

see their trade go to the United States or into the hands of rivals would fill orders on wholesale terms. Also, farmers not uncommonly would get their stock direct from the retail department of some jobbing establishment, and would represent to the local country merchant that they bought on the same terms as those upon which he bought.

From an examination of the position in which the seed trade is, it seems certain that there is a good deal of business done with the farmers upon the same terms as with retailers. The farmers, growing more and more averse to doing business through the retailer, apply to the jobber. If he answers them with the same quotations as the local merchant, they at once say the jobber and retailer are combined to fleece the farmers. They have recourse to other jobbers, and only the most staunch supporters of the retail trade will withstand the veiled or open threat to give one of them the proposed patronage. The fact that other houses will comply, often overcomes the disposition to hold out for consumers' terms. We believe, however, that there are houses which stand by the retail trade, and the retail trade should in turn stand by them.

The country merchant must bestir himself if he wants to do a seed trade. He must canvass for it. He has the catalogue of the house whose stock he wishes to sell. Both when the farmer calls on him and when he calls on the farmer must he push business. Also in the buying of seed for his house must he exert himself to make a little money. By making himself a recognized broker between the farmer and the wholesaler, both for buying and selling stock, he gets himself in the best position to control local trade and keep out itinerants. But as in all kinds of employment these days, he must be a pusher, and go outside for his business. It is the rugged kind who do this that make money.

MAPLE SYRUP AND SUGAR.

In anticipation of the greatly increased demand for high class and absolutely pure maple syrup, Messrs. Wilkins & Co., of Adamsville, Que., are making arrangements for a much larger supply than formerly. Among the many reputable makers in the counties of Missisquoi, Brome and Shefford, who contract their whole product with Messrs. Wilkins & Co., are perhaps a dozen farmers having sugar orchards containing from 1,000 to 4,000 trees each. These counties, adjoining Vermont have long been famous as the chief sugar-producing districts of Canada, and their sugars are furnished with the the most approved modern appliances. The old-fashioned clumsy methods still in vogue in other sections, have long since been superseded there, by covered tin buckets, in which the sap is caught free from rain and other substances which otherwise change the flavor, and by the substitution of

the evaporating pan for the old cauldron or potash-kettle. The "tapping" season in the Eastern Townships is usually between the 15th and the 25th of March.

LOOKING AHEAD.

In looking over the work of different trade associations on the other side of the line, it is evident that among them are to be found some very live bodies. In several cities of the union are to be found associations which have their central officers, their collectors, their legislative committees and an efficient committee on various other matters. Their offices instead of being an expense are a source of profit, and it is in this respect we think an improvement in Toronto's work might easily be made. Why shouldn't they have an office down town like other progressive associations? We imagine we hear the old cry—it would not pay. We believe it would pay, and the only way to settle the question is to try it. Let us look into the future. An office rented down town, fitted up with show cases of neat and attractive size; said cases rented to manufacturers for the display of their goods, their handsome show cards neatly framed and glazed, would be self-supporting. Here the executive committee could hold their meetings, instead of running from one place to another. Here the secretary could be on duty certain hours each day, to answer enquiries. Here, if necessary, the secretary could also have the price lists for the goods displayed, and in the event of a collecting agency being run, the secretary could receive monies for the members. If it pays in other associations to have these things, it would pay in Toronto. It would not be necessary for the secretary to take orders for goods. He could give prices and refer the intending customer to the house handling the goods. A clerk's register could be kept where clerks and counter hands could register their wants when out of employment, and grocers wanting hands could also register in the same manner. This alone would be a boon to trade, since a certain amount of protection would be afforded against dishonest clerks. A clerk when he went to register, would give a copy of his references and he would be brought to understand that his record would be looked at. We believe that there is a large sphere of usefulness in this direction. The association in Toronto has done good work in the past, and this down town office would be an enormous stride in the right direction. Merchants coming in from the country would seek out the office and obtain much needed information, and they could use it to conduct their correspondence. The expenses of such an office would not be heavy, and would be met by rents from the show cases and other sources of income. The Secretary's salary would be an important item, but the usefulness of that officer would be greatly increased. There would be enough work to occupy his whole time and it would be a paying institution. Why not have it done?

BANKRUPT STOCKS.

The method of the Sarnia Grocers' Association settles the question as to the disposal of bankrupt stocks in country towns, but it remains to be seen whether the same work can be successfully done in large cities. We are afraid that in a city like Toronto or Hamilton the number of these stocks thrown upon the market would militate against its success. That a tremendous amount of injury is done is without doubt a fact, and, more, it is being done every day. A storekeeper fails. It may be what we term an honest failure, brought about by sickness and misfortune, or it may have occurred through reckless trading. It matters not. The man possibly seeks a compromise or he may be thoroughly disheartened and wash his hands of the whole business. The assignee has the stock to dispose of. Along comes the bankrupt stock man, scans the stock sheets and offers 30 to 40 cents in the dollar. He seldom goes higher. The assignee accepts the offer, and our pirate at once looks around him for an empty store, pays about two days' rent for the same, moves the stock in, arranges it in small lots around the shelves, and then calls in an auctioneer. The goods are sold at whatever they will bring, the lots are put up, not to suit storekeepers who might gather to prevent a wholesale slaughtering of their trade, but to suit consumers, two cans of this, four bottles of that, and so on. Wherever this blue bottle fly descends he causes a most lamentable state of affairs. The consumer does not always get a bargain however, for he always has a lot of shelf worn goods that he manages to work off and which no one cares to have. Now we are of the opinion that there is a very nice little source of revenue to be obtained from this which should go into the city treasury. It is a work for the Association to handle. If these men must bring a stock in a neighborhood other than where the failure occurred the transient trader should pay a good round figure for the privilege of moving the stock and for the injury he does to the business men of that neighborhood. Grocers have quite enough to contend against without being obliged to put their hands in their pockets and witness the procession of their customers going to purchase goods from a bankrupt stock and very often with the cash that should be in the grocers hands for goods supplied to the self same customers. There is a very sore spot here and it should not be lost sight of. We would suggest that, at the next meeting of the Toronto Retail Grocers' Association this subject be taken up for discussion in order to see if some practicable solution cannot be reached.

The Chicago Grocer says: A large number of Alaska salmon canneries will combine in a few weeks for the purpose of reducing the expense of operating their canneries, and for mutual protection the coming season. They hope to be in a position to lessen the tendency to disastrous competition, which in years past has raised havoc with the industry, and in time will endeavor to get to a point where they can pool the entire product of all the canneries.