

able to use her savings to acquire some unjust and unnatural privilege in the private monopolization of some natural opportunity by which she could exploit the rest of society, those members of it who labor productively.

It requires some little effort to remain patient under this economy advice.

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No one can rationally approve heedless extravagance; no thinking man or woman does. And it is doubtless true that the poor and the relatively poor are led by the example of the profligate rich into petty, silly extravagances, into the artificial disregard of cost, the imitative heedlessness of expense, the trailing after idiotic styles, styles purposely rigged, set and advertised as snares of commerce for the thoughtless, the waste of substance upon the inconsequential or even the vicious. But the proscription of the niceties and the substantialities and the comforts of life for the poor and the prescription of intemperate so-called economy are arrogant, cruel vapidities when considered as cures for the inequalities in the enjoyment of the decently good things of temporal existence and as aids to the more natural and just distribution of them.—Robert S. Doubleday, in *The Public* (Chicago).

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American Economic League **FRUGALITY.**

Conceive, if you can, not only the inconsistency, but the arrogant insolence of persons whose luxurious expenditures often reach a thousand dollars in a single day, contending that the poor are poor merely because they do not accumulate enough riches to put them beyond the reach of want out of incomes of five hundred dollars or less a year. Must the salvation of the poor from their poverty begin at the garbage can and the rag bag?

A popular philanthropic pastime of the day is figuring out six-cent meals, on paper—for other people. If there is not soup enough to go around, add a little more water—and work harder. If there are any batter-cakes left over, put them away in moth balls for another season; they may shrink a little but they will fill almost as great a void under the waist-band next winter. Add a little more fringe to the bottoms of father's trousers and, presto, you have a neat pair of lambrequins for the air-shaft window. If you cannot ride in an automobile, you can stand on the curb, smell the gasoline, and consider what you save in tire punctures and valve grease. Be glad that you are living. Rejoice that you are permitted to live.

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Let any business man, or any farmer, or any manufacturer ask himself, as an immediate, practical question, What would be the effect upon his interests if greater economies were practiced by the masses of poor?

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Not many years ago several million good people believed that we had been ruthlessly hurled into the throes of a period of "hard times" because the then dominant political party had reduced the average of our tariff duties from forty-seven per cent to about forty per cent. Since our foreign business represents only about five per cent of our total business, if a difference of seven per cent in the tariffs affecting five per cent of our business could bring on a period of pronounced distress, what would happen if any considerable portion of our business were to be lopped off by the general adoption of an ultra-rigid economy?

By way of illustration, suppose that by further scrimping and extended penury the masses of consumers should reduce their purchases, their consumption of produce and of manufactured goods by even as much as twenty or thirty per cent. Measure, if you can, what the effect of this would be. The stagnation of business, the collapse of even reasonable markets for farm products, the disemployment of the masses who now depend upon the will of others for the enjoyment of the natural right to labor and to produce and to consume, would mean a cataclysm, an era of distress, of suffering, of riot and bloodshed and destruction such as would find no parallel in the history of the civilized world. The immediate adoption in full of the most radical or even unwise system in government would invite no state to compare with it.

And yet, gentlemen of the Rockefeller type, gentlemen whose incomprehensible fortunes have been neither earned, nor accumulated by economies, gentlemen to whom some would attribute superior wisdom, lay stress upon the sort of rigid economy they prescribe as a wise social course as the means by which the poor may become rich. And the lack of economy is designated as the reason for the poverty of the poor. Mr. Rockefeller himself, when asked recently by a young woman how it came about that he possessed so much while her trained, valuable, professional work brought her a beggarly fifty dollars a month—nine months in the year—advised economy, rigid economy. "Save your pennies; save your pennies," said he promptly.

Mr. Rockefeller is reputed to be the possessor of the equivalent of a billion dollars. Let us suppose that he is worth half that amount. If our worthy school-teaching young woman were to nourish herself on sea fog and clothe herself in blushes and save all the pennies she would receive for teaching for a million years she would by that time be only a trifle of fifty millions of dollars behind the present Rockefeller fortune, which grows without effort on the part of its possessor so rapidly that he does not know what to do with the increase.

Nor could she relax in the economies nor reduce the period of service for the goal set, unless—ah, here we see one corner of the trick—unless she is