

there were 19 shoddy mills in Canada, having a total capacity of 60 cards, 30 pickers, 6 garnett machines and 4 carbonizers. These do not include a small number of woolen mills, who have their own carbonizers and wool stock plants.

THE PEOPLE'S KNITTING SYNDICATE, LTD.

The Co-Operative Knitting Machine Co., formerly of Georgetown and later of Toronto, Ont., has for some years been doing business as dealers in knitting machines and yarns and knit goods. The methods of the company, as announced in one of their circulars, were to sell a hand knitting machine either for cash at \$15, or on the installment plan at \$20, and to supply to the buyer yarn to be knit and returned to the company, which sells the manufactured goods. These circulars state that "after long experimenting we have been able to produce an Automatic Machine by which all kinds of knitting is now done by a simple process." It is further stated "that the large export trade to the North-West Territories, B. Columbia, United States and the British Colonies furnishes an unlimited demand for our goods." The claim is made that a pair of socks can be knit in 30 minutes. The prices promised for knitting are: bicycle stockings, \$10 per hundred; woodman's socks, 5 cents per pair; motorman's mittens, 10 cents per pair.

In publishing this article we are anxious only to state the facts as they exist and we would be glad to hear from anyone who is in possession of any information to the credit of the Co-Operative Knitting Company, or of the People's Knitting Syndicate, Ltd., which is now carrying on the business.

A number of enquiries have reached us on this subject, and we are in receipt of the following letter, to which we should like to have the company's answer:

"In reference to Knitting Co. I enclose copy of Contract Order Form and will also give you an idea of how they fulfill it. When you order outfit and pay the required sum they forward machine at once with the work started as agreed and enough yarn to knit about one stocking. This is to be knit and returned as sample. Then they send by post enough yarn for another pair, these to be returned as samples for which they give no pay; these samples came about once in two weeks and sometimes more, not often less. After sending about six or eight of these samples, which lasts about three months, they tell you that the season is on for another class of goods and will send samples for them. They usually start with socks and then on children's toques and then bicycle hose or mitts, so that they keep their workers on samples for about ten months or a year before they give them any work that they pay them for. Then they start to send yarn enough to make about twelve to fifteen pair of socks or about fifteen to twenty toques at 5 cents which makes from 50cts. to \$1 worth, and then the workers have to pay 25 cents for express. If a person had all the work they could do they might make about 50 cents a day at the outside, but they never get enough yarn, as after every parcel has been returned they had to wait from 2 to 4 weeks for more yarn and after paying express on such small parcels there was not 50 cents a week for the workers. After sending work for about 3 or 4 months at this rate I know of two workers who received notice that they were going to move, that was last May, and as yet they have not received their pay for last work done and cannot get any answer to letters written. Should you want any witness to prove these statements I will be pleased to furnish them."

After some experience in Georgetown the Co-Operative Knitting Co. moved to Toronto, as is shown by this advertisement which appeared in the *Brantford Courier* a short time ago:

"Seven to ten dollars a week in leisure hours, anyone can do the work. We want reliable families in every locality to help us manufacture children's toques, gauntlets and bicycle leggings for the trade by a new process. No canvassing or experience required. Steady work, good pay, whole or spare time. Write to-day. Address, The Co-Operative Knitting Co., 15 Leader Lane, Toronto."

At the present time the newspapers of the Dominion are flooded with the advertisements of the People's Knitting Syndicate, Ltd. That is, the newspapers, with the exception of the dailies published in Toronto where the directors of the company reside, are so flooded. The following paragraph in some form or other usually appears in the paper with the first publication of the advertisement. This is from the *St. John Telegraph*, Dec. 30th:

"A concern that promises to have the hearty support of the public is the People's Knitting Syndicate of Toronto, Limited, stock in which to the value of \$100,000 is now offered for public subscription. It is the avowed object to oppose the large knitting combines, and to place its produce on the market at a cheaper price than the trusts can do, as well as to enable its shareholders to share in the profits of the syndicate, and to make money at their own homes. The plan of the syndicate is novel and engaging. To each subscriber for 20 \$1.00 shares in the syndicate, a knitting machine is given, and the members are then supplied with yarn to manufacture at his or her own home, such knitting goods as the syndicate requires. The syndicate promises cash payments for the knitting done by the shareholders, and also to divide among its members semi-annually, the net profits realized from the sale of goods made by the shareholders for the syndicate. The syndicate should have no difficulty in disposing of knitted goods, which are always in demand. The plan seems to be a good one, and is in the hands of well known Toronto gentlemen. It should be a great success."

Most of the advertisements contain a picture of a building which bears a large sign "The People's Knitting Syndicate, Ltd." and underneath the sign is the following statement: "The above cut shows the mill secured for manufacturing machines and yarn for the Syndicate." Though the building is situated on a street corner no street sign shows upon it, so it is presumably not in Toronto, and upon enquiry of the "trustee and transfer agent" of the company as stated in the advertisement we were informed that the company had as yet no mill, but was having the machines built under contract by a well-known machine builder, whose name, be it observed, does not appear on the machine.

Opposite the picture of the alleged factory in many of the advertisements there is printed a copy of a paragraph which appeared in the *Toronto Mail and Empire* on Dec. 8th, announcing the formation of a knitting mill trust. As no such trust has been formed it would seem hardly necessary to float the People's Knitting Syndicate, Ltd., in order to compete with it.

The character of the newspapers in which this advertisement has appeared is such as to inspire public confidence. People believe in things which are advertised in the best papers everywhere. This is especially true of the *Montreal Witness*, a paper which is known to sacrifice yearly many thousand dollars to the sense of duty and