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WHAT TO DO IN JANUARY

DEALERS should bestir themselves in two directions during the weeks that follow the Christmas rush. Inside the store, their best move is to arrange clearing sales and get rid as soon as possible of all left-over stock, that is liable to become dead. Outside the store, they should bestir themselves to cover the local trade in office supplies. The two departments of activity will keep trade alive during the reaction that inevitably follows on the heels of holiday excitement.

Left Over Stock.

The fortunate dealer is the one, who can so skilfully gauge the demand of his neighborhood, as to provide just the right quantity of any commodity to meet requirements. But few dealers come under this category and there is usually considerable stock left over after Christmas. Of this stock, the portion that is liable to become dead stock must be got rid of at once. There are annuals for one thing; there are calendars for another; there are numerous other articles which depreciate in value markedly just after Christmas. These must not cumber your shelves. Far better sell them at one half, one-third or one-quarter their value and pocket the money, than pay shop-rent for their storage.

Plan January Sales.

No time should be lost after Christmas Day has passed, in sticking your knife into prices. Make good use of your windows and your advertising space. For instance, suppose you are located in a market town, with a weekly newspaper as your advertising medium. Publication day is Thursday. Market day is Saturday. Get a good hot advertisement into the weekly, telling in straight language just what you are going to do on Saturday; what you are going to sacrifice and at what price. Utilize the calm of Friday to load up your windows and by means of good large show cards let the public know that you are giving them genuine bargains. They are aware that such-and-such an annual sold at \$1.50 before Christmas. The boy, who didn't get one, sees that it is possible to secure a copy on Saturday for 75 cents. Will he buy? Well, likely. A choice calendar, not procurable before Christmas for less than \$2.00, goes for \$1.00 only two weeks later. And so on.

Staple Stock.

But in addition to the stock that should be disposed of, there is other left over stock, especially in the book section, that may be good at other times and care should be taken to store this away so that it will not become shop-worn. This is a feature of retailing that dealers do not consider enough. We advise a thorough

inspection of the whole stock after Christmas and a careful disposition of the goods, that are to be shelved away. By this means a dealer knows just where he is at and he may assure himself that his goods are in a state of preservation.

Office Supplies.

On this subject, it is impossible to speak too strongly. Stationers have allowed the trade in office supplies to slip out of their hands, to a great extent through a lack of enterprise. The old-style systems are passing away and modern ideas have been brought forward to take their place. Instead of keeping in touch with the new developments, stationers have allowed city specialists to take away their old trade. It is not too late to repair the damage and, if stationers will only wake up, there will be a chance to recover lost ground. All interested should look for a paper in our January number on the new systems of book-keeping devices.

Local Travelers.

It is good policy to send out a clerk to call on the business men of the community and enquire about their office requirements. He should carry samples of your goods and, if you have adopted some of the new devices, a practical demonstration of their efficiency, should carry weight with many merchants and manufacturers.

Stock-taking.

The consensus of opinion seems to be that January is not the best time of year for stock taking. Stocks are not at their lowest and merchants are wearied after the holiday trade. For this reason it is better to wait until May or June before going into a detailed stock taking. In any case, it is best for the dealer to give his personal attention to the matter, as no clerk can perform the work as satisfactorily as the proprietor himself. We would recommend, however, a careful going over of the stock as soon after Christmas as possible in order that the dealer may see just how he came out.

Buying.

January buying need not be heavy. Some orders for office stationery and staple lines will probably be needed to keep the stock up to requirements. The dealer would do well to replenish his stock of picture post cards with some of the latest designs, as these goods are in constant demand. He should also see to it that his supply of Valentines is well-balanced and it is also time to think about Easter goods. A few books will probably appear in January and, to keep the public interested, some of these should be secured.