

# NATIONAL ECONOMY AND ROTARY.

BY ROTARIAN DR. LUDWIG MISES,  
Professor at the University of Vienna.



"Service" is the device of the Rotarian.

In no sphere of human activity can this principle find an application on a larger scale than in economics. Human society being based on a division of labour, the work of individuals is of necessity piece-

work only. Every human being performs one task only and his activity is limited to a narrow field. Unaided by the work of others he cannot exist.

The manner in which every individual arranges his life presupposes the activity of other members of society in occupations which harmoniously complement his own work and vice versa. If we consciously specialize in one kind of activity, we can do so only because we count upon other individuals being ready to serve us just as we are prepared to serve them it is here that the great principle of solidarity, which governs society, comes into play.

The principle of solidarity, however, does not lose its force at the frontiers of a country. Economic solidarity does not unite compatriots only, but it ties together all peoples. The European feeds on, and clothes himself in, the products which America, Asia, Africa and Australia sup-

ply, giving in exchange the fruits of his industrial efforts. The present standard of life of all nations is based on the enormous increase of the productivity of human work which has been made possible only by an international division of labour.

## INTERDEPENDENCE OF COUNTRIES.

These are propositions so simple and self-evident that it seems hardly necessary to mention them. The fact, however, that commercial hostility still exists between nations proves that, in spite of the axiomatic nature of this truth, it is not quite superfluous to re-state it. The spirit has not yet died out which regards the prosperity of other nations as a danger to one's own country, though experience teaches us every day that in view of the close economic interdependence of all countries every single state has a large interest in the prosperity of other states. Any decline of business activity in America makes itself felt in an extraordinarily acute manner all over Europe. When business flourishes in the United States, more European goods are imported there and a larger number of Americans visit Europe with the consequence that business on this continent is brisk. When there is a depression in the United States, there is distress in Europe.

To recognize the need for solidarity in economic life and to affirm it by conscious action is service in the sense in which a Rotarian uses the word.