

An Error

That Took

37 Men, 3 Women, 2 Boys
and 8 Horses To Correct

*Needless Mistakes That
Swell Overhead And Add
To The Cost Of Modern
Business, With A Graphic
Lesson How They Hurt.*

BY JERRY MCQUADE, JOURNALIST

COPYRIGHT 1919

MCKESSON & ROBBINS, INC.

MANUFACTURING CHEMISTS

91 FULTON STREET

NEW YORK CITY

*Were half the power that fills
the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed
on camps and courts
Given to redeem the human mind
from ERROR,
There were no need of arsenals
and forts.*

—LONGFELLOW.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

1. Merchant, desiring $1/12$ doz., writes order for "1 at \$2.00 doz." instead of " $1/12$ doz." or "One Only."



"All tragedies have their beginning in error."—Gary.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

2. Wholesaler's stock clerk, being left to guess what dealer really desires, guesses 1 doz. and ships 1 doz.



"When the prescription is wrong, so will be the medicine."

—The Country Doctor.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

3. Wholesaler's bill clerk enters charge for 1 doz. and mails invoice.



*"Plant a weed and you raise a weed.
From the seed of error you get error.
Oranges never grow on cactus plants."*

—Burroughs.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

4. Merchant receives invoice showing larger shipment than desired. Gets mad.

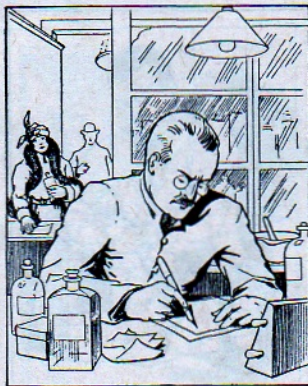


"What you sow you reap. Start trouble and it will pursue you like a wasp."

—Walt Whitman.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

5. Merchant writes letter stating he will return 11/12 doz. when received.



"Wasting 5 minutes to repair what 5 seconds extra care should have prevented, has kept many a man poor."

—Peter Cooper.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR.

6. Goods arrive. Clerk removes 1/12 and re-packs 11/12 for return.



"Time needlessly employed is time lost. Time lost is money lost."

—Ben. Franklin.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

7. Merchant, who happened to conduct a sub-postal station, telephones post office to send parcel post wagon to call for 11/12.



"Spending 5 cents for an avoidable purpose is equivalent to throwing 5c. out of the window—it's gone forever."

—Poor Richard's Almanak.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

8. Parcel post wagon picks up 11/12 and starts it back.



"Utilizing the energies of men in superfluous work saps the vitality of a nation in times like these."

—McAdoo.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

9. Clerk at post office cancels stamps and routes package.



"If prosperity is to continue, the public utilities and their employees must not be burdened with non-essentials."

—Willard.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

10. Post office porter place 11/12 on mail wagon for delivery to train.

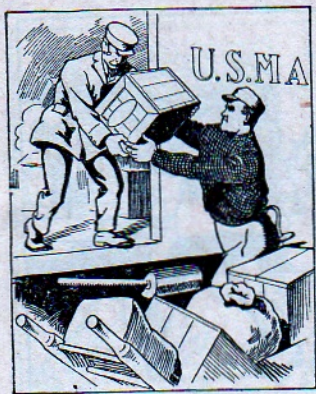


"The world cannot be fed and clothed unless American business men help correct the causes of railroad congestion."

—Baker.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

11. Railway mail clerk receipts for and sees that package is put off at destination.

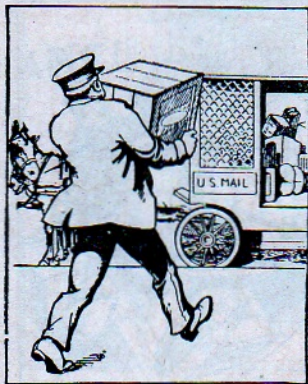


"He who aids to clog the wheels of commerce, embarrasses a whole nation."

—Daniel Webster.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

12. Post office employees, horse and truck pick up package at railroad depot and carry it to nearest post office.



"Every time human energy is diverted from useful employment, the world steps back instead of forward."—Schwab.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

13. From post office another postal employee, horse and truck carry package back to wholesaler's warehouse.



"A dollar frittered away through carelessness, is a dollar burned up."

—Armour.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

14. Wholesaler's receiving clerk receives package and makes out receiving ticket in TRIPLICATE.



"No man can add to another man's expense of doing business, without adding to his own expense; the buck you pass comes back."

—Drug Topics.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

15. Porter carries 11/12 back to wholesaler's stock shelves.



"Carting back to-day what was carted away yesterday, costs money, for which the man who causes that extra carting inevitably must pay."—*Wanamaker.*

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

16. Boy takes copy of 11/12 receiving ticket to wholesaler's claim agent.



"Save an unnecessary step and you save tuppence; waste a step and you waste tuppence."—Dean Swift.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

17. Claim agent orders file girl to dig out original order.



"When a man's time is consumed correcting other men's blunders, productive effort ceases."—Harriman.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

18. Claim agent calls stenographer to take letter to merchant explaining how mistake occurred.



"If the thoughtless could always see the mess they make and the trouble required to repair their thoughtlessness, I believe they would be ashamed of themselves."—Adam Smith.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

19. Boy takes memo from claim agent to bookkeeping department, authorizing it to allow credit for returned merchandise.



"Until we cut out the lost motions—the wasteful, unnecessary tasks—we can never have 100% efficiency."—Emerson.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

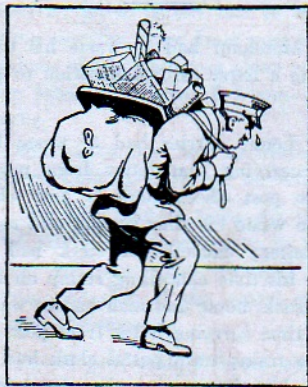
20. Bookkeeper enters credit for returned 11/12.



"Business is a matter of motions; increase the motions and you increase the expense; decrease the motions and you decrease the expense."—Ford.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

21. Credit memo made out and mailed to merchant.



"The sum of human waste, the result of carelessness, if gathered together each year would represent a fortune whose size would feed the world for 100 years."—James J. Hill.

SEE WHAT WAS WASTED

1. Merchant had to waste his time writing a letter calling attention to the error.

2. Letter carrier had to waste his time carrying that letter from postal box to post office; clerk at post office had to waste his time sorting and routing letter; cancellation clerk had to waste his time cancelling stamp on letter; truck, horse and man had to waste their time carrying letter from post office to train; train postal clerk had to waste his time seeing that letter got off at right destination; another man, horse and truck had to waste their time carrying letter from train to post office in city of destination; postal clerk in

that post office had to waste his time routing letter to station of carrier who delivers it; letter carrier had to waste his time carrying letter from post office to address of wholesaler—a clean waste of the labor of 8 men, 2 horses, and 2 trucks.

3. Merchant's clerk had to waste his time repacking 11/12ths not needed.

4. Merchant had to waste his time, that of girl telephone operator, in telephoning to post office to call for 11/12ths and that of the postal clerk who took the message.

5. Parcel post man, 1 horse and 1 truck had to waste their time carting 11/12ths from store to post office.

6. Parcel post clerk at post office had to waste his time cancelling stamps, weighing and routing package.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

7. Railway mail clerk had to waste his time receipting for, watching and putting package off at destination.

8. Railroad had to waste its space transporting 11/12ths at a time when transportation was already horribly congested.

9. Postal employee at destination had to waste his time removing 11/12ths from car to parcel post wagon.

10. Post office had to waste the time of a driver, horse and truck to pick up 11/12ths at railroad and carry to post office, and then another driver, horse and truck, their time to carry package from post office back to wholesaler.

11. Wholesaler's receiving clerk had to waste his time and stationery making out receiving ticket in triplicate.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

12. Boy had to waste his time taking copy of receiving ticket to Claim Agent.

13. Porter had to waste his time carrying 11/12ths from receiving office back to stock room.

14. Claim Agent had to waste his time and that of 1 file girl digging up original order.

15. Stenographer had to waste her time typing dictated letter from Claim Agent to merchant, explaining how mistake occurred.

16. 8 Employees, 2 horses and 2 trucks of the post office had to waste their time transporting that letter to the merchant.

17. Boy had to waste his time carrying memo to bookkeeping department authorizing issuing of a credit to careless merchant.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

18. Bookkeeper had to waste his time entering credit in books for return of 11/12ths and making out credit memo to mail to merchant.

19. 8 employees of the post office, 2 post office horses and 2 trucks again had to waste their time forwarding that credit memo to Mr. Merchant.

INEXCUSABLE WASTE OF THE TIME AND ENERGY—THAT MIGHT OTHERWISE BE USEFULLY EMPLOYED—OF

37 MEN, 3 WOMEN, 2 BOYS,
8 HORSES AND 8 TRUCKS.

In this particular instance, the error was made by the customer, but similar errors are made every day by employees of manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

What This Error Cost in Dollars and Cents

Time of 42 Men, Women and Boys at only 5c. each.....	\$2.10
Time of 8 horses and trucks at only 10c. each.....	.80
Freight both ways on 11/12ths re- turned.....	.60
Writing 3 letters, time, stationery, stamps, etc., 20c. each.....	.60
Merchant's telephone for parcel post.....	.05
Total.....	\$4.15

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

With loss of interest on merchandise in transit, risk of breakage, etc., added.

\$2.15 MORE THAN THE TOTAL
VALUE OF THE GOODS
SHIPPED.

BUT FOR INEXCUSABLE ERRORS
OF THIS KIND, THE MANUFACTURER'S
AND WHOLESALE'S PRESENT
OVERHEAD CHARGE WOULD BE LOWER;
HIS BUSINESS EFFICIENCY GREATER.
IF HIS OVERHEAD WERE LOWER,
HE COULD SELL HIS MERCHANDISE
FOR LESS MONEY.

THE STORY OF AN ERROR

***"From the errors
of others a wise
man corrects
his own."***

***Let's
Minimize
Errors***