

ation, nobody spent his money more generously on all the luxuries which the best hotels afford than the traveller *sui generis* both for himself and the customer who came to examine his samples and talk business with the man who was going through the best possible school for becoming the future representative merchant in his particular line.

Of course every merchant, if possible, should see his customers occasionally; it is good for both, and a member of the firm or a responsible agent should make occasional visits to them. Every country merchant recognizes the convenience of these visits, which bring the wholesaler to his door with his variety of samples and saves him the trouble of a trip to town with all its incidental and accidental expenses, besides loss of time.

But there is a worse side to the picture, and we suppose the following extracts from the St. Catharines *Daily Times* embody in a measure the opinions of many merchants on the subject, in that and other towns in the Dominion:—

"The whole system of trade is injured by the hordes of travellers who infest every city, town, village, and country store in the land. The urgency of these men is so great that they continually induce business men to buy what they really do not want. A wholesale house sends out a couple of travellers with samples of lines of goods which must be sold. These men, of course, do their best to get good and safe customers, but failing in that they will push them off any way. Thus, some merchants, who are financially sound, are led by the great inducements held out, such as cheap goods, job lots, dating forward and promise of renewals, to overload their carrying capacity. The giving way to these solicitations and inducements has been the first step in the financial ruin of hundreds of good honest merchants. Now, if the wholesale men should put a stop to sending these armies of men on the road they would all have safer and better customers, and even if they sold less goods would in the end be better off, for they would save very large sums in expenses, and their bad debts would be very greatly reduced. By doing this they would not only effect a great saving themselves, but they would help all the retail merchants who are trying to do an honest business by paying one hundred cents on the dollar. The present custom of starting so many of these supply stores, nine out of ten of which are sure to fail sooner or later, is doing a world of injustice to all legitimate dealers. It is utterly impossible for an honest merchant who pays all his indebtedness to stand a competition

with those who are selling bankrupt stock bought at from 40 to 50 cents on the dollar, or who are selling goods which they never paid for nor intend to pay for. Why don't the wholesale merchants follow the example of others and form a commercial union—the first principle of which would be to send out no travellers? We should like to see such a union formed and lived up to. If any wholesale men think it is impossible to do without travellers, let them see what even one man has already done in setting his face against an evil which is doing such a vast amount of injury to the legitimate trade and commerce of the country."

The traveller is an expensive luxury, and the experience of many leading houses in the United States is in favor of advertising to the extent of one-fifth of the cost and reducing the price of goods to their customers the other four-fifths.

A QUESTIONABLE ACT.

The Legislature of the State of Connecticut has passed a law which obliges Canadian Fire Insurance companies doing business in that state to make a deposit of \$100,000. This action on the part of the Nutmeg State was prompted by the jealousy of local companies owing to the unparalleled success which has attended the efforts of a certain Canadian company across the lines. The legislation does not apply to European companies, and the Royal Canadian Insurance Company may flatter themselves that it is a special act to drive them out of the field. The worst feature of this conduct is that it is retro-active, the Royal Canadian having complied with all necessary rules before commencing business in that State. Retaliatory legislation is not desirable under any circumstances, and we are sure that all right thinking people on both sides of the line will condemn this petty action on the part of the Legislature of the State of Connecticut; but if Canadian companies are thus obliged to make special deposits in every state of the Union in which they may desire to carry on business, it is high time the local Governments of the Dominion thought of insisting on similar deposits in each Province where business is done by American companies.

THE CANADIAN TITANIC IRON COMPANY.

To iron masters and those interested in the iron trade, perhaps a short account of the origin, and the causes which led to the failure, of this Company may prove interesting, it having been another of the many unsuccessful attempts made, chiefly in

the United States, to smelt titanic ore, an ore principally found in America, and from which iron of a most superior quality can be produced, but hitherto never in sufficient quantity to render the working of it a financial success.

The Company was formed by a number of practical and influential men in London, England, in 1871, for the purpose of working a large deposit of the titanic ore, at St. Urbain in the Country of Charlevoix. Early the following year, the Company commenced the erection of two blast furnaces, which, with the necessary engines and all modern appliances, were finished in the fall of 1873, together with ten miles of an iron tramway to Baie St. Paul on the St. Lawrence, the whole being completed at a total cost of £80,000 stg. The furnaces were 47 ft. 10 inches high, 10 ft. bosh, and 8 ft. throat; with closed tops whereby the waste gases were utilized, by being conveyed into Player's hot air stoves. Two engines of 30 H. P., each with steam cylinders 2 ft. 6 inches diameter and 4 ft. stroke, and two blowing cylinders 3 ft. 6 inches diameter, were also erected, driven by 3 boilers 22 ft. long and 6 ft. diameter of best Lowmoor iron.

The fuel used was charcoal, and it was estimated in the Company's prospectus that only 140 bushels per ton would be required for smelting; but, on the furnaces going into blast, it was discovered that, from the refractory nature of the ore and other causes, chiefly the deleterious effect of the large percentage of titanium contained in it—40 per cent,—that not less than 400 bushels of charcoal were required, and that on account of this serious difference in the consumption of fuel the cost of production was increased beyond the market value.

The only partially successful attempt at working this ore has been by the Norway Iron Company at Norton in England, who had, however, to combine with it an equal proportion of brown hematite, which enabled them a few years ago to produce a good quality of iron, at about \$40 per ton, whereas at St. Urbain the lowest cost was \$60.

On this excessive consumption of fuel becoming known to the shareholders, it was resolved to wind up the Company, and the works were handed over to the creditors for satisfaction of their claims. This step was the more readily decided on, from the knowledge of many previous failures on a smaller scale. Those failures cannot but be deeply regretted, as it would be of great benefit to the country, could means be devised for profitably reducing this ore, of which we have immense deposits.