

THE CANADIAN GROCER

& GENERAL STOREKEEPER

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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 epithet "dishonored," in its application to an unaccepted draft, means just the same thing that it does in any other connection. It is not one of those commercial terms which have taken on a secondary or special meaning that utterly differs from and completely displaces the primary one. It means "to put dishonor upon," and not simply upon the insensible paper, but upon the person or firm who has issued that paper. Hence, our correspondent, whose letter appears on another page, rightly regards the non-acceptance of a draft, in certain circumstances, as an insult to the house to whom it is returned dishonored. The circumstances required to make it such an offence are: that the goods for which the trader is drawn upon have been received some time before the draft is made upon him; that he has had sufficient time in which to notify the drawer of any mistake or other fault in the shipment; and that warning has been given him that the draft will be made at a certain

time. These circumstances give to any man of a courteous disposition a chance to do any demurring, or protesting or appealing for extra time before the draft comes. If he has had adequate opportunity to find all fault and put in all excuses beforehand, his neglect to make use of it until he does so by dishonoring the draft is exceedingly ungracious and offensive. A man may not have the money when the draft comes, but in the conditions above supposed, he could say before he is drawn upon that he would be unprepared.

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There are circumstances in which the refusal to honor a draft is no breach of commercial amenity. When the draft accompanies the bill of lading, it frequently is presented for payment before the goods are seen. Of course even between the most upright and largest concerns the refusal to honor a draft till the condition of the goods has been looked into is no more than a matter of ordinary caution. In such a case it is not an unexpected thing, and the house whose draft is declined for such a cause can find no fault with anybody. It happens as well sometimes that drafts accompanying bills of lading are drawn for goods that the receiver is dissatisfied with. He has no option in such a case but to pay or dishonor the draft. With the policy of a business man he usually and quite correctly takes the latter course. He had no chance to do anything before the presenting of the draft, and so is absolved from any charge of boorishness. If the goods have suffered in transit, through railway accident, weather damage or other cause, which may lead to a dispute about their value when come to hand, it is well that the receiver should keep as much as possible of the advantage in his own hands.

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To refuse to honor a draft for a trifling cause, or after ample time and opportunity have lapsed for all complaints and pleas to

have been made, is very exasperating to a creditor, and cannot be considered as anything short of an ultimatum from the debtor that he wishes to discontinue trading with the people he treats in this way. He cannot expect any very considerate treatment afterwards from a house which he has used so cavalierly. He puts himself at a disadvantage if he has any intention of trading in the future with that house, whose memory for an ill service may usually be depended on to be good. A rude man may ignore every chance of doing things in a gracious way, that he may exercise his crookedness to the full when the most disagreeable course is all that is left open to him; but in business there are always two sides to the connection, and the man who wants to work against the grain needn't expect to be rubbed down with anything much softer than a brick. Even if a trader has good cause to reserve payment for any particular shipment of goods, he has no reason to put off the statement of his objections until there is a draft made upon him. If he has delayed the matter long after receipt of goods, and after notice of intending draft, he ought to pay the latter when it comes, and depend upon the honor of the house he owes.

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The annoyance which many wholesale merchants and manufacturers are caused by returned drafts has been apparently greater this fall. The cause probably in the majority of cases is want of ready money, though some pretext is very often given instead of this real reason, the drawee being unwilling to admit that he was so negligent as not to advise his creditor in time of his inability to meet the debt. The practice of returning goods is perhaps not less objectionable, but it usually is more justified than that of returning drafts that follow delivery. The return of a draft should be made only in cases where nothing else can be done.