



THE AMERICAN DRUMMER ABROAD



(Special Correspondence of the Deseret News by Frank G. Carpenter.)



Photographed for the "News."

AMERICAN WIND MILL PUMPS NEEDED.

HAMBURG, Germany.—Uncle Sam is the best manufacturer and the poorest salesman on earth. He knows how to do business at home, but he tags along at the tail of the procession in his business methods abroad. He makes great sales because his goods are better than

any others, but his trade is conducted in a slovenly manner and it might be increased a hundred fold. Nevertheless, it astonishes the nations. We are now selling a billion dollars' worth of goods every year in Europe, and our total foreign sales amount to something like three millions a day. Our profits are about a million dollars a day, and we

How Our Commercial Travelers Should Work the Great Countries of Europe—The Fields of Russia and Siberia—Along the Mediterranean—How to Sell Goods in Spain and Portugal—Our Invasion of Italy And What Americans are Doing There—The Italian as a Customer—Among the Greeks—How to Drum Turkey and the Countries of the Danube.

might do twice as much and make double the money.

EDUCATED DRUMMERS NEEDED.

What we need is live men on the road. We want Simon-pure Americans, who are educated for the trade. We should copy the Germans. They send their salesmen abroad to study the languages and countries where they are to work. They study the people and make and pack their goods to suit them.

I have just come from Russia. The Germans are doing more business there than any other nation. I met their salesmen on every train and found their commercial agencies in every city. The most of my interpreting was done through Germans who spoke Russian. I found that nearly every man had a large acquaintance and that he knew the standing of the different merchants. Several of them told me they had set aside the Russian trade for their life work, and that they expected to stay with it until they had made their fortunes. Some of these men are also handling American goods, but they always put the German goods first. It is one word for the United States and two words for Germany, and as a result the American product has to be by far the better to make a sale.

OUR SALESMEN IN RUSSIA.

Indeed there is not a better field in Europe than Russia for the American drummer. The market there is beyond conception, enormous. Its imports are close to a million dollars a day, and Russia is in the infancy of its development. The wants of the people are like ours, and our goods please them better than any others. They are our friends, and they would rather deal with Americans than Germans, English or French.

Any bright young American with good commercial instincts can go to Russia and make a successful life business of handling American goods. He will have to learn the language and study the market and try to supply it. He might get a chance at the government business, which alone would give him a respectable income, and he could build up a trade which will net him a fortune. There is room for scores of our young men there, and especially in the Asiatic provinces.

I met a number of American salesmen in Russia. The most of them were handling reapers and mowers, thrashers and heavy farm tools. The opening there for such machines is enormous. The Russian empire is the greatest farm upon earth, and is now a century behind the times. Steam plows, steam threshers and steam engines of all kinds can be sold there. There is a big opening for American pumps, windmills and gasoline engines. Heavy plows are needed, for the country is now only scratched, and where deep plowing is done there is little danger of drought. Our goods are popular and the drummer who speaks Russian will have no trouble in making sales.

THE YANKEE IN SIBERIA.

Another important field is Siberia. That country is bigger than all Europe, and the southern part of it compares with our wheat lands of the northwest. It is rapidly settling and the openings for American goods are very great. I have told of Enoch Emory, the Cape Cod boy, who made a million dollars in working the territory in the past. He tells me the opportunities for building up a business in Siberia are enormous. The Germans are attempting it and succeeding. They have big houses at Vladivostok, Irkutsk and other places, and there is one German firm which

has 18 branches selling everything, from a needle to a thrashing machine, and from a seditiz powder to a steam engine. American machinery is already well known in Siberia. Many of the locomotives on the railroad came from the United States, some of the biggest bridges were built by Americans and the people favor American trade.

HOW TO WORK THE FIELD.

The man who goes there must study German and Russian. He must make his own acquaintances and learn the standing of the merchants. He should have catalogues and price lists in the Russian language, using Russian money, weights and measures, and, if possible, he should carry a stock of goods with him, having a warehouse or supply point here and there along the Trans-Siberian railroad. I am told that goods will bring 25 per cent more if they can be delivered at the time they are sold. The Siberian Russians like to see the goods before they buy them and to carry them away when purchased.

Much of the Siberian business is done upon credit, but the people are sound financially, as they are in any other country, and they pay their notes, not objecting to a good round interest. At present the demand there is for agricultural implements and farm tools. There is also an opening for all kinds of milling and mining machinery. The government owns vast tracts, and its orders for foreign tools are large. The commercial traveler will also have a chance to work among the villages, many of which own lands in common, buying their machinery at wholesale. In such trades the Americans are made to the head men of the villages, and the drummer should be something of a diplomat and a good mixer.

SOUTHERN EUROPE.

During the past year I have been traveling chiefly in northern Europe along the tracks of our commercial invasion. I am told that our sales are increasing in southern Europe as well, and that there is a big field there for the American drummer. We are already sending something like \$30,000,000 worth of stuff every year to Austria-Hungary. The American reaper and mower is now cutting the wheat along the Danube; our flour milling machinery is used in Budapest, the Minneapolis of Europe; and Vienna is importing so much American food that the home manufacturers are trying to prevent them coming in. It is the same with American leather and the American automobile. The mechanics having risen up in arms against our footwear, indeed, no country in Europe is so opposed to American products as Austria. Nevertheless, the government has recently placed contracts for American machinery to be used in its public improvements to the amount of \$100,000,000.

IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

I met the other day a man who had just come from Barcelona, Spain. He says that city has American street cars, but they have painted out the names of the American makers and put Spanish names in their places. He says that Spain is using American goods under foreign labels, and that the market is now open to American importations. Spain has a foreign trade of about \$225,000,000 a year, and a large share of this should come to us. This is especially so, as by the acquisition of the Philippines and Porto Rico we have become to a certain extent Spanish, and are fast acquiring Spanish speaking

commercial travelers. Our drummers who go to Spain should be able to speak the language. They should carry a full line of samples and should expect to do their business by talking rather than by letters and catalogues. The Spaniard reads little, but he likes to talk, and is always ready to look at goods. Theoretically the commercial traveler is expected to pay a tax in Spain, but he seldom does so.

There is also a good opening in Portugal, but the drummer who goes there must call on the governor of the first port at which he stops and get a residence permit. This will cost him \$2, and if he establishes himself for general business he will have to pay a tax of from \$150 to \$250 per annum.

OUR INVASION OF ITALY.

The American drummer will have little trouble in Italy if he speaks French or Italian, or even Spanish. He will find a wide-awake country and one that is doing an enormous amount of farming, mining and manufacturing. Italy is three times as big as Indiana and its population is more than one-third that of the United States. It is a country of wealth, notwithstanding the many statements that it is poor. Its foreign trade amounts to more than half a billion dollars a year, and it buys almost \$300,000,000 worth of goods annually, one-tenth of its purchases being from the United States. We send Italy farm machinery, farm tools, food products and raw materials in the shape of cotton and other things. The country has two million spindles in its cotton mills, and they turn out a product of \$60,000,000 a year. There are 80,000 hands employed in these cotton factories and 20,000 hands in the woolen mills. A large business is done in iron and steel and also in silk and flour.

At present the branches of our trade which are selling most are those dealing in heavy farm machinery. Italy has something like fifty million acres of farms, and although parts of the country, like the plains of Lombardy, are well cut up by railway lines and irrigating ditches, our hay rakes and reapers and mowers can be used. The McCormicks, the Deeringes and a number of other harvester companies have their agents on the ground, and they tell me their trade is increasing. There is considerable business done in electrical machinery by the General Electric company and the Westinghouse company. Many of the towns already have electric railroads and electric lights, and telephones are being put in almost everywhere.

There is an American in Florence who is making cables for acetylene gas and there are American importers in Milan and Genoa.

I am told that it would pay well to own American warehouses in Genoa and Milan. Genoa has direct connection with the United States and it is to a large extent the commercial center of Italy. It has one of the best harbors of the Mediterranean sea, having spent something like \$20,000,000 during the present generation on harbor improvements. This is to be still further increased by a breakwater which will cost about \$6,000,000. I understand that American contractors have offered to undertake the job, and to accept bonds in payment therefor.

Milan has something like 500,000 people. It is the center of trade for the Lombardy plains and is a splendid place for the sale of farming tools and farm machinery. It has many factories and its wholesale houses have connection with every part of Italy. A warehouse here could show its goods to people from all parts of the country, and

farm tools and farming machinery. In return we annually import from them from 15,000 to 20,000 tons of seedless raisins, known as Zante currants.

The Balkan states of Serbia, Bulgaria and Roumania are all using more or less American goods. Their total trade, however, is small, and it will not pay our commercial travelers to work the territory. It can be managed by the agencies at Budapest, or from Constantinople or Odessa, if Americans want correspondents and agents at those places. The countries are very backward, and sooner or later they are bound to use our farm tools and our heavy farm machinery.

Speaking of American warehouses abroad one has recently been opened in Constantinople. It is known as the American Oriental Agency and it handles goods on commission. It shows the goods in its warehouse, and when sold it pays the American exporter for its sales. This warehouse has all sorts of agricultural machinery and farm tools. It is handling wind mills, pumps, lamps, jewelry and stationery supplies, as well as sewing machines, typewriters, clocks and watches, and American notions.

Turkey is now buying considerable hardware of the United States. Five hundred agricultural machines were sold there last year. New openings are coming up as to railroad materials, although the supplies for the concession recently granted for a road from Constantinople to the Persian gulf will probably come from Germany. There are also openings in Asiatic Turkey, Palestine and Egypt, but these I will refer to in my next letter, which will describe a trip around the world with the American drummer.

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