

## TORONTO RETAIL GROCERS' ASSOCIATION.

The regular monthly meeting of the Toronto Retail Grocers' Association was held on Monday night in Richmond Hall. The proceedings began at 9:10 p.m. The following were present:—President Booth (in the chair), Messrs. Clark, Gibson, Williamson, Lindsay, McCulloch, J. S. Bond, Hambly, H. Billingham, W. Bird, Harris, J. F. Morrish, Roberts, Secretary Carrie, W. J. McCleary, D. Perkins, Anderson, Sykes, Mills, Sinclair, McMillan, Westren, Mulqueen, McMahon.

The minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed.

### NEW MEMBERS.

The following new members were proposed by the secretary:

C. E. Batchley, King St. W.; W. Bird, Claremont St.; Nolan, King W.; A. Wardell, Clinton St.; W. J. Robinson, Avenue Road; J. Davidson, Yonge St.; J. V. Adams, Queen St. E.; E. T. Britain, Bathurst St.; F. W. Hutt, Parkdale; E. J. Henry, Queen St. W.; H. Corin, Spadina; C. E. Clarke, Elm St.; E. Roberts, Parliament St.; G. F. Smedley, Wilton Ave.; H. Conlin, Parliament St.; W. R. Stewart, Queen St. E.; H. Billingham, Manning Ave.; J. McMahon, Arthur St.; J. W. Wylie, Queen St. E.; Lucas Bros., Little York; W. B. Eddy, York St.; Kelly Bros., Queen E.; M. Swartout, Parkdale; F. Dean, Parkdale; T. R. Morris, Arthur St.; Massey & Gross, Spadina Ave.; S. Ruthven, Parliament St.; J. S. Bond, Gerrard St.; D. Matilda, Broadview Ave.

Moved by Mr. Williamson, seconded by Mr. Gibson, and resolved, that the above named persons be members.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS.

The Executive Committee submitted a report recommending the payment of R. Stuart's and R. Mills' accounts; noting the fact that prices were cut by certain grocers on Morse's, Dingman's and Electric soaps, and stating that they would notify the manufacturers, if it were thought necessary, for the purpose of preventing any more of this; the question of a picnic was referred to, but it was deemed advisable that this should be dealt with by the Association.

The report was received.

Mr. Gibson reported for the committee appointed to wait on the Mayor, that his colleague, Mr. Barron, had been unable to give any time to the question, and consequently the committee had not seen the Mayor.

### PACKAGE TEA IN DRY GOODS STORES.

Under the head of new business, Mr. Gibson brought up the question of package tea being sold to dry goods stores. Some brands of such tea were being pushed now among the grocers, and at the same time being placed with the dry goods trade. The Association should not take up such tea. Grocers

who touched it were robbing themselves. They might think they were suffering loss by not carrying it, but he held it was better to let every customer who asked for it go away somewhere else and get it than carry a pound of it. The more the trade handled such tea the more they advertised it for the dry goods merchants.

### CUTTING IN SOAP.

Under the same order of business Mr. Williamson ventured the opinion that some action should be taken to put a stop to the cutting on certain brands of soap that was going on in some quarters. It was detrimental to the trade to sell soap at 4c. that cost 4c. To his knowledge Dingman's was being sold at the rate of 6 for 25c., and the Dingman people had once passed their word to this Association that they would not allow their soap to be sold below a certain price. The Morse and Electric soaps were being sacrificed in the same way, and he believed the manufacturers would not countenance such work if they knew of it. The Pure Gold Co. ought also to be advised that their borax was being sold at the rate of 6 for 25c. He therefore moved, seconded by Mr. Mills,

That the Secretary write to the manufacturers in question and inform them that their goods were being sold by some grocers below the regular prices, and that since the association as a body upheld these prices, it was thought desirable to have this practice brought under the attention of the manufacturers.—Carried.

Mr. Williamson thought that, as some of the persons doing this cutting were members of the Association, it would be well for the secretary to write to them to ask that they discontinue it, but the sense of the meeting was strongly opposed to the Association committing itself to any such step.

### A BLACK LIST SCHEME.

Mr. Ryckman, representing the Retail Merchants' Exchange, was introduced and allowed a few minutes to explain the principle of that agency's scheme for compiling a list of the dead-beats of the city. He claimed that the system the Exchange would go upon was entirely different from anything of the same sort that had been projected before. The difficulty with former associations of similar pretensions was that they aimed to make money, not by the merit of their work but by the saving of expenses. Instead of establishing a proper connection or employing adequate machinery for getting information, they jotted down their ratings by guess work, and thus often were proved wide of the mark and turned out unsatisfactory to subscribers. The Retail Merchants' Exchange proposed to draw its information from its members, and to comprehend all the trades, so that ultimately individuals would in self-defence be obliged to belong to it, as outsiders, not being forearmed with the Exchange's book, would be the sure prey of the dead beat fraternity. The scheme was described in detail by Mr. Ryckman, and

turned out to be identical with that devised by the late secretary, J. F. Thackray, and used by the Association for two years, only that it aimed to include all trades.

When Mr. Ryckman and his associates in the deputation withdrew, Mr. Clark moved, seconded by Mr. Westren,

That the Association declines to endorse any scheme for listing bad debtors, and does not undertake to influence any of its members in such a matter, but leaves every one free to do as he wishes.

After a considerable amount of discussion, in which there was frequently expressed a desire not to throw cold water upon the project, the resolution was carried.

### THE ASSOCIATION'S BLACK LIST.

While speaking to Mr. Clark's resolution above-mentioned, Mr. Mills said he had intended this evening to ask that the Secretary be given further power for the purpose of collecting and circulating all the information obtainable in the Association as to confirmed dead-beat customers. He believed in the principle of a division of experience of this sort among members of the same trade, and especially among members of the same association. There should be no antagonism on this line. He had eight or ten bad debtors and he would freely put their names at the service of his fellow members. The Association's list should be kept up.

Mr. Clark moved that a standing committee be appointed to take charge of the bad debtors' list, and improve on it.

Mr. Westren said it could not be improved on, if the members would do their part and give the information they possessed.

The motion was not seconded.

The meeting favored a revival of the list, and discussed the advisability of printing slips for making reports on, but as there was a committee on printing, that detail of the scheme was left to it.

### THE PICNIC.

In regard to the yearly outing, Mr. Gibson said he disapproved of a repetition of the picnic experience they had had every year so far. He thought there was too much labor about it, and was averse to taxing the wholesalers and manufacturers for another of the same kind. He considered it a case of riding a free horse to death to ask these houses to contribute any more. A line of boats would run to Rochester, he understood, at hours very suitable for an excursion to that city, and he thought it would be a good idea for the Association to take its day off that way.

Mr. Westren thought too that more enjoyment could be got for less toil and less expense, as heretofore they spent \$1,000 to get \$150.

The general feeling was that a picnic on the old lines was too rough and was very unsatisfactory.

Mr. Roberts moved, seconded by Mr. Clark, that the Association should take a quieter day's outing this year, and that the