

ANOTHER EXAMPLE.

Melville & Co., general dry-goods merchants, of Owen Sound, have made an assignment of their affairs to John McClung, of 18 Wellington street east, Toronto. The liabilities are at present unknown. This firm courted failure by its alliance with the Patrons of Industry. The reaction against the Patrons cannot but be hastened by such results of signing their trade compact. Failure appears to be the inevitable and speedy destiny of those whom the Patrons once fasten upon. They do immense injury to trade in this way, and the extent of the injury is not to be measured by the failures which overtake those merchants who have subscribed to their conditions. Those merchants do fail, many of them already have failed, but the free competitors whom they drag down with them are numerous, and represent the loss which is especially to be deplored. Take a neighborhood where there are three or four stores under the thumb of the Patrons. When a man has maintained his independence against the competition of three or four Patron merchants within the range covered by his custom, he is next beset by a new form of irregular opposition in the sacrificing of the bankrupt stocks from the stores of these Patron merchants. He survives the Patron merchants, but he has almost certainly to succumb to the slaughtering of their bankrupt stocks. This is how they demoralize business. They make use of the weaklings to sap the strength of the sturdy men in the trade. Wholesalers who sell to Patron merchants are parties to this injury to trade. They ought to have a little real concern for trade to moderate their eagerness to do business.

IN BUSINESS FOR OTHERS.

It is unquestionable that there are retailers in trade who are permitted to be there only by the grace of the houses which take the risk of furnishing them with goods. They are keeping store because these houses want to make some money out of them, and that probably will be the one end realized as the result of their keeping store, unless by a supreme effort on their part they can get into a position to choose their sellers. A retailer that cannot give sufficient credentials to secure credit from one house to make a start may be accepted by another. This difference may be owing to the fact that the former house has a good sound customer doing all the business there is to be done in the place where the applicant aims to open up, and the latter house is doing no business in that place at all. Consequently the starting of this new man by the latter house means the acquisition of a new customer. He goes in on the understanding that he is to sell goods, his profits are not calculated to amount to much in a competition whose object is to displace somebody that does not buy

from the same house as he does. He is watched well to prevent his getting beyond the tether of his patron, and he is doing business solely for the benefit of the house which has taken him up. That house may be pleased to run him for three, four or five years, as circumstances may determine, but when that house concludes to run him no longer he is cast aside like a squeezed orange. This is one of the ways some wholesalers adopt for getting ahead of their rivals, who have a good customer somewhere that it is impossible for the other house to sell anything to. The taking up of a man who has no title to independence and who is delighted with the confidence placed in him, will usually damage the trade of the retailer who was there before him, but it will seldom add anything to the wealth of the dupe who filled the breach. If once the original trader at that place sees it to be his interest to treat with the house supplying the newcomer, the latter will find he has served his purpose and will be called off. Wholesale competition upon a strictly wholesale stage is keen enough and sufficiently depressing upon prices, without descending to retail stores for the purpose of carrying it on. Let retailers do all the competing that is done in retail stores.

BADLY TIED PARCELS.

A parcel that won't hang together till the customer gets home with it is apt to make mischief. It may cost the dealer the trade of that customer, or it may cost the careless clerk who tied it the loss of his situation. Fragile paper, brittle twine, dissolving knots, slack binding, will sunder hearts that ought to beat as one in the matter of trade. There is no mistaking the language of deep-seated wrath, when it is called forth by the collapse of a parcel that contains sugar, tea, coffee or any other loose aggregation of small particles. The man or woman who spills its contents is generally too warm at the moment to be reasoned with. The thing uppermost in the mind of such a person at such a time is an agitating desire to square matters with the man who put up the goods in that flabby way. It is bad enough to have the stuff that is in the package glide out of it upon the pavement. An unruly temper will wax wild enough over that part of the embarrassing mishap, but the getting down on one's knees to gather the stuff up again mortifies the most disciplined of us. The remembrance of being in that unheroic position for five or ten minutes, with a crowd looking on as he scooped with his hands, the stuff that got out of the parcel, will a year after fan the flame of a man's animosity against the grocery salesman who caused him to cut so ridiculous a figure. A parcel with a slithery feeling will always be likely to make a man, who has once had such an experience, a little decided and perhaps irregular in the language which he uses to condemn it. Things will

have to be put up good and tight for him ever afterward.

Of course no salesman can be expected to put up a package that a 200-lb. man may with impunity suddenly sit down upon, or throw forty feet when the ice becomes too slippery for his feet to hold on to it. When a customer's equilibrium gets beyond his control parcels will be apt to suffer. Even in these circumstances the victim of the accident is always too serious to join in the joke that any less fleet-footed or strong-bodied person may venture to make at his expense. But he does not nurse any grudge against the grocer. It was not a matter of tying by which he was undone.

A case that made some people laugh came under notice the other morning. A woman was carrying a parcel of goods whose molecules moved freely against each other, and only needed an opening to slip away. The parcel had sagged out of shape, and the twine didn't seem to have any control over it. Slowly but surely the structure of the parcel accommodated itself to all outward impressions of the woman's hand or arm, and she hugged it in the vain hope of keeping it together. Soon all curbs were unavailing, and the stuff shot out of its paper prison as the snow shoots off a steep roof when the weather softens. It needed no physiognomist to tell that the woman was outrageously mad. Her face grew very red and set looking, but her tongue told whom she was mad at. The man who tied the parcel was abused in unmeasured terms, and unless she changes her mind, that accident puts a date to her business with the grocery where the goods were bought. Grocers and grocer clerks should make fast and sure work of all packages.

TORONTO PEDLARS' LICENSE FEES.

Though the struggle between the grocers and the pedlars in the matter of licenses started under auspices favorable to the latter, the views of the grocers nevertheless triumphed. The Markets and Health Committee undoubtedly did show itself obsequious to the wishes of the Trades and Labor Council, though each member of that committee had been waited upon by members of the Retail Grocers' Association and his support was bespoken on the side of no reduction in the present fees. The matter had next to pass before the Executive Committee of the City Council, and though there had been no lobbying of the members of that committee, they reported in favor of the old fees being continued, and against the recommendation of the Markets and Health Committee. Finally, on Monday night the question came before the Council, and the reduction was disapproved. Consequently the pedlars have to pay the same fees now as they had to pay before, that is \$30 per year. The good offices of their friend of the Trades and Labor Council did not therefore avail to secure the wished-for reduction. The course of the Council was not swayed either by the grocers or the pedlars. Economy and justice appeared to be the uppermost considerations in the minds of members of the Council in the settlement of this matter, and it is satisfactory that it was so.