

# THE TRADER.

TORONTO, ONTARIO, DEC., 1880.

Distributed free to every Jeweler and Hardware Merchant in Canada.

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Full Page, - - -	\$20 00	each issue.
Half Page, - - -	12 00	"
Quarter Page, - - -	8 00	"
Small Advertisements, 8 cents per line.		

A Discount of 25 per cent. will be allowed from the above rates for yearly contracts. All advertisements payable monthly.

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THE TRADER PUBLISHING CO.,  
Box 1325, Toronto, Ont.

## THE CHRISTMAS TRADE.

The "Christmas Trade" has, of late years, become such an established fact, that it is now confidently looked forward to for a certain amount of business, and, as a rule, the result equals the expectations. The giving of Christmas presents is becoming annually more a matter of fashion, and while the custom is highly commendable in itself as being indicative of affection, it is no less so as being a very strong factor in the yearly balance-sheet of many kinds of business. To the Hardware trade, it brings an increased demand for Sleds, Skates, and household articles fitted for presents, and makes business in that department seem specially brisk while it lasts. To the jeweler and fancy goods dealer, it is harvest time, and if they fail properly to take advantage of the opportunity, they will have to wait until the same season comes again before they can hope to do an equal amount of business in the same period of time. In "That season of innocent mirth, when a glory ineffable rests on the earth," not only do men's hearts seem to be opened, but their purse strings seem to be similarly affected, and they determinedly and composedly spend their money upon trifles that would make them hesitate and calculate at any other period of the year.

As we said before, it is well that it is so, and we trust, for the sake of trade if not for any higher object, that the custom will never die out.

The shrewd business man is always ready to take advantage of this fashion or custom, whichever it may be called, and he gets his stock into as good shape as possible in order to be equal to the

expected demand. Other things being equal, as a rule, people buy where they get the best assortment to select from, and the best value for their money, and it is for these reasons that it is imperative upon dealers who desire to do a good paying Christmas trade to have their goods carefully selected and in stock in plenty of time to anticipate the rush. Our experience is that the dilatory or procrastinating merchant loses more than he gains by being short of stock on such an important occasion, and the truth of the old proverb is fully attested, that "There is that which scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that which withholdeth more than is meet and it tendeth to poverty."

From the present indications it would seem as if the coming Xmas trade will be more than usually lively. From every direction we hear of good sales being effected, money coming in more freely, and fair prospects ahead. For these reasons we would say to our friends throughout the country, you will consult your own best interests by ordering early and carefully, and erring on the side of liberality rather than that of overcarefulness.

To one and all of our readers we wish a successful and prosperous Xmas trade, and when we come in our next number to wish them a happy New Year, we trust that they will be able to look back upon the year 1880, not only as the most prosperous of their lives but as the precursor of good years to come.

## A COMPETITOR TO THE GRAND TRUNK.

Probably no road on this continent is so much afraid of opposition as the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada. Its scent for opposition roads is as keen as that of the warhorse for the battle, and is always on the alert to buy up opposition roads, or fight those who cannot be thus treated. It is the grand railroad bully of Canada, and like the proverbial donnybrook fair Irishman is ever wanting some rival corporation to tread upon the tail of its official coat. Its treatment of the Credit Valley Road has been simply tyrannical impertinence, and it is only because it has friends at court that it attempts to play such pranks in a country like Canada. Its opposition to the scheme for bridging the St. Lawrence has been so fully ex-

posed by the general newspapers, that we need say nothing more about that little game, further than that it was a disgrace to any country. In fact in the continual fights this road has with other lines, we are reminded of the soldier who was being flogged; the man who plied the lash could never suit him as to place, for the blows were either too high up, or too low down. It opposed the St. Lawrence Bridge scheme on the ground that its construction would interfere with navigation, and it gave as a reason for opposing the Credit Valley Road that it was unjust to their vested interest to subsidize an opposition line. Their latest scare seems to be the "Toronto and Ottawa Railway," which proposes to run from Toronto to Montreal via Ottawa.

That this railway is badly needed, there cannot be the slightest doubt, for from present appearances the Grand Trunk is totally unable to carry the freight that is forced to take that route in order to reach the seaboard.

But, in its usual dog and manger style, it will do all it possibly can to stop the new road, and, if it cannot crush the scheme, will probably try and buy it up. Indeed the latter idea is freely talked of in the Montreal papers already, but we trust that Mr. Wm. Gooderham, who controls the projected road, will keep it independent of its huge and overgrown rival. The Grand Trunk Railroad has never done justice to the requirements of Toronto; indeed it has carefully discriminated against us in favor of Montreal. We are continually told by merchants in London and the west, that they get freights from Montreal as cheap as from Toronto by the G.T.R. That is, that the Grand Trunk carry freight for Montreal merchants 383 miles for nothing. When a Toronto merchant has to get goods from Montreal, this time of year, it costs him 50 cents per 100 lbs., and often takes from twelve to fourteen days to accomplish the journey by their so called "Express Freight!" Surely such a term is a misnomer, or is intended by the company as a huge pun. "Express Freight," which, under favorable circumstances, makes fully 25 miles a day, is pretty nearly as good a thing, in its way, as Mark Twain's "Avalanche Express;" the latter, although slower, had, however, a decided advantage in its freight and passenger rates, which were free. We are certain that if ever Mark Twain