



### THE PATRONS OF INDUSTRY.

One of the most agreeable experiences in a man's life is when another man slaps him on the back and tells him that he is the best fellow in the world, the more so when he ought to know and does know very well that he is not one whit better than his neighbors but perhaps a great deal worse. There are some people who are peculiarly susceptible to this sort of flattery and if the report of a recent meeting at Richmond Hill, of the York County association of the Patrons of Industry, is correct, the farmers must take a front seat in this respect. A lecturer of the organization addressed them on that occasion in the most fulsome terms, telling them in effect that they were the salt of the earth, that their employment most resembled the employment of the Divine Being who gave to the earth its fertility, etc., etc., and so well pleased were his audience that they applauded him vigorously. Not only that but in the opinion of this man with the gift of the gab all other trades and professions were conspiring to crush the farmer under the iron heel of oppression and rob him of all his rights and privileges. Of course these poor, guileless, suffering farmers were not told of the many miserable tricks they play upon the country storekeeper or upon the unsuspecting consumer. That's not what these lecturers are paid for; they are paid to make the farmer swallow the most unmitigated rot and the stronger the dose the better they seem to like it. They appeal to the cupidity and well known selfishness of the farmer and in doing so make use of the grossest exaggerations and palpable absurdities. The lecturer we have reference to, maintained that "they (the farmers) were paying for their merchandise to-day about half more than they ought to pay. Let them analyse it. In the first place they had the manufacturer who in the majority of cases had to deal with two wholesale men. When he sold to the first he had certainly to put on a tariff to protect himself from loss. The first man in selling to the second had to put on a tariff for a similar reason. The second man had to be recouped for loss in dealing with the retailer, who in turn did the same to the consumer. But this was not all. There was the commercial traveler. Under the old credit system to-day, therefore, they were paying for at least four losses. Of the commercial traveler it might be said that perhaps he was a necessary evil. They found that these men were costing them from 8 to 15 per cent more for their merchandise. Besides their salaries, ranging from \$800 to \$1,500 per annum, there was their expenses and whiskey bill—no unimportant item. (Laughter.) And these travelers always stopped at the best hotel and got the best in the land. Could the farmer do that? No." Does this not demonstrate that this man is either grossly ignorant of ordinary business methods or that he wilfully makes use of misleading statements to inflame the minds of his hearers and rouse within them the demon of distrust and suspicion. It is not necessary to discuss his so-called tariff statements as every business man can see their absurdity, but we must protest most vigorously against his contemptible and slanderous charge against commercial travelers. In the face of temptations to which no other class of the community are subjected, we say unhesitatingly from personal knowledge, that as a body they are as temperate in their habits, if not more so, than any other class and we venture the opinion that there are numerically more strictly temperance men in their ranks than among the farming community. When such men as this lecturer finds it necessary, in order to bolster up his position, to cast aspersions upon a body of men, who have not the opportunity of defending themselves, it can only be characterized as an unmanly act and one shewing the weakness of the cause he represents. The Patrons of Industry may flourish for a brief period, but common sense will ultimately assert itself and the farmers will be forced to the belief that they are no better than other citizens of the State and must con-

duct their business on business principles. Their position is utterly untenable. Instead of being ground under the iron heel of oppression they are doing their level best to oppress and ruin tradesmen who will not enter into their unrighteous agreement. We know of storekeepers who have been glad to cancel their agreement with the patrons as they found they were losing the whole of their other customers. We have no desire to enter the prophetic line, but we are prepared to go so far as to prophesy that the organization of the Patrons of Industry will be short-lived and that those storekeepers, who are now reaping a temporary advantage from their custom, will yet have ample cause to curse the day on which they signed away their right to control their own business.

### A THRIVING INDUSTRY.

Three years ago Messrs. Newlands & Co., of Galt, Ont., started a new industry in the manufacture of imitation Buffalo robes. This was rendered necessary by the almost total extinction of the shaggy monarch of the prairie. While in Galt the other day we visited the establishment and were courteously shown through it by Mr. Warnock. The robes were seen in their various stages of manufacture, and no one could be otherwise than thoroughly convinced of their durability and imperviousness to wind or rain, so desirable in our North-West. One striking point in their favor is that the more they are exposed to storms the more they resemble the fur of the natural animal. This was borne out by one shewn to us which had been in constant use by a medical man for two seasons. Owing to the mild weather of the past two winters there has not been the demand for the robes which colder weather would have stirred up, but the manufacturers say they have no reason to complain and that they have every faith in the pronounced success of their industry. Since starting, the firm have branched into other lines and are now manufacturing wolf-grey imitation robes, which they claim are more pliable than the real article, and imitation Buffalo and dogskin coats which are first class goods and should become very popular wherever warmth and comfort are desired. They have made a great success in their Jersey cloths for children's wraps, etc., and in their glove linings. Their latest venture is the manufacture of imitation lambskin and they have already brought it to such perfection that glove men say the problem, which has so long bothered them, has at last been solved.

### THE KNIT GOODS TRADE.

Manufacturers of knit goods report that the volume of business this year has been on the whole very good, but that prices have been cut to a very fine point. The profit to the manufacturer has therefore not been nearly what was anticipated. Although the demand for domestic goods keeps steadily increasing there is still great scope for improvement in this respect. Certain manufacturers turn out certain lines which they can place to advantage, but that of itself is not sufficient to keep them busy throughout the year, consequently many mills are forced to lie idle for some months of the year at considerable loss, which makes a heavy inroad upon the legitimate profits. There is a point that we think deserves serious consideration by the manufacturers, and that is some distinctive trade mark whereby their goods would be known not only by the trade but by the consumer. One manufacturer may turn out a much superior article than his neighbor, but he derives no practical advantage therefrom owing to the fact that it is sold across the counter without the consumers being in a position to ask again for the same make if it pleases them. A distinctive trade mark would obviate this, and we know from enquiries and personal observation that it would pay some manufacturers well to introduce it.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

We solicit letters from our readers on business topics. A practical merchant's views are always of great value to others in the same business, and we should be pleased to have our paper made the medium of exchanging such opinions and experiences.