

A subject receiving a good deal of attention just at present in the American press is "Cheap stationery and who uses it," and the generally expressed opinion is that it is not used by the lady or gentleman to the manner born. The stationer's department of the dry goods emporium is never visited by the best people. Stationery is one of the articles that it will not do to buy at the bargain counter if one wishes to stand well in good society. This is a point which the trade should note and mention. I may be a crank on the subject, but I have always made it a rule to critically observe the envelope and paper used by my correspondents, both business and social, and I not only observe, but likewise act upon the impressions received. Looking back over my decisions which were influenced by the stationery I am satisfied that I was right. Of course snobs and slatterns sometimes use stationery that is right and good, but you will generally find an earmark in the paper or the envelope or the fold that tells the character of the writer. A true lady is just as particular about her stationery as about her clothing, and so is the gentleman. Watch your correspondence for a little while and see if I am not right. Then when you find that it is so see that your customers buy the best.

HOW TO DISPLAY PAPER HANGINGS.

To make an effective display of paper hangings the modern dealer must possess some tact and ingenuity, if not actual artistic discernment. An exchange tells of the original method which has been adopted by a live Chicago dealer. He takes a full single roll of every paper in stock, divides it in two four yard lengths, and matches and pins these together, so that the pattern can be seen as well as if it were in its place on the wall. These samples are exhibited over brass rods which cross the room at even distances from side to side, and on other rods projecting from the side wall. Every foot of floor and wall surface is given up to them, and the full length of the room is utilized as far back as the last rod. On the floor in front and beneath each rod is a neutral coloured rug. This arrangement divides the room into three compartments, where papers are hanging in view. The compartments have their complements of furniture, to give a cosy look, with books and bric-a-brac enough to represent a home instead of a shop. No sloping show racks are used, for with them the full glitter of the material employed on the paper is reflected into the face of those who wish to judge of a pattern or colour effect, and papers so viewed bring disappointment after they are in place. Paper should be shown hanging straight down, as it will appear on the wall. This novel plan of exhibiting wall papers will be interesting to dealers, and is

not without its merits. It does away with the unsightly racks and their expose of the ends of the rolls. In fact, the stock can be stored in an apartment where space is less valuable, while it makes the best possible use of the salesroom.

A POPULAR FALLACY.

It is sometimes asked why, when two brands of the same class of goods are selling from the same counter, one marked double the price of the other, the more expensive grade finds a readier sale. Why doesn't everybody buy the cheaper grade? The natural answer to this is that the costlier is worth just so much more than its cheaper rival. Better materials or ingredients are used in its manufacture. People buy it because it will last just so much longer, or because it will render so much better service while it does last. This, then, is the theory. Because it costs more it is the better article.

But is this conclusion true?

Not by any means. Cost is not the only criterion to go by in judging of qualities. It is only fair to admit that the great majority of cheap articles are inferior to those selling at a higher price, but it is not always so. The manufacturers in many lines are smart enough to know that the public is not a good judge of quality. They argue that by tacking on a fancy price to their goods they will capture the better class of trade, and if their sales are somewhat smaller than they would otherwise be, the increased margin of profit more than equalizes matters. The trade have succeeded in educating the public up to the idea that buying an inferior grade of goods, simply because it is cheap, is false economy, and so, when the public rushes to the opposite extreme, the manufacturers are shrewd enough to take advantage of the tendency.

In conversation with a professional tea taster connected with a large tea importing house, he gave some inside facts which go to illustrate the saying that there are tricks in all trades. It is the custom with many grocers, he said, to obtain from the same box the different grades of tea which are sold at varying prices under various names. It is an old theory with P. T. Barnum that the public likes to be deceived, and the manufacturer or the retailer not unfrequently succeeds in turning this faculty to practical account.

To be a judge of quality in lines varying so widely in nature as those comprised within the stationery and fancy goods trades requires a more extensive experience and intimate knowledge of manufacturing processes than it is given to the average layman to acquire. And in the course of events it may transpire that the stationer who thinks he knows it all is not nearly so well posted as he imagines himself to be. The writer has heard a prominent manufacturer boast of the fact that very few of his customers were

capable of judging of those fine points which constitute quality and regulate the price of an article. —Stationer.

PARASITES OF THE BOOK TRADE.

Since we published, some weeks ago, the expose of Mr. J. L. Thurston's generous and general offer, at a salary of \$125 per month, "or more," of a "General Manager position" in "a publishing company of which Mr. Appleton is president," we have accumulated a number of similar circulars and proposals in written, type-written or printed letters which show a singular likeness to each other. One of these is "The Buyers Union," with which Mr. E. T. Loomis was connected, and which has received much gratuitous advertising in the daily press since Mr. Loomis' incarceration in the Tombs. Its circular was very ingeniously concocted, and was adorned with the elaborate illustrations of the composing room, press room, bindery, etc., intended to impress the distant observer with the enormous business it was doing or proposing to do. Another circular proceeds from the "Consolidated buyers' Jobbing Co.," which is possibly Mr. J. L. Thurston's organization, since the name of Mr. Nathan Appleton, "President of Boston Board of Trade and Commissioner of Panama Canal Co.," is given as president. This name will be recognized as that of a gentleman connected with the well-known Boston family of that name, a brother of Mr. Thos. G. Appleton, who has an unfortunate habit of lending an honoured name freely to various schemes not always of the highest credit. He is not one of the Appletons of the publishing house. Another affair of a similar character is the "Century Book and Paper Co.," of Chicago, which also has made generous offers of the "local business management" of its affairs to any number of gentlemen in various cities, who were expected to return a deposit for the privilege of representing the company at a large salary. The officers of this company, Frank L. Loomis, Howard G. Loomis and Edwin S. Jewell, have been indicted by the Chicago Grand Jury for conspiracy to defraud. How many more concerns of this kind there may be through the country, or whether these all are really various noms de guerre of the same sharpers, it is difficult to say. Curiously, several of them have happened on the same list of names to whom to send their similar offers, and so have opened the eyes of a good many would-be-victims.

All these concerns, it will be noted, purport to be connected with the book trade, which seems to be a particularly desirable field for this sort of quackery and fraud. —[Publishers' Weekly.]

J. Theo. Robinson's new books are, "A Modern Mephistopheles," by Louisa M. Alcott, and "Mr. and Mrs. Morton," by the author of "Silken Threads."