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Ask the Member for your Constituency in the Local Legislature to support Mr. Middletons's Bill at next Session.

DEPARTMENTAL STORES.

THE MODERN CURSE TO LABOR AND CAPITAL. THEY RUIN CITIES, TOWNS, VILLAGES, AND THE FARMING COMMUNITY.

WHO ARE INTERESTED ?

1. *All men and women whose livelihood depends on their weekly earnings, and who wish to see a living wage standard maintained in this Country.*
2. *All citizens who desire honesty, integrity, and stability in business, instead of dishonesty, deception and demoralization.*
3. *All owners of real estate, whether of house or store property, who desire that such may be occupied and made more valuable to the owners and to the community.*
4. *All wholesale and retail merchants, for the monopolization of trade by a few concerns in any city, means that these important classes with their army of employes will be crowded out.*
5. *All municipal governments of cities, towns and villages; for if departmental stores are not abolished or restrained in some way, wholesale ruin of business property follows, causing great loss in civic taxes, loss of population, and consequently higher burdens on house-owners and small holders of property.*
6. *All physicians, lawyers, and other professional people whose callings are affected according as the masses of the people become impoverished by curtailment of opportunities of earning money; which is the direct result of departmental stores.*

Wherever department stores exist they form a barrier between the people and prosperity. They endeavor to monopolize all trades—to drive out every other man and woman from business life. The effect is to leave many thousands without employment as little work is created for those displaced. Every one knows that the bulk of the business in departmental stores is conducted by child labor and poorly paid young men and women. Living salaries are paid only to heads of departments and even they sometimes merely exist. Of all monopolies department stores are the most dangerous, most pernicious, and most injurious to the general welfare of the community. The Ontario Legislature has been aroused in the matter. Hon. A. S. Hardy, Premier of the Province, has admitted that the subject is a serious one, and a bill has been framed which will curtail some of the immense advantages that these monopolies now enjoy, to the detriment of public welfare. This bill is to be introduced at the next session of the Legislature and until then there must of necessity be an educational crusade. The

people and their representatives in the Local House must be awakened to a full understanding of the danger of allowing these grasping concerns to become stronger year by year, and force thousands more out of employment in wholesale and in retail houses, and in manufacturing establishments in this city, and throughout the Province. Public sentiment must be aroused sufficiently to stir our Legislature to decisive action, for if the situation is once thoroughly understood the battle is won.

The leader of the opposition, Mr. Whitney, Q.C., is also favorable to this proposed legislation. At the last session of the Legislature, when the matter was under discussion, he expressed sympathy with the principle and remarked that the government would have to protect the various classes affected, for whenever one section of the community was injured all partook of the hardships that ensued. Mr. Haycock, leader of the patrons can be trusted to look after their interests.

RUINING THE FARMER'S PRICES.

In this connection we clip the following specimen extract from an advertisement of a Toronto departmental store :

Best Dairy Butter, regular price	- - - -	20c.	our price	14c.
Fresh Eggs,	do. do. - - - -	15c.	our price	11c.
Turnips,	do. do. - - - -	12c.	our price	7c.
Potatoes,	do. do. - -	35c.	per bag, our price	19c.
Flour,	do. do. - -	\$2	per bag, our price	\$1.40

Selling farm produce at greatly depressed prices, or less than cost, merely as a "leader" tends to the destruction of good prices not only in Toronto, but elsewhere. It means less money for the farmer. Not content with ruining industrial centers, the department store is even going into competition with the farmer and dairyman. We find it so in Toronto, one large department concern owning a tract of land on which all farm and dairy products are grown for sale in the city.

Thus, in three ways is the departmental store injuring the farmer: 1. By lowering the standard of prices for farm produce in Toronto; 2. By even going into competition in growing the produce for sale; 3. By killing business in the towns and villages and reducing the population of these places, which if prosperous, are always good markets for the farmer.

The influence of the farmer ought, therefore, to be against patronizing those monopolies, and in favor of the proposed legislation to restrict them.

SERIOUS CONDITION OF AFFAIRS.

The state of affairs in Toronto and this Province to-day, calls for the serious reflection of every man and woman, and those of the rising generation, who are mature enough to be concerned about their own future. It is impossible for any young man to start in business in city or country overshadowed by these monopolies, as W. T. Stead says: "Any young man in one line of business would be undersold by these huge concerns, on account of the number of lines they carry, they can sell goods in one line at cost, and make good the loss by increasing the profits in other departments until they crush the merchants in that line out." Other lines are then attacked, crushed out one by one. The ultimate object is to crush all rivals and finally dictate their own prices. The starving of labor is one secret of their success, and it is useless for anyone to enter their employ

with any hope of the future. The learned professions are over-crowded and these also, are suffering from the departmental store, because its influence is to make the great bulk of the people poorer. To impoverish the masses by destruction of their means of livelihood in existing industries, wholesale, retail and other kinds of establishments must re-act severely on all professions depending more or less upon the prosperity of the people. What then is a young man to do but look to other lands, for the opportunities that will not be found here, if a few department store millionaires are allowed to run this country. Unless restrained by some decisive legislation, the ultimate influence of the department store will be not only to make the people poorer but to partially depopulate city and country.

Centuries ago, in some of the old world countries the question was fought out. A few syndicates in some cities threatened to ruin all other businesses and trades, and governments took action.

In Vienna these places were licensed and the departments limited to a certain small number to prevent monopolization of all trades. The result has been so satisfactory to the people that no money influence is able to revoke these laws of Austria and Hungary.

In London, England, there are several stores run on the same principle, but the effect is not so noticeable on account of the great amount of commerce and traffic there from all quarters of the world, and absence of temporary price cutting methods to destroy rivals and monopolize the field. The situation is quite different from that of a Canadian city and Province where the local needs of the people form the chief sources of commerce and industry. Our more limited commercial sphere is easily demoralized, and must of necessity be protected against unscrupulous capitalists. Every citizen has a direct influence in this matter. He or she can refuse to patronize department stores. Everyone can assist by personal influence in the agitation until the matter is disposed of in the Legislature. We can influence municipal councils to see that young girls and women are not starved or imposed upon. We have protected them in factories we can do so in department stores. We can require that advertisements be valid contracts and not mere tricks. to get people into these places.

HOW THEY RUIN FACTORIES.

The following graphic pen picture from an American paper gives an idea of department store methods and results. It is true of them wherever found :

On the banks of the Ohio, in the vicinity of the historic Blennerhasset Island, the ruins of an enormous pottery stand. The buildings once covered many acres and the village near was the home of prosperous artisans. A few years ago this spot teemed with activity. Commercial travellers sent out by the establishment visited every city in the country as well as many in foreign lands. What ruined the business, leaving a plant worth several hundreds of thousands of dollars to rust and decay? Was it mismanagement? Yes; but of so new and novel a character that the shrewdest business men of the time mistook the shadow for the substance.

On a morning long to be remembered there appeared at the office of the factory a representative of the department store business. To the management he said: "Count up the cost of your commercial travellers, the expense of bookkeepers, packers, collectors, your credit man; interest on bank discounts—in fact, the expenses of your entire business as now

conducted, and compare it with selling the output of the pottery to us for spot cash." It was an enticing offer. The deal was consummated—the discharge of various faithful employes, including all of the travelling salesmen, was one of the first results. The established trade of the factory drifted away to other people, and the owners soon found themselves completely at the mercy of the tigers, who then began to dictate terms as to prices. Realizing the dependency of their workmen—for they were humane—and the necessity of keeping the works running to prevent deterioration, the proprietors yielded one point after another until there was no profit in the business. Alarmed at the situation they endeavored to re-obtain former customers, but found that the course pursued by them had greatly reduced the profits of all engaged in the same line. That those potteries only most favorably situated both as to supplies and transportation were making any dividends. Crowding the latter, they obtained rates against which the first could not compete, though the difference was so infinitesimal that under former methods of business it would have been a matter of no importance. The factory was forced to stop; the plant a loss to its owners, and the workmen, many of them well advanced in years, told to shift for themselves. What stock there was, left on hand, was purchased by department stores at about fifty per cent. of the cost of production; the office shutters were put up never again to be taken down, and Nature resumed its sway in that locality as completely as it had before the discovery of the continent.

What department stores have done for Toronto already:—700 stores vacant; 2,000 men thrown out of employment; city property depreciated some \$10,000,000; loss of rents to property owners almost incalculable; millions in wages lost yearly in city, towns, and country because departmental stores buy largely in Europe where labor is cheapest. Why then patronize them?

What departmental stores have done for women and girls: sample of wages paid in sweat shops in Toronto where goods are manufactured under contract for departmental stores: sweat shop, (investigated), women and girls paid 19c. a dozen making mens shirts (and find their own thread); sweat shop (investigated); girls paid 25c. dozen for making blouses (find their own thread); sweat shop, (investigated), girls paid \$1 a week for making coats; sweat shop (investigated), girls paid 19c. a dozen for making knickerbockers. Amounts allowed on some other goods; cambric dresses with lined waists, \$1.25 per dozen; night gowns with tucked yokes, \$1 per dozen; ladies silk waists, 98c. per dozen; ladies skirts, 30c. per dozen; aprons 22c. per dozen; neckties \$1.25 per gross; overalls \$1.20 per dozen; flannel shirts 20c. per dozen (girls find their own thread).

The real "bargains" are blood-stained. The sale may be said to be on account of a fire or something of that sort, but as a matter of reality the under-priced goods have been paid for by somebody, no matter whether bargain-hunters pay the full price or not. Somebody has toiled for too little; somebody has labored in vain; somebody's weary hands have fallen idly and forever pulseless because of too little pay; somebody has suffered to make this "bargain day"; yet men and women who live by their day's wages, the rich who can afford to buy elsewhere, the harpies who buy "bargains" to sell again, mingle in one wild rush in a struggle to buy what is being sold for less than cost.