

"Attendance is the Price of Membership"

Wage Cutting

By Samuel Rosinger

It is the simplest and easiest way out of a bad situation. It takes no thinking, no pondering. Reduced profits—reduced wages. It is obvious and intelligible to a child. Business is not philanthropy. Considerations of the heart do not enter into it. Sentiment must be kept out of it. Business has two aims which it must pursue ruthlessly and relentlessly. It must crush competition, and earn as large profits as possible. To achieve these ends, business must regard the human material needed to man the machinery, and make up the office or sales force, as a commodity to be bought at the cheapest price in the open market. Whether the unskilled laborer—and, owing to the lack of systematic vocational education, the large masses represent unskilled labor—is in a position to maintain on his meager wages a household, and provide his family with indispensable creature-comforts, or lay up for a rainy day, especially old age, when business casts him aside like a lemon, squeezed of its juice—is none of business' concern. Let social welfare agencies and organized charity look after these sentimental matters. And business is willing to contribute generously to these relief agencies. Business' sole purpose is to grow big by expansion and production and profit.

Strange as it may seem, this selfish, soul-less policy of business, is destined to bring about its own defeat and destruction. The mass production of industry is dependent upon mass consumption. And, unless the working masses are paid wages which, in addition to providing them with the necessities, leave a margin wherewith to secure the comforts of life, mass production is bound to come to a standstill. Those economists who claim that the depression is due not to over-production, but under consumption, have made a correct diagnosis of the illness from which humanity is suffering. And the only lasting remedy for the economic ill is a more equitable distribution of the profits of industry in the form of higher wages.

Especially now, when foreign nations, owing to tariff reprisals, and, above all, to their successful adoption of mass-production, have barred American manufactured goods, and therefore American industry has to depend very largely upon home markets and home consumption, cutting wages means severing the jugular veins of business and letting it bleed to death. For, divine harmony which prevails in the universe, checks the inordinate greed of soul-less business, and compels it to restore the upset economic equilibrium by a more generous distribution among the toilers of the profits of industry.

ROTARYGRAMS

OF BEAUMONT



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Slants at the Meeting

Well, you heard a good talk last week whether you liked it or not. It was supposed to be without bias for or prejudice against, and the measure of success attained will not be debated by us.

VIADUCT was the cry. Whether it was safer to crawl under or climb over.

You might as well have a coal car fall in your tonneau as a switch engine sitting in your lap.

To mar your vision with an elevated is no worse than have it excluded by a "banana" special.

We have heard so much about elevateds we feel an uplift ourselves. It may have been the bottom of our stomachs clamoring for food.

The barbershop experts have bombarded us with so much data we are dizzier than a stranger in a country club listening to the jargon of golf.

Vested rights, constitutional privileges and priority claims have been hurled at us with such unerring accuracy we are dodging worse than the off-side mule after a beating over the head.

We have gotten to the point where it is safer to agree than retreat. Your friends have become foes and your foes foul.

The impudence of locomotives has been emphasized and a bill of rights for handcars has been sustained.

Everything from the Mosaic Law to the Magna Charta and down to the "local ground rules" have been invoked to prove this is a golden opportunity or the sale of your birth right.

Figures have been juggled until millions sound like loose change from an old sock.

But we hope by the time you read this, you will have re-acted to the results like the purring pussy does to the hand that strokes it.

—Check.

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—Rotarygrams—

The bride was very much concerned at seeing twin beds in their bridal suite.

"What's the matter, dearest?" asked the attentive bridegroom.

"Why, I certainly thought that we were going to get a room all to ourselves."

—R—

The newlyweds on their honeymoon had the drawing room. The groom gave the negro porter a dollar not to tell anybody on the train they were bride and groom. When the happy couple went to the diner for breakfast next morning all the passengers snickered and pointed and eyed the couple knowingly. The groom called the porter and demanded: "Did you tell anybody on the train we were just married?"

"No, sir," said the dusky porter. "I told 'em you all was just good friends."

—R—

Mother: "That brazen Miss Vamp boasts that she has been kissed by every married man in town except one."

Father (absently): "I wonder who he can be?"

How Chain Stores Help The Community

Are chain stores a community asset?

Col. C. O. Sherrill, who recently resigned as city manager of Cincinnati to become an official of the Kroger Grocery and Baking Company, believes they are.

"Chain stores make large contributions to community chests and other charitable and civic efforts," he writes in the June Rotarian Magazine, and they invariably have memberships in chambers of commerce. The local representatives of the chain stores are not only allowed, but are urged by their management to participate actively in community undertakings."

Answering the often-repeated charge that chain stores take money out of the community, Mr. Sherrill asserts the contrary is true. Efficient distribution systems enable them to sell to the consumer with but a single mark-up in price of 20 per cent over actual production costs, whereas, according to the Harvard Bureau of Business Research, the combined independent merchant and wholesaler's mark-up is 28.3 per cent. The saving, declares Mr. Sherrill, is left in the community—and in the pockets of the consumer.

"Chain stores profits," he adds, "rarely exceed 2¼ cents on each dollar of business done. Of this, approximately 1 cent is paid out for dividends and 1¼ cents go to 'surplus' to be used for future purchases of buildings and new equipment."

Efficient chain store merchandising methods are rapidly being adopted by progressive independent storekeepers to their own advantage and to the advantage of the community, declares Mr. Sherrill. As a result, the old-fashioned, lard-barrel store of thirty years ago is giving way to the sanitary, attractive grocery of today that advertises its wares in the local newspaper.

"But," he comments, "there is a place for independents as well as for the chains, each giving the class of service for which it is best qualified."

Among the natural advantages of the independent store upon which the wise merchant is learning to capitalize are "personal zeal, and interest of ownership, personal contact of the owner with the consumer, and ability to grant special services such as delivery and charge accounts."—From the Rotarian Magazine."