

### Commercial Travellers, the Railways and Baggage.

The question of convenience, time and profit, in relation to the commercial travelers and the railways, suggests a few ideas which might be considered by both interests.

The railways and their employees are, as a rule, ever ready to facilitate this part of their traffic, and it is no small part, either.

The commercial travelers have rarely appreciated the trouble the railways have in the handling, checking and all the other et ceterae of this immense traffic.

There are probably 10,000 commercial travelers, carrying, in the year, say, nearly 5,000 tons of baggage, on which the railways collect nothing direct. When this is considered, with the cost of the excess cards, prepaid certificates, and baggagemen, it is easily seen that the balance of baggage that pays its way must also pay for that which is nominally free.

Why not make all commercial baggage pay for being carried, and formulate a price that would be known to everyone—say, 100 pounds of baggage, for 100 miles, for 10¢? This sum may be too low or too high, but no doubt their mathematicians could give a price that would pay the railways.

Were this system introduced, it would save the railways the cost of excess tickets, and prepaid certificates. It would save the baggagemen no end of trouble just when a train was leaving. It would end the question of a commercial traveler handing any baggage to a companion going in with him. The idea being still further followed out would be facilitated by books of coupon tickets, which could be issued by the railways for any mileage or weight of baggage, and interchangeable on any line of railway or boat.

So far this may read as if it was all well studied out for the railways' benefit, but an idea to be of enough value for adoption between two people must be of value to both.

Were this adopted, the commercial travelers could have their baggage all settled for by the firm, before they leave for their trip. When leaving a station the time lost in having to be there long before train time to have excess made out or prepaid certificate attended to, is well known to mostly every man on the road. Under this idea, commercial baggage could be checked as any ordinary traveler's trunks. On arrival at its destination it could be settled for by the commercial traveler. If he travelled fifty miles he would simply give up fifty miles in coupons. Every firm knows to a pound or two what their travelers are carrying and how long a trip they will have, so the matter could easily be calculated, and it is much satisfaction to know your baggage is all settled for. By this idea the commercial traveler has the very last moment in the town he is leaving for business, just saving enough time to pack and go to the station. Under the present system he must be there from at least a quarter of an hour before train time. Then, a commercial traveler has more time when he arrives, to look after the railway's requirements.

These books of coupons would have the commercial traveler's name and certificate number and firm's name. Each coupon being numbered, belonging to a series, would easily be checked by the railways.

Should a commercial traveler send part of his baggage back to his firm

before he has completed his trip, it is easy to compute the number of coupons to pay on the balance.

Should a commercial traveler not use his entire book, the balance could be used on a later trip, or used as part payment on a new book.

The amount of money saved to the railways by this method would very likely permit a reduction of the rate per mile on commercial travelers' passenger transportation, possibly bringing it to 2¢ per mile, and, if this were so, there would be no reason why the employers of travelers would not also buy the passenger as well as the baggage transportation for their travelers, for their entire trip before they leave.

These suggestions are submitted for criticism, and the promoter would be glad to get opinions from men on the road.

### A COMMERCIAL TRAVELER.

#### The Commercial Men.

Thos. Clearline arrived from the east this week, with his samples for next fall and winter's trade.

S. D. R. Fernie, western representative of the Hudson's Bay Knitting Co., and Joseph Horsfall & Sons, has moved his sample room to the Hatching's block, Main street, where he has taken an entire floor, giving him commodious quarters. Mr. Fernie now carries quite an extensive stock in Winnipeg for the sorting trade.

#### Gigantic Enterprise.

Toronto, Jan. 5.—F. H. Clorgue, manager of the great pulp mill at Sault Ste. Marie, gives particulars of vast projects on the part of the Ontario & Lake Superior company, American capitalists, backed by a capital of \$20,000,000, of which \$6,000,000 has been paid up.

Briefly, the proposal is to establish at the Canadian Sault the following enterprises. Reduction works, to cost \$1,500,000, chemical works, to cost \$500,000 alkali works, to cost \$1,500,000; sulphide pulp mill, to cost \$250,000, a steel rail mill, to cost \$2,500,000, total \$7,250,000.

The reduction works will treat nickel, copper and other ores from all over Ontario. The proposed steel rail mill will have a capacity of a thousand tons of steel rails daily.

#### Dairy Trade Notes.

Portage la Prairie Liberal. The Portage creamery closed down for the season at the end of the year. In all 79,000 pounds of butter were made during the season, part of this was made at North Brandon and Strathclair creameries which were operated by the same firm, but during the early and latter part of the season all the cream was shipped to Portage. The price paid to patrons varied according to the markets during the different months, but was always equal to that paid by the merchants for dairy butter, those who sent cream during the whole season realized an average of 15¢. The same territory will be operated next season with improved prospects as pioneering new routes is always expensive. J. Bousfield, the proprietor, will spend the winter organizing the different districts and placing cream separators among the farmers.

Shipments of ore from Rossland camp during the week ended December 22 amounted to 4,932 tons. Only seven of the mines figured in these shipments.

### Movements of Business Men.

David Ross, of Whittemouth, was in Winnipeg this week.

J. E. Dingman, of Winnipeg, returned from an extended trip east this week.

J. Johnston, of Johnston & Stewart, Winnipeg, implements, left for the south this week on a business trip.

George Craig, dry goods merchant, Winnipeg, left this week for New York and Great Britain on a purchasing trip.

### Growth and Use of Tea.

Although the tea plant is indigenous to Assam and the Chinese plant is a debased variety, it was unknown in India till 1834. In the previous year the East India Company had lost its monopoly of the China tea trade, and the directors set to work to secure for their own territories a portion of what had become to them a very material business. Seeds and plants of the debased Chinese variety were imported, and with them Chinamen and Chinese methods. The following fifty years were employed in getting away from Chinese methods, of which the outcome is the excellent Indian methods of to-day, which have practically destroyed the export of the Chinese production. Following the success in Assam, tea was planted in Bengal and other provinces, until in 1897 the area of cultivation was equal to 200,000 hectares. Outside of India, China and Japan, the greatest development has been in Ceylon and Java. The principal tea-drinking countries of the world are China, Japan, the United Kingdom, the British colonies, Russia and the United States of America. Excluding Mongolian requirements, the world's consumption may be taken roughly at 230,000,000 kilograms per annum, which, including cost of transportation, but not revenue and distributive profits, may be valued at \$17,000,000. It is estimated this quantity is sufficient to make 100,000,000,000 cups of tea. The United Kingdom takes the largest quantity, the imports for 1898 being 107,000,000 kilograms, or 2.65 kilograms per annum per head of population—a good deal less than the quantity consumed by the Australasian colonies. Next to Great Britain comes Russia as a consumer of 42,000,000 kilograms, or 0.34 kilogram per head of population. The United States takes 31,000,000 kilograms, or 0.41 kilogram per head; but then the people of the States consume 5 kilograms of coffee per head. Canada consumes 3 kilograms per head and Holland 1.2 kilogram.—Bradstreet.

According to official estimates there will be over \$75,000,000 feet of timber cut in Northern Ontario during the present winter. The cut of last year was 570,000,000 feet.

The Christmas number of The Farmer's Advocate is a fine edition, well filled with interesting reading matter and an unusually well-executed series of illustrations, mostly of famous Canadian stock herds. The Canadian minister of agriculture is one of a number of notable contributors to this edition.

**WANTED—SEVERAL PERSONS FOR** District Office Managers in this state to represent me in their own and surrounding counties. Willing to pay yearly \$500, payable weekly. Desirable employment with unusual opportunities. References exchanged. Enclose self-addressed stamped envelope. S. A. Park, 120 Caxton Building, Chicago.