

Montreal and Toronto have not shown any marked liberality. When St. John was overwhelmed by the conflagration of 1877 it is gratefully recalled by the *Telegraph* that Windsor, having then but 2,800 persons gave \$4,320 in money and \$500 worth of clothing and provisions to relieve the sufferers.

#### OUR AUSTRALIAN LETTER.

The first shipment of Canadian paper pulp arrived by the last steamer. It is too soon to learn what it may lead to, but it may be safely predicted that the trade will grow. However, the market for this article is limited, and it is useless for too many pulp mills to rush after orders. This much by way of warning.

Mr. Godbolt, of Toronto, came out a month ago as the representative of Messrs. J. & T. Bell, manufacturers of boots and shoes in Montreal. In a business way he has opened up several good accounts. If he had come here a couple of years ago he could have got more and larger orders, for American boots and shoes were then in demand, but the execution of some of the United States manufacturers has not been quite in keeping with their flamboyant promises, so the market is a bit shy of Americans just now. Still this Canadian representative has secured a good footing, and in one or two cases his orders were much larger than could have been expected. The firm, like all other Canadians, is unknown here, and it is showing some faith on the part of Australians to buy a pig in a poke, for they have to pay for the goods before they can see them. The fact that Canada has a recognized representative here helps to secure orders, as his vouching for the character of the Canadian firm is often asked for and accepted. Messrs. Bell & Co. have laid the foundation of an export trade in boots and shoes that will grow.

The record, however, is in another direction. Mr. Godbolt came here a confirmed bachelor, but he is going home a benedict. He has seen, loved and won a winsome Tasmanian, all in a calendar month. Here is a new danger to susceptible Canadians. If any Canadian girl objects to this matrimonial business, it may be of some comfort to know that it is to some extent reciprocal, for it is not unknown that a Canadian girl has come to Sydney and found a husband.

The bicycle business, chiefly that of the United States manufacturers, has had a set-back. A number of agencies for American bicycles that opened with a big boom have closed with a bang—generally that of the auctioneer's hammer. Their machines have been too light and weak for this country. The Canadians in this line are moving along, though. The Wellandvale Company of St. Catharines, is opening a warehouse in this city. It will also handle carriage wheels, and, no doubt, axes and farm implements. The North American Bent Chair Co. of Owen Sound, has a representative and several car lots of goods on the way to open a furniture depot here. I think the courageous efforts of these companies will prove as successful as have the experiments of other Canadians who have given similar attempts a fair trial.

With these signs of development there comes the necessity for your correspondent to caution and complain. The caution is that as Canadians come into competition here there is a danger that they may fall into the very bad practice of abusing each other's goods. This is stupid. If all Canada came they would not secure all the trade of these colonies. It is very hurtful to belittle Canadian products, because one of the obstacles to be overcome here is the natural conception that Canada is a crude country with little manufacturing experience and, therefore, unable to make first-class goods. Nothing is so likely to confirm this notion as the misrepresentations of Canadians themselves. The sale of one good Canadian article always helps the sale of another. The heads of Canadian firms here recognize this, but some of the newcomers and understrappers do not observe it. Canadian houses should insist that while pushing their own goods, every employee shall be prevented from slandering any other Canadian product.

The complaints are the old ones of Canadian exporters being dilatory in letters and shipments, and paying too little attention to details. A firm had an agent here, who had done some business for them; they wanted to increase it, and the agent was willing to undertake it on suitable terms. The Canadian house answered that some one was coming out to do so, but the coming was postponed from month to month. The last ship brought neither representative nor letters, and the Sydney man closed with a United States house that has kept an offer open for his acceptance for some time. As he was an exceptionally good man, this is a loss to Canadian trade. By and by, no doubt, he will get a letter from Canada, apologizing for the delay in replying to his letters and hoping that it has not affected their relations! There are the old complaints of failure to send bills of lading or invoices with goods, to notify if goods are shipped to order, through what bank the draft has been made, or if sent via England or New York, by what line or ship they were sent. All these things are annoying, and some

of them are worse than that. If a consignee cannot produce his bill of lading, he can secure the delivery of his goods only upon giving a bank security for the full value.

In one shipment by last steamer it meant a deposit of three thousand dollars lying idle for perhaps three months. If this is not done the goods are put into a bonded warehouse, where the value is eaten up by costs, storage and charges. In another case a shipment came to an agent who was to remit for them in sixty days. There was no manifest, so he had to deposit the cost in a bank. Next he found the freight was forty per cent. more than he was led to expect it would be. His goods, therefore, cost him ten per cent. more than he anticipated, and the transaction will be a loss to him. I know of four cases of this sort. Primarily, no doubt, some Canadian bank or carrier was responsible for many of these neglects or overcharges, but manufacturers must see to it that every detail is properly attended to, by the right parties, that will ensure the correct delivery of the goods at this end. If they cannot do this then it is useless for them to attempt to do trade here. The most discouraging thing about the whole matter is that these blunders are frequently made by firms which have sent representatives out, and who ought to be well aware of the consequences that follow them.

United States firms have been pushing business here during the last year or two in order to regain trade that was lost in 1891 and 1892. Some of these efforts have been on conservative and safe lines, others have not. The latter class came to do business and they were bound to do it. They strove to get big prices, but they were going to sell anyway. They sold, but in the case of one Frisco firm which sold about half the trade done by the United States with this city, the unlucky shippers of the goods are now enquiring "where they come in." It is one thing to do business, and another to do it at some profit.

Colin MacArthur & Co., of Montreal, have been trying to induce Australians to buy Canadian wall paper. It was slow work through a commission house. Recently they sent out a good man and he has succeeded in his mission, for they have secured connections that ought to repay them for their enterprise. The designs and quality of the paper-hangings were always approved of, but special efforts were found necessary to overcome the prejudice against the narrow widths.

F. W.

Sydney, New South Wales, Sept. 13th, 1897.

#### THE GRAND TRUNK.

The report for the June half year presented by the directors of the Grand Trunk Railway Company at the meeting of shareholders in London, on the 14th inst., is very interesting. It bears throughout the mark of economy in administration and new methods. The economies have not been, however, of a degree or nature calculated materially to diminish the efficiency of the road. The outlay on the permanent roadway was £384,701, which was £14,196 more than in the corresponding period of 1896. The earnings of the Grand Trunk proper show an increase of £14,951 as compared with the first half of 1896. A striking feature of the report pointed out by the London *Economist* is that it reveals a smaller number of passengers carried, and a smaller volume of goods traffic, so that the increase in total revenue arises from more remunerative rates. Thus the average fare per passenger last half-year was 3s. 2d. against 2s. 11d. in 1896. In the same way the average freight receipt was 5s. 8½d. per ton, against 5s. 7½d. in 1896. Combined with these more remunerative rates there has been a reduction in the train mileage run of 594,073 miles, or nearly 7 per cent. The result of these combined influences is that the average sum received from each train mile run was 4s. 1.66d., against 3s. 9.95d., an increase of 8.07 per cent. The reduction in the train mileage run has assisted the company to save £36,132 in the locomotive department. What effect this may have upon the efficiency of the plant is uncertain, as a part of the saving was made through a diminished outlay on repairs. A reduction of £36,730 was made in traffic expenses. By these economies the ratio of expenses to gross receipts is thus reduced from 71.34 per cent. to 67.49 per cent. Adding this saving to the increase in gross receipts, the addition to the net profit of the Grand Trunk proper for the half-year has been £70,628. There are no important changes in the net revenue account, the principal one being an increase of nearly £7,000 in the interest paid on the 4 per cent. debenture stock, owing to an issue of £450,000 of that stock during the half-year.

The subsidiary lines have proved, as usual, a drain upon profits, the Chicago and Grand Trunk entailing a charge of £50,073, and the Detroit, Grand Haven and Milwaukee, £20,085. After meeting the charges imposed by subsidiary lines, the balance of net profit is reduced to only £2,709. This compares with a debit balance of £82,063, so that the net improvement is £84,771, compared with the first half of 1896. The report points out that the improvement during the year