The Question of Credit.

The *American Storekeeper* in its August edition has a lengthy essay on credit, from which we clip the following:

We are well aware that some of our readers who have made bad debts will not thank us for taking this view of the case, but if they will be patient we will endeavor to show them that our position is correct. To do this we must consider what credit is. There should be no difficulty in understanding the nature of credit. It is a loan of seasonable commodities without security. The merchant who trusts a man for a barrel of flour furnishes the man with material on which to live while he earns the money to pay for it, the flour being consumed when the payment is made.

Credit thus permits us to wear out clothing before it is paid for, to consume groceries without having given anything for them, and—in other words—to eat our chickens before they are hatched. The merchants who grant credit place themselves in a position of philanthropic persons who enable their customers to live before they have earned the right to live. There are cases of deserving poor who are temporaily unable to pay for the means of sustaining life, but merchants who feel charitable should support such persons purely as a charity and not as a business policy.

YOUR GOODS REPRESENT MONEY.

Consider for a moment the position which you as a storekeeper occupy. You have invested your money in a stock of goods. If the goods have been paid for they belong to you absolutely. They are to you the results of saving, thrift and economy. These goods you can give away if you like, but you possess them because you believe you can profitably exchange them for commodities you need.

In this exchanging process money need not necessarily enter, as your goods could be directly bartered for other goods—as they frequently are for butter, eggs and produce—without any money passing between you and your customers. Money only enters as a convenient and reasonable equivalent for commodities, and your goods should purchase as much money as you originally exchanged for them, plus a sum which will recompense you for placing your services at the command of the public. By taking this view of the transaction, you will see that you might as well loan a man ten dollars without security, note, or other evidence of debt, as to trust him for goods which you could exchange for ten dollars.

CREDIT RESTS ON KNOWLEDGE.

Credit should largely rest on a knowledge of a man's financial history and condition. It should not be refused to a man who all his life has met every engagement, nor should it be extended to one who has regularly failed therein. Your own judgement of the man's character should not be relied upon to guide you in this matter, because there is a natural inclination in the human mind to magnify that which is not certain, and we are apt, therefore, to ascribe more means to a man than he really possesses.

A merchant should be guided in granting credit to a person by:

1. The positive amount of capital possessed or the ability to earn wages.
2. The general fidelity displayed in pas engagements.
3. The co-operation which the law will give in the collection of the account, if necessary to proceed to law. It is well to know the extent of protection the law throws around a debtor, because as Charles Francis Adams has pointed out, "The first reliance of a creditor is commonly upon the g od will of his debtor; the second upon the law of the land."

Courtesy in Trade.

As intelligent human beings, we, are placed here to make the world better for our having lived in it. To make our fellow men better we must first win their respect and esteem, which quickly begets their confidence. Life is made up of little details, thickly studded with petty annoyances, which rasp on our good nature to test its durability. Probably no men are more subject to irritant provocation than those engaged in city or country mercantile trade. If they deal justly in the face of abuse, chide rudeness by a deportment of gentlemanly courtesy, banish frowns and coax a smiling countenance, their trade will flourish in spite of close competition and jealous rivals. When a merchant opens a house of business in a town which he comes to as a stranger, it is his privilege and right to win custom from any source provided he uses only fair and legitimate means therefor. What fair and legitimate means are, is sometimes curiously interpreted in this rushing world of ours; but all men are possessed of honorable instincts which if they would observe to the letter, would wonderfully lubricate the sharp frictions of every day commercial intercourse. It is useless however, to speculate on what other men might or ought to do, but we must bring the question right down to the personality of "*What must I do to succeed?*" We cannot succeed, as success is generally counted, without the aid and support of men with whom we daily come in contact. That support will be cheerfully and effectively accorded us if honesty of purpose, equanimity of temper and genuine, unaffected politness characterize our bearing toward all men. Merchants can ill afford to manifest rudeness toward any persons who conduct themselves with propriety in their stores. If you exhibit signs of discourtesy to a penny customer, because his purchases are meagre in view of the trouble entailed you, a more profitable customer may see it and thereafter shun your place of trade, to your detriment many dollars. Our brief span of life calls for the expansion of our virtues and the stifling of vices. Pleasant smiles, sincere words and sterling honesty are talismans in trade, better than luck or shrewdness.—*Leather Gazette.*

Competition.

Commenting on the failure of Bowman & Kellogg, millers, of Atchison, Kansas, caused it is believed by the press of competition in the milling business, the Minneapolis *Northwestern Miller* of the 7th instant, has the following sensible remarks: Competition in the minds of most people who are opposed to any combination of interests, means a system of business whereby they shall receive the fruit of a man's industry, the result of his energy, the product of his brains, and the legitimate returns for his money invested, at such figures as shall prevent him from gaining even a bare living. Legitimate competition is desirable, but cut-throat competition is commercial murder. Not one man in ten thousand who eats his loaf of bread realizes the conditions which surround the business of the miller who makes the flour for him. Yet this nine thousand nine hundred and ninty-nine ignorant people consider themselves justified in resenting any attempt of the millers individually or collectively to better their condition, and obtain for themselves the same right which the bread eater, be he butcher, baker or candlestick maker, demands for him self—the right to exist and receive a fair equivalent for his work.

Dakota Crops.

Satistician Sheridan, in making his crop report of Dakota for Sept. 1, says the reports from correspondents do not indicate the yield of grain that has been anticipated. Owing to the dry, hot weather since July 15 up to the present time, and the heavy frost of Aug. 16, the prospects for a good crop has been considerably diminished. It is rather early to fully estimate the yield, yet the threshing machine is at work at many places, and much of the grain is a small and shrunken berry. Places that last season sent out only No. 1 hard and No. 1 northern will this year have but little hard to ship, and a considerable portion will grade No. 2 and below. The frost did much damage, but how much cannot be estimated. The average yield will not exceed 12 bus per acre, and will fall below rather than over that amount. Besides the damage by drouth and frost, the chinch bug and cut worm have done considerable damage in some parts of the territory.

Harvesting commenced in central and south Dakota about Aug. 5 and was finished about the 28th, while in north Dakota harvesting did not begin until Aug. 21, and will not be completed probably before Sept. 10. The oat crop will be a light yield. In many places they rusted badly, and those already threshed report a very light berry. Barley will be a fair crop, although much of this grain will be a light berry. During harvest no rain has fallen and grain has been secured in fine shape, Corn is doing well and promises a good crop if not injured any more by frost. Below is the statement as furnished by 128 correspondents on Sept. 1, as compared with the same time last year:

Corn. 80 per cent; wheat, when harvested, 70 per cent; rye, 80 per cent; oats, 87 per cent; barley, 85 per cent.—*N. W. Miller.*

THE demand for the "Myrtle Navy" tobacco is still on the increase, and from every quarter the firm who make it are receiving unsolicited testimony of its growth in public favor. A gentleman from one of the mining islands of Lake Huron writes, "Your 'Myrtle Navy' is an invaluable solace to the lonliness of the miner's life. I don't know how our men could get along without it. If their stock ran out they would risk swimming to the mainland to replenish it, heedless of danger, and I believe they would cross the ice in winter on the same errand if it were not more than an inch thick. No other tobacco will satisfy them.