



THE SPECTATOR




WENT over to Ogden the other morning to have a fight with a fellow who forgot to pay a bill. His office girl

politely assured me that he "was out" and that she really didn't know "when he would be in," and I am glad now that I didn't get to see him. It might have spoiled what afterwards proved to be a very pleasant day.

On my way up town, something possessed me to stay over and spend a day in the bustling city. I did, and the day turned out to be one of the most pleasant and profitable I have ever experienced. It is good for a Salt Laker's health to pass a little while in Ogden. The atmosphere is most refreshing and bracing. Perhaps it comes from meeting busy men who are engaged in doing big things; perhaps it is the impression one always gets when visiting a prosperous community; at any rate, the incidents encountered during the day resolved themselves into an inspiration.

Of late, I had become so accustomed to hearing the men of our own city complain and say that "business is bad" that I was fairly swept off my feet by the marked optimism and enthusiasm evidenced by every man I met in our sister city. It goes without saying that war has no alarms for Ogden, and that those fellows over there have figured out a way to serve the country and themselves at one and the same time. With them, it is not "business as usual," but "business is better than usual, thank you." It might be a good plan for our Salt Lake business men to get up a junket and run over to Ogden for a day—it would open their eyes and pay them well for their trouble.

I WALKED into the Mayor's office and met that dignitary just as he was returning from his regular morning trip of inspection over the city works. The Judge stepped like a two-year-old and looked as though he had just come out of a band-box. The customary boutonniere was in evidence—it was a pink rose—and it served to brighten up the landscape on this dismal, rainy morning. But I forgot all about the weather as we shook hands and I was cordially invited to take a seat.

We talked about Ogden, of course, for the Mayor is typical of his fellow townmen. Like the others, all his dreams and deeds are wrapped up in the development of the city, and he never allows the visitor to forget for a single moment that Ogden is on the map. Inasmuch as Judge Heywood is a candidate for re-election, I expected him to discuss politics, but he didn't. His mind seemed altogether

occupied with the program of public improvements which are now under full headway.

During the course of our conversation I learned that Ogden is laying more paved streets this year than has been completed altogether between that city and Salt Lake. I also learned that the cost per square yard is less than that of five years ago, and that they expect to complete the entire work in three months—it took over three years to build the sixteen miles of paved highways between Salt Lake and Ogden. This was surprising until I was advised that our fellow townsman, P. J. Moran, has the contract, and that he is driving his big organization as he never drove it before. They seem to think a great deal of P. J. over there; he is accustomed to doing big things himself and they like his style.

While on the subject of public improvements, I reminded the Ogden mayor that there was a prevailing opinion throughout the country that all work of such a nature ought to be suspended during the period of the war, but he couldn't see things that way. "Each community," he replied, "owes it to the country to maintain its normal condition and this, in Ogden's case, implies that we shall push ahead with our public improvements just as rapidly as our finances will warrant. It is simply a matter of sustaining confidence in one's self, his community and his country. If there ever was a time when men should keep things moving, that time is right now." There was no answer to his argument, and when the conversation was concluded I was more convinced than ever that Salt Lake had made a mistake when it decisively defeated its public improvement program.

WHEN I went to see Ralph Bristol, general manager of the Ogden-Portland Cement Company and of the Utah Sales Company, with almost a hundred branch concerns under his direction, throughout the intermountain region and on the coast. Mr. Bristol, though still in his thirties, is one of the genuine captains of industry and a real live-wire. We had a brief chat, but much was said—Bristol doing most of the talking. He is a regular gatling gun when he gets warmed up. He assured me that business was good—and I believed him—for while we were talking he sold two carloads of cement and several cars of lumber over the phone.

But like all the others I met that day, Bristol seemed more engaged with his public duties than his private affairs. Business must be kept going at a good gait, yes, because that is the only way to keep the nation at a high point of efficiency. He is also a member of several civic committees now

in the service of the government and is really devoting more time to such duties than to his various business interests. When I left his office I carried with me the conviction that if every civilian does his bit, as Bristol is doing his, America will be whooping 'er up in short order.

AFTER lunch I went out to the plant of the Ogden Packing and Provision company. This is really one of Utah's greatest industries. People who eat the famous "Mountain Brand" meats have no idea of the size, character and enterprise of this big institution. There was a long waiting list in the outside office and I experienced some little difficulty in obtaining an interview with S. S. Jensen, the general manager. He was busy and he thought I wanted to talk advertising. I did—but I promptly forgot all about my mission when he received me in his private office and began to tell me about the operations of his plant.

Mr. Jensen talks with momentum, has every detail of the big business at his tongue's end, and simply astounded me with a number of his statements. We talked—that is, he talked and I listened—for something over an hour, and I was so interested that I forgot to take notes. I regret this now, for a verbatim reproduction of his remarks would read like a romance to the person who doesn't know any more about the packing industry than I did before the interview. Picture my surprise when Mr. Jensen informed me that the packers hadn't made any profit out of pork since last June. I was brazen enough to question that statement, but he immediately produced statistics to prove it. He also predicted that the price of pork is bound to fall; this, for the reason that it is now so high that the average consumer simply can't afford to eat it any longer, and that when the public quits buying pork the packer will be obliged to do likewise, and a downward movement will result.

I asked Mr. Jensen whether he endorsed J. Ogden Armour's statement that the packers sell the meat that a beef will dress to the consumer for less money than the animal costs them live weight. "We do better than that," he replied, "we throw in the hide and them some. We buy a steer on the hoof—say, for \$90.00—kill it and prepare the meat for the market. Our proceeds from the sale of the meat alone average between \$75 and \$80. We must make up the deficit and get our profit out of the utilization and sale of the by-products which do not cost the meat consumer a penny." I also learned that the government has become a heavy purchaser of the products of this plant, as well as the allies. Mr. Jensen had a communica-

tion from the war department that had been received that same day, asking for a quotation on four thousand dressed beefs for the army camps. It didn't appear to scare him a particle. "We will manage to keep our end up somehow," he remarked as our conversation came to a close.

LATE in the afternoon I went down to the Utah Canning Company's plant. This is where the celebrated "Pierce's Pork and Beans" and various other canned products bearing the same reliable brand are prepared. I sent my card in to I. N. Pierce, the veteran founder and president of the institution. He hurried out in his shirt sleeves, shook hands and said, "I'm sorry, but I am too busy to see you today." "I just want a minute," I assured him. "Can't do it today," came the answer. "Perhaps after work—" I started to say. "I work until I can't stand up any longer these days, and then I go straight home and go to bed. Come to see me in November when the rush is over," said the veteran canner, as he hastily shook my hand, said goodby and hurried back through the door.

As a rule, Mr. Pierce is the personification of courtesy in receiving callers and I didn't know what to make of my reception. However, that same evening I happened to be talking to W. E. Zuppman and he explained the situation. I realize now that I should have known better than to intrude on Mr. Pierce in this, the greatest year of the canning industry and in the very rush of the season. Mr. Zuppman informed me that this busy plant has already canned over fifty carloads of products this season and that it is under contract to furnish the government with twenty per cent of its total output. No wonder Mr. Pierce hadn't time to see me. I have made up my mind that the very next time I am in Ogden, providing the canning season is over, I am going down to see Mr. Pierce and apologize for the interruption.

I saw other Ogden men, too, and they were all the same. They are optimistic, enthusiastic in their work and busy as bees. Coming home on the 8 o'clock Bamberger, Pat Moran asked me what I thought of the Ogden crowd. "They're our kind, P. J.," I answered. "That's right," he said—and we both agreed for once.

"Then this," asked rejected James, "is absolutely final?"

"Quite," was Dorothy's calm reply. "Shall I return your letters, James?"

"Yes, please," answered poor James. "There's some good material in them that I can use again."