

develop any method whereby they would be led to a proper sense of their own position and their own importance, we would be glad.

Their utter inability to size up a market is seen in their actions during the past four months. With the raw wool market advancing, they have been cutting prices. The wholesale buyers "pulled their legs," "twisted their noses," and did several other funny little things with them. Now the manufacturers are loaded up with orders, and repeats are being sent in at a rapid rate, but they must pay several cents per lb. more for their raw material than they figured upon.

And now the manufacturer weeps.

What might have been!

And yet some of the buyers overreached themselves this year. They juggled and haggled, and finally placed contracts at low prices, but deliveries promise to be slow and irregular. One buyer got badly nipped. He had got the price for some fall goods down so low that the manufacturer failed, rather than make them from wool at its present price. This instance may be duplicated several times before the season is over.

Domestic woolen manufacturers are not making money and it is their own fault. They allow the wholesale buyer to play them off, one against the other. He uses one to beat down the price of the other. And yet there are enough orders to go around if they would wait for them to be placed. The buyers bear the market, and the manufacturers seem to forget that they might play the same game.

We propose a remedy. Let there be a Woolen Manufacturers' Association, to educate the trade and introduce an esprit de corps that would help maintain paying prices.

### SHORT WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

A complaint noted in the last issue of THE REVIEW that in Quebec some concerns sold yarns with as small a number as 8 and 10 ounces to the pound does not seem to be an isolated instance of a "short standard." "There are a number of lines in which the pound, or the yard, or the fixed quantity, whatever it be, is short," said a business man last week. "The wholesaler does not conceal at all in these cases that the standard has become a mere figure of speech. He simply assures the retailer that the lengths or the weights will be found the same as handled by others, and that the practice has been encouraged by extreme competition and the low prices at which the things have to be sold. This is the actual fact. No manufacturer gains anything by making the full length or full weight, and, in consequence, charging a fraction more. He must meet a competing price or lose sales. The wholesaler, in turn, must handle the goods as he gets them, and in some lines the retailer is allowed a recompense when the goods are found wanting by actual measurement. It is not satisfactory, but excessive competition is the cause."

### DENIED IN ENGLAND.

An English paper has taken the trouble to deny the statement made recently by the manager of the Merchants' Bank that Insolvency laws "operate as an encouragement to insolvency."

The Drapery World denies this and remarks: "Our Insolvency law has not the effect of promoting or encouraging insolvency; that it has the reverse effect to a very striking degree

would probably be admitted by every debtor who has had the misfortune to come under the jurisdiction of the Bankruptcy Court. If the idea of Insolvency law is simply that it is a process whereby a trader can discharge his debts with fifty cents on the dollar, then we understand the objection to it. It is readily conceivable that such a law would constitute a means of relief to debtors, and an encouragement to insolvency. But, though it is obviously necessary to have some provision for discharge, it can be, as is the case in our Bankruptcy Act, hedged round with such requirements and conditions as render the lot of the dishonest bankrupt anything but pleasant. Long experience has shown us in this country that good solid bankruptcy laws are a protection to the creditor, a terror to the debtor, and a real necessity to the whole community. If some of the leaders of opinion on the other side understood this better, Canada might have had proper insolvency legislation long ago."

### TO REMEDY A CUSTOMS EVIL.

The Premier stated in the Senate one day last week that he proposed between then and the next session of Parliament to consider an amendment to the Customs law whereby the Board of Appraisers and the Governmental head of the Department of Customs would be relieved of the duty of deciding cases of dispute in reference to questions of seizure and infractions of the Customs law.

It is well, says The Canadian Grocer. The present system of settling difficulties between importers and the Customs Department is obviously contrary to the spirit of British fair play. It is a relic of mediævalism. In it we see exemplified the prosecutor adjudicating upon his own prior decisions.

Obviously, under such conditions one cannot expect justice. The "judge" may desire to be fair; but he is only human, and, naturally, he will be disposed to be quick to seize upon points that will sustain his previous ruling and slow to accept those that will tend to weaken it.

It is gratifying to see Sir Mackenzie Bowell making a move in the direction of independent adjudication on Customs disputes. When he was head of the Customs Department he ruled with an arbitrary hand, as importers well remember. And while the present head of the department is much more amenable to reason than his predecessor in office, yet that is none the less reason why the present faulty system of settling difficulties between the department and importers should not be placed on a more equitable basis: It is not in the men but in the system, that the evil primarily lies. And it is to the credit of the Government that it realizes it, long as it has taken it to do so.

### U.S. TRADE EXPANDING.

The United States dry goods trade is expanding by leaps and bounds. The following, from The N.Y. Journal of Commerce of July 26, shows this wonderful change:

The imports of dry goods at this port for the past week and since January 1, 1895, compare as follows with the same period of last year:

|                          | 1895.       | 1894.       |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| For the week--           |             |             |
| Entered at the port..... | \$2,819,806 | \$1,756,679 |
| Thrown on the market..   | 2,705,801   | 970,236     |
| Since January 1--        |             |             |
| Entered at the port..... | 82,461,577  | 46,017,774  |
| Thrown on the market .   | 82,966,801  | 46,328,090  |