

## THE BUSINESS MAN EXPLAINS WHY THE PRESSURE OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS DRIVES GIRLS TO RUIN

This is a story of a Curious Person and a Business Man.

The Curious Person had been hearing a great deal about the Pressure of Economic Conditions.

He had seen young girls—not ignorant nor dishonest girls, but girl who had been given expensive educations by the state, and who seemed to be very nice girls—driven to a life of shame because they could not earn enough to live on in any other way.

This did not seem quite right to the Curious Person. So he went about making a nuisance of himself asking the reason of it, and was told on every hand that it was the Pressure of Economic Conditions.

The Curious Person did not understand the term very well. So he decided to go to the Business Man, who was a very wise man, indeed, and ask him what the words meant.

The Business Man owned a department store, and the Curious Person found him there in a great office, surrounded by expensive mahogany furniture and stenographers and clerks and the like.

The Business Man himself was sitting before a large desk, covered with papers, and was smoking a very long and black cigar. He was a very kindly looking man, and the Curious Person felt much encouraged.

The Business Man consented to see the Curious Person, and very obviously pulled out his

watch and laid it on the mahogany table.

"I have only ten minutes to spare," he remarked.

"What," asked the Curious Person, "is meant by the Pressure of Economic Conditions, which drives girls to ruin?"

The Business Man looked at the curious Person as if he were looking at a strange animal at the zoo. The Curious Person felt very foolish, indeed.

"Why, that is quite easy. Everybody knows what that is. But you have reminded me of something."

"Miss Smith," he called.

Miss Smith was a person with very yellow hair and a notebook and a pencil too large for her. She came over to the Business Man's desk, with the air of approaching a throne.

"Just take a note Miss Smith, that No. 35, in charge of counter G, is to be discharged. She was seen in a saloon yesterday."

Then the Business Man turned to the Curious Person once more.

"Economic Pressure," he said, "is very closely allied to the law of supply and demand.

"You see, it is like this:

"There are more girls who need work than there are girls needed by department stores, factories and the like.

"Thus the supply is greater than the demand, and wages are kept low. Indeed, it keeps them so low, that at present they are