

VIEWS AND INTERVIEWS.

A Boy
Inventor.

Humphrey Potter is probably the only boy who ever invented anything of practical use to the world. Before Watt had perfected his discovery the Newcomen engine was considered the best. Besides a man, it required the services of a boy to turn alternately the two cocks, one admitting the steam into the cylinder, the other admitting the jet of cold water to condense it. This work was easy enough, but it soon grew monotonous, as it had to be constantly attended to. Potter was lazy, and he thought how much time he would have for play if he could only make the cocks turn themselves. He observed the alternate ascent and descent of the beam above his head, and being a bright boy he thought he could save himself much work by applying the movement to the alternate rising and lowering of the levers which governed the cocks. He contrived a device, which he called the "scoggan" (meaning lazy boy), consisting of a catch worked by strings from the beam of the engine. While the arrangement was of course very rude, it not only answered the purpose and made the engine automatic, but improved the working power by increasing the number of strokes from six to fifteen in the minute. Henry Beighton, who added the plug rod and hand gear, subsequently improved upon the boy's work by doing away with the catches and strings and substituting a rod suspended from the beam, which alternately opened and shut the tapets attached to the steam and injection cocks.

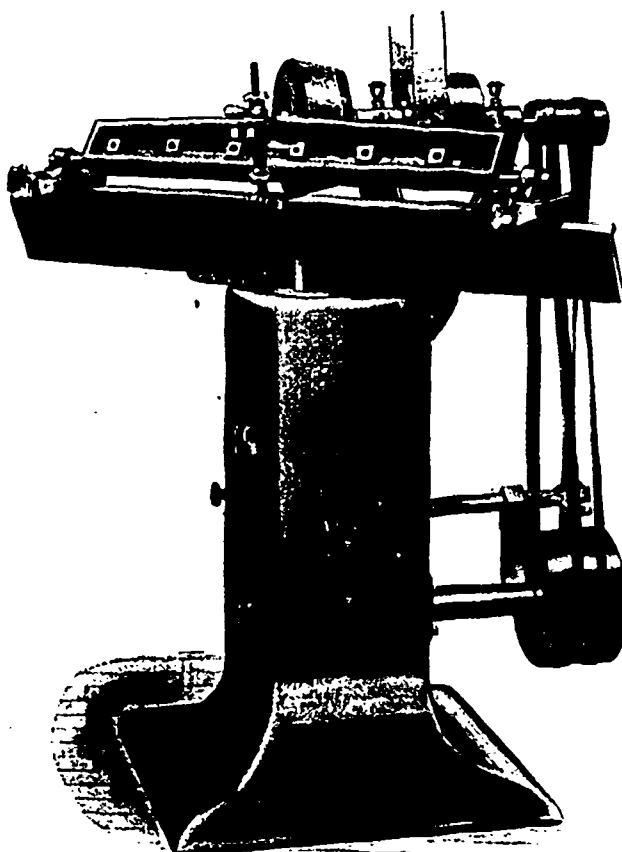
Business
And Sentiment.

There is not supposed to be much sentiment in business; perhaps not as much as there might be. "Business is business" is the motto on which the changes are hourly rung in the busy mart of commerce, and the man who steps out of this hard, beaten, adamant track, more frequently receives the cynic's laugh, than not, for his unusual innovation. But without following the subject further on these lines, though they are not wanting in suggestion, we shall quote an extract from a commercial exchange, that if on sentimental lines will, we opine, touch a sympathetic chord in the breasts of not a few business men. "The road along which the man or business travels," says this writer, "is not a macadamized one, nor does it ordinarily lead through pleasant scenes and by well springs of delight. On the contrary, it is a rough and rugged path, beset with 'wait-a-bit' thorns, and full of pitfalls, which can only be avoided by the watchful care of circumspection. After every day's journey over this worse than turnpike road the wayfarer needs something more than rest; he requires solace, and he deserves it. He is weary of the dull prose of life and athirst for the poetry. Happy is the husband who can find that solace and that poetry at home. Warm greetings from loving hearts, fond glances from bright eyes, the welcome shouts of children, and many thousand little arrangements for our comfort and enjoyment that silently tell of thoughtful and expectant love, the gentle ministrations that disencumber us in an old and easy seat before we are aware of it; these and like tokens of affection and sympathy constitute the poetry which reconciles us to the prose of life. Think of this, ye wives and daughters of business men! Think of the toils, the anxieties, the mortifications and wear that fathers undergo to secure for you comfortable homes; and then compensate them for their trials by making them happy by their own firesides."

Sawing off
Prices.

The crazy habit of cutting prices cannot be too severely condemned. We have reverted to the matter more than once in these pages; and will give place here to some utterances that we have found in an exchange, from one who knows how to size up the question in vigorous English and apt simile. This writer says: "Some men have a mania for cutting prices, and where the habit is strongest it is the least frank and open-handed. It condescends to trickery, and is in trade relationships what Judas Iscariot was in the councils of the twelve apostles. It is, of course, impossible to manipulate business morals on a pancake basis of even justice. It

may have its revivals, but these are usually restricted to sales, and leave the sinner still unregenerated. Saints are scarce both in churches and shops, and, if a pity, it is still a fact; and if Moses fails with the ten commandments, it is not reasonable to suppose any trade law can escape the usual violation. The evil, however, is none the less for being too common, for it is to this spirit of rivalry and cupidity we find so many men making meat of their noses to spoil their neighbor's face. It is this phrenzy that makes competition homicidal. It simply does a butchering business and fills the modern shambles with debtors and creditors, financial skeletons and busy sheriffs. This, of course, is foolish; but as fools seldom die when young, they have to be endured in whiskers. They are practically immortal, and never die. They co-exist with the mosquito and the gadfly, and the wart that spoils the beauty of a Roman nose. Everybody knows that two-thirds of our business failures, bad debts and ruined creditors are traceable to these unrepentant sinners, and that their delinquencies in the long run have to be balanced in the big clearing house of the public purse. All kinds of schemes are devised to limit this business evil. We cork it up in conventions, committees and organizations, and frame all kinds of affidavits to keep the modern Annanias from his old habit



PLANER KNIFE GRINDING MACHINE.

of going back on his veracity. Men travel hundreds of miles, frame constitutions and employ the national mails to distribute resolutions and schedules in printed form, but still the cat gets into the pantry and the dreaded camel gets through the needle's eye. In fact, men who would adhere to living prices and save themselves from the sheriff, are frequently compelled, by the law of self-preservation, to take to the water on a plank when the bottom is kicked out of the business boat. Competition keeps its knife on the grindstone and the trader's throat, with the criminals sitting before a ledger, and their names on the official roll of fair and honest trade. It may be safely said that it would pay, with a handsome profit, to give a life pension, with board and lodging and free rides on Sundays, to this class of men, who are strangling themselves and their neighbours by undue and injudicious competition."

A THREE CENT STAMP DOES IT.

ON receipt of a three cent stamp we will mail free to any address a copy of our little hand-book entitled "Rules and Regulations for the inspection of pine and hardwood lumber," as adopted by the lumber section and sanctioned by the Council of the Board of Trade, of Toronto, June 16, 1890. Address, CANADA LUMBERMAN, Toronto, Ont.

PLANER KNIFE GRINDING MACHINES.

THE evolution of planer knife grinding would be an interesting study. Step by step the art has advanced from the clumsy all-day job done on a grindstone, two men holding the knife to the work. The first improvement dispensed with the services of one man, by using a dovetail slide to travel the knife to and fro.

The advent of emery wheels made a decided advance, for a narrow emery wheel twenty-four inches in diameter took the place of the more burly grindstone, and a more elaborate mechanism traversed the knife back and forth without the aid of manual labor. The emery wheel ground a slight concave in the bevel of the knife when first used, but the concave increased regularly with the wear of the wheel till, long before the close of its natural life, it had to be put aside as having outlived its usefulness, the edge ground becoming altogether too concave. The next step was the introduction of a massive machine nearly a ton in weight, and the objectionable increase in concavity was prevented by an oscillating motion of the knife carrier. For obvious reasons this machine was never a prime favorite.

Cup or tub wheels next pushed their claims, but while they made a very good edge for some work, the lack of concave was objectionable to those whose finer work seemed to demand a concave edge.

What is really wanted by nine-tenths of planing millmen is a substantial yet simple machine that will grind accurately and automatically either a straight or concave edge.

The illustration on this page represents such a machine. Moderate in price, simple in construction, accurate in work, producing at will of operator either a straight or concave bevel, occupying the minimum of room, provided with a countershaft, if needed, (not shown in illustration), it does seem to fill the bill, and the makers, the Dominion Emery Wheel Co., of Hamilton and Prescott, guarantee it will. For fuller particulars, price, etc., please address them.

ANOTHER LOCAL FAILURE.

WE regret to have to record this month the assignment of Porter, Robertson and Co., lumber merchants, of this city. Mr. Robertson, the sole member of the firm, is one of the best-known and most highly respected men in the lumber trade. Unfortunately, however, like many others, he has during the past year suffered heavy losses, until at last he has himself been forced to the wall. Mr. Robertson places his liabilities at \$10,000 and assets nominally the same, but which will, no doubt, shrink considerably in the effort to realize on them. The creditors were most kindly disposed towards the insolvent, and a compromise might have been arranged, but it was Mr. Robertson's wish that the estate be wound up, and his hope is that if the shortage is not too heavy that he will ultimately be able to wipe it out by his own exertions. As an earnest of his intentions to push things, and lose no time in getting down to work, we are pleased to learn that Mr. Robertson has formed a connection with the Toronto Wood and Shingle Co. (Ltd.), of Queen Street West. The arrangement will no doubt be a profitable one to the company, and we trust will be equally satisfactory to Mr. Robertson.

WHY BAND SAWS BREAK.

Being a book of instructions to filers on the care of large band saw blades, used in the manufacture of lumber. Treating on the hammering, filing, brazing and care of band saw blades, removing unequal tension, setting irregular teeth, etc. By Joshua Oldham; M. T. Richardson Co., Publishers, New York. Cloth, price \$1. For sale at office of CANADA LUMBERMAN.

In the above-named book may be found valuable information on the subject of treating band saw blades. Beginning, the author gives sixteen reasons for the breaking of band saw blades. Each reason is analyzed, and information which, if carried out, will remove the causes of breaking, is then given. The styles of hammers to use are illustrated and described. Explicit instructions are given on hammering, filing and brazing the blades. Instructions are given to remove improper and unequal tension, irregular and uneven teeth, etc. In connection with the treatise is a history of the manufacture and use of the saw from its origin to the present time. Altogether the book presents an accumulation of valuable and practical information which cannot be found anywhere else. It is printed on fine paper, in good clear type, and is bound in cloth.