

more than offset by brisker business elsewhere. Trade is excellent in Great Britain, where the large navy expenditures are likely to keep things booming for a long time; the same reports are given of France and Germany, and the outlying parts of the world also contribute their share to the volume of trade. It was expected by the Americans themselves, and by others too, that a lessened American demand would injuriously affect foreign manufacturing centres. But this has not proved so. Prices are being maintained and while no one looks for the enormous advances of 1895 there is no talk anywhere of demoralization. "You needn't expect," said a buyer to THE REVIEW on his return April 25th, "to see the starvation prices of 1894 for a long time, if ever."

HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS.

Written for THE REVIEW

"OH, here's the express, it's my silk blouse from Toronto, Mary, run to the door."

It was an express parcel from the departmental store of Beatum and Push addressed to

MRS. MAJORIBANKS,
The Eagle Nest,
BARNABY BRIDGE, ONT.

"Oh, isn't it lovely," cried Mary, Mrs. Majorbanks maid of all work, as the blouse was opened out and tried on. It was a light shot silk Nile green affair, ordered specially for a swell party, invitations for which were already out.

Mary was so infatuated with her mistress' blouse that she did a very foolish thing. She sent her last two months' wages down to a sister in Toronto and requested her to buy her a blouse identically the same as her mistress had got.

The evening of the party arrived; so did a house full of guests. Several women were hired to wait on table—and Mary—where was Mary? At last she appeared in the dining room magnificently arrayed in her Nile green balloon-sleeved blouse. Mrs. Majorbanks nearly fell from her chair. Her eyes flashed; her face flushed; she was really angry. Following the girl out to the kitchen she said:

"Mary, where in the world did you get that waist?"

"My sister got it for me same place as you got yours, mem."

"Are you aware it is the same as mine?"

"Yes, I told her to be particular and get one the same as yours. I thought it would be a pleasant surprise to you for me to have one like yours."

"Well, it is a surprise, that's a fact; I don't know whether you or your sister is the biggest fool. Now, you either take that off or I must take mine off."

"Well, mine is bought and paid for, and I'm going to wear it. You can do as you please about yours."

Mary wore hers—in the kitchen. She was forbidden to enter the dining room again. Next morning she packed her "pleasant surprise" carefully in her trunk and left a sadder but a wiser girl.

TOM SWAIWELL.

THE QUESTION OF RETURNING GOODS.

To the Editor DRY GOODS REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Readers of your excellent paper who are in the retail dry goods business must be somewhat wearied with your oft-repeated admonitions on the subject of returning goods, without giving us a word on the other side of the question, viz., wholesale houses substituting and duplicating. We do not claim that the latter is a very prevalent practice, but there is enough of it to cause a great deal of annoyance to those in the retail trade. A case in point we were adjusting when we picked up the last edition of your paper, and, as the quickest way to prove our contention, we will give a synopsis of the case in point. The invoice had eighteen entries, as follows:

- No. 1 Correct.
- " 2—Goods substituted.
- " 3—Goods sent before.
- " 4—Correct.
- " 5—Ditto.
- " 6—Goods sent before.
- " 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12—Goods sent in wrong sizes.
- " 13—Price not correct.
- " 14—Ditto ditto.
- " 15—Goods sent before.
- " 16—Prices wrong.
- " 17—Correct.
- " 18—Ditto.

Thus, out of the 18 items on the invoice five were correct, and the others either wrong in price or sizes—or the goods had been previously sent. The total amount of invoice was \$150, and goods to the amount of some \$15 only was in accordance with the order given. This is by no means an isolated case, though extreme in the number of errors, and you will be quite willing I am sure to admit that it called for doing, what you have so often decried, viz., return goods. The matter of deciding as to whether goods are according to order or not cannot be left to memory, and the only safeguard is for merchants to take their own "copy" in a book kept for that purpose, and give a sufficiently minute description of the goods as they are ordered to prevent any possibility of doubt when they come in as to whether they are correct or not.

There is another subject that urgently demands the attention of both the wholesale and retail trade, which we will merely mention and leave for some one else to enlarge upon; that is, indiscriminate compromises. By all means give everyone who is trying to do a legitimate business every chance, but we question very seriously if it is legitimate for merchants to sell goods at 50 or 75c. on the dollar for a year or two, then compromise with their creditors at 50c. on the dollar, and celebrate the event by slaughtering goods at ridiculous prices, interfering to a large extent with ordinary trade. We can call to mind at least four large dry goods concerns within a radius of 25 miles, which could almost be termed annual compromisers, and they come up smiling after each one, and flood the surrounding communities with their circulars of cheap goods, secured by favor of their wholesale friends at not usually more than 50c. on the dollar.

Yours truly,

A. W. CRESSMAN

Norwich, April 10, 1896.

Mr. F. E. Kaley, of the Morse & Kaley Mfg. Co., Millford, N.H., took a trip through Canada last week, stopping at Montreal and Toronto on the way west to Chicago. Mr. Kaley, who is a typical up-to-date American business man, speaks hopefully of the trade outlook in the States. Mr. Kaley was accompanied to Toronto by Mr. R. Henderson, the Canadian representative of the company.