

never have been and never will be sold to the public. These millions lie on the dealers' shelves. This may be a happy condition of things for the publisher, but after all 'the greatest good to the greatest number' is a very far reaching gospel; and the publishers will some day realize that what they have gained in this way could have been more than equalled by terms which would have permitted the trade to engage skilled pianists as assistants, who could present the music in an efficient and musicianly manner, and also to engage local professionals for the purpose of introducing novelties at quarterly concerts and thus educating their *clients* to an appreciation of the best in music.

"In conclusion, however, it is obvious that, in consideration of the skilled labor necessary to salesmanship in sheet music and the complications and obligations inseparable from its manipulation as stock, it is absolutely folly for any dealer to pass a sheet of music over his counter for which he does not receive thirty-three per cent. profit. He must be able to secure this at all times by being able to purchase at any time through some accredited depot (controlled either by the publishers or by the dealers' association) at two-thirds of the selling price and seven and six-and-half and fourteen as twelve (if of one title) from the publishers. Novelties at half rate for six months. Here we have a fair and equitable basis for trading that it is up to the publishers to adopt with all possible expedition,—a proposition that if adopted would inspire the music dealer with as keen and active an interest in his sheet music as he has put into his gramophones and records, to the magnificent results of which the manufacturers and wholesalers will testify. Here he knows he has a fixed purchasing price, a fixed selling price and up-to-date catalogues that he can order one or a hundred records from at any time and—last but not least—a chance of exchanging unsalable stock once or twice a year on a two to one basis. In his record department he has no stupid and fictitious marked prices to haggle about with his customers; no compulsory purchase of novelties that he does not want in order to secure fair terms for the stock he does want; no direct trading between the factors and the retail buyers through travellers' calls and the 'approval' parcel and the circular letter to professionals, etc., but a clean, honest deal that shows a margin of profit that does not require to be inflated with the vain and delusive solatium offered to the sheet music dealer: 'That although sheet music does not pay, it brings the people in, and some day they might want their pianos tuned or repaired and then you will be in touch with a profitable deal.' If I were a publisher, I would call my *conferees*

together and say: 'Gentlemen, it is high time we framed up a square deal; it is high time we set our houses in order. These dealers have to live,—they should be artists for the proper fulfillment of their functions; but if we cannot remunerate them as artists we should at least permit them a fair profit that they may be able to pay their rents and remain honorable citizens. Gentlemen, a fixed price; a fixed profit, a fair and equitable deal on returns and no retail supplies,—these are the just dues of those whose enterprise and industry have carved the channels through which our output reaches the public.'"

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