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High Cost of Living

Sydney Business Man Claims That Retailer is not Responsible. Makes Comparison of Former Prices. Blames Combines for Increased Price of Goods

Says the Sydney Record:—Among all the problems that are before the people today there is perhaps none that receives so much attention as the high cost of living. One portion of the public blames the retail dealer for the high prices, another blames the combines. Few are disposed to blame the public itself. The wonder is if the public is being so unjustly dealt with as a large section of it, at least, would have us believe, that there has not been long ago an eruption which would sweep the combines, or retailers, or both, out of existence. The fact that the public has not got beyond the grumbling stage yet would seem to indicate that it realizes, no matter what it chances to say, that some of the blame can be laid at its own door. This at least is the opinion of a prominent business man in Sydney, who conducts one of the largest and most successful provision stores in the city, in an interview with a Record reporter.

"In the first place," the gentleman said, "the term 'high cost of living' is misleading. I claim that living is not really higher than it was years ago. Comparatively speaking it is lower. Many articles of course, have gone up in price, as, for instance, meat, milk, eggs and butter, but the prices of a great many other staple articles are lower, in some cases by as much as one hundred per cent. For instance, I saw lately books kept by a Cape Breton merchant about twenty-five years ago. Flour was put down at between ten and twelve cents a gallon, and tea fifty to sixty cents a pound. Now all these are staple articles of food, and the lower prices are paid for them today should offset the higher prices paid for such staples as meat and eggs.

RETAILERS PROFIT IS SMALL

"The retail dealer's profits are small. In proof of this I refer to Dun's record, where you can see that there have been more failures among retail dealers, especially retail grocers, during the past year, than in any other line of business. It was not an all-round bad season, for few manufacturers failed. Moreover, the hotel business was good. This goes to show that a good deal of travelling was done, from which we can infer that money was not practically scarce. Moreover, the prices of a great many articles, package meats and teas, for example, are not set by the retail grocer, but by the manufacturer. The retailer does not control the prices of these goods at all. Lately for example, the manufacturers have been putting up molasses in small tins, to sell at a fixed price, and beyond this price the retailer cannot go.

REAL CAUSE OF HIGH LIVING

"Admitting even that the cost of living is high, the blame of it cannot certainly be laid at the door of the retail dealer. Living, as most people live, is high, but not altogether because of high prices.

"In the first place, most buyers, especially women, do not exercise good

judgment in buying. Many women will come into a store and buy a five-pound package of rolled oats for twenty-five cents. They buy the package because it contains a cheap dish, worth three or four cents. For the same price they could buy seven pounds of the same article in bulk. In other words they are paying five cents a pound for rolled oat-meal which they could buy for three and a half. They will buy cream of wheat in packages at a cost of thirty per cent over the article in bulk, and puffed wheat, puffed rice, grape-nuts, and other package groceries, many of which are almost worthless as articles of food. People are too much inclined to buy foods of which they know nothing, because they are widely advertised and put up in fancy packages. A general return to old-fashioned oat meal porridge would mean a great saving of money. Grocers, of course, must handle these lines of goods, because customers ask for them. The dealers could advise them, but customers are chary about accepting advice. If a clerk advises a customer to buy any particular life in preference to another the question almost invariably is, "How much are you getting for pushing this line?" So the grocer learns to keep his advice, which only tends to bring suspicion on him, to himself, and the customer suffers in consequence.

ANOTHER REASON

"Another explanation for the (supposed) increased cost of living may be found in the steady influx of country men to the cities and towns. The women are responsible for a great deal of this. The solid advantages of country life are lost sight of in the more showy attractions of the city. The people who are not satisfied with the quiet comfort of the country can hardly be expected to live economically in the city. They are extravagant, and when they find that they are not making ends meet, they lay the blame on the high cost of living. For instance, one of our collectors called on a woman lately to collect a grocery bill. The lady made a part payment which the collector thought was less than she should have been able to make. The woman explained that she was keeping a dollar or so to enable herself and children to attend the nickel. Now, it is all right to go to theatres if one can afford it, but people with unpaid grocery bills should not think of it, or if they do, should grumble less at the high cost of living.

COMBINES PARTLY RESPONSIBLE

The combines, of course, are responsible for the increased price of some lines of groceries. Canned goods particularly have gone up in price under the combine. But canned goods are not among the necessities, and people could force down the prices by buying less. The prices of canned goods would certainly go down with the decreased demand for them.

(Continued on page 4.)

The Late John Whitman Almost a Centenarian

It Was His Desire to Reach the Century Mark—Was born in Nova Scotia in 1814.

Passaic, N. J., November 14.—John Whitman, Passaic's grand old man, died last evening at his home, 104 Passaic Ave., in his ninety-eighth year of his age.

Mr. Whitman, who was the father of Mrs. Frederick P. Fairbanks, of 120 Paulson Ave., was undoubtedly Passaic's oldest citizen in age, though not in residence, for he had lived here only about ten years. He was hale and hearty, only two years ago, making the journey to the summer home of his son, Clarence Whitman, at Katonah, N.Y., to attend the celebration of his ninety-fifth birthday, which was attended by nearly all his living five children, thirty-three grand-children, and twenty-three great grand-children.

Mr. Whitman had determined that he would live until he reached the century mark. While he was perfectly well, he was afraid he might fall, and for the past few years he kept indoors most of the time. Up to five years ago he was a familiar figure about the streets and a devoted attendant upon the services of St. John's church. He was always an enthusiastic churchman, having been senior warden of his parish church at Halifax. He was taken ill last week and it was seen that he was falling. But only last Saturday he was up to greet his daughter who came on from Boston. He was able to enjoy his pipe on the day of his death and the year came peacefully, while he slept, near midnight last evening. He was in full enjoyment of all his faculties and in his presence, a man of great physique, he was splendid.

Mr. Whitman was born on June 3rd, 1814, in a small village named Rosette, situated near Annapolis, Nova Scotia, in the land of Evangeline. He was a descendant of John Whitman, who came to the new world in 1638, and he was of a long-lived family, for while his father died at the age of eighty-three years, his father's grandmother, Mr. Whitman's great-grandmother, died at the age of one hundred and eleven years. A brother, now living in Annapolis, is eighty-eight years of age.

Mr. Whitman remained in Nova until 1856. For many years he was in business in Halifax and also in St. John. On coming to the United States, he first lived at Cambridge, Mass., and later in New York city. Ten years ago he came to Passaic, where he has since resided.

Mr. Whitman's wife died some thirty-six years ago and five children are dead. The other children, three sons and two daughters are now living. One son, Clarence Whitman, formerly president of the Merchants' Association of New York, is one of the largest cotton manufacturers in New York state. The other sons are Jas. Whitman, connected with the New York dry goods firm of Harding, Whitman & Co., and William Whitman.

Sad Fatality at Sherbrooke Village

Five-year-old daughter of C. W. Anderson Burned to Death, and Mother Also Badly Burned.

Sherbrooke, N. S., Nov. 27.—Two fatalities, which occurred early today have cast a gloom over the village. On Saturday evening Margaret, the five-year-old daughter of C. W. Anderson, so generally known as Warden of the Municipality, and President of the Scotia Lumber and Shipping Company, while playing near a table on which was a lighted lamp, upset the table and fell upon it and the overturned lamp. In an instant the child's clothing was a mass of flames. The mother, with a baby in her lap was in the same room and as soon as she could, the infant down ran to the assistance of the poor little girl who was rolling on the floor and being roasted alive. Mrs. Anderson rolled the child in a mat and held it around her while Laurie and another little daughter with admirable presence of mind procured a bucket of water and finally extinguished the flames, but too late to save little Margaret's life.

Drs. Ellis and Denmore were on the scene in a few minutes and did everything to relieve the child's suffering but she passed away in convulsions at midnight on Sunday. Mrs. Anderson was dreadfully burned on the hands and arms in her brave effort to save her child, and the child's death following so soon after, the mother's condition is now very serious.

Fire!

J. W. Beckwith's Store Narrowly Escapes Destruction by Fire.—Back of Shop Gutted and Stock Damaged by Fire and Water.

The store of J. W. Beckwith was almost gutted by fire early this morning. Shortly after one o'clock the fire broke out around the furnace pipe in the back shop and broke through the south wall. The ascending flames were seen coming over the roof by Mr. Beckwith from the windows of his house adjoining on the north. He is not in the habit of retiring early and fortunately was not asleep, otherwise, if the fire had not been discovered at this stage, nothing could have saved the building, and probably the disaster to the town would have been wide spread as there was a strong wind blowing from the south.

Almost at the same time the fire was discovered by the Captain of the fire department, M. McLeod, who lives a few doors to the south. Mr. Fred Beckwith was quickly aroused and ran to pull in the general alarm and at the same time aroused fireman McLean. In the meantime Mr. Beckwith and Mr. H. Banks had turned on the garden hose, but the small stream had little effect. In a short time however, all the fire company were on the spot with the hose reel, and the great stream of water quickly checked the flames which had been up to this time confined principally to the two stories in the back of the shop. The stock in the front of the shop, though not reached by the flames, is of course badly damaged by smoke and water, and the loss will be heavy. The insurance on the stock is \$6,000, representing probably about one-third of its value. The insurance on the building is \$2,000, the company represented being the Aetna.

Mr. Beckwith and his clerks were in the store quite late last evening marking Christmas goods. Fortunately a portion of his latest shipment of goods was still at the D. A. R. station awaiting delivery.

The warmest sympathy is expressed by our townsmen for Mr. Beckwith in his loss, the disaster being greater in that it comes just at the end of what promised to be an exceptional season's trade.

Praise is given the fire company which so quickly responded to the alarm and rendered their services so promptly and successfully. To this fact and the splendid water supply which the town possesses is due the escape of Bridgetown from the fate of Middleton a year ago.

A. DeW. Foster Makes His Maiden Speech

An Ottawa despatch is as follows:—Arthur DeWitt Foster, the brilliant young Conservative member from Kings, who defeated Sir Frederick Borden at the last election, delivered his maiden speech in the house of commons today upon the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne. Mr. Foster has a powerful voice and pleasing address and the ability which he displayed in the house may account in part for his notable victory, though he declared that his triumph over the minister of militia had not been a personal one but had represented the opposition of his constituents to the Tait-Fielding agreement.

Upper Granville

Upper Granville, Nov. 25.—Mrs. Edwin Dodge has been spending a week or more with her brother, Mr. Charles Dodge. Mrs. Dodge will spend the coming winter with her sister, Mrs. Henry Troop of Belleisle.

Mr. Edmund Clarke is visiting his daughter, Mrs. Penwick Balcom, near Annapolis.

Miss C. E. Longley is the guest of Mrs. Albert FitzRandolph.

November days are passing quickly, and have given us many changes in temperature. A broken winter at present seems apparent.

It is reported that Mr. Roy Fash, son of Mr. L. D. Fash, will remove shortly from Sydney, C.B., to Prince Edward Island.

Miss Jennie Fellows, who has been teaching with success in the far West, is expected home and will spend Christmas with her parents.

The Fruit Prices in London Down to Rock Bottom

London Telegraph Reviews the Conditions in the Fruit Market and Points out the Advantages and Disadvantages of our Great Crop in the Annapolis Valley.

(From London Telegraph)

Seldom has the supply of apples been so enormous. Every week there arrives from Nova Scotia a cargo consisting of anything from 25,000 to 35,000 barrels. Each barrel contains one hundred and twenty pounds of fruit, and those who are fond of simple calculations can by the facts stated, estimate the weight of apples sent into London from that fertile district. As usual, under such circumstances, the result is that very low prices are being obtained, not only at Covent garden but also at important sale rooms on the other side of the Thames. For the great market celebrated for choice fruits does not enjoy a monopoly of the colonial apple trade. Large consignments are sold in other parts of London.

APPLES AT TWO PENCE PER POUND

To give an idea of the remarkable cheapness of this good, sound fruit, it is necessary to explain that apples of large size, and almost perfect appearance are classed as number one, smaller samples being described as number two. It is not a distinction of quality, but of size, and the authorities in Nova Scotia are exacting in their demands that strict attention shall be paid to the grading and selecting of the fruit. During the week ending today thousands of barrels of ribston or ribston pippins, have been sold wholesale at Covent-garden and elsewhere at 9s. to 10s. per barrel for number ones, and 8s. to 9s. for number twos. This means that considerably less than 1d. per pound has weight of edible apples, including samples of first-rate size, appearance, and quality. Now is the opportunity for retailers to give the public the benefit of their wonderfully cheap purchases. There is no reason why best Nova Scotia apples should not be offered to the public at 2d. per pound. Some tradesmen are wise enough to take a reasonable profit, and thereby please their patrons and ensure a continuance of satisfactory business. Others prefer to sell less fruit at a greater remuneration on their outlay. It is for the public to decide whom they will support.

BLIENHEIMS AND KINGS ALSO CHEAP.

Two other good varieties of the Nova Scotian apples, the Blenheim and King, are also very cheap, and can with advantage be retailed at 2d., or at the most 2½ per pound. It is worthy of note that at the present time London is by far the cheapest market for apples in the British Isles. This may be due to its proximity to Kent, whence come so many good home-grown varieties. Still, whatever may be the cause, there is no denying the fact there is a great slump in apples, which will probably continue for some little while, as there are huge quantities to come.

HOME GRIEVANCES NOT A FEW.

True friends are said to share the joys and sorrows of others. Now is the opportunity for Colonial apple growers to sympathize with those of England, because the complaint of cheap apples is likewise prevalent in Kent. Even the famous Cox's orange pippin is changing hands at 3s. to 5s. per half basket Covent-garden, whilst King pippins and Blenheims are still lower in price. The crop in England is large, and the quality good all round, and, as already intimated, ruling rates are very moderate.

Not only indecent, but vulgar and suggestive pictorial post cards are not allowed the use of the mails. Such cards instead of reaching the person to whom sent, are forwarded by instruction to the Dead Letter Office.—Exchange.

Remarkable Religious Gathering

Missionary Convention at Halifax Brought Together Immense Audience to Hear Addresses From World-Renowned Religious Leaders

The second day of the great Missionary Convention treated the City's visitors to altogether beautiful weather, says the Halifax Chronicle, and the smile of the bright blue sky seemed to be reflected in their happy faces. The atmosphere, too, had the thrill of a strong tonic in it, the kind of air that makes a man throw out his chest and lift his head sunward. The animated scenes about the convention church and the thronging rooms and pews prepared one for the announcement of the evening that the enrollment had passed the 500 mark. And there were many present unregistered. That means fully a thousand men have been gathered about the great programme of the Halifax Convention. The morning meeting was superb. In the afternoon one had his choice of good things. There was the meeting of the men in the Convention church and also a mass meeting of the women in Grafton Street church.

A GREAT MEETING.

There was a special note of enthusiasm and triumph in the crowded pews and galleries of St. Matthew's church last night. The audience was even larger than the night before. It was truly magnificent. The Convention temperature as well as roll-call is rapidly rising. It reached well nigh fever heat last night. It would be difficult to assemble a trio of speakers so fitted to arrest and arouse the closest attention of one of the finest congregations that ever assembled in St. Matthew's church. Was ever that grand old hymn, "The Church's One Foundation," sung in Halifax with such thunderous melody.

The venerable Archdeacon Renison, of the Diocese of Moosomin, was the first speaker, and he is a real orator. He rose grandly to a grand theme, "The Canada of today and tomorrow." It was impossible to convey in print an adequate idea of the impression his address made on the audience. The 18th Century saw the imperial rise of Britain; the 19th the meteoric rise of the United States. But Canada has the eye of the 20th century. We have the best part of the Continent on our side of the line. We have agricultural land for 48,000,000 of people and everything else in the proposition. No nation of 7,000,000 ever had such an opportunity; no nation of like population ever boasted more of its resources; and there is a spiritual side to materialistic growth. The Christian people of the country should get in on the ground floor, and in the name of God take possession of this our loved land. Let us not bow down to a God or worship pleasure.

What do Christian churches of our land stand for? Nine-tenths of the

contents of christianity we hold in common.

Berkeley was inspired when he said: "Westward the star of Empire holds its way." The Atlantic was the theatre of great scenes in the 19th century. The Pacific is bound to play a big part in the 20th. We must not do as a town council in Ireland that had decided to build a workhouse. They met and adopted three rules. 1st. A new workhouse must be built 2nd. It must be built from the old materials.

3rd. The old one must not be pulled down till the new one is built. Some seem to want to adopt such a plan in the building up of our country.

Other nations have fallen because they lapsed into selfishness, our crown in Canada will not come from what we get but from what we give. The orator closed with a quotation from Kipling's poem, "Let us forget."

SIR ANDREW FRASER.

Much interest was centered in the appearance for the first time in the men's convention in Halifax of Sir Andrew Fraser. His is a truly heroic figure. Of stocky and soldierly bearing, but with all the consummate charm of a cultured Scottish nobleman, he captured his audience at once. It does one good to see his gracious smile and hear the soft and cultured accents of his musical voice. He wears his years as lightly as his learning. The Empire as well as the church have a right to be proud of him.

He was the recipient of an ovation as he ascended the pulpit stairs. His theme was "Experiences of Missionary work in India." It is needless to say he is an enthusiast in Christian Missions. He administered a severe castigation to the sceptical globe trotter who looks in upon a country and reports unfavorably about missions. If one wants to learn astronomy he does not go to a geologist.

Statistics do not tell us all that christian missions are doing in India and the world. And Sir Andrew proceeded to give out of his thirty-seven years contact with the work of missionaries many illustrations of the efficacy of missionary work. At the close of his address there was a remarkable demonstration, the audience rising as one man in respect and admiration of his noble words.

THE CALL TO SERVICE.

Mr. J. Campbell White had a hard task to follow such a speaker, but those who know him at his best will believe that in his own grand way he led the meeting to its climax. His theme was "The call to service." He pointed out the wonderful unity among Korean Christian churches in their work. In a certain mission,

(Continued on page 8.)

The Royal Bank of Canada
INCORPORATED 1869.

CAPITAL	\$6,200,000
RESERVE FUNDS	\$7,200,000
TOTAL ASSETS	\$109,000,000

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