

THE CANADIAN DRY GOODS REVIEW

Vol. II.

TORONTO, JUNE, 1892.

No. 6.

THE DRY GOODS REVIEW

THE ORGAN OF THE CANADIAN

Dry Goods, Hats, Caps and Furs, Millinery and Clothing Trades.

Published Monthly by

THE DRY GOODS REVIEW CO.,

Toronto.

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COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS AND ADVERTISING.

TIS an indispensable fact that travellers in many cases do not do justice to the samples they carry. It has often been remarked that a traveller will sell a great deal of one or two lines and only small quantities of other lines which ought to sell fully as well or perhaps better. The reason is close to hand. The traveller has such a multiplicity of samples that he cannot be expected to give fair and equal attention to all departments and lines. He cannot spread his affections so widely, and to sell goods properly a man must be deeply interested in the goods he handles. The consequence is that he has favorite lines and he pushes them, to the neglect of other lines. Travellers are a necessity, and a good traveller is a valuable adjunct to a business and an almost indispensable part. Of course there are businesses where travellers can be dispensed with, but this is only where there is one house with an almost monopoly of the line carried and where this line of goods is necessary to, or very strongly desired by the consumers. Where these two conditions meet; the house can do without travellers and rely entirely on advertising.

But this is not the case with the dry goods trade. Travellers are necessary, and this necessity increases as competition increases. Then the question arises, how are the evils of one man selling a large number of lines of varied classes of goods to persons who are anxious to do their buying in as little time as possible, to be remedied?

They cannot be eradicated entirely without a very great change in our distributive system. But they can be modified and lessened by judicious advertising. This must be done by placing carefully written advertisements in trade papers and newspapers which reach all the consumers. By this means lines of goods which travellers are found to neglect may have the attention of the trade drawn to them. This of course implies that the advertisements must have specific, not general statements, a fact which is too often overlooked. If special lines are pushed in this way, there is less danger of a wholesale house being left with a class of goods which would have sold readily, if special attention had been directed to them; and the retailer will be immensely benefitted by having his attention drawn to articles and lines which he might otherwise have not heard of, or hearing of not been drawn to think sufficiently of their suitability to his needs. The traveller will be relieved, because his customers will ask for these goods, and thus he will be relieved from the fear of neglecting them. He will be relieved in another way. Besides having less talking to do, the orders will often be sent to the house direct and thus relieve him. This may lessen his orders, but not necessarily, because he is able to devote his energy and his customer's interest to other classes of goods, and by the increased vigor he can put into his display of these goods, he can sell as great an amount in the total.

The advertising will be expensive, but all good plans are expensive, and it is better to spend a little and both increase the volume of the sales and prevent a loss by the aggregation in the warehouse of unsold goods. But the great benefit will be to the over-burdened, much-sampled salesman. Another difficulty which will be avoided will be the stocking up of all merchants in a town with the same class of goods due to the preference of the traveller for that class. This loading up of all the customers in one town with the same kind of goods has been a great evil in the past. By some method it should and must be avoided in the general interest of the trade. The cheapness of postage and printer's ink are the levers by which to remove this burden, and immense benefit will accrue to the traveller, the consumer and the wholesaler by a judicious use of them.

WOOLLEN GOODS.

Woollen goods, such as underwear and blankets, are being sold at prices which will benefit the fall purchaser. Prices are extremely easy, due mainly to the low price of wool, which is from 1½ to 2c. cheaper than last season. All-wool blankets which sold at the mills last year at 42½c. can be bought in equal quality at 37½ to 40c. This should mean that woollen goods will sell well next winter, because every indication points to the fact of low prices. Knit woollen underwear is about 25 cents per dozen cheaper than last season, averaging more than 25 cents in plain goods. Southdown wool blankets are selling at 55 to 60c. this season, whereas the same quality would have cost 60 to 65c. last season. The variety of underwear this season is a huge improvement on last season in point of softness and also in regard to finish, this is especially marked in the goods made by the Canadian mills.