

time this inducement had the effect of causing customers to place large orders, trusting to time to aid them in working off the stock. If the season happened to turn out unfavorable they had to slaughter their goods in order to realize, and as a consequence they fell so much behind that in a year or two they found themselves in bankruptcy. It has also been customary with Montreal houses to have in the large towns and generally throughout Ontario what is known as supply accounts, that is they got hold of a young man locally known and let him have a stock and take his notes in payment. This practice had become almost general with Montreal houses. The evils arising from the above policy of long credit and having supply accounts in almost every town in Ontario became apparent when trade began to shrink and goods had to be sold at less than cost to keep up the sales. As a natural consequence their over buying, inadequate means and general incompetency became active agents in bringing about disaster. But the evil did not stop where it arose. It extended to legitimate traders because of the competition they were subjected to by reason of the slaughtering of these goods by the men who were supplied by wholesale houses and also the numerous bankruptcy sales that took place in their midst. It is no marvel, then, that solvent retail merchants hail with delight and extend a liberal patronage to the new departure.

The new policy is a sound one and will effectually check the evil of long credits and the still worse one of supply accounts, because it places the business men of means in a position to compete successfully with their favored competitor, besides it compels the wholesale houses who have hitherto resorted to such unbusinesslike methods to call a halt and to take a more careful survey of the situation which they are directly responsible for. The only way to avert disaster is to demand of those who embark in trade practical knowledge and experience, adequate means and business integrity. If those requirements are present business can be transacted on a cash basis on a smaller margin with a better profit than has hitherto prevailed under the credit system.

Yours truly,

Toronto, Aug. 1st

W. H. SCOTT.

A NOTE OF WARNING.

Editor Dry Goods Review

SIR, Retail merchants often find themselves undersold on certain lines by their competitors, and they can explain it only by concluding that a competitor is selling a particular line at or below cost as a leader. Some time ago I found I was being undersold on two or three lines by a competitor whom I knew was seldom found selling goods except at a fair advance on cost. For days I wondered at this and tried to think out some explanation. I wrote to two or three houses for prices on the lines, and was forced to the conclusion that I had got the lowest price in the market. But I received a hint from a traveller which led me to discover a practice which I think can not be too strongly condemned. I don't know how widespread the practice has become, but I have found two or three instances of it.

The trick is as follows: A certain wholesale house—I won't say whether in Montreal or Toronto—sends a traveller into a town and sells one of the leading merchants. About ten days afterwards another traveller for the same house strikes the same town and calls on a competitor of the house previously sold to. He shows the order given by the other merchant and states that he will sell him 5 or 10 per cent. less and thus give him an ad-

vantage over his competitor. Of course this offer will likely be made only to men whose orders are likely to go to another wholesale house, and it will thus be the means of opening a new account or increasing a small one. But at best it is a despicable method, and I show it up simply that merchants may be on their guard. Each one can draw his own conclusions from what I have said.

Yours truly,

MERCHANT.

SILK GOODS FOR NEXT SEASON.

THE American skirt dancer, Loie Fuller, who has taken gay Paris by storm, has also been the cause of a most decided fashion which, instead of dying out as was predicted by not a few, bids fair to continue with renewed vigor for next season. Some of the most careful buyers and manufacturers had no faith in the Loie Fuller colors and believed that they would last just long enough to load up the retail stocks and then become a drug, hard to clear out at any price. In nothing more than this has the uncertainty of fashion been demonstrated, for the popularity to-day is greater than ever.

The Loie Fuller rainbow effect differs from the old ombre with which the country has more or less familiarity. It has a rainbow and lustrous effect quite its own. Some of the new styles show large squares of 5 or 6 inches, each square containing a shading of one color; four or five different shades of reds will join a square that contains as many shades of yellow, and this in turn will join a square of green shades. When the eye becomes accustomed to this striking chromatic scale it enjoys the harmonious display.

Every one has a more or less strong belief in Satin Duchesse in what it is generally admitted will be a satin season.

Peau de soie and moire antique, in both plain and changeable effects, have many champions.

One-color satins, with small geometrical figures, dots, cubes, etc., are spoken of highly, but there are not a few well-informed men in the trade who think that the small figures have had their best day, and that larger and more decided patterns have a better chance for success. Still, the majority favor the small effects in the less costly goods, while those who favor larger designs believe that they are to find favor only with the expensive and largely exclusive trade. At all events, if there is going to be any change it cannot be in the direction of smaller points, for they would then become invisible. Worth and other famous modistes of Paris and London think that there will be many a surprise in store for those who handle silk before the next season is well advanced. Plain, rich colors will be the most in demand by the fashionable early in the season, so they report, but inasmuch as their patrons are the ultra-fashionable, their opinions are of secondary interest to the great majority of merchants in America, for their styles are generally a season ahead of us. Bengalines, in both plain and changeable effects, are thought by some of us to be as strongly indicated for the fall as they have been popular for the spring. —Retailer and Jobber.

Mr. Bowman, New York, of the M. E. Q. Spool, was here recently engaging men to travel for his firm in the States. This is not unusual, as other spool manufacturers have done so for some time. Canadians are much more popular on the other side than native Americans. The former are more reliable, trustworthy and conscientious, and take a greater interest in the affairs of the firm they represent.