

(ARTICLE THREE)

THE MIDDLEMAN AND HIS MISSION

Sidelights Upon the Much-Abused Man Who Performs a Needed Service.

THE RETAIL GROCER AND COLD STORAGE TRUST

By JAMES H. DeLAMERE

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"Somebody must cook, and somebody must serve" once remarked the late Elbert Hubbard in *The Fra*, "otherwise all of us would have to do the thing ourselves, and then all our efforts would be taken up in the search for eats, and we would be reduced to the occupation of the cave-men."

"Civilization is a great system of transfers. Each one does the thing he can do best, and works for the good of all. So, any man who does a needed service for humanity should not be classed with the parasites—although he be a middleman."

The "middle-man" is any merchant, or broker, or person who handles the product of the producer before it reaches the consumer. In other words he is the producer's salesman, for example: A farmer has ten tons of hay; 500 bushels of wheat, corn, potatoes or other commodities to sell. Now we know the farmer can bring this stuff to town, haul a load of hay in and stand around all day looking for a buyer. He might perhaps sell it to you or I if we happened to be looking for hay, at the same price the middle-man would pay him.

But suppose he doesn't happen to sell it that day, it must be either hauled back to the farm or else he must stop over night at the tavern and pay for his team and his own lodging. In order to protect himself, he must necessarily add this expenditure to the price of the hay, as it is one of production and selling.

The Modern Way of Selling.

But this method is too slow, too crude and too antiquated for the modern tiller of the soil. Remember he isn't a "reub" any more. The farmer of today is some thoughtful, thrifty person, so he goes to the commission merchant—middleman—who contracts to take over the whole or any part of the farmer's produce, agreeing to sell it in the open market, either to the grocer or consumer, through his salesman, and for which service he charges the farmer a certain percentage upon the amount of money the goods will bring, which percentage usually ranges from five to ten per cent.—or rather, an average of 7 1/2 per cent.

Now, if the goods are not sold at once, they must be placed in storage—which adds another item of expense. There might not be a demand that day, as they must be kept in good condition until the time does arrive when people want that particular kind of food. And right here we may as well throw out a bit of this "cold storage" talk that has been going the rounds of the press for some time.

We Need the Middle Man.

In a recent address before the Wholesale Grocers of America, the late Mayor Gaynor is quoted to have said:

"It is all very easy to talk, but when you come to analyse the complex affairs of life, then you have to measure your thoughts accordingly. The fact of the matter is this. In the cities we have to buy by the pint, quart or peck. If I have a barrel of apples someone has to keep them for me.

"Prices are high all over the world. In Paris, London and Rome they are talking about it just the same as we are over here. The trouble with high prices is, that we are all trying to get them. The laborer is trying to get the highest wages possible. Everyone with anything to sell tries to get all he can—and then someone goes upon the rostrum and abuses high prices! It is my belief that he doesn't believe it at all."

The period of high prices and increasing prices is now, and always will be, the period of progression and prosperity. Wait for twenty-five years, or less, until the period of falling prices and low prices sets in. Then you will see hard times, and you will have reason to complain.

Buying From the Producer.

There is an alluring sound to this "from the producer to the consumer" talk, but any food concern today selling to the consumer and eliminating the wholesaler and retailer, must, and does get the same of a higher price for the commodities than the consumer pays the retailer. This is because the selling and delivering expense is so much greater per pound of product than it is through the general channels of trade, for the retailer can deliver cheaper under the present conditions.

Everywhere we hear people planning the millennium when the producer can send his products direct to the home and out into the middleman. This sounds good, but for sake of illustration, suppose we disregard the jobber and retailer. Put them out of business along with their great warehouses and stores, wipe out their taxable values. Who pays then? Why the consumer, and he pays well, too.

Tell me, how are you going to get your products from the farm? By the railroads, you say. Wait. The railroad is a middleman. It doesn't produce any goods, but it is a necessity, so we've got to have them.

Now, we've wiped out the wholesaler, the jobber and the retailer. Mother wants five pounds of flour. She writes to the farmer to send her eight

pounds of wheat by parcels post so she can grind it up—with what? Why, the miller. So she phones the miller—but he is a middle-man. He's no producer either. Listen. He does produce something. He produces the skill, experience and labor to make the flour—and so do all middlemen and retailers. They produce service, credit and protection.

The Retail Grocer of Today.

The retail grocer is a pretty serious business man and a hard working public servant. He is down closer to "hard-pan" than he ever was in his life before, and to charge him with the high cost of living is unjust. On the contrary, he should be commended for his courage. Here's an instance. 100 pounds of sugar costs him today \$6.75. This he weighs out to his customers in pound lots, puts it in paper bags, ties it with a string, delivers it to your house—and the highest price he can get for it over the counter right now is 7 cents the pound.

You might not know it, but it costs the grocer at least 15 per cent. to operate his store. Taking this sugar argument as a basis, and he is actually out of pocket—and the profits are not great in any of the food lines. I think the retail grocer is a public benefactor, and he is kept from his proper position only because he is working fourteen hours a day contriving methods that will please his patrons, and assist them in keeping down unnecessary expenses, without going to the wall himself.

Food products will always be sold largely through jobbers to the retailer—because it is the economical way. It is a tremendous machine built up at great pains-taking risks all the time, and getting a very small percentage of the profit for the effort it puts into the service of the consumer.

The Cold Storage Man's Side.

Much has been said pro and con regarding the part the storage man plays in this cost of living era. Take the matter of storage eggs as an example. I recently put the question up to one of the leading storage men of Ontario, and he said:

"It is my opinion that oftentimes the consumer is to blame for insisting upon getting fresh eggs when they are asked for, and very few folks really comprehend the situation as it really exists."

"Fresh eggs generally appear early in the year, sometimes as early as January when the weather is favorable, but, as a rule, a free flow of eggs begins in the South along about March, and two weeks later is at its height in the north and west. This lasts about sixty days, when the supply gradually dwindles, so that in moulting season practically no eggs are produced—continuing until the next March."

"It is during the flush of production that eggs are gathered and quickly placed in specially prepared cases, after being graded; small and dirty ones being rejected, and the high grade eggs of the "first flow"—and cool weather eggs—are put in cold storage warehouses where the temperature is close to freezing point, where they are kept for months with so little deterioration that only an expert could detect a change in quality—if there be any."

"Now, as to the persons storing these eggs, no such thing as an "egg trust" exists. It requires millions of dollars to handle the products of this country, and necessarily men of means must invest or lose the money. The fact is, the owners of these eggs, are often glad to part with them at a five per cent. profit, after paying interest, storage and insurance."

So it will be seen that in the handling of goods, another expenditure is added to the cost of production, and this you and I have to pay for—all of which is right and proper and in strict accordance with the principles of trade and commerce.

There are many things we are today purchasing for the same, or less money in proportion, than we did ten years ago. While the cost of producing flour has materially advanced, we are not paying proportionately for our bread—and this is particularly true in Belleville.

Gilbert's Bakery, while not the largest in Ontario, is, nevertheless, one of the best and most efficiently equipped baking plants in Canada, and, with the new improvements which are now being made together with the installation of modern mechanical appliances by means of which human hands will never touch the bread at any stage of the baking. This concern will be a notable credit to the city.

Mr. Gilbert serves nearly 800 homes in Belleville and vicinity every day. This bread is wrapped in wax paper to protect it from dust, dirt and carelessness in handling—a big, full-size loaf of goodness—for five cents the loaf. Toronto, Montreal and other towns pay six, seven and eight cents. Evidently there's little use for a "bread line" in Belleville.

Next week's article will tell you how bread is baked in a modern bake-shop. It is entitled "The Art of Bread Making."

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IN MEMORIAM

THE LATE JOHN W. CHISLETT

Written by Our Ameliasburg Correspondent.

It was with feelings of regret and sorrow the many friends of John W. Chislett formerly merchant at Rednersville, learn of his death, which took place after a short illness at the home of his daughter Mrs. J. F. Hepler, Narberth, Penn., U.S.A. on Feb. 26th 1916. The late Mr. Chislett was born at Fort Hope, on March 25th 1824, being a son of the late Chas. Chislett of that place. When a young man he took considerable interest in sports from which he received an injury to the knee which gave him considerable discomfort at times for many years. On the 26th of April 1876 he married Ella Louise Garrett daughter of the late Stephen Garrett of the City of Belleville, the marriage ceremony being duly performed by the Rev. Wm. Briggs the pastor of Bridge St. Church.

After completing his High School education at Port Hope he came to Belleville and graduated from O. B. C. and up until the time he entered into the Merchandise business at Rednersville some 23 years ago he successfully followed the profession of Book Keeping. He was in the employ of the late L. Yeomans for a number of years and continuously for 19 years with J. Walker hardware merchant of Belleville.

Early in life the late Mr. Chislett became identified with the church and up to the time of his death he continued to be an earnest and faithful member of the Methodist Church. He entertained a deep affection for his church and all the means of grace in connection with it. He was a generous and cheerful giver to every means and call for assistance to proclaim the glad tidings of Salvation either at home or in the heathen lands. He felt that he had a duty to perform and he cheerfully did it. The charge can never be laid against the late John W. Chislett that he did not practice what he preached, during the number of years he resided in Belleville both he and Mrs. Chislett were valuable members of Bridge St. choir, the same deep interest they took in singing songs of praise they manifested in all other branches of church work. Taking up their residence in Rednersville they entered into church work with the same zeal they had shown at Belleville and during the past 23 years the late Mr. Chislett has been a pillar of strength to the church and it will be many years until one will be found to fill his place. He honored the church and the church honored him, he filled with credit to himself the positions of Ass't. Supt., Class leader, trustee, steward, Secretary of the S. S. and other positions of honor. During the past 23 years he was leader of the choir and to himself and family the congregation owe a debt of gratitude they can never repay for the valuable services so cheerfully rendered under many obstacles and sacrifices.

He was a man of strong social character, he made friends wherever he went and he continued to hold their confidence, esteem and respect until the time of his death. He held strong

convictions of right and wrong and he always aimed to choose the right. He was amiable in his associations genial and upright in all his business dealings and if he could not speak well of any one he never said evil of them. His hope was strong and he had an abiding faith in the future. In July last he disposed of the business he had successfully conducted at Rednersville along with his position as Postmaster thinking a rest might do him good, he had been subject to frequent attacks of Nephritis from which he had suffered a good deal but he bore his affliction with that christian patience and fortitude his most intimate friends did not realize the seriousness of his illness, but when the summons came he was ready, his house was in order and he peacefully passed to his long home. The funeral took place from his late residence at Rednersville on Feb. 24th 1916, service being conducted at the Methodist Church by Rev. R. L. Edwards. The Altar and the deceased's chair in the choir were heavily draped, and the large number present bore evidence of the esteem and affection in which John W. Chislett was held by all who knew him. The example he has left on record may profitably be followed by all of us. He was a member of Lake Lodge A. F. & A. M., C. O. O. F., of which he was Secy. for years, the order of Foresters and Royal Templars. Rev. Mr. Edwards' discourse was appropriate, at the close of which the remains were taken to Belleville cemetery for interment. In addition to his widow the following family are left to mourn the loss of an affectionate husband, father and brother, H. W. Chislett, Winnipeg, Mrs. J. F. Hepler, Narberth, Penn.; Mrs. J. B. Phillips, Rednersville; Mrs. Hepler, Harrisburg, Penn.; Garrett (deceased) The brothers and sisters are Chasles of B. C.; Joseph, Coburg; Stephen Florida; Arthur, Winnipeg; Albert, Rochester; Mrs. J. C. Honey, Port Hope; Mrs. Wm. Freeman, Mass.; Mrs. Emil Leitfield, Mass. In addition to the floral offerings by the family the following were the contributors; W. A. Russell, Winnipeg, cross; W. J. Kimber and family, anchor; Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Walker, wreath; W. E. Anderson and family wreath; Choir, Star, Lake Lodge, A. F. & A. M.; wreath, C. O. O. F., wreath.

The bearers represented the Masons Oddfellows and church officials.

HILLIER

Mrs. W. A. Lloyd has returned after visiting friends in Hastings. Miss Barbara Shuris of Rosehall spent the week-end with Miss W. Foster. Pte. Edison Campbell is confined to the house with mumps. Mrs. R. Jones spent a couple of days last week in Trenton. Last Sunday Anniversary Services were conducted in the Methodist church by Rev. Mr. Limbust of Bloomfield, and Monday evening a Tea Meeting was held in the Town Hall.

Miss Effa Campbell is visiting her sister Mrs. F. Wight, Gilead. Miss Eva Sullivan of Thurlow spent a few days last week visiting friends here. Messrs. R. Turvey and Earle Anderson of Melville visited friends in the village last week. Misses Helen Gilbert and Eva Sullivan spent last Saturday with Miss Maggie Turvey.

A number attended the dance in the hall on Friday evening. Miss Jennie Wright spent the week end under the parental roof.

Owing to a press on our columns we have been compelled to hold over a number of our correspondence.

The 18th episode of the great photoplay serial "The Broken Coin" is announced for presentation at the Palace Theater, tonight and Thursday matinee and night, the title of this episode is "The Hidden City". The many admirers of J. Warren Kerrigan will be pleased to learn that he is to appear on the same program in a beautiful southern romance entitled "A Kentucky Idyll" besides the above offerings two sparkling comedies will also be presented.



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News

ZION
The Belleville (Chureh) held their at Zion.
The chairman of S. C. Moore B. A. siding. The secretary Harry B. A. read last meeting. The was principally to the work such evangelism which progress. The ev of a platform meeting as chairman an address on "C and Mr. Moore these addresses, sonalizing. God by the Plainfield Mr. A. Walt of Jenny Kennedy w vesday February evening prior, the friends of Miss former house and nice things.
Mr. J. Clapp he of Mr. Wm. Val of Sidney.
Mr. Ernest W married to Miss last week.
The funeral of Cacey took place church, Rev. A. the funeral sermey was presen from Belleville w Mr. and Mrs. for some time v case N. Y.
H. K. Deny Jones at Marsh J. G. Sills has Good Roads Con A Number of attended a pa Ketcheson's and time.
Miss Beale Si near Whitty.
Sawing wood of the day.
Mr. and Mrs. I spent Wednesday Mr. V. Mitz. Mr. and Mrs. day at Mr. J. W. A number arc reception at the cen.
Mr. and Mrs. night last week.
Mr. H. K. Den 66 Mr. R. Dale. On Monday ev was given to before her depar The following a Mrs. Fred Deny Dear Jennie,—
neighbours have to spend one m together before our midst.
It was with e learned that yo your connection a very bright that you will we trust we sha will always be e our homes wher We shall mi and cheerful di you many frien ways been will whenever asked will miss you, a gues but we tr may go, that y field of service, you will do you We ask you which we have to show in son great este-m and we trust that a they may bring memories of y Hill.
We all join in intended compa et and happier Signed on bel
Miss Jennie E be made a su ing was spent the crowd disp in voyage th
A pretty we at St. Charles' day, Feb. 21, w and Michael Jo holy bonds of a McCarty.
Mr. and Mrs were the gues nott last week. A number t ded the Assm nestday evening. Mr. Joun Corng day evening at. Some in the took a satist Mr. and Mrs. evening of us gical time.
M. J. M.

The more printing that you buy of us, the better we will both be satisfied.—The ONTARIO Presses, "ON TIME AND RIGHT."

Police Circles

All was quiet in police circles last night except that two or three hilarious soldiers were rounded up and turned over this morning to the military police.

Successful Social

The social given in the Academy last evening by the ladies of Murray and Coleman wards was a great success socially and financially. Great credit is due to the ladies in charge, who always work so well and agreeably together.

