

THE CANADIAN GROCER

& GENERAL STOREKEEPER

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.
\$200 PER YEAR

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

Vol. V.

TORONTO, NOVEMBER 27, 1891.

No. 48

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.

If a trader employs a sufficient number of capable shop-hands to do the mere mechanical and routine work of his business, ought he himself to do such work? Does he further the ends of his business by making frequent headlong sallies into the packing room, into the warehouse and into the midst of rough service generally, where, with sleeves rolled up, he lifts on heavy cases, tears packages open, and throws things around like a porter. Such a man is much like an impetuous but not well-disciplined foot-ball player, who cannot be brought to believe, when the ball is out of his sphere of action, that it is in somebody's else; he feels that the winning of the game depends upon his exertions, and he cannot be kept in the one place where his usefulness is appreciated and trusted. He spreads himself all over the field, and dissipates his energy to comparatively little purpose, though he may toil and sweat: "like to a harvest man that's tasked to mow or all or lose his hire." When the ball gets to his place the man relied on to take care of it is probably not there, and in default of his presence a goal may be scored by the team he is working against. So it is with the trader who makes a practice of leaving the post for whose keeping he is more particularly responsible.

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A man may feel that the contagion of his fervid energy will react beneficially upon the industry of his clerks and porters, but he

ought also to remember that his own particular duties are entitled to as much of his spare ardor as he has in reserve. Picture a manager whose salary is \$15 per day dancing round a big package of goods knocking the cover to pieces with an axe, then yanking out the contents and strewing them over the floor, while a \$5-a-week clerk looks on nonchalantly, having long been accustomed to this officious assistance, and having therefore become case-hardened against the stimulating lesson of the example. The manager was really not doing his duty. Instead of being at his place busied with some of the executive problems or devising some of the financial schemes that relate to his proper work, he is really earning but \$5 a week, though he draws \$15 a day. The clerk could knock that box to pieces with less fuss and in quicker time, if he is employed in a concern whose affairs are properly administered, and the man who is responsible for their proper administration is taking the job out of the clerk's hands.

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The manager should be able to make his influence felt throughout all the grades of the staff without being under the necessity of taking a hand occasionally for example's sake in the rudimentary or detail work in which employes are engaged. The tone of his rule may be detected in the work of his subordinates, who can be infused with the right ideas and held answerable for the full discharge of their duties by the graded responsibility plan. The vigor of the chief will inform the whole staff if the head of each sub-division is sharply watched by the manager. Then the latter can confine himself to the work for which he is paid, and that work will be done all the better for the undivided attention it receives. There can be no doubt that trained, highly-valued powers

are not well employed when the possessor of them is working at what the crudest mind can do as well as he.

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It is necessary of course that the manager or the head of a business should know all about the detail involved in competent service in any part of that business. Too much such knowledge no man in a leading position can possess. But he is supposed to have acquired it in his training. It is one of the qualifications which fit him for the direction of others. Under judicious management he rose through the different degrees of service till he reached the topmost one, and it is probably as much due to the fact that a disciplinarian was at the helm as to any other external influence. The command of detail, not the slavery of detail, is what is expected of the manager.

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Failure is sometimes the penalty of misplaced energy. In a big concern there are plenty of chances to give attention to other people's business instead of one's own, as there usually are several other people. The opportunities for neglecting one's own duties are correspondingly numerous, and a business will be apt to drift. A certain business man is in mind who was the proprietor of a large store, engaging many hands. This man was noted for his wonderful physical energy. He would go like a shot from one place to another, but often fruitlessly, frequently neglecting to take note of the fact that what he wanted was at hand. He spent his bodily powers prodigally, but he never made all the use of his head he should have done. In all that he tried it was the same way. In a certain athletic exercise he excelled in quickness, but he often was beaten by a weaker, less capable man, simply because the latter did more head-work. Those who have the control of a business ought to transmit their energy through their mental rather than their physical mechanism.