

WOOLENS AND CLOTHING.

THE CLOTHING TRADE OF CANADA.

It is gradually becoming an established fact that ready-made or ready-to-wear clothing can be produced by houses who are equipped with modern machinery and understand up-to-date methods of manufacture in style, fit, and finish, equal to the best work produced. The result has been considerable improvement in the quality and style of garment that is being turned out by the leading houses in the clothing trade, with the prospect of a still further improvement in the quality of goods used taking place. If wholesale clothiers are properly encouraged to manufacture a finer grade of goods they are not only quite ready but very anxious to do so, and among leading houses the trade is being encouraged on these lines to a considerable extent. This, of course, means the population of Canada being clothed and turned out in much better style than heretofore, and at a considerable less expenditure of money.

A well-dressed man respects himself and commands the respect of others. Put the ordinary individual in a stylish well-made suit of clothes, and it has a tendency to make him think he amounts to something, and as a rule he will rise to the occasion and show the man in him; put him in a shoddy suit that will rip and ravel and he will be just about the style of chap to go well with such a suit. But the shoddy suit, even if made up in a manner quite in keeping with the goods from which it is made, has a temptation that is sometimes hard to be resisted, as the late P. T. Barnum remarked that "the public liked to be humbugged."

The regular clothing trade complain strongly of increased competition from the dry goods houses. It would be a great pity if any competition, no matter from what quarter, caused the retail trade to push the very cheap, as compared with the better classes, of ready-made. In the latter is money for all and the public are really better served, because a very low grade of clothing undoubtedly tends, in the end, to a loss of patronage. One clothier said to THE REVIEW: "It would be better if the dry goods men stuck to their regular business. Against goods made by cheap, outside labor, often made roughly with inferior thread and trimmings, it is hard to compete. And it must be inferior to sell at low prices. Of course the bargain hunters would rejoice, but I cannot see that anyone will really benefit. The result could only be that what is now a growing and respectable business will rapidly degenerate through the unfair competition of people who know nothing of the business competing with those who do."

THE REVIEW feels that this is a trade matter which can best be referred for settlement to the retail merchant. He knows how far this cheap goods mania stands to injure him. If trade can be held, customers satisfied and a good margin made it will be difficult to stop the practice. But these are not the views held by our best merchants. They want salable goods at a reasonable figure, it is true, but the very cheap tends to shave down the margin of profit until we reach the disappearing point. The wholesale clothiers should redouble their exertions and, turning out, as we know they do, excellent clothing of superior workmanship, may rest satisfied that their goods, properly pushed, will hold the trade.

WHY CANADIAN GOODS GET NO REPUTATION.

We know of dozens of instances where manufacturers have dropped into tailor shops and been shown goods which the tailor has solemnly assured them (no doubt sincerely) were imported; but the manufacturers know the goods to have come from their own mills. We know of cases in which experienced salesmen in wholesale houses have been for years selling Canadian woollens as imported without knowing the difference. The assurances of tailors and dry goods salesmen to the contrary notwithstanding, there are

large classes of Canadian tweeds, etc., which no expert save the manufacturer himself can distinguish from imported goods, and in selling these as foreign the home manufacturer is defrauded not only of his good name—for these are usually the higher grade of goods—but of his profits on the only lines of goods which now-a-days yield a profit. It may be asked, why does the home manufacturer allow his goods to be sold as foreign? Simply because if he did not permit the wholesaler to dispose of them as he wishes, he would get no orders at all. It is a case of being compelled to "fish or cut bait," as our Yankee friends would say.—Canadian Journal of Fabrics.

MRS. MILLER'S TESTIMONY.

Mrs. Jenness Miller, of Washington, D.C., the lady who is devoting her life and best efforts to the women's dress reform movement, in a recent lecture delivered in Chicago, said, in speaking of the Rigby process for waterproofing textile fabrics, that "every woman who has a regard for her health and personal comfort should have her out-of-door garments proofed by the Rigby process, which, although impervious to rain, permitted the free respiration of the skin and allowed the air to pass freely through the fabric."

She demonstrated this fact to her audience by having a pail of water brought on the stage and making a tank of the folds of her skirt and having the water poured into it, then allowing it to run off, shaking the garment and exhibiting to her audience the fact that it was perfectly dry.

Mrs. Miller is so well known amongst advanced women that her testimony will be of considerable value as an advertising medium to the Rigby Waterproofing Co. of America, of whom Messrs. H. Shorey & Co., wholesale clothiers, of Montreal, are the controllers.

THE PICTURES FRIGHTENED HIM.

"I want to get a good suit of clothes made to order," he said to the tailor. "I never had a suit of clothes made to order, and my wife thinks its time that I put on a little style."

"Certainly," was the reply. "You can look over the stock and make your selection. And here is a picture showing the styles. You can make your choice from that, as to how you will have the suit made."

The visitor gazed at the picture, and laying it down with a sigh turned toward the door.

"You're not going, are you?" said the tailor.

"Yes, I hate to disappoint my wife and to see you lose a customer. But I guess I'm happier as I am. I'm not vain, but if this suit of clothes is going to make me look like a stiff-kneed, wooden-elbowed graven image with glass eyes and a false moustache, I'm going to go without it."

CANADIAN WOOLENS.

With one or two exceptions all wholesale woolen houses in this country divide their stock into separate departments for Canadian and imported goods. What is gained by doing this? Cotton houses do not find it necessary to follow any such course with their goods. These are sold upon their merits and without reference to where the goods are manufactured. No British house would think of dividing its stock in this manner—a merchant doing this would be laughed at.

It is supposed that Canadian mills cannot compete with the European manufacturers in the higher grades of woollens, but even in these, and certainly in many lines of medium quality, the home made article is equal in every way to the imported. By the system of divided stocks, Canadian goods are discriminated against, and the retailer—and through him the consumer—is given the idea that