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THE CANADIAN GROCER

& GENERAL STOREKEEPER

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SPECIAL TO OUR READERS.

As the design of THE CANADIAN GROCER is to benefit mutually all interested in the business, we would request all parties ordering goods or making purchases of any description from houses advertising with us to mention in their letter that such advertisement was noticed in THE CANADIAN GROCER.

To say a man is narrow-minded is a reproach, and to say that he is broad-minded is a compliment. These propositions are true with reference to opinion, but not with reference to action. Men of thought, in the domain of morals, religion, politics, science, etc., should take broad views and proceed upon them, but men of action must usually proceed upon narrow views, especially if they have to work against opponents. The business man is a man of action. His conception of business may be liberal or it may be contracted, but he will find that it is best to focus all his energies upon it. Narrowness must be cultivated by the man who would succeed in trade. The amplitude of mental grasp that qualifies a man to run a store, a farm, a gristmill, be a magistrate, take an active part in local politics, belong to two or three fraternal or secret societies and be a success in everything is rare. This many-sidedness is a dangerous thing for a business man to exhibit before he has begun to write his capital in a notation of six figures. That sort of thing may be all very well for men who have got past the breakers that lie along the very shore of success, for men who are able to pay for capable financial management. Even for those who have the

money-power to run several concerns at once, narrowness is necessary for the success of these. Narrowness means concentration, and one must concentrate one's powers the more on one's business the more that business expands or branches out. There is no spare energy for public service or political glory. Broad-mindedness or versatility means shallowness in a business man.

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Narrowness is the fundamental element in all business success. A single point is kept in view, all side issues, no matter how tempting, are disregarded. The aim is kept in sight, every little gain brings it closer, and soon it becomes the absorbing object of the plodder's attention. The man who clearly selects something as the object of the first half of an average life, and gets into the habit of letting that object over-rule his wayward inclinations, is sure to realize that object if he lives, but narrowness of view is involved in the very singleness of his purpose. The business man who sets before himself and steadily pursues an object, will be accumulating substance, while his broad minded competitor will be dissipating his power over several objects. The strict business man has no time for anything but business. His very narrowness will beget breadth. This is paradoxical, but it is true within the limits of a business man's care. Constant contemplation of the one object, constant study of the means to accomplish it, constant husbanding of resources, cannot fail to broaden and strengthen the mind that is engaged in such work. Such a mind will in a few years have far wider commercial compass than will that of the man who is busy in many spheres of activity. The following up of a single object is an excellent training and unfolds a man's powers wonderfully.

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This is an age of specialists. It is necessarily so. The book of knowledge is growing every year, and it would be folly for any man

to attempt a mastery of even a very few things as they are known now. Consequently there is a division of knowledge as there is a division of labor each man is supposed to know something one well. If he be thoroughly versed in that, he will be an exceptional man. Narrowing as the tendency of special occupation is it a great means of developing knowledge. For the contraction in breadth it makes up in depth. It liberalizes and invigorates instead of enfeebling or enslaving our minds. No man will find he has too little to do if he gives faithful study and attention to the matters that concern any person in trade in this country. He is always on the alert against competitors; he has to save his profits by close buying, cash buying, selection of goods, etc.; he has to watch over his resources that he may lose little or none through misplaced credit; he has to please his customers; he has to advertise; he has to have enterprise, and now and then do a clever thing; he has to keep abreast of the times in his methods, his stock, his knowledge of the market, and a thousand details furnish nooks and corners wherein to dispose his attention. He has to vary the routine of his life by the use of changes as often as possible, and that necessity will make a bright, active, earnest man, fertile in expedients for the improvement of his business. "The penny saved is the penny made," "Look out for the cents and the dollars will look after themselves," are good maxims, but are not the only ones learned and practised by the trader who concentrates and expends freely his energy, his time and his talents upon his business. He will be rich in experience, and probably in money, before he is an old man. Method grows out of narrowness and concentration. The amount of method that can be introduced into even a small business is incredible. The real breadth that is born of this sort of narrowness may be expressed in these words: That a man of many-sided activity will rarely succeed in business, but a man who has succeeded in business will succeed in nearly anything else.