

Customers Are Not Always Right, Storekeepers Find

Most Customers Fair, But Sometimes Minority Take Advantage of Stores

John Wannemaker started the mischief when he proclaimed "The customer is always right." Other department stores found it imperative to meet competition by following suit. The policy has sent many an executive to an early grave and worse still, it has become appallingly expensive for the customer.

Take the return evil, for example. In stores doing mostly a charge business, returns run as high as 19 per cent. One dress out of every four sold in exclusive specialty shops comes back. Many women seem to do their shopping after their buying. They send home half a dozen garments for consultation with husbands, mother, sister, and perhaps the cook, until one is finally selected. Fur scarfs are returned after having been worn at a party. The Monday following a big football game is a Roman holiday for the return of fur coats. In the pockets may be found cosmetics, handkerchiefs, and half-empty bottles of liquor. Houses are virtually redecorated for some gala event. After the ball is over calls are received to pick up rugs, chairs, glassware and china. Often not all the food has been washed off the dishes.

Met by Rival

Not long ago a load of furniture was sent to a customer in a New York suburb. As the van turned into the driveway, it was met by a truck from a rival concern coming out empty. The lady had accounts at both stores and had calmly ordered from the second shop duplicates of every piece of furniture from the first. The fact that it cost \$135 to send out each truck was something she never considered. She wanted to compare A's furniture with B's. In the end, she decided not to buy any of it; she shut the house for the winter and went south.

A good many returns, of course, unavoidable. Stores make mistakes; they deliver the wrong article or the wrong size or deliver it late. But most returns are not justifiable. Every survey shows that more than half are in no way the store's fault. Even in a medium-sized department store no fewer than 23 persons are involved in getting an article to a customer and getting it back in stock. The cost runs from 30 to 60 cents an item. Returns entail an annual outlay of \$50,000,000 for wasted labor alone. The indirect and intangible costs of the extra space required for returned merchandise damage and breakage, the settling of unjust claims, and the loss of potential sales while goods are out, are impossible to estimate.

Often Wrong

The customer is often wrong, too, in complaints against salespeople. Madam returns a pair of serim curtains in rags. "The girl assured me they were washable," she says, "and look at them!" Discreet questioning brings out that the curtains had been put into a washing machine. Salespeople are definitely instructed to call attention to unusual delicacy to forestall the complaint, "It didn't wear."

Another popular accusation, when credit is refused because a returned article is not in good condition, is

that the salesperson said, "Take this out and use it and see how you like it." This statement may be made occasionally by a foolish employee, but stores emphatically discourage such wiles. The records of salespeople are carefully checked for returns as well as sales.

Now the trouble with this whole policy is that it defeats its own ends. Everybody employs it. Store A does not gain a single customer by being idiotically lenient when store B is doing exactly the same thing. Again, a single incident may destroy the effect of years of patient acquiescence to whims. One customer spilled ink on a new glove. She demanded a new pair because, although the gloves had been guaranteed washable, the spot would not come out. The buyer explained that no amount of washing will remove ink stains. The customer was furious and never dealt with the store again.

Rules Broken

Maintaining the fiction that the customer is always right has created a problem of such proportions that there are continued attempts to combat it. Rules are made, and broken. One store wraps garments in cellophane and says it will not take them back if the wrapper is broken. Another affixes seals. In some stores the credit given for returned goods is only 75 per cent of the original price. Time limits, ranging from three to ten days, are set. Central testing bureaus settle some of the arguments about defective merchandise. Yet only in Washington, D.C., where women's clubs participated in the campaign, has there been substantial decrease in returns. Repeated attempts in Boston, Dallas, Detroit and New Orleans have met with little success. During a campaign in San Francisco, the period that goods were kept out decreased 40 per cent—but total returns decreased only five. Reporting habitual returners to a central bureau and refusing them credit precisely as if they were bad pay, as is now done in many communities, is a firm step in the right direction.

Anywhere but in a small town, a single store is helpless. And it is difficult to get merchants to act together. In one city all the stores agreed, at a meeting, to be adamant about time limits. Two days later the largest store in town advertised in all the papers, "We set no time limit on returns." The plan had to be abandoned until the next meeting.

The solution in the last analysis, rests with customers. Most of them are women. They should learn to shop as men do. Returns in men's departments are strikingly lower than elsewhere. Men, more accustomed to business dealings than women are less prone to make absurd demands. The average man has less time to waste. He wants to get his business over as rapidly and painlessly as possible, and he hasn't the leisure to spend hours in comparative shopping expeditions or in arguing over imaginary grievances.

If women curbed their proverbial privilege of changing their minds, they would not only bring light into the lives of harassed employees and help solve the traffic problem by eliminating trucks loaded with unwanted merchandise but they would also materially benefit the family budget by lowered prices.

Social and Personal

Mr. Walter Scott of St. Catharines is visiting at the home of his son, Mr. Walter Scott Jr.

Reeve J. A. Greene is attending County Council sessions in Toronto this week.

Mr. A. E. Glass and Mr. J. A. Mabley left Monday by motor for California. They expect to return about March 1st.

Please reserve the date Friday, January 28th for the annual Bridge and Euchre of the School and Home Club in the High School Gymnasium at 8 p.m.

Mr. T. H. Trench, Mrs. Frances Atkinson, Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Smith and Miss Betty Smith attended Sir William Mulock's birthday reception Wednesday afternoon.

W. I. TO HOLD SOCIAL EVENING
The Women's Institute will hold their Social Evening in the Municipal Hall, Thursday, January 27th at 8 p.m. All friends of the Institute are cordially invited.

HOUSE SOLD

Mr. Henry Bowes has sold the property at 36 Centre St. West recently purchased by him from the executors of the late Mrs. Lucy Bowes to Miss Millichamp of Toronto through Barr and Co., Real Estate Brokers, 22 College St., Toronto.

A LIMERICK BY RUDYARD KIPLING

There was a young boy in Quebec Who was buried in snow to his neck. They said are you friz? He said, yes I is. But that the cold you have in Quebec.

SKATING AT PUBLIC SCHOOL

Parents are advised that a sheet of ice at the Public School is reserved for junior pupils and skating is supervised by the teachers until 5 o'clock.

T. B. TESTING IN ALBION AND CALEDON BEGUN

The testing of cattle for T. B. began last week in Albion and Caledon townships. This testing was postponed last year owing to the opposition which developed at the time. This work has been done in the bordering townships and the districts will therefore soon present a solid block in this regard.

IN MEMORIAM

REAMAN—In loving memory of our dear mother, Mrs. D. S. Reaman, who passed away January 23rd, 1935. Through all our lives the thread appears,

Of mother love pure gold,
The woven pattern of our years,
No brighter fibres hold.
This golden thread has made for us
Sweet memories that shine,
And bind for all eternity,
Our mother's heart and ours.
—Family.

IN MEMORIAM

DIXON—In loving memory of a dear wife and mother, Laura Sheppard, who passed away January 21, 1935. Gone is the face we loved to see, Silent is the voice we loved to hear, Too far away for sight or speech, But not too far for thoughts to reach; Sweet to remember her who once was here, And who, though absent, is just as dear.
—Sadly missed by husband and daughter Lorleen.

IN MEMORIAM

REAMAN—In loving memory of a dear mother and grandmother, Mrs. D. S. Reaman, who passed away January 23, 1935. We mourned for her in silence, No eyes can see us weep, But many a silent tear is shed While others are asleep. Three years have passed since that sad day,
The one we loved was called away;
God took her home, it was His will,
But in our hearts she liveth still.
—Ever remembered by Ambrose, Pearl and family.

HIGH SCHOOL NOTES

(Sam Macdonald)

Two hockey games were scheduled to be played between a team from the local High School and a team from Aurora last week. Monday, January 10th the team from Aurora played the first game at the local arena. The first period gave Aurora the edge but neither of the teams were very good. Richmond Hill won the game by the score of 7 to 4. The first period was more of a game of golf with the opposing players batting the puck to each end of the ice. The second and third period showed some very exciting hockey. The other game will be played soon.
The first game of the basketball schedule was played Wednesday, Jan. 19th with Pickering College.
The Grad game Friday, January 14th was easily won by the senior team 28 to 16.

RICHMOND HILL BADMINTON CLUB PLANS EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT

The Richmond Hill Badminton Club founded last Fall, is now a thriving organization with a membership of about forty. It has planned its first major entertainment for Wednesday, January 26th. Willowdale and Thornhill Badminton Clubs are to be the special guests of the evening. Starting at 7.30 there will be a few friendly games amongst the three clubs. A big drawing card is exhibition games to be played by several experts from the city, who will display the correct technique involved in the various serves and returns. This feature should be a real advantage. Later there will be dancing. Of course there will be a lunch before farewells. The club looks forward to a record crowd and plenty of fun for all.

HEADFORD

The first meeting of the Young People's Union for this year was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. Curtis on Monday evening. After the hymn singing Rev. McDonald led in prayer. The lesson was read by Miss Love from Luke 10, 25-37; Romans 10, 8-15. Mrs. Acreman gave a reading "Shifting Gears," also the topic on a missionary theme, "A new church faces a new world" which was very interesting. Murray Acreman read a poem "1938". An article on the life of the late Miss Dow, a Canadian missionary to China was given by Mrs. Acreman. The example and memory of Miss Dow will long linger among the Chinese where she worked. After the program the executive met to plan for other meetings. An outcome of the business meeting was a resolution that the president open each meeting before the convener of the evening takes charge.

Next Monday the Y.P.U. will meet at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Freeman Barker.

The congregational meeting will be held on January 25th.

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Stewart of York Mills were visitors of Mr. and Mrs. Victor Stephenson on Sunday.

Miss Ruth Bice visited her friend Miss Gwen Smith on Sunday.

Mr. Herb Smith, Miss Gwen Smith and Miss Love attended the Junior Farmers Banquet at Victoria Square on Tuesday night and report a good time.

Mr. Elmer Leek and aunt attended the funeral of a relative at Bolton on Monday.

Letters from The People

"THINKING THE WORST"

Editor, The Liberal

Dear Sir:—

Multitudes of people are quicker to believe the worst of others than they are to give them the benefit of the doubt.

An illustration? This will serve. This man had been an ardent prohibitionist for many years; in public and private life he was known far and wide as one who never touched any alcoholic beverages at any time. There came great and deserved honor to him—with its attendant gatherings. Gatherings where formerly there had been served drink in many forms and in abundance. A daily paper in referring in advance to one of these gatherings wrote of the "punch with a stick in it" that would be served and immediately the barrage of letters was on. Many who had known the public man well for years wrote him expressing their great surprise that he should have abandoned his principles for position and reading him a fine curtain lecture for his sin in serving liquor at his gathering.

It never dawned upon these that the fine man they had known so long might not be guilty of the offence charged—that the paper might be wrong in what it wrote. They just assumed he was guilty and scorched him with their letters.

They did not know that before the function he had issued orders in writing that no liquors were to be served in any form and that these instructions had been observed strictly. They just believed the worst without a single endeavor to learn the truth of the affair. It's strange but why do so many seem to prefer thinking the worst in preference to the best? It seems that way so often.

Published in the Canadian Baptist January 13, 1938 by editor Lewis F. Kipp, B.A.

May I add to the above by Mrs. Kipp. We who have worked for 8 years with Mrs. Matthews as president of our Baptist Women's Foreign Mission Board frequently entertained in their home, love and honor Dr. Albert and Mrs. Matthews for their high standard of Christian service, feel keenly this effort to connect them with the liquor traffic. It is not the first. Thank you.
Richmond Hill, Ont. Anna Moyle.

UNIONVILLE

The fine sum of \$320.00 was gathered in during the year and a substantial missionary bale and box of clothing, etc. collected, besides a goodly number of quilts sent to Norway House, was reported on the year's work at the January meeting of the W.M.S. of Unionville United Church, held at the home of Mrs. J. Brown.

In reviewing the 2nd chapter of the study book, Mrs. E. E. Braithwaite, with the aid of a map, made it very interesting. In 1884 the British Foreign Missionary Society was organized. Some of the great missionaries sent were Dr. Geddes to the New Hebrides, Rev. W. Currie to Angola, Africa, Rev. O. Kilborn to Chengtu and Miss J. Dow to Honan, China.

Mrs. H. Whaley gave an appropriate talk in memory of the three life members, namely, Mrs. C. Crawford, Mrs. A. McKinnon and Mrs. J. H. Chant, who have passed away recently. Mrs. Crawford was for over fifty years an active missionary worker and president for many years. Mrs. McKinnon was always interested in the W.M.S. and Mrs. Chant was an active worker and 1st vice-president at the time of her death. Mrs. Whaley closed with repeating some beautiful verses.

CENTRAL UNITED CHURCH UNIONVILLE

Pastor—Rev. A. E. Owen

10 a.m.—Church School.
11 a.m.—"Prayer and Good Management."
7 p.m.—"Some Reformation Minds."

EBENEZER UNITED CHURCH

1.30 p.m.—Church School.
2.30 p.m.—"Prayer and Good Management."

RAILWAY BARGAIN FARES THIS WEEK-END

From Toronto to all points on the Temiskaming Railway including Cochrane, Noranda and Kapuskasing. Also to Ottawa and Montreal. Fare and services from any C.N.R. ticket office.

RICHMOND HILL UNITED CHURCH

Rev. C. W. Follett, B.D., Pastor Sunday, January 23rd

11 a.m.—"God's Search for Man."
2.45 p.m.—Sunday School. All Departments.

7 p.m.—"Man's Inhumanity to Man." Song service with old favorite hymns at 7 sharp. Everybody welcome.

P.S.—The annual meeting of the congregation will be held on Wednesday evening next at 6.30 o'clock. Supper will be served at 6.30 after which the business of the church will be transacted. Come and share the evening with us.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH

(Anglican)

RICHMOND HILL

Rector: Rev. W. F. Wrixon, L.Th. Sunday, Jan. 23rd Epiphany 3

Services 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Sunday School and Bible Class 3 p.m. All Welcome

W. A. Supper Friday, January 21st Annual Vestry Meeting Monday, 24th

RICHMOND HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. J. D. Cunningham, B.D., Minister Sunday, January 23rd

11 a.m.—"God's Redemptive Purpose."
2.30 p.m.—Sunday School.

7 p.m.—"The Glory of the Ungifted." The annual meeting of the congregation will be held on Monday evening, January 24th at 8 p.m. in the Sunday School room.

MAESTRO PAUL

Well known voice teacher and chitic will undertake to train eight boys in the art of singing children's folk songs for concert and radio appearances. Only those with good vocal material will be accepted.

Auditions from three to four o'clock Saturday, January 22nd at the Rustic Inn Studio. Accompanist, Mrs. J. W. Johnson.

MRS. ISOBEL BANNERMAN

Elocution and Dramatic Art

WEEK-END SPECIALS

Domestic Shortening, 2 lbs.	25c.
Peaches, tin	11c.
Adanac Flour, 3/4 lb. bag	14c.
Cowan's Cocoa, 1 lb. tin	22c.
Benson's Corn Starch, pkg.	11c.
Pure Lard, 1 lb.	14c.
Crisco, 1 lb. tin	22c.
Matches, large box	7c.
Clark's Tomato Juice, 3 large tins	25c.
Oranges, 1 dozen	19c.
Chocolate Layer Cakes, each	25c.
Rinso, large pkg.	23c.
Prunes, large, 2 lbs.	19c.

KERR BROTHERS

BAKERS — BUTCHERS — GROCERS
Phone 117 Richmond Hill

ROYAL THEATRE AURORA

TO-DAY, THURSDAY, JANUARY 20TH

WILL ROGERS - ROBERT TAYLOR in

"HANDY ANDY"

We are again pleased to present this great comedy. An evening of entertainment for all.

FRIDAY - SATURDAY, JAN. 21 - 22 DOUBLE FEATURE BILL

JACK OAKIE - ANN SOTHERN in

"SUPER SLEUTH"

All will enjoy this farcical murder mystery. It's a real laugh romp from start to finish.

Also SMITH BALEW - CECILIA PARKER in

"ROLL ALONG COWBOY"

A pleasant Western, rich in photography and good singing.

MONDAY & TUESDAY, JANUARY 24 - 25

IRENE DUNNE - RANDOLPH SCOTT - DOROTHY LAMOUR in

"HIGH, WIDE AND HANDSOME"

It is magnificent entertainment. In it you will find all the ingredients that go to make up the sort of film one can enjoy from beginning to end. A richly produced, spectacular and melodious show.

WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY, JANUARY 26 - 27

CARY GRANT - CONSTANCE BENNETT - ROLAND YOUNG in

"TOPPER"

It is one of the funniest comedies of the year.

Feed Master

FOR BETTER RESULTS

FIRST THREE WINNERS in the Sainsbury Competition for Wiltshire Sides at the Royal Winter Fair were raised by Master Feeders — MASTER PIG FEED CONCENTRATE and MASTER PIG STARTER!

MASTER DAIRY FEEDS are being used by more and more feeders every day. MASTER GAINMAKER DAIRY FEED (24%) and MASTER DAIRY CONCENTRATE (32%) are ideal for long-time, trouble-free milk production. MASTER DRY AND FRESHENING FEED is the NEW and BETTER feed for dry and freshening dairy cows!

MASTER POULTRY FEEDS are setting new records this year. The highest record for a year's production ever made in Canada (all breeds considered) was produced by birds started on MASTER CHICK STARTER and grown on MASTER GROWING MASH!

THIRTY BIRDS owned by L. F. Bevan of Thornhill, Ont., qualified in Official R.O.P. this year with records from 207 to 313 eggs per bird per year on MASTER RED HEAD EGG MASH C.L.O.!

Get on to MASTER Feeds NOW!

Wilfred R. Dean
Thornhill, Ontario