

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Conducted by Paul C. Olsen.*

THE EMOTIONAL APPEAL.

"Eight dollars for two ounces of perfume just because it has a French name and a pretty bottle! Curious indeed are the ways people spend their money."

Ezra Shaw shook his head as he spoke these words to himself. Through the door of his drug store the object of his remarks, Margaret Mullen, was breezily disappearing. She was indeed a vision in her luxurious caracal coat, close fitting hat and high-heeled, patent-leather slippers.

"Times certainly have changed," continued Mr. Shaw. "Fifty years ago when I started in the drug business I sold two ounces of almost any perfume from a shelf bottle for a quarter. Now the same thing dressed up in a fancy colored bottle with gold labels and a satin lined box with a tassel, sells for \$8.00.

"And the surprising thing is that I sell more perfume at \$8.00 a bottle than I used to sell at a quarter a bottle!"

After the willing way in which Margaret Mullen parted with \$8.00 for a bottle of perfume, you may be very much surprised, perhaps, to hear Miss Mullen's conversation a few minutes later with the druggist's business neighbor, Oscar Sharp, local stationer and bookseller.

In Mr. Sharp's store, Miss Mullen was exclaiming with no little petulance, "What!—five cents apiece for these report covers and I need six of them. It certainly is expensive to go to college now-a-days. These professors must think we students are made of money the way they make us buy books and supplies."

Why should Miss Mullen display such utter nonchalance in the expenditure of \$8.00 and a few minutes later complain so bitterly at making a thirty-cent purchase?

A recent advertisement said that thousands upon thousands of furnaces installed in 1903 were in use to-day in American homes. On the other hand, scarcely one of the automobiles built in 1903 is being operated to-day. The advertisement pointed out that the improvements in furnace design and construction have been just as startling since 1903, as have been the improvements in automobile design and construction. Why should people be so quick to buy the latest improved automobiles and so slow to make changes in furnace equipment?

A college student spends gayly \$3000 to \$5000 and more for the necessities and luxuries of good living during the four years he is obtaining his college education, but objects most strenuously to paying a total of \$30.00 to \$50.00 in these four years, for the necessary books and supplies from which a large part of this education must come.

Week after week a young man pays \$5.50 each for theatre tickets, but he complains bitterly when the price of his railroad commutation ticket for a whole month is raised from \$6.94 to \$7.48.

To this young man, \$2.00 seems little enough to pay for a box of candy, but

* Instructor of Merchandising, Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, University of Pennsylvania, Lecturer on Business Administration, Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science.

when a waiter in a chain restaurant gives him a check which is five cents too much you should hear his angry complaint.

Women's fancy in shoes quickly changes from frail lizard skin pumps to sturdy sport brogues with low, flat heels. The \$15.00 pumps are discarded long before they are worn out in favor of the new sport shoes which likewise cost \$15.00. Yet the very same women who speedily discard one kind of \$15.00 shoes for another have been known to transfer their trade from one druggist to another for no more reason than that in one store she had to pay five cents to obtain two two-cent stamps from a stamp machine, while the other druggist sold stamps at no premium.

These idiosyncrasies of people's buying habits which result in amazing extravagances in some directions and the pettiest kind of parsimony in other ways arise from a variety of motives. However, the result of an analysis of these motives is that they all come from the basic idea that people respond and spend more readily for the things they like to do than they do for the things they ought or have to do.

In other words, emotion is a more powerful selling force than is reason.

A now famous breakfast food was lifted from the dead level of a mediocre success to the heights of leadership in its field when the advertising appeal was changed from the idea of "this breakfast food is good for you" to the idea that "this breakfast is most delicious tasting cereal you ever ate."

How can a retail druggist apply this idea to increase the rewards and profits of his own business? Few people realize the tremendous influence for larger sales and increased profits in the retail drug business that a number of far-seeing manufacturers have been through their effective application of the emotional appeal in the sale of their products. For instance, whose idea was it to sell two ounces of perfume attractively packed for \$8.00, instead of continuing to let the druggist dispense perfume from shelf bottles at a fraction of the present price? Think what this increase in the general level of perfume prices has meant to the druggists' sales and profits.

Perfumes are not the only lines which are susceptible to emotional appeals. A dozen other lines of toilet goods might be mentioned. Under the leadership of a few aggressive manufacturers, candy has been lifted from the limitations of five, ten and twenty-five cent paper bags to \$1.00, \$3.00 and even \$5.00 boxes. The manufacturer, the druggist and the customer have all profited from this rise in drug-store candy standards.

Fountain pens have been transformed recently from the category of drab necessities to beautiful and ornamental merchandise eminently suited for gifts or personal use. This has been accomplished by the introduction of colors and various novel effects and models.

A druggist I know sold hundreds of fifty-cent cigars when he displayed with them this sign. "Why not smoke the finest cigar made—fifty cents." His patrons simply could not resist the lure of this luxury appeal.

From these few examples it is apparent, I trust, that a druggist has in his own hands a means to increase his sales and profits. It is easiest to sell the goods which people buy for the enjoyment or comfort their purchase will bring. Feature, therefore, the goods which have this appeal and be sure that in their display and sale this appeal is brought to the attention of the customer. Any druggist who has

intelligence enough to conduct a retail store has intelligence enough to select from his stock the goods which are most readily adaptable to these emotional appeals.

HOLIDAY DECORATIONS.

In Seattle at Christmas time the down-town streets are decorated with evergreens and other holiday perennials. Festoons of cedars, firs and hemlock are stretched between the ornamental lamp posts and the stark simplicity of each lamp post is relieved with hanging decorations of the greens for which the Pacific Northwest is justly famous. The hurry and bustle of the busy city seems softened by the quiet beauty of these natural and appropriate decorations. An atmosphere of good cheer, goodwill and tolerance abounds. Merchants, their patrons and holiday visitors to Seattle all have commented most favorably about these decorations.

The decorations, of course, are but a physical manifestation of the Christmas spirit. Their appearance tends to arouse in those who see them the mellowness and generous impulses characteristic of Christmas time.

If Christmas greens placed outdoors on the busiest streets of a hurrying city are really credited with an important influence upon the Christmas spirit of that city, isn't it reasonable to suppose that within the comparatively quiet confines of a drug store, appropriate and beautiful Christmas decorations will promote the spirit of Christmas among the people who pass and enter the store. The drab sameness of the store is transformed by the magical touch of appropriate decorations into a veritable haven of Yuletide cheer. Not only are the patrons of the store influenced by the holiday atmosphere created by these decorations but, also the people in the store go about their work with a new zest and interest inspired by their bright, cheery surroundings.

Christmas decorations in a drug store follow two general lines. The first is the decoration of the store itself—wreaths at the windows and doors, and at the mirrors behind the soda fountain, streamers overhead of evergreens or red and green crepe paper joined to Christmas bells and wreaths, here and there a life-like picture of old Santa himself, and sprigs and wreaths of holly and other greens at various vantage places about the store.

So much for the store itself. In addition, let every possible bit of merchandise which is displayed or sold in the store carry with it a reflection of the holiday spirit. A bow of bright red ribbon or a sprig of holly tied to a perfume bottle telegraphs instantly to all who see it the spirit of Christmas. A generous use of holiday boxes, gay Christmas tissue paper and wrapping paper, red ribbon and holly ribbon, red and green twine all help to impart to the merchandise they include, the spirit of Christmas and all that it represents.

Immediately after Thanksgiving is not too soon to decorate the store for Christmas. But the druggist who waits until later does not make his preparations in vain. Remember a large proportion of the Christmas shopping in drug stores is done at the very last minute. It is to the drug store that people turn hurriedly and belatedly for the overlooked, almost forgotten gifts for Aunt Edna and Cousin Clara. Open early and late, the convenient drug store is a haven for harassed and forgetful shoppers, both women and men. The foresighted druggist does well to prepare himself for this last minute holiday rush with merchandise and decorations appropriate to the Christmas season.