

Going to Lipton's

Think of what it must be like to start your own business. It's your idea, your money, your risk and your hard work. If it is going to succeed and last so that you can earn enough to make a living, you have to sell more than you spend each month.

By the time Thomas Lipton comes back from America he has saved £100, enough to open his first shop. In 1871, on his birthday, May 10th, he gets up very early and pushes his cart down to the quayside where the boats arrive from Ireland with fresh produce. It takes all his strength to push the cart, now loaded with ham, eggs, butter, cheese and other basic foods, back up to his brand new shop. It is his first day of business, the first day of testing his big idea, the first day of **Lipton's Market**.

Back at the empty shop he has to work fast, unloading the cart, dressing the shop window with a bright display, and putting ticket prices on everything he has bought. He had already decided to sell good, quality products at prices working people could afford. "Well bought is half sold," he would often say.

On that first day, Thomas relies on his own warm welcome and charm as well as low prices to make his customers happy. By the end of the day his takings are £2 and 6s. More customers come the next day and the day after that. Soon, Thomas is working so hard to satisfy demand that he often sleeps on a bed under the counter in his shop.

Before long, his shop is making enough money that he can afford to buy not just one, but several more shops and employ staff. In each new LIPTON'S he makes sure of the same low prices, clean and bright displays and, most importantly, that the staff know what to do.

