

## CAUSES OF FAILURE.

Many men lose their heads when an opponent is selling cheaper goods than they are, in place of trying to meet the competition on business principles. If an opponent is selling cheaper, he is either buying cheaper or selling without a paying profit, and the merchant who is suffering from such competition should make it his business to find out which is the case. When goods are bought cheaper, he can meet the competition by getting at the bottom of the market; but when goods are sold without a profit, the best thing he can do is to reef his sails and wait until the storm blows over and his opponent is swamped, which assuredly will happen in a short time. Then he will have an opportunity of buying the bankrupt stock, or bidding it up at the sale to such a price that he need not fear the competition from an outside purchaser.

The man who keeps on the even tenor of his way, giving honest value for the money every time, and never deceiving a customer as to the true merits of any article, will hold his own against any of the mushroom establishments which advertise the cheapest goods in the country, and sell inferior stuff. The custom which yet prevails largely in sections of this country of giving presents at Christmas and other seasons to customers, makes a serious inroad on the profits, and every one who does this should keep an accurate account to ascertain if the business will afford it. It is not the custom for the honest farmer to throw in a bushel of potatoes or a pound or two of butter when he sells his produce at the store; on the contrary, he demands payment for the full quantity, doing his business when selling on more strict business principles than the merchant. Why, then, should the merchant, who is supposed to have more business ability than the farmer, let the latter get away with him in a matter of business? Then, again, the farmer demands the cash or its equivalent for everything he sells, and why should the merchant be afraid to collect his accounts in due season?

Being afraid to collect accounts when they are due is the cause of many a man's failure, for by want of pluck in collecting, his capital is locked up so that he gets terribly behind in his payments, and the renewals he has to ask from his creditors not only impair his credit, but pile interest on to him which often amounts to as much as he spends on himself and family.

The number of retail merchants in this country is far beyond what is required to distribute the goods among the consumers, and the consequence is that nearly everyone is trying to sell cheaper goods than his neighbor in order to attract custom. It is said that "competition is the life of trade," but when there is only sufficient trade to support two stores and three are catering for it, competition may prove the death of trade, be-

cause it is impossible for these three stores to secure a living profit. Anyone starting a new business should be fully satisfied that there is room for another store before embarking in the enterprise. It is a common fallacy for men opening a new business to think that they are smarter than those already in the field, and that by their superior ability they will be able to walk the course, and, without any difficulty, distance their apparently slow competitors. Time and experience are the only teachers for those who commence business with these ideas, who will probably find when it is too late that they have run their heads against a stone wall.

Some one has said, "The crying sin of the Anglo-Saxon race is the worship of Mammon," and it is a deplorable fact that the majority of people cannot look on another man making money without wishing to have a share of it; therefore, if a thriving business is being done in any locality, envious eyes are cast on it, and two or three rush in to divide the spoil which may not be more than enough for one.

[TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.]

## TORONTO'S DELINQUENT LIST.

It all depends upon the action of the Executive Committee of the T. R. G. A. whether this important work shall go on or not. A cry has been raised that it does not pay, that it should be self-supporting, and so on. In the meantime, the list is trembling in the balance, and the heart of the delinquent grows jubilant, as he recognizes the fact that the bars leading to the green pastures of the grocers' ledgers are about to be let down. What a treat is in store for him? A fresh lease of life is opened to him, and he can go on plundering to his heart's content. It does not pay, forsooth. We are inclined to think that it was the best paying item in the whole work. How many members did the fight on the tobacco question bring into the ranks? How many came in on the peddling question? How many have joined on account of the attack upon combines? Gentlemen of the Executive, count them all upon the fingers of one hand, you will not require both. A careful enquiry would prove that on all the questions mentioned the Association was not a unit. Turn now to the list, and let us see if there are any complaints on that head. We venture to say, none. It was well conducted, the information was reliable, and above all no member was made acquainted with another's business. In fact, as far as we can learn, everybody was satisfied with it.

But it does not pay. Where is the member who will take the floor and say that he has not profited by its appearance? Where is the one who has not recognized an old friend (?) upon the sheets? But it does not pay. It has saved the members many hundreds of dollars. But it does not pay. We can name ten or more members, who at the

beginning of 1890 (before the working of the Association's lists was understood), who paid \$36 each into an affair not half as reliable. It will be well for the secretary to hustle around and get in this year's dues as quickly as possible, if the executive committee is going to decide against the continuance of it. Already there is talk of starting an agency on the same lines for the grocery trade only, and if it goes on, having for its single purpose the protection of the trade from delinquents and leaving trade questions out, it will prove a success. Numbers of members of the Association who now strengthen its ranks will fall away, and yet the list does not pay. Gentlemen of the executive, it does pay. It must pay, and it is for you to say that it shall pay. Order its continuance, and study the payment part afterwards. Don't break the fyle, but order out the February list in regular order.

## WESTERN PACKERS' MEETING

Secretary John S. Edwards, Leavenworth, Kansas, has issued the call for the annual meeting of the Western Packers' Canned Goods Association to be held at the Tremont House, Chicago, Ill., Feb. 11th and 12th, 1891, at 10 o'clock, a.m.

One and one-third rates have been secured on all railroads, and all Canadian points as far as Toronto. In order to secure return ticket at the reduced rates, it will be necessary for each member to procure a certificate from the agent when purchasing ticket, which certificate must be counter-signed by the Secretary of the Association. A cordial invitation is extended, not only to the packers within the territory of the Western Association, but also to the delegates from all other associations, manufacturers of machinery and labels, and dealers in seeds, canners' supplies, etc., etc. Parties wishing to exhibit machinery will ship same care of John H. Leslie & Co., Chicago, Illinois, who will care for same upon arrival. There will not be any shafting to connect with. Please report to the Secretary if you intend to be at the meeting.

## A WEDDING PRESENT.

Mr. William H. McFarlane, well and favorably known to the trade of this city as one of Smith & Keighley's local travellers, was married on the 13th inst. to Miss Georgie Fleming. The wedding was a brilliant affair, and was followed by a tour, which is not yet ended, through the eastern cities of the United States. It was also preceded by a very felicitous send-off to the groom by his co-employees in Smith & Keighley's warehouse. Their approval of his marriage and of his 11 years' fellowship with them was signified the last evening of his bachelorhood by the presentation of a handsome dinner set. We wish the young people much joy.