

curiosity of many a reader who would like to know something from time to time of the transactions of the associations controlled and owned by Brother Cassidey.

### WHY NOT?

The interests covered by the term "woolen manufacture" are much too diverse to be easily united into a manageable combine for general purposes, yet there are some points where combination appears more possible than at others. For instance, cannot something be done towards raising the standard of quality for the average output of our mills? There can be no blinking the fact that the quality of Canadian goods is not what it was even five years ago. Some people go so far as to say that there is no absolutely pure stock worked up in our mills to-day. This is of course not true, yet the average of a year's output is in most instances lower than in former years. This is a condition which is not confined to the Canadian trade, as is evidenced by a series of articles in the *Dry Goods Economist* recently, by C. O. Boring. He seems to take the ground that the manufacturers themselves are responsible for this condition of the trade, and while he blames the trade for handling inferior goods, he seems to consider them not only the victims of circumstances, but also of the manufacturers. The facts of the case, in Canada at least, are that the blame rests entirely upon the trade, which appears to control the manufacturers. There is not a manufacturer carrying on business in the country who is not prepared to turn out a reliable class of goods in his line if he had any demand for them. Year after year samples are got out, covering in some cases a range of a couple of thousand patterns, and representing every grade in quality. You know the whole story when you see the orders come in. The lower the quality of the goods the more freely are orders placed; as the quality rises the orders fall off, and when it comes to numbers representing goods which are absolutely pure wool, dyed in fast colors (and Canadian manufacturers can and do make such goods, though many people refuse to credit it), the orders disappear altogether. The matter would right itself if a good demand in the retail trade for Canadian wares of the best quality could be created. As it is, the better class of goods is sold by the wholesale men as English and Scottish goods. If the Canadian goods bore the manufacturer's name or trademark the demand would rapidly improve, for when the consumer had the opportunity of comparing prices and wearing qualities of Canadian and imported goods, he would soon see that the advantage was with the home producer. In the meantime, a combine to stamp out the production of the lowest class of goods would be a good thing. Remember the consumer is with the manufacturer in this. In this cold climate people want something that will wear, and they are willing to pay for it. The wholesale man is the offender. Can he be induced to do better?

### COUNT THE COST.

Enthusiasm is a great thing, and it is very desirable in starting a new industry, but we think an Owen Sound contemporary has, perhaps, a little more of this desirable commodity on hand than the state of the market warrants. In an article entitled "The Knitting Industry," in a recent number, occurs the following:—"It should not be a difficult matter to secure subscriptions for \$20,000 worth of stock amongst the business men of the town, and the investors of town and country. Only half of the amount would be required. From information in our possession, we learn that the necessary plant of knitting machines of the most improved kind, sufficient to give employment to fifty hands and able to compete with the best, would cost well under \$3,000. The advice comes from authorities on the subject to go into the manufacture of knitted goods of the better class only. The factories have always succeeded best that have used Canadian or imported worsted or cashmere yarns, instead of going into the manufacture of poorer grades, where combining yarn-making and knitting, the machinery for which would cost over three times that of the knitting machinery where the yarns were bought." Upon reading the facts based upon "information in our possession" it becomes evident that the article was written in order to insure its "not being a difficult matter to secure subscriptions for \$20,000 worth of stock." Now as to the improved plant that is to cost under \$3,000. The following at least are essential to the scheme outlined: One knitting machine, probably Balmoral, 18 inch, \$500; one sewing machine, \$200; cuff sewer (looper and raveller), \$100; button-hole cutter, \$75; washing and fulling machine, \$400; extractor, \$500; press, if hosiery press is used, \$200, but if regular knit goods press is used, \$1,200. This represents \$2,975, upon which a reduction might be made for possible bargains in second-hand machines. This, however, is only the beginning. A boiler is necessary for heat, even if it were not required for power. Drying and bleaching and the thousand and one little things must be taken into account. This equipment will cost fully \$3,000, and when it is put in it will not afford employment to half of the fifty operatives of whom our contemporary speaks. Then, as to the mills using ready-made yarns. We are somewhat doubtful as to the statement that they have succeeded better than those spinning their own yarns, because so many mills that we know to be paying well are spinning their own yarns. Competition for orders is so keen that the delay necessary to procure a certain grade of yarn must often be a serious difficulty. If the mill is to confine itself to goods of the highest class it cannot do business at all, as the mills now running are producing all of this class of goods that the market is able to take up. If low-class goods are turned out there may be an opening, but it is only to be secured by cutting prices, and the trade is of the opinion that the limit in that direction has been reached.