

bloom—in its most full-fledged development. All ken and cunning is here based upon antique traditions, and the good old customs of the grandfathers and fathers of the trade are sacredly adhered to by the successor. Every one of the latter possesses a chip of the philosopher's stone, and the divers trade secrets are guarded by them with a jealous care that seeks its equal. The endeavor to propagate among them our trade publications, advancements and improvements simply provokes a commiserating shrug of the shoulder; of course, they understand the thing much better; no one would publish a method or process really worth anything; they, of course, would not think of writing Excelsior's "Hints on Watch Repairing," or McGee's "Handbook to Goldsmiths;" these are merely abnormal idiots; they opine that if one were reduced to the strait of acquiring anything useful from a trade publication the art would indeed be a fit subject for commiseration; no trade publication can teach them anything.

Against such minds even the gods battle in vain. It would be "love's labor lost" to attempt their conversion, and it is no wonder if such obtuseness and obstinacy, when compelled to battle with intelligent competition, is crowded to the wall after a little struggle.

Happily, death is decimating their numbers. The younger crop of workmen is already more imbued with the spirit of the age, and less wedded to antiquated prejudices.

This, the close of the nineteenth century, does not longer admit of trade secrets and musty old traditions.

Obituary.

GEORGES-AUGUSTE LESCHOT.

It becomes our sad duty to chronicle the death of one of the most eminent horologists of Switzerland, Georges-Auguste Leschot, who departed this life at Geneva, Switzerland, on February 4, 1884, at the ripe age of 84 years. He was justly celebrated in his own country as an able mechanic and inventor, and one whose name will for all time to come be illustrious as one of the chief promoters of the progress of Geneva watchmaking during the first half of this century.

His appreciation of the excellency of the anchor escapement led him, in 1825, to so highly perfect it that from thenceforward it has been adopted as the leading movement of watches. He invented and constructed a series of watch machinery for the world-renowned horological firm of Vacheron et Constantin, for which he received the gold medal of the value of 600 francs, being the prize established by Prof. Auguste de la Rive.

In 1851, Georges-Auguste Leschot was elected a member of the Swiss Société des Arts.

In 1833 he discovered various marks of tools on a very hard piece of antique Egyptian porphyry, and knowing that they could not have been made by a steel tool, he was led to infer that diamond tools must have been used by the ancient Egyptians. His attention was re-directed to the subject in 1862, in answer to an inquiry as to what tools would be suited best for cutting the extremely hard rocks in tunnels, and he then invented and perfected the diamond drill which has been used so successfully in boring tunnels both in America, and, in fact, all over the world.

His two sons died several years ago, and he had the further great misfortune of losing his life companion a few years ago, after which life possessed no further charms for him, and the gnarled trunk bowed before and finally submitted to the storm of time, mourned by his compatriots as well as by all other nations, because genius, though born in a certain country, pertains to every clime and nation.

We most sincerely regret the loss which the horological interest of Switzerland has sustained in his death.

JOHN W. KING.

Col. John W. King, a well-known jeweler of Jacksonville, Ills., died at his residence in that city March 4. For several years the deceased had suffered from an acute inflammation in the inner ear which developed into an abscess of so painful a character that death was welcomed as a release from his earthly sufferings. The deceased was born in Westfield, Mass., and at the time of his death was in the 49th year of his age. He leaves a wife and one child and a host of friends who sympathize with the bereaved ones in their affliction. The deceased was one of the early members of the Jewelers' League.

Size of Spectacle Glasses.

THE QUESTION is frequently asked by spectacle wearers, especially older people, whether spectacles with large glasses are not better than those with small ones. There is but one advantage in having large glasses, and that is when the spectacle frame does not fit the face and the center of the lenses do not come opposite to the pupil of the eyes. Three-quarters of one inch is plenty large enough when set in frames that cause the center of the lens to come opposite the pupil, for the following reasons: In the first place the glasses being small they can be much thinner—a very decided advantage; secondly, only about one-quarter of an inch of glass can be used, because we cannot see distinctly through a glass except we look straight through and not obliquely, hence all spectacles and eye-glasses should be worn at the same angle that we generally hold the print or the paper that we are reading or writing upon; thirdly, a great many back rays of light passing over our shoulder on the glasses, are sent back into the eyes and never pass through the glass, which fact can be illustrated by having all of the lens that we do not use ground gray and not polished, then we will find that we see clearer and sharper through the same lens because there are fewer rays reflected from the polished surfaces of the glasses into the eyes. The great objection to these glasses are that they do not look quite so nice and they are more difficult to keep clean.

A great many spectacle lenses have their edges polished; it adds to the beauty but detracts from their usefulness. Many more reasons might be cited why large glasses are not good, but sufficient have been given to show the advantages of small glasses. The very pertinent question might be asked: What is the use of putting glasses on a man's forehead or cheek—the places where a great portion of the large glasses go. A great many frameless spectacles and eye-glasses are now worn and are very neat and clean. They can be washed with brush, soap and water, but the edges of the glasses should never be polished.

HEREDITARY SHORT-SIGHTEDNESS.—Dr. Coba has, in a recent number of the *Gesundheit*, summarized various statistics on the question of hereditary short-sightedness, which have, from time to time, been collected by Erisman, Scheidling, Pflüger and other authorities on the subject. The researches of the last named writer resulted in the following facts being elucidated as to the percentage of short-sighted pupils: Public schools, without predisposition, 8 per cent.; with predisposition, 19 per cent. Higher schools, without predisposition, 17 per cent.; with predisposition, 26 per cent. The difference of about 10 per cent. in favor of those children without an hereditary predisposition to short-sightedness is, according to Pflüger's opinion, a reliable basis of argument. At the same time he asserts that this relatively low figure is arrived at after the necessary elimination of those cases where the predisposition has remained latent, and where it is of such a nature as only to become the source of ocular affection under circumstances of an unfavorable character.



THE JEWELERS' CIRCULAR AND HOROLOGICAL REVIEW

The recognized organ of the Trade, and the official representative of the Jewelers' League.

A Monthly Journal devoted to the interests of Watchmakers, Jewelers, Silversmiths, Electro-plate Manufacturers, and those engaged in the kindred branches of art industry.

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The Prospects of Trade.

WE HAVE noticed recently in the daily papers interviews with prominent business men, both of the east and west, relative to the business outlook for the coming season. With one accord the persons interviewed have predicted a prosperous year in all lines of trade, and give as reasons for the faith that is in them the promise of abundant crops and the abundance of money in the country. While we are willing to admit that the crop prospect is as good as ever they are at this season of the year, and that the banks have more money in hand than they know what to do with, we cannot agree that the outlook for business is particularly promising. We anticipate simply a fair, moderate, steady-going trade, with but little fluctuation, scarcely exceeding in amount the trade of the last two years. The fact is not generally appreciated that during the past two or three years the country has been in a state of liquidation, getting rid of its excess of values, and bringing business down to a bed rock basis. As a matter of fact there has been a shrinkage in market values during this period that exceeded the shrinkage that took place during the panic of 1873. Then the shrinkage came suddenly causing a crash and a collapse; now the liquidation is going on quietly, slowly and evenly, affecting all classes of property equally and consequently has not been felt as it was in 1873, and has not resulted in disaster. The water is being squeezed out of all enterprises, speculative and otherwise, and business is based on intrinsic rather than fictitious values. Instead of producing a panic and carrying down to universal ruin business houses without number, this process of liquidation has made dull times, and all lines of business have felt its effects. Men have not had the confidence to engage in great undertakings; manufacturers have not been active; speculators have not seen their way to making investments; and the money that should have been diffused throughout the country has accumulated in the banks where it lies idle, and cannot be loaned

satisfactorily at any price. Some of the trust companies and banks have been so burdened with the money of their depositors that they have notified them that they would pay no interest whatever and would prefer to have them remove it. It is no wonder, therefore, that business has been dull, and we must expect it will continue to be so just so long as business men lack confidence in the future, and see no indications of the dawn of coming prosperity.

While this has been the condition of general business during the past two or three years, the jewelry trade has cause for rejoicing that it has passed through this season of liquidation with so little of disaster. There have been fewer failures in the trade during the past year than in almost any other line of business, an indication that dealers generally have had less indebtedness than usual to provide for, and that they have endeavored to cut their suits according to their cloth—that is, have bought goods as they needed them rather than overstock themselves in the spring and fall rushes. They have followed the advice so often repeated by THE CIRCULAR, and bought according to the demand instead of piling up goods promiscuously and waiting for the demand to grow. Of the failures of the year, but one or two were of sufficient magnitude to cause apprehension, while the number of small ones was less than usual. The introduction by retail dealers of kindred goods to diversify their stock and keep up their sales has served to tide many of them over the shallow places and bring them safely into port. It has also enabled them to reclaim some of the trade that had drifted away from them and into the hands of outsiders. By judicious treatment this trade can all be won back to the legitimate dealers in the course of a few years.

The business men who have been interviewed sanguinely predict a "booming" spring trade; we do not so read the signs of the times; on the contrary, there are many reasons that combine to make us apprehend a dull spring trade, with a prospect of a gradual improvement toward the fall. The process of liquidation we have alluded to has left business men without confidence to undertake extended enterprises in any field of action; the winter has been a remarkably severe one in the west and south especially; these sections have also been visited by floods, cyclones and mud blockades, and all industries have suffered in consequence. Add to this the actual loss of property entailed by these several disasters, and it is not surprising that the dealers in those sections are somewhat discouraged, and are unable to see where they are to find a market for their goods. As a consequence they will buy lightly at this season, trusting to the facilities afforded them for ordering what they want from time to time as circumstances require. This is certainly the part of wisdom, and the trade would be a gainer if it were more generally followed at all seasons. Another thing that tends to depress trade of all kinds is the constant menace held out by Congress that it is going to tinker with the tariff. It is not so much what is done, but what is threatened in this direction that operates to deter business enterprise. Men cannot afford to take the chances of buying foreign goods and paying the present duties on them when Congress is constantly threatening to take off the duties or to lower them. This