

THE RETAIL SYNDICATE.

**D**URING the past week a movement has been going on whereby the retail syndicate of this Province is seeking to force certain arrangements on Toronto wholesalers which the latter regard as inconsistent with the dignity of their business.

This retail syndicate includes such firms as Messrs. Crompton, Appleby & Co., Woodstock; John White, Brantford; Bartlett & McDonald, Windsor; Geddes Bros., Strathroy; Pratt & Watkins, Hamilton; Hall, Gilchrist & Co., Peterborough; G. B. Ryan, Guelph; A. Bristol & Son, Kingston; Geo. Ritchie & Co., Belleville, and Dundas & Flavelle Bros., Lindsay. Perhaps about fifteen firms are included altogether. These men have combined to import together and thus secure a better price than if they imported separately. They also purchase their Canadian goods through a local jobber who does their work on commission. Thus they hope to save the middleman's profits and turn them into their own coffers.

For a considerable length of time they have viewed with envy the big city retailer who would go into a Toronto or Montreal wholesale house at the end of the season and clean out the balance of a stock of dress goods, of silks, of embroideries, etc., at a very low price. They have taken steps which they hope will enable them to secure part at least of these bargains.

The wholesalers talk rather disdainfully of the move, and argue that these men do not buy from them regularly, hence they have no right to expect snaps at the end of the season. They declare that if they have snaps they will give them to their customers who buy regularly from them and do no importing.

It will thus be seen that the wholesalers have the theory of their business down fine. But their practice does not run

parallel with their theory. If they find themselves loaded up to the end of the season they are willing to sell to any man whether he represents an Eaton, a Cousineau or a Syndicate. They are going to sell to the man who will give them the most and who will handle the largest quantity. Then they will try to hush the matter up so that their customers, who are not on hand, will not hear of it.

The syndicate, while it may have some redeeming features, will fall to pieces in the ordinary course of events. Its methods are too crude and competition is too keen.

WAGES REDUCED.

Wages in all the cotton factories in Canada under the control of the two big companies have cut wages 10 per cent. This is the way they have of maintaining profits. The public's sympathy is always with the laborer, and will be in this case. It will say, and perhaps justly, "The company might have retrenched at some other point than on wages."

What the cotton companies need is a little less watering of stock, somewhat less of the profits to go to one or two men, a little more freshness about the designs of the goods, and somewhat more care in the regulation of prices.

STOCKS SOLD.

The stock of J. T. Hutchinson, Mono Road, \$1,600, was sold to J. W. Shields, at 55c. on the dollar.

Sloan & Scott, dry goods, Nanaimo and Wellington, B.C., have sold the latter branch to C. R. Masters.

Spring Season, 1895

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