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STANDARD PRICES AID COMPETITION

The Stephens Bill Encourages
Rivalry in Quality.

REAL BENEFIT TO PUBLIC

False Pretense in Merchandising as
Practiced by Big City Stores is Meth-
od Used to Injure Small Dealers and
to Destroy Small Towns—Dishonesty
Can't Benefit Consumers.

The true competition is between
rival articles, a competition in ex-
cellence, which can never be main-
tained if, through the perfidy of the
retailer who cuts prices for his
own ulterior purposes, the manu-
facturer is forced to compete in
prices with goods of his own
production, while the retailer re-
coups his losses on the cut price
by the sale of other articles at, or
above, their reasonable price. IT
IS A FALLACY TO ASSUME
THAT THE PRICE CUTTER
POCKETS THE LOSS. THE
PUBLIC MAKES IT UP ON
OTHER PURCHASES. Fixing
the price on all brands of high
grade flour is a very different thing
from fixing the price on one brand
of high grade flour. The one
means destruction of all competi-
tion and of all incentive to in-
creased excellence. The other means
heightened competition and in-
creased excellence.

This language, used by the supreme
court of the state of Washington in a
unanimous decision of the case of the
Fisher Flouring Mills Co. versus C. A.
Swanson, clearly sets forth the in-
terest the consumer has in maintaining
the highest form of competition—that
of quality. Competition in price re-
sults in inferior quality and the evil
of substitution. Dishonest advertisers
use cut prices on standard and widely
known merchandise to lure customers
into their establishments, where an
effort will be made to sell anonymous
goods.

The genuine bargain is used as "bait"
to spread the impression that all mer-
chandise is sold at the same low mar-
gin of profit. If this impression can be
created the cut rate merchant can sell
unknown goods at as high a figure
as his conscience will permit him to
charge—and his conscience is elastic.
Nearly every man's is more or less so
where profits are concerned.

A Bill to Protect the Public.
Representative Dan V. Stephens of
Nebraska and Senator William F. Ash-
urst of Arizona have introduced in
congress "a bill to protect the public
against dishonest advertising and false
pretenses in merchandising." A sim-
ilar measure was introduced in the last
congress by Representative Stevens of
New Hampshire.

It ought to be axiomatic that the public
cannot profit through dishonesty or
through false pretenses. The individ-
ual may make a pecuniary gain; thieves,
burglars and confidence men occa-
sionally escape paying the penalty of
their crimes and are pecuniarily bet-
ter off. But the public, the victims of
the successful criminals, loses.

The Stephens-Ashurst bill provides
for standard and uniform prices on
articles sold under a trademark or spe-
cial brand, with the widest possible
publicity for buyers and sellers. Oppo-
nents of the bill—adherents of dishon-
est advertising and users of false pre-
tenses in merchandising—have de-
clared that it will encourage monopoly
and prevent competition. They have
tried to make consumers believe that
it will increase the cost of living, that
it will raise the price of everything
sold in any sort of store.

No Monopoly Possible.

The bill does not encourage monop-
oly, because producers who have a mo-
nopoly of any particular line or who
make an agreement with a competitor
to maintain prices are barred from
taking advantage of the privilege of
preventing discrimination by contract-
ing for the resale of their goods at uni-
form prices. A monopoly, no matter
how it is gained, cannot do business
under the terms of the Stephens bill.

On the other hand, cutthroat competi-
tion in price has always been the chief
weapon of monopoly.

The bill will not raise prices and in-
crease the cost of living. Producers
already have the right to sell their
goods at wholesale at any price they
can get, at what they are worth. The
proposed legislation merely permits the
producer to control the retail price, and
if he puts this too high—higher than
the public is willing to pay—then his
goods will not be sold and he loses.

The cut price storekeeper that sells
goods at a loss does not stand the loss;
he passes it on to his customers. What
he loses on one article is made up, or
more than made up, on another. The
use of cut prices on standard articles
for the purpose of drawing customers
into the store with the intention of

selling them something else, that is
where "dishonest advertising" is found
and where "false pretenses in mer-
chandising" injures the public.

Cut rates by big department stores
enable them to kill off the small store
and the small towns. Those residents
of rural communities, villages and the
lesser cities who want to see their
home folks injured that the large cities
may grow richer and larger should
naturally oppose the Stephens bill.
Those who desire to see their own
vicinities prosper should support the
principle of uniform standard prices.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR PET FURS FROM DIRT RAVAGES.

About this season of the year one's furs
that were so soft and glossy
back in November begin to take
on a matted, dingy look which
is distressing. If madam's pet
Pomeranian ever took on the
rusty, matted appearance of her
furs in February he would be
dropped into the bathtub with-
out loss of time. But furs may
not be treated in this simple,
practical fashion when they be-
come soiled. For all that is the
matter with furs in spring is
that they are soiled. No one
ever thinks of using a whisk
broom to furs, yet obviously the
fur coat has acquired as much
dust as the broadcloth or velvet
suit, and should be brushed every
time it is taken off. Dirt and
dust do not remain on the sur-
face of fur, but work down into
the roots of the hairs, which be-
come matted because of it. All
furs should be shaken briskly in
the open air once a week, and it
will do no harm to hang them
on the line and give them a
brisk beating with a light wand.
A near seal coat will keep its
smooth texture better if brushed
over lightly now and then with
a whisk broom dipped in cold
water.

How to Open Sardine Cans Without a Slip of the Tool.

Those who have trouble in opening a
sardine can will find this is a good
way: Start the key as usual, then in-
sert the blade of a can opener in the
loop of the key and turn. This acts
as a lever, removes all strain and opens
the can easily.

How to Ship a Mirror Without a Fatal Breakage.

To ship a mirror without breaking
the glass paste narrow strips of paper
diagonally across the glass. This
breaks the vibrations and prevents the
damage that often results.

JUST PLAIN COUNTRY.

Beauty to Be Found in Rural Scenes
Round About Home.

Like many another person of the
present day, I have from time to time
traveled as far as my means would
permit—and a little farther—exploring
countries new and strange or new and
strange to me, climbing high moun-
tains, sailing broad seas and making
the acquaintance of coasts as full of
wonder and of mystery, swept by the
wings of gulls, washed by green waves,
as were the far shores of Odysseus' wide
adventure to Odysseus. And I have
had huge enjoyment in it all, standing
to watch at distant corners
of the earth the pageant of wind and
wave and cloud, trudging up unknown
hills in a fine mood of adventure, driv-
ing across mountain passes into coun-
tries as fresh and as enchanting as if
they had been created overnight to
meet this first fresh sense of quest.

Yet sometimes and oftentimes I re-
alize that no strange shore or wonder-
ful mountain range has brought a
sense of pleasure quite so deep as that
which comes at moments in mere coun-
try, the plain country of the land of
home. I do not mean any of the show
regions of America. The glories of the
Canadian Rockies, the wonders of the
Yosemite, are unknown to me. I
mean the common country of old fash-
ioned fences and winding roads, where
tangles of alder and sumac cluster by
the gray rails or gray stone—com-
mon country, where the bay grows
long in June and the woods creep close
to the bayfields and a little stream per-
haps does threading its way softly be-
tween the grasses.

Here is no sense of effort in your en-
joyment. All is near and dear, fam-
iliar, perhaps for generations a part
of your forefathers' lives. There is no
need to try your eyes to take in the
meaning of jagged rock outlines and
heaped earth masses or stretches of
desert sand. You have not purchased
an expensive ticket whose worth to
the uttermost penny must be extract-
ed from the panorama before you,
making you study it anxiously, eager
to do your duty by every shade and
outline. You do not have to strain to
the sublime, as you do when confront-
ed by scenery, capitalized scenery—
capitalized in every sense of the word.
You do but sit quietly upon some
green bank, full of unforged pleasure
that hardly names itself pleasure, so
unconscious it is.—Scribner's.

HOW

To Make a Safe Gift For
Almost Any Man

THERE is one article which it is
safe for a woman to embroi-
der for a man, and that is a
handkerchief. Women, too, who
object to what they call embroidered
fol-de-rols are always glad to accept
embroidered handkerchiefs simply be-
cause they are useful things to receive.
Frequently it is difficult to find the
exact initial one desires. There are
types of initials that are particularly
suitable for certain types of people.
For this reason one should use judg-
ment in selecting the letters for hand-
kerchiefs.

Failing to locate a suitable initial
among one's collection of needlework
designs, the next best thing is to look
over the front pages of one's books.
On one or more of these one is sure to
find an initial of the right size and
style. Once found it is quite an easy
matter to transfer the letter with car-
bon paper to the corner of the hand-
kerchief.

Pad the letter carefully and then em-
broider over it in solid stitches, placing
the stitches close together, so that the
result will be pleasing. White or col-
ored cotton or silk can be used to
work the letter.

Beauty can be added to the initial or
initials embroidered on the handker-
chief by surrounding the letters with
a delicate floral wreath. A plain cir-
cle of eyelets is also effective.

FOR SPRING HOUSECLEANING.

How to Polish Furniture So That It
Looks Like New.

Polished furniture should require no
other treatment than washing with
warm water, to which a very little
methylated spirit has been added, fol-
lowed by a vigorous rubbing with very
soft cloths. For furniture which has
been stained and polished and has be-
come scratched it is best to get a good
oil and color man or a furniture dealer
to put up a French polish mixture,
which can be used very sparingly. Pol-
ishing with a thin beeswax and tur-
pentine polish answers satisfactorily
if there are no scratches.

For the cheaper kinds of furniture a
mixture of methylated spirit with a
small quantity of orange shellac can
be used. This will remove scratches
and brighten the furniture, but must
be used sparingly. If the furniture
needs brightening only a beeswax pol-
ish can be used or a mixture of lin-
seed oil, turpentine and vinegar in
equal parts.

FOR SOIL GRUBBERS.

How to Make Your Worn Out Garden
Soil More Fertile.

In many cases rotted stable manure
and humus will prove all that the gar-
dener need add to make his garden fer-
tile, but in some cases, especially where
the ground is being worked annually,
it will be well to add a commercial
fertilizer. The best results are usually
gained by the rotation of crops—that is,
by never planting the same piece of
ground with the same crop two years
in succession.

The government agricultural bureau
issues charts and pamphlets showing
the proper rotation of crops which will
prove invaluable to the gardener. They
can be obtained, along with much other
valuable information, for the asking.

A GARDEN HINT

How to Make and Set Out Flower Cut-
tings For Spring.

Cuttings from many plants growing
in the window garden will root readily
at this season, and in conservatories
and greenhouses cuttings should be
made freely now.

Clean, sharp sand is the best for root-
ing cuttings generally, though gera-
nium cuttings can be made and potted
up in thumb pots. The cuttings should
be made just below a bud, trimming
off all the foliage except a leaf or two
at the top of the cutting, and the top
half of these leaves may be clipped off.

Be careful to have the sand firm about
the base of the cutting, setting it half
its length below the surface. Water
thoroughly and shade from the sun, not
allowing the soil to become dry.

FOR THE COOK.

How to Fry a Large Chicken the Easi-
est Possible Way.

Prepare in the usual way for frying;
have fat one-eighth inch deep in pan
smoking hot; place the chicken in the
pan and cover; reduce gas flame until
the chicken fries very slowly, turning
each piece until rich brown. Pour one
cupful of hot water into the pan and
let the chicken continue to cook with
cover on until all the water has cooked
out. Lift the chicken on to a dish and
make a brown gravy. This is intend-
ed for grown chicken, but not old fowl.

Those are our friends who reprimand
us, not those who flatter us. Pythaga-
ras.

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