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The profession of business, undated.

"THE PROFESSION OF BUSINESS"

Of all human professions the profession of business has been the slowest to progress, not physically, of course, -- physically, that is as an instrument for production and distribution, business has had a most marvelous record of rapid development especially during the last century. Think of those wonderful industrial units, those mighty corporations that have been built up, think of their efficiency, their thoroughness, their system, their scientific management, think of the thousand and one time and labor-saving inventions of today and you will gain an idea of the marvellous and rapid development of business and industry during the last century, physically. But morally, that is as a social agent, the profession of business, I venture to say, has been the slowest to progress. The profession of business has lagged behind all other professions. The profession of medicine has a code of ethics and its dominant note is service, the teaching profession is exemplary in its splendid sense of social service and in its high ethical standard. The ministry too, has a fine code of ethics in spite of the few small souls who violate it, and even the legal profession, the most mercenary of all, has a code of ethics superior to that of the business profession. ~~Of all professions.~~ Of all professions, business has not yet developed a dominant social note. Of all professions, business has not yet found itself, has not yet found its soul. In the matter of purpose and tendency, business is today where it was a millennium ago. It is still a matter of mere profiteering and aggrandizement. The profession of business, I venture to say, has not yet allied itself whole-heartedly with all the other human agencies which are consciously and deliberately working for human progress and for the social weal. I said "The profession of business" for business, the business of high ethical standards is a profession, business entails today as much expert knowledge, ~~and~~ as much training, as much originality as any other profession and it is certainly as dignified and as honorable a profession as the legal, or the clerical,

or the teaching profession. There are still among us, two types of men who speak disparagingly of business: The first type consists of those poetic and religious souls who live in a rarefied atmosphere of perfect beauty and purity and who regard business as something hopelessly sordid and earthly, something hopelessly materialistic. These people, who live in a detached world of their own making, amidst ideals too good for human daily food, I say these people fail to realize that business, the work of producing and distributing commodities to increase the physical comforts of men, that business is as Godly and as beautiful a service as is the work of creating esthetic or spiritual values or the improvement of the mind or the soul of man. Both types of labor are needed and indispensable in the scheme of life, both are beautiful and holy provided they are beautifully executed, provided they are executed in a spirit of beautiful service. Then there is the other type of man who speaks disparagingly of business, that hollow-headed, pseudo aristocrat, the man who speaks of business with gloved words, who is aggravatingly superior to it, that man is a survival of those stupid days when to work was a disqualification for social position, when loafing was an essential in the make-up of a gentleman. No gentleman really worked "Don't you know". Today, only those who work are gentlemen. The aristocrat of today is not the man of leisure but the man of brain and the man of brawn who perfects his soul in service, who cleanses himself in the crucible of honest, human toil, the toiler, the laborer is today the "Knight Errant" of civilization and the jewels of his crown are the glistening beads of honest toil, but in all fairness let it be said that the change today is not so much in under-estimating the value of business but in over-estimating it. The profession of business in this land, in this day, has eclipsed almost every other profession in its assumed importance. The fact that business, that success in business, is attended by such great financial rewards, has, in the mind of the masses, placed business in a position far transcending every other human profession

whose financial rewards are more modest, whose attainment is less sudden and spectacular. This fact, the great financial recompense that comes with business success, has brot into being a type of man, who for arrogance, conceit and domineering habits is unparalleled in the personnel of any other human profession. you know him. I mean I have in mind that so-called self-made, successful business man, that all-sufficient, self-sufficient, insufficient creature who looks with a certain amount of contempt or patronage upon every service or profession that cannot be translated in terms of dollars and cents and who especially feels called upon to pass judgment upon everything and everybody within and without his sphere on art, literature, politics, sociology, and especially on Religion. That is where he shines. You take one of these marvels of omniscience and get them launched on a religious subject and Moses himself will look like a \$ 3.00 a week office boy aside of them. Fortunately, this specimen is gradually disappearing and we shall not mourn him nor miss him much.

I like to speak of business as a profession, I like the word "profession". It implies something that you profess, a declaration of your faith, of your life's purpose. When a man professes business he declares that he has chosen the sphere of business as the field for the exercise of all his native *****that he has chosen business as a channel for self-culture and self-development. Now for business to attain to the rank and dignity of a profession, it must submit to the ~~following~~ following requirements:

First of all, business must become a vocation, a calling. The business man must feel that he has been called to that particular service, even as a minister feels that he has been called to his type of service, or a physician to his. A business man must feel that he has been called to that work and that work must be, for him, a grand and holy passion of his life, that work must mean for him, the purpose and

meaning of life, the beauty and nobility of life, that work must be for him his destiny, that work must mean for him his fulfillment and his realization. I am emphasizing this point but not unnecessarily. Many business men ~~xxxx~~ today, have compromised their business, they look upon their business as something sordid but withall necessary and valuable. They look for life's meaning. They look for the beautiful and noble things ~~ix~~ of life in other spheres, and not in the sphere of their business, of their profession. They do not find in ~~their~~ business profession those opportunities for character-building and self-improvement which the minister finds in his profession, which the lawyer finds in his profession, or the doctor in his profession, and this fact ~~ix~~ ^{has} brot into being, types of business men which are so common today, those who possess a dual personality. The type of man who is a Mr. Hyde in his business and a Dr. Jekyll in social life. The type of man, who, in his business, in his shop, ~~factory~~ or store, during business hours is mean, is cheap is scheming, is unscrupulous, is brusque, is unkind, and who outside of his business, after 6 o'clock, suddenly becomes gracious, affable and charming, especially charitable. Now that dual personality is an acknowledgment of a conscious and an unconscious dishonesty, for character, my friends, means a unity of purpose and action. Character means unity, singleness of heart and mind and not duality. You as a business man must look for the beautiful things of life, for the exercise of the noble virtues of life not in any other sphere, but in your own chosen field, in your business - that is the place to be gracious, charming, ~~and~~ affable and charitable, that is the place to be kind, that is the place to be the man. Business must become a vocation first of all, a calling, before it can assume the rank of a profession, and secondly, you must come to regard business for what it is - a discipline - not for what it achieves - wealth. You must come to look upon business as finding its highest expression in its technique,

in its method, in its discipline, in its ability to train character, in its ability to give you power and mastery over other men -- for ~~of~~ all human professions, business is the most favored because it exacts a more rigid discipline, because it has within it the means of strengthening and refining and building up character. That is why sons of millionaires are as a rule failures in life -- because they are given the product of business and not its discipline, because they are given a soft pillow to lie down on they fall asleep and a competitor is never too anxious to wake him up until it is all over. Is it not surprising, my friends, how many fathers are anxious to save their sons from life, how many fathers are anxious to stand between their sons and between God, how many fathers are anxious to save their sons, those trials and tests and tribulations which were so beneficial unto them, which made them? How many fathers want to save their children from those very things which they need, for God comes to a young man, first, as an exacting task-master and then as a loving friend. Let life take hold of your boy, my friend, if he has it in him life will make him, if he has it not within him, life will break him but not as hopelessly, and not as utterly as your pampering and your paternal prodigality will break him.

An eminent jurist was once asked what he considered the most important thing that contributed to success at the bar and he said, "Some succeed because of talent and others succeed because of good connections and still others by some miracle but most men succeed by commencing life with a shilling." There cannot be a primrose path to success. Of all the sad complaints that I have ever heard, the ^{and} saddest of all/ the one that burned itself in upon me so that I shall ever remember it, was the complaint that came from the lips of a man of middle age, who began life full of promise but who reached middle age, a broken, a marred, an ugly shape of a human being and he said to me "The people blame me for ruining myself. People blame the fast company which I kept. That is not so. It

It was not I, he said, that ruined myself nor the fast company which I kept, it was my father. He was so damned good to me. I hate him."

Every profession must find itself in a discipline and business offers a most wholesome discipline for character-building and life, and the third requisite for a profession I hold, my friends, is this --that business must become a service. Last week I spoke at length on catch words. I endeavored to show ~~you~~ how much folly, how much viciousness is hidden in a catch word. Now of all the stupid and dangerous catch words that is in use today, none is more dangerous and none more stupid than this "Business is business". "Now business is business" means either nothing at all or it means this: It is a confession that business has a standard of ethics that is far inferior to the standard of ethics of any other human profession and that while this fact may be so, while it may be regrettable, it is inevitable. "Business is business" is used as a cloak to disguise all the ugliness of our conventional business standard. "Business is business" is used as an apology for unscrupulousness, dishonesty, cheapness and smallness in the industrial life. "Business is ~~not~~ business" it is what you make it. Business is capable of those same high ethical ideals of which every other human profession is capable and if business does not attain to those ideals it is your fault and not the fault of any inherent quality of business. The profession of business must realize that everything in life that is worth while is dominated by a sense of service, that whatever we do, whether it is in law or medicine or teaching or preaching or manufacturing or selling or anything, is done for the sake of serving our fellow men, for the sake of making this world a Godlier, better place to live in. The business man is as much a servant of God as a minister in the pulpit. The business man must have the same high ideals as any other human being because you are doing God's work even as other men are doing it. Business must learn the lesson of service

and - lastly --- business will become a profession when it becomes rich in happiness. The seal of approval, my friends, which God places upon your work, whatever it is, is called happiness. When you are happy in doing anything, you may be sure that your work and your actions are acceptable in the eyes of God. If business ~~yields~~ that sense of utmost soul satisfaction, if business gives you the thrill of joy and happiness, if you approach it with a zest and a will and an eagerness, if it is not deadening and stupefying ---if it is full and replete with joy and happiness, then business is a profession. If you cannot find happiness in business, ~~you~~ are out of your sphere. You do not belong there. Now when all is said and done, what is it that I am trying to convey to you? Simply this ---that you, my friends, can so live your life as to become a co-worker of God in this world, a creator of beauty, a creator of beauty. God's world is full of beauty. You go out under God's open sky. You see a wonderful sunrise or sunset. You see a field waving with many-colored flowers, *you* feel a sense of holy beauty come over you - well that beauty is God's beauty. You did not create it. But there is a sphere of human activity in the world of men where you and I can be actual creators of beauty. The artist who takes the brush and palette and puts on the canvas a beautiful ~~picture~~ figure, an image which gives you a thrill of joy. He has created actual beauty in the world. The ~~sculpture~~ *sculptor* who takes a block of marble and ~~chisels~~ chisels an image of glory. He has, even as God, ~~has~~, created actual beauty in life. The poet, who combines words into a glorious lyric, that poet too, has created something beautiful in life, and the man who creates anything that is beautiful, the man who speaks any word that is beautiful, thinks any thought that is beautiful, does any act that is beautiful, that man is a creator along with God. Now it is within the power of ~~you~~ and me, whatever your occupation, whatever your work in life is, to be co-workers of God, to be creators of beauty in life. Whether the beauty consists

in the product you manufacture, in the organization of your shop^{or} factory - whether the beauty is within your shop or among your men, whatever the beauty may be, if you succeed in creating it, you are a co-worker,~~and~~ an agent of God in the world.

Now Religion is here, my dear friends, to call upon you to the sacred service of creating beauty in life. You - business men - have been given a sphere, a world, to make beautiful. You know, as well as I do that there is a great deal which is not beautiful in ~~the~~ business life, a great deal which is ugly. God has given to you a world to make beautiful. God has given to you a world in which you might find its beauty. Will you become artists of a finer world? - will you become co-workers of God? ---. that is what I mean when I speak of the "Profession of Business"-----Amen.

