



THE CANADIAN GROCER

& GENERAL STOREKEEPER

PUBLISHED
WEEKLY.
\$200 PER YEAR

Published in the interest of Grocers, Packers, Produce and Provision Dealers
and General Storekeepers.

Vol. V.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 11, 1891.

No. 50

J. B. McLEAN,
President.

HUGH C. McLEAN,
Sec.-Treas.

THE J. B. McLEAN PUBLISHING COMPANY,
FINE MAGAZINE PRINTERS
AND
TRADE JOURNAL PUBLISHERS.

HEAD OFFICE: 6 Wellington West, Toronto.

MONTREAL OFFICE: 115 St. Francois Xavier St.
G. Hector Clemes, Manager.

NEW YORK OFFICE: Room 105, Times Building,
Roy V. Somerville, Manager.

SPECIAL TO OUR READERS.

As the design of THE CANADIAN GROCER is to benefit mutually all interested in the business, we would request all parties ordering goods or making purchases of any description from houses advertising with us to mention in their letter that such advertisement was noticed in THE CANADIAN GROCER.

THE CANADIAN GROCER has a bona fide combined circulation among grocers and general merchants double that of any trade journal in Canada.

The merchants who keep their customers at a distance, holding little or no communication with them except through the mediation of employes are not confined to the retail ranks of trade. There are wholesalers who err gravely in this respect. Salesmen frequently complain that, in the race for business against other salesmen, they are handicapped by the coldness or the invisibility of their principals, and account for the triumphs of competitors by pointing to the genial prominence of the place held by employes of these in all transactions between the house and the customer. The salesman, either in the house or on the road, can sell more goods if he has an urbane, approachable chief as coadjutor. The latter need not necessarily take a hand in the selling, but a little friendly attention to the customer from him will materially aid the salesman, and will certainly popularize the house more than any other ha-

bit. Travellers have no trouble in breaking the ice with a retailer, if they find him disposed to refer with pleasure to his reception at the wholesale warehouse represented. Heads of firms ought to remember that their representatives have to call on the retailers, and they should be as cordial and considerate in their welcome to visiting buyers as they would wish those to be to the wholesalers' visiting sellers. The reception of the retailer at the wholesale house has often a great deal to do with the way the traveller is received at the retail store.

* * *

There is all the difference between overdone flattery and courteous attention that there is between a coxcomb and a gentleman. It does not follow because sycophancy is detestable that disregard of the amenities is commendable. Not less objectionable than either extreme of manner is the patronizing air. Men of self-respect prefer to be chilled by reserve rather than be flattered or patronized. It is what is due normal self-respect that the principal is called upon to render. That cannot be galling to his own self-respect. An over-lofty idea of his own personal importance is not what is usually dignified by the name self-respect, and it would be a misnomer if it should be so named. The wholesaler who can boast that he is personally acquainted with every customer he has is deserving of credit, not only for his good sense but also for his memory, as such a man is sure to have a longer list to keep in mind than most of his competitors. A pleasing manner costs little and yields big profits. All other things being equal, it gives immense advantage to a competitor, and though it cannot make up for quality, it can in many cases balance an unfavorable price.

* * *

We heard a retailer remark not long ago that, though he had traded for years with a particular house, he had yet to change the

time of day with one of the principals of that house. The fact that he had traded for years there was no guarantee that he would always do so, and though he had no other fault to find than that of apparent lack of interest in him or his trade, he would no doubt have gone elsewhere with his custom but for the liking he contracted for one member of the staff who usually waited upon him. Rarely, indeed, a customer expects too much. An instance is recalled: Years ago a traveller for a certain house made periodical visits to the centre of a lumbering region, where the keeper of the general store was the right man in the right place. A strong, athletic fellow, he was easily capable of vanquishing any of the rough customers who resorted to his store for both wet and dry groceries. He was far from polished in his manners, but he was an open-handed, jolly fellow, who gave the traveller in question a rousing good time upon every occasion that the latter came that way. The traveller always sold a very big bill of goods and always was promptly and fully paid. That trader came to the city when something was going on here, and of course went to the house that got so much of his money. He was an uncouth and rather forbidding man to look at, and when he announced himself was taken aback that no fuss was made over him. He was rather outspoken in the expression of his opinion about the dandified manners of the people connected with the concern, and asked for his friend the traveller, whom he had often received with the most uproarious hospitality. He could not understand why the latter should be so much more subdued than was his wont, but was treated well. He was disappointed, however, in not having the traveller for his companion in a hilarious spell of enjoyment, and from that time his custom fell away. This man looked for more than a cordial reception, and the house forfeited his trade because he was disappointed.