

## NOT AN EASY TASK.

When you talk about well posted grocers, did you ever pause to consider the number of articles handled by a grocer, and the necessity for him to understand the merits and variation in quality of each and every one of them? The well posted grocer is a regular encyclopedia of knowledge on food products. He has to run up against the department men in the wholesale houses, who give their whole attention to one particular line, and who are not presumed to interfere with each other. To hold his own he has to cope with the knowledge of men who are specialists in their line, the managers of the coffee, cigars and tobacco, etc., canned goods and fancy groceries departments. Those who think this is an easy task are in error. The successful retail grocer deserves credit for holding his own.

## THE COUNTRY STORE.

An Eastern exchange says: "The country store may be passing away in some localities, especially in the immediate vicinity of the large cities, but if so, it is being transplanted to some virgin soil. A trip through the rural districts anywhere will show the country store to be as numerous and prosperous as ever, although the city grocers are making raids on its reserves by sending out solicitors in wagons. There is evidently a mistake somewhere in the statement that the country store is passing away. What is called the country store in the east is better known as the general store in the south and west, and it can be said that there never were as many general stores as there are now. Indeed, the methods of the country trader are coming to be quite generally adopted by the city stores, and there are many localities in which trade lines cannot be sharply defined. The farmer who has to drive in a long distance does not always want to run from store to store, but prefers to make all his purchases of one merchant, thus avoiding a duplication of accounts as well as a loss of time. The country store will exist and flourish as long as farmers continue to follow the pursuits of agriculture."

## A MOVE ON THE ENEMY.

Every business man has enemies that he must contend with daily, and his success depends on the result of his effort to win in spite of them. There is the enemy of bad credit. It makes its appearance almost every day in every store in the land, and the question is as to what the merchant will do about it. If he yields to this enemy he is admitting to his business a foe that will sooner or later down him and make him a prisoner to failure. There is the enemy of delay in purchasing goods at the proper time, and these figures in every stock more or less. Careful attention should be given this important matter so that sales will not be lost by not having goods in stock.

There is the enemy of over-stocking, and this is a bad fellow in trade. He eats up profits with avidity and leaves the merchant to care for a pile of goods that

are soon out of season and counterworn. How many merchants there are who suffer from this enemy. They do not seem able to withstand the pleas of the salesman to buy, and they allow themselves to be led into the trap, only to suffer later.

There are more enemies of this character but it is not necessary to name them. The question is what are the merchants going to do about it. There is necessity of a common move on the enemy. There are scattering instances where the enemy has been defeated all along the line, but how few the cases where the dealer is entirely free from the enemy in some of these lines. It is an important matter, and should receive his careful attention. There is danger in letting any of these things get the upper hand in business. The record shows that they wreck more firms in a year than any other cause, and almost more than all other causes.—*Ec.*

## HOW TO BUILD UP TRADE.

To make trade or to attract business requires a carefully and well-selected stock of goods suitable to the wants of the people whose trade you are seeking.

"Sell your goods for just what they are—weave, weight, style or quality. Do not call a well known fabric by a new name. Let the public know who you are, where you are and what you have to sell. See that your prices are moderate and that your customers get honest value for their money. Never deceive anyone in order to make a sale. Impress this upon your clerks and sales force. When they deviate from it, censure them, and, if they repeat it, discharge them. When you do this, it will be a question whether you will keep your trade or clerks. Do not, however, force this rule on your clerks and not keep it yourself. When you do this, you lose the confidence of your clerks and also your trade.

Lay down this rule for fair, square dealing in all things and adhere to it. Follow this out and you will soon gather customers who will stand by you. The reputation of a merchant for honesty, for having a choice stock and being abreast of the times in styles and fashions assures his success. Keep your goods well displayed in your windows, on your shelves and counters. Have neatness, cleanliness and attractiveness appear in everything in your store. Show your customers that you have a well selected stock, and that it is always fresh and clean. The first and last thing to always keep in mind is to please the ladies. Cater to them, and you will not only increase your trade with them, but draw the trade of men also. Polite and persistent attention to the wants of ladies is sure to win in the retail dry goods trade, no matter where your store is located.

James E. Ostrander, late treasurer of the Water County, N. Y., Savings Institution, has been found guilty of perjury and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment at Dannemora.

The Hamilton Woollen Company of Amesbury, Mass., has increased the wages of all employees, except spinners, seven per cent. The spinners were given an increase of ten per cent., recently.

## A TRUE STORY.

In a recent issue of the *Storekeeper*, of Sydney, Australia, appeared the following: "Between buying and selling, lies the uncertain, treacherous ground, full of pitfalls for the unsophisticated trader, and not without its dangers even to the experienced man of business. The best customers in a district are always chary of shifting their account from one storekeeper who has served them well to a new-comer of whose ability, appearance and antecedents they know nothing. And even where considerations of personal convenience induce them to transfer their custom, they naturally expect the usual credit, which a beginner cannot afford to give so readily as his established rival. All the 'bad marks' in the neighborhood, the shabbiness of whose purses are well known to the other storekeepers, and who consequently insist on cash down, will, in all probability, flock to his store and gladden his heart with substantial orders, for which, however, they will never pay until sued, and even then, though the luckless trader may obtain a judgment against them, in all probability, he will get nothing else.

"Meanwhile, the weeks slip past. The original stock has been reduced somewhat by credit transactions, but the cash takings have been miserably small, barely sufficient in fact to meet the current expenses of the business. The promissory notes given in good yet foolish faith to the various firms are nearly due, so he makes a desperate attempt to collect his accounts. A few of his customers are offended by his request and withdraw their custom, a few pay, but the majority request him to call again or promise to attend to the matter in a day or two. Meanwhile, certain stocks there has been a demand for have had to be replenished; other lines for which a ready sale had been anticipated remain unsold and are becoming unseasonable. The wholesale houses, or their travelers, are accommodating and his additional orders are executed promptly. Then comes the fatal fourth. His available funds are inadequate to discharge a moiety of liabilities and he is obliged to request assistance, which is granted, somewhat to his surprise. But from that day forward his life becomes a burden; he is constantly pressed for 'something on account'; travelers are no longer angels, but spies in disguise, his orders are not filled with that promptitude and exactitude his employer was accustomed to. Why continue the recital? Staggering beneath an accumulation of debt and hampered by want of cash, he finds it is a blessed relief to summon a meeting of creditors, assign his estate and recommence life behind the counter."

The customs returns for the month of November for the port of Toronto show an increase compared with the returns for the same month last year of \$8,975.51. The inland revenue returns show an increase of \$10,157.

The Stone City Bank, a private concern at Joliet, Ill., which was thought to be solid, has suspended payment, owing to a run. The failure is a heavy one, deposits ranging from \$100,000 to \$500,000. H. Fish & Sons owned the bank.