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WARRANTED GOODS.

Our attention has recently been called to the question of warranted goods. We are asked whether there is now any strong reason for manufacturers continuing the custom of replacing a defective article. This is a practice handed down from a former generation, and is probably one of those peculiar time-honored institutions which it will be hard to overthrow. It is a relic of those ancient days when every workman took such pride in his task that to engrave his name on his work was to erect an enduring monument of his skill and honesty. One can imagine with what confidence a workman of that class would hand a tool to a customer and tell him that if it ever failed to give satisfaction in any respect to bring it back and get a new one. The warranty was as much a feature of such a sale as the sale itself. It was not a bad custom either in the infancy of our manufactures, and when it was necessary for domestic makers to compete with famous houses across the Atlantic, to have domestic edge tools warranted, so that the purchaser would risk nothing in his hazardous experiment of buying an unknown make of saw or chisel or hatchet, or what not. The volume of business was lighter in those days, with our sparse population and our limited development, and when warranted goods were returned the time of the merchant who was called on to make the exchange was not severely taxed. The custom of warranty in those days probably accomplished a very useful purpose and was a most capital feature in pushing trade in new articles. But such reasons as then existed for warranting goods have wholly passed away. We are living and transacting business in a new era. Our manufacturers now have a reputation which needs no such bolstering. In the case of the old established makers the custom is probably continued because it is hard to drop an old habit, while new fledged manufactures are forced to adopt it because it is the custom of the trade. Price and quality are the two factors which now govern commercial transactions. Those who want cheap goods merely care nothing for a warranty and do not look for it. When quality is sought for there are other considerations that will govern a choice apart from a warranty. It has grown to be an annoying feature of modern trade, especially in the case of the large wholesale houses. The shipment of a single tool, the correspondence, the receipt of the exchanged tool, the transmission to the retail merchant and the correspondence in his case are all consumers of time and interferences with the harmonious dispatch of heavy trade. Our population is now too great, the volume of business transacted is too large, our manufacturers are too well known to continue this ancient custom of warranty. Quality should be made a sufficient test, and the manufacturer who pays strict attention to keeping up quality should have no need of attaching a warranty to every tool. — Iron Age.