



MR. M—RT—N J. GR—FF—N,

ABLY FILLING THE CLOTHES OF MR. EDWARD FARRAR, AND THE EDITORIAL CHAIR OF THE "MAIL."

Canadian Wayside Sketches.

THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER (Continued).

If I were about to take a long trip to any part of the habitable world, I would immediately obtain the services of some Commercial Traveller as courier, and I am convinced by so doing would rid myself of much expense, annoyance, and loss of time; he understands the art of travel thoroughly, and I should have absolutely nothing to do but to hand him my purse, put my hands in my empty pockets, and enjoy his various squabbles and occasional fights; and should have besides the calm and satisfied assurance, if death happened to overtake one in some gigantic smash-up, that the samples of my remains would be neatly packed up, addressed and forwarded, per quickest route and lowest rates (C.O.D.) to my family's burying ground; and added to this, the additional consolation that he had got even with the railroad company by taking an accident ticket, and on the proceeds thereof he would live long and happy ever after.

In the railroad car, the C. T. is unmistakable, he has a certain knack of spread-eagling himself into the wholesale monopoly of seats, and but few will venture the mild enquiry as to whether he has engaged the whole section—he has no fear of intrusion from the ubiquitous woman with her numerous market-baskets; he withers the young bridal couple with a look of ineffable scorn, and should that fail, resorts to the most expressive wink at the bride as a final and decisive settler; no timid mother with string of noisy children dare approach him; no deaf old gentleman with a propensity to talk will hazard an intrusion; none, in fact, dare invade the sanctity of his presence but those whose company he wishes or for whom he has a predilection, and I have observed, by the way, that his predilections often run towards a pretty widow or a "femme sole." I find no fault with him for all this, on the contrary, I envy him the art, which he has acquired by long practice, of securing himself from all unwelcome intrusion. Englishmen, as a rule, can

do this pretty well, but in this country the C.T. can discount him every time.

He is sometimes observed to spread his rug and lay himself out as if asleep, he has no fear of disturbance from the peanut-boy fiend, or of the inquisitive conductor, and yet, strange to say, he never sleeps whilst on the cars, one eye at all events is always open, and he keeps it on the advent or departure of rival men in his line, and sharp indeed must that one be, who gets on or off without his knowledge.

It is part of his business, I suppose, to withhold the knowledge of his destination from his conferees, for I myself have counted twenty different replies in answer to as many enquiries, till I at last began to wonder if he would not really forget himself just where he was going. He has a habit of getting off at stations and pretending his journey is finished, but in nine cases out of ten this is only a blind, and you will find him presently in the last car, looking supremely unconscious and happy; This has become so fixed a habit with him, that I fear when he shall finally come to the Stygian Lake he will try the same game with our old friend, the ferryman.

As to what his religious views may be, I am on the whole unprepared to state, but I am inclined to think he is given at times to adapt them to those of his prospective customers, for on one single Sunday I have seen him attending the somewhat varied services of a Methodist, Catholic, and Baptist Church, and from this I opine that his views are inclined to be somewhat broad and undogmatical, and that he carries out the apostolic injunction, "to be all things to all men."

The great aim, however, of the C. T.'s life is to become a partner at some future day in "his House," or failing that, to start a "House" of his own. If he succeeds in the former he usually does well and prospers, but in resorting to the latter, generally makes a sad smash sooner or later, and then returns again to the road.

He is sent sometimes to Europe, and performs the duties entrusted to him with fidelity

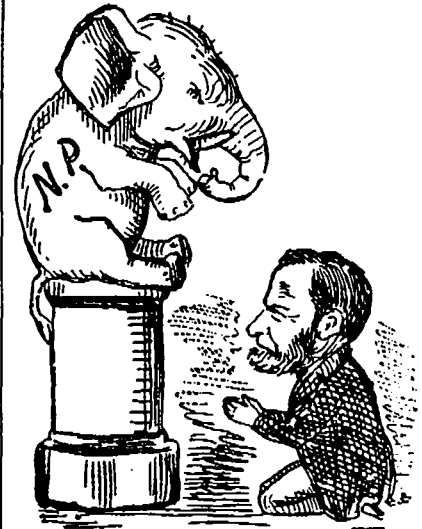
and despatch. I have met him there, but could hardly recognize in him the same being, for there he is simply as any other ordinary mortal, and his glory seems to have departed, and even the very bell-boy does not quake before him. A sad, far-away look is observable in his eyes, and he is never really happy or himself again till he arrives home.

There is no gainsaying the fact, that taken altogether, our C. T. lives better, travels better, dresses better, and enjoys better, than you or I or any other uncommercial traveller of life's highway, and that though he is not the man you would exactly choose for an argument on the subject of psychology, or any other "ology," still he is, as times go, fairly informed on general subjects, and is a very useful and agreeable member of society.

Outside of his own business he is by no means bigoted in his views, and is generally prepared to admit two sides to every question (saving, of course, politics, for in that proposition no one admits the axiom except Mr GRIP), and for this worthy characteristic he is indebted chiefly to travel. The worst case of bigotry ever extant could be cured by a few years' travel, and I would willingly subscribe to a monster excursion round the world, for a certain class of our population whose views are now, alas! confined to the narrowest possible limits by a species of continued moral tight-lacing, sad alike for themselves and their posterity.

I don't know where Commercial Travellers go to when they die, but think they are somehow deserving of a better fate than that frequently assigned to them. I know, however, that they do die sometimes, and I have no doubt that when future paleontologists ponder over their fossilized remains, they will find a certain prominence in their cheek bones, which will render understandable some of their present characteristics, and lend weight to the theory on which I ventured on starting, that the C. T. is a specific creation; but be that as it may, he is altogether a jolly good fellow, and I hope to have the pleasure of meeting him somewhere in the happy hunting-grounds of the Future.

VIATOR.



NEELON

Before the shrine of the great N. P.

"What's the difference, Pa, between the Upper House and the Lower House?"
 "The difference, my dear, is this: The Lower House moans a-bility, the Upper House no-bility."—Judy.