

THE SPRINGFIELD NEWS

EIGHTEENTH YEAR

SPRINGFIELD, LANE COUNTY, OREGON, THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 1921.

NUMBER 2

IN A SPIRIT OF FAIRNESS

By the request of many, we are repeating the first installment of the following article in order that you may have it complete.—News Editor.

By THOMAS SYKES

So much has been said pro and con on the matter of price regulation by the local merchants in relation to the lowering of wages of employes in the lumber industry that a comparison of prices when wages went to five dollars per day with prices now seems to me the way to determine whether the price of staple food articles has really lowered in proportion to the reduction in wages.

It is not intended to argue the point of whether the merchants are receiving a greater per cent of profit than they should or whether the men are receiving a greater or less wage than they should receive.

To argue the question of merchant's profits would of necessity bring out the wholesale as well as the retail prices and a lengthy discussion of necessary overhead expenses.

To argue the question of the amount of wages the men should receive would of necessity bring out the cost of production and each man's work in relation thereto which of itself is a very big subject.

In 1916 President Woodrow Wilson said: "America is nothing if it consists merely of each of us, it is something only if it consists of all of us, and it cannot consist of all of us unless our spirits are banded together in a common enterprise of Liberty and Justice and Right."

Let us apply this thought to our present conditions.

This American nation was born into the world to do mankind service and no man is a true American in whom the desire to do mankind service does not take precedence over the desire to serve himself.

We believe that the present question between the four L's and the merchants is the outgrowth of the economic conditions through which we are passing. Many of the men feel that some of the merchants have been profiteering off them during the past few years. Whether the retailer had had the opportunity to do much profiteering I very much doubt. True his stock on hand advanced slowly in price during the early days of the war until perhaps a \$3500 stock had required \$5000 to carry it. But the close competition and the desire of the retailers to keep prices from soaring too fast often operated to prevent the advance in retail price in proportion to the advance in wholesale.

But now that the slump in wages has come they demand that the merchants now, immediately cut the price of his merchandise in the same proportion that wages have been reduced.

Now this is only natural that he should ask a cut in merchandise and in the spirit of fairness the merchant should lower his prices, but let us see what he has been doing the past few months.

Let us make a comparison of prices

INTERNAL REVENUE OFFICERS IN EUGENE FEB. 18 to 26 INCL.

In a letter received this week Milton A. Miller, Internal Revenue Collector, informs The News that Messrs. Davis and Darymple, Deputy Collectors, will be in Eugene at the City Hall, February 18 to 26, inclusive, for the purpose of aiding those who are not familiar with the proper procedure in making out and filing their income tax returns for 1920.

Social At West Springfield School House Friday Night

The parent teachers' association of the Glenwood district will hold an old time basket social, including a fish pond and candy booth, at the West Springfield school Friday night, January 21, starting at 7:45. Hot coffee will be served. The proceeds from the social will go to the European Childrens' Relief Fund. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

CLAUD NESTLE SERIOUSLY INJURED AT ROCK CRUSHER

Mr. Claud Nestle, who has been working at the rock crusher was killing some of the machinery Monday morning when his coat became entangled in a cog wheel. He was drawn into the wheel and badly bruised almost all over his body and two ribs were fractured twice. He was reported to be resting easily Tuesday.

CATHOLIC CHAPEL CAR IS MODERN CHURCH ON WHEELS

The St. Peter Chapel Car which has spent several days in Springfield will be at Wendling Thursday and Friday evenings and will proceed to Oakridge for services Monday and Tuesday night. The chapel car is a veritable church on wheels. It seats comfortably from eighty to a hundred people and is a well equipped chapel. Besides it has accommodations for the superintendent and the missionary. Father O'Hara, of Eugene, who has all Lane county for his parish is visiting the principal towns with the car.

When wages went to five dollars per day with the prices today:

Article	1919	1921
Sugar	.20	.10
Flour	1.70	2.90
Vegetables	2.50	1.50
Cereals	.30	.25
Rice	.15	.10
Prunes	.25	.18
Beans	.13	.08
Coffee	.60	.50
Lard	.33	.25
Compound	1.25	.90
Bacon	.55	.45
Butter	.80	.60
Milk	.20	.15
Soap	.25	.20
Wash Powd.	.25	.20
Cheese	.45	.45
Mill Run	2.70	1.80
Scratch	5.00	3.65
Syrups	1.45	1.19
Graham	.85	.70
Maple	.75	.55
Ham	.55	.35
Cr. Corn	4.00	2.75
Canned Goods	.25	.25

\$27.48 \$20.14
\$27.48—\$20.14 equals \$7.34
\$7.34 divide by \$27.48 equals 26.3% percentage of reduction.

I have carefully investigated local prices and I know from years of dealing with the working men of Springfield that none of them with average intelligence but can be made to see that the retailers in Springfield are not exorbitant in their retail prices.

Now I do not claim for the merchant that from the old high price he has deliberately slashed the retail regardless of the wholesale to him, but I do claim that he has reduced the retail in proportion to the reduction in wholesale to him and that that reduction is in proportion to the reduction in wages. In other words I claim that a dollar today will buy as much as a dollar and thirty six cents would buy when wages went to \$5.00 a day.

Right here I want to say that I am not contending that \$5.00 was sufficient wage through the period between when wages went to \$5.00 and when they were lowered to \$4.00. I think that when living was at its highest it was 10 to 12 per cent higher than when wages were raised to \$5.00. I believe the wage earner should have had the benefit of this. But again I insist it was no fault of the local retail merchant that these conditions came about and that they did not receive this additional wage.

The merchants feel that the men want to do what many of them have threatened to do; put them out of business and that the demand now made on them is a threat to take some action which may result in driving some of our business men out. When you trade away from home are you not helping the home merchant out of business.

I believe in the might and power of the 4Ls and that this organization formed for a righteous purpose and out of a sincere desire to settle amicably all questions of dispute. I further believe that they can be a power for good in the community. They are giving us practical demonstrations of this in their

TOWN AND VICINITY

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Griffin on January 17, a 9 pound girl.

Why not let us print your next order of butter wrappers.

Bert Nickum of Vida was in town Wednesday.

Eggmann's bread—made clean, wrapped clean, and sold clean.

Mrs. C. F. Eggmann left Wednesday morning for Portland to attend a dinner given by the state president of the Ladies of the G. A. R. for the other state officers.

Mrs. J. S. McKay of Wilbur is staying with her sister, Mrs. George Orr, who is convalescing after a severe attack of pneumonia.

Dull Cars—dull season. But a bright idea—let us brighten up—Chapman and Devore.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Nestle on January 17, a son.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Haznas are moving from their rooms in the Rankin building to a ranch east of Eugene.

Dr. S. Ralph Dippel, dentist, Springfield, Oregon.

Mr. and Mrs. Carl Peterson entertained Mr. and Mrs. Ben Skinner, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Skinner, and Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Freeland at "506" last Saturday evening. Refreshments were served at a late hour.

Lyceum course and in the community Christmas tree, and I must not pass this point without saying that the citizens of Springfield, including the business men, should not fail the Loyalty Legion in supporting this Lyceum course. I have attended both numbers and they were well worth the price of admission, and from what I am able to learn of the numbers yet to be given they are better than the ones already rendered. As to the community trees, I will only say that they do not occur often enough to suit the patrons, the boys and girls.

On the other hand I believe that the merchants and professional men of Springfield can be a power for good in the community and that they always have and always will give liberal support to all social matters pertaining to the welfare of our town.

I have served on committees whose duty it was to raise money to defray the expenses of a cibration, a barbecue or some other community interest and almost invariably if a thousand dollars was to be raised the committee would sit down, make out a list of the possible subscribers from among the business men and opposite each name the amount that person or firm was expected to give. The committee then called upon them and said: "We want \$50; we want \$40; we want \$25; we want \$10 etc., for the Fourth of July celebration and they got it."

The business men finance these things almost invariably. Thus they demonstrate their interest in the community.

We are all of one social group and we have the right to demand the same liberty and justice and right that we are willing to give and no more.

Labor is dependent upon industry. Industry is dependent upon business, and business is dependent upon labor; thus the three are interwoven and thus the three must be interwoven.

And every time that labor destroys business they strike at labor and vice versa. Let us drive the business from our main street and note the result: property values decline in the once business section and taxes on the home owner must go up to meet the necessary expenses of city government and schools.

Undertake to finance a matter of community interest calling for the expenditure of a few hundred dollars and ask the committee how they are succeeding.

A few months ago the newspapers were full of H.C.L. and profiteering. It would seem that these two much talked of monsters were contagious diseases and we might add that enstigmata against them was contagious also. Now it would seem to me that it has been so difficult to infect some people that they are really out

MANUFACTURING JEWELER TO OPEN STORE HERE

Mr. W. G. Baker of North Bend has rented the place known as the Jennie Smitson building on Main street between 3rd and 4th and expects to open a manufacturing jewelry store by the first of February. He intends to later install machinery for the making of ice cream and candies.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC REDUCES FORCE AT THE LOCAL DEPOT

Max C. Cogill, baggage clerk at the local depot was laid off this week, making the third man that has lost his position in the past two months on account of the slack in business. This leaves only four men now on duty at the depot. It is reported there are 150 empty cars on the side tracks between here and Oakridge at the present time.

of date in getting the diseases now. But however since they still linger in our community and it is a question of dispute as to which is the most harmful disease I might suggest that we employ the doctors of common sense and community welfare and settle the difference by getting at the bottom of things in the right manner.

Let the ill feeling that now exists in the minds of the 4Ls and the merchants give way to kindness; let fear give way to faith; let hate give way to love; animosity is swept aside by cooperation between the 4Ls and the merchants and a brotherly feeling dominates over the town.

To the 4Ls, you need your merchants; to the merchants, you need the 4Ls. A united and well organized Springfield, all pulling for the banks, for the business men, for the industries, for your newspaper, for your schools, for good wages and for all things of a community interest will make telling blows for the progress and welfare of Springfield.

Some stranger coming to our town may notice this suit and think it a good place to locate.

No man profits more from this than the man who owns his home and has children in school. Every child growing up in this community will make a better and a more useful citizen in this great republic.

It is a pleasure for the merchant to wait upon the customers that enter his store. No merchant frowns upon you because you are looking for better prices. But if he should ask you a nickel more for an article than you can get it elsewhere for, do not bowl him out before a crowd and show your lack of good breeding and good manners, he can always return the compliment if he chose to do so. If you can not quietly tell him of the difference, simply go buy the article at the cheaper place, but buy it in Springfield.

Remember that when you go elsewhere than your home town for the things that are for sale here because you see a little lower price advertised, you are frequently biting on a baited hook. The specials that are put on have many baited hooks.

By this I do not refer to special sales in general lines. They are most always reliable.

The other day I heard a lady call for a loaf of bread. The merchant stepped to his bread case and said: "Eggmann's?" "No, Eugene", the customer replied. Immediately it occurred to me, why not Eggmann's bread.

Now Mr. Eggmann don't give me a nickel for boosting for him and he never did and I never expect him to do so. But for me I want to say that we use Eggmann's bread upon our table. It is just as good as Eugene bread. It is just as palatable; just as wholesome.

Mr. Eggmann has invested several thousand dollars to make his bread just as good as the Eugene bakeries bake for you. Why not buy it.

Why not help your home town? As I said, I am not boosting for Mr. Eggmann, I must tell you for whom I am boosting.

I am boosting for Springfield and for you Mr. Reader, if you live in

THE PUBLIC FORUM

To the Editor:

Just a word or two in reply to Thomas Sikes' "In a Spirit of Fairness" who observed some listed prices of articles at the time wages of lumber workers advanced to \$5.00 per day and compares them with prices at the present time and who exercises care in not giving an account of how prices soared afterwards. Sugar for instance went some better than twenty cents per.

To monkey with figures is to revert to the saying—"A naught is a naught and a figure is a figure—figures don't lie but liars do figure". I am not inferring Mr. Sikes handles the truth carelessly, but sometimes figures are misloading and to conduct business according to figures upon paper often leads to failure. Ideas based upon his figures are only bubbles in favor of the merchants and will burst their own volition in the swirl of thought and their influence will amount to just that in the minds of thinking workers.

Set forth an array of figures on prices of things today and compare them with the earnings of lumber workers forced into involuntary idleness and the spirit of fairness to the workers ought to dazzle the intellectual lights of all the merchants.

During the war—"Everything was skyrocketed except wages", persons of ordinary capacity for thought became cognizant of the profiteering going on; in fact, it was so obviously plain—professors teaching economics of the old school could even see it. These learned gentlemen are today pulling hair out by the roots for close scrutiny in an effort to find the correct ideas that may enable them to formulate plans to overcome the ill effects upon society caused by profiteering. A suggestion that they call upon Mr. Sikes may not go far amiss in aiding them to solve the riddle. Since merchants have not been exorbitant in price fixing, perhaps no one else has, excepting the wage earners with his logic everybody who perchance has four bits to invest can come to town and start a 2x4 grocery business, placing still more production on the shelf and join in on the refrain—"Overproduction and high wages is the cause for all effects".

Sing this, despite the fact our leading minds of the nation were, here a few months ago, calling for increased production to tide us over the readjustment period.

The objective phenomena of everything being out of joint, I'll say will eventually force workers to apply a conglomerate mess of remedies to the present system of production and distribution which will either kill or cure.

Just how we produce and distribute the needs of life is not always going to remain a mystery like the running of the universe. Take it from me Mr. Sikes, workers will continue to expropriate the expropriators by peaceful applications of the law of economic determinism.

—Donald W. McKinnon.

Springfield.

Think of the taxes that these business men pay upon their business which goes to the support of your schools. On a \$3000 stock of goods he will pay about \$10 a month taxes and the schools get their pro rata share of it.

Four Ls you have it in your power to hurt the business man in your town. He will have no chance to retaliate. But mind you sir your chickens will come home to roost. You will, in some manner and at some time, pay your share of the burdens in Springfield.

Don't grind your merchant down unless you know it is just and right for you to do so. Don't jump at conclusions until you have all the facts in the case. Do not allow yourself to join in any deal whereby you may take from the merchant that which is justly his. Remember that he is now buying on a declining market and taking a loss on many articles that he may supply you with

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