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ability. As the present purpose, however, is to treat of the methods to be pursued in selling goods, it will be assumed that the stock to be disposed of has been well bought, is suited to the wants of the community, and only awaits skilful and judicious handling by the salesman to yield satisfactory returns to the merchant.

MARKING THE GOODS.

One of the most important matters connected with the mercantile business is the marking of goods. In doing this three objects should be kept in view. Profit to the merchant, ready sale, and satisfaction to the customer. This last object is often lost sight of, but we insist that a policy on the part of the salesman who does not aim at securing satisfaction to the customer is a short-sighted one, and will ultimately prove disastrous to the dealer. A customer will pay for a suit of clothes a price which will yield to the merchant a fair profit, and yet be content with his bargain; but were a sack of sugar marked to yield half as large a profit, a customer would feel that an attempt had been made to impose upon him. On some kinds of goods, then, customers will willingly allow the merchants a good profit, but others they will purchase only at a very small margin above cost.

It is the duty of the salesman to consider all the circumstances attendant upon this feature of his business, as the amount the capital invested ought to earn, the probable amount of the year's sales, the running expenses of the establishment, the kinds of goods handled, the competition to be met, the class of trade to be catered to, what will and will not satisfy his customers, &c. A volume could be written upon this one feature of mercantile business, but practical experience and native good judgment are the only

means by which a salesman can become proficient in it.

Having considered every circumstance which ought to influence him in marking the goods, the salesman should make his prices and then adhere to them. A rumor that a house has two or more prices, according to the customer who is buying, will spread rapidly and soon create a distrust very hurtful to its business. It is unfair, undignified and downright dishonesty to make different prices to different customers, other things being equal, such as quantity, time, &c. Uniform dealing one-price houses command a respect and confidence among customers which sliding scale dealers never enjoy.

Careful investigation has shown that in nearly all cases of bankrupt retail dealers a large proportion of the goods on their shelves were unmarked, and hence in a condition of confusion which could not but result in loss and disaster. The retail dealer who puts his goods on the shelves without marking them is tolerably certain to learn by bitter experience sooner or later the folly of his course; and the wholesale dealer who fails to keep a suitable record of prices as the market fluctuates is omitting a vital feature of success.

THE WHOLESALE SALESMAN.

Whether employed in the establishment at home or sent "out on the road" in the capacity of what is called a drummer, the first duty of the wholesale salesman is to make himself thoroughly and perfectly familiar with the entire stock of goods in the department or house in which he is employed. If an article is mentioned, he should be able to state instantly whether or not it is in stock. It is of the utmost importance that he should be thoroughly posted on prices, and able to give from memory or his pocket price-book the price of any article the instant it is asked.

He should be able to discriminate accurately between brands, grades, qualities, etc., and to explain differences between them to a customer.

Next to having a thorough knowledge of his own stock and business, it is important that the wholesale salesman should be familiar with those of his customer. He should know what kind of a business his customer is doing, what class of people patronize him, and what goods will be most popular among and best suited to the needs of that class. A wholesale salesman should not try to load up a retail dealer with goods not suited to the latter's trade. If this is done the retailer will meet with disappointment and loss, and in consequence of dead stock will be unable to meet his payments. Disgust at his own bad judgment will be mingled with distrust of the salesman who induced him to take the unsalable goods, and he will thereafter buy elsewhere. Thus the retailer is injured and the wholesaler loses a good customer. All this may happen when the goods causing the trouble are really first-class and sold at a reasonable price; the difficulty lying in the fact that the wholesale salesman either did not know or did not regard what the real interests of his customer required.

All wholesale salesmen of experience understand perfectly well that, having once won the confidence and patronage of a retail dealer, he is influenced to a great extent by their advice and recommendations. It follows, then, that these should be offered intelligently and in the strictest good faith, with an earnest purpose on the part of the salesman to subserve the best interests of his customer. Their interests are identical. The more goods the retailer sells the more he will purchase from the wholesale house which has won his confidence. A bill of goods which is unprofitable for him to buy is unprofitable