

THE PATRONS OF INDUSTRY.

THE gullibility of some people is simply astounding. The Patrons of Industry swallow without question the wildest and most exaggerated statements and the most fulsome praise that flow so readily from the lips of their paid lecturers and thereby make themselves the laughing stock of the country. They talk of other men combining to rob and plunder the farmer forgetting there is such a thing as "the pot calling the kettle black." Is the organization of the Patrons of Industry not a giant monopoly with the object of robbing the retailer of his just profits? Of course it is. Every retailer knows in his heart that he cannot sell his goods at 12½ per cent. advance on wholesale price and make a living profit, even if he should be in a position to pay cash for all the goods he buys. And there is the further disadvantage in the fact that he must pay the full current market price for the Patron's produce which he is bound to take in payment of the goods as per the agreement entered into with the Patrons. If the Patron merchant intends to deal honestly with his customers and live up to the strict letter of the agreement he is bound in the natural order of things to come out a loser. This could ultimately result in only one thing, viz: An assignment and another bankrupt stock thrown upon the market to the detriment of the legitimate trade of the locality. But do the Patron merchants deal honestly with their customers? We know for a fact that some of them have asked wholesale merchants to put on 20 per cent. advance on their invoices, which would give them 32½ per cent. profit instead of 12½. We are not assuming that this device is resorted to generally, but it has been done. We are also informed that a printer was approached in a western town not long ago and asked to print blank forms of invoices of some wholesale houses. There could only be one object in such a request—to copy the original invoice with whatever percentage added that should strike the fancy of the Patron merchant. Well may the Patrons of Industry ex-

claim: "What fools we mortals be." There are other ways and means of getting even with the Patrons, and it stands to reason that everything will be done to take advantage of them. Sensible people are getting heartily sick of the senseless twaddle persistently dinned in their ears about the wrongs of the "honest farmer," and are gauging him for what he really is—a mean, selfish, avaricious humbug. There are exceptions to every rule, of course, and there are farmers who despise the methods adopted by the generality of their class just as thoroughly as the rest of the community, and refuse absolutely to join any of their fakes. And it is said that this independent section is rapidly gaining in numbers, from which it is evident that the Patron of Industry fake will very soon meet with the same fate as its predecessor, the Grange.

UNWISE CLERKS.

Personal feelings should not enter into the business actions of a clerk. A certain customer may succeed in making herself well disliked, but that does not give the clerk license to treat her with neglect or rudeness. You are engaged to sell goods, and likes and dislikes do not enter into the question. When a personal customer comes in it is the clerk's place, if busy, to call another salesman and transfer his customer so as to wait on the old patron. Never ask the latter to wait until you are through. Shoppers are generally too impatient to wait on your convenience; they expect to be waited on at once. One of the meanest acts of a clerk is to try and take an old customer from a fellow clerk. For the sake of getting credit for the sales, they will sometimes condescend to do very small acts, but in the end a straightforward line of conduct toward employer and clerks pays. When a customer cannot be suited and asks what other store keeps the same goods, it will be well to direct her only where the prices are much higher. It would not be business to send a customer to a store of the same standing and prices, yet, for the sake of diplomacy, do not refuse her an answer.—Ex.

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