

HOW TO READ THE MONEY
ARTICLE

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HOW TO READ THE MONEY ARTICLE

A GUIDE TO THE
PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF
THE CITY NEWS

BY

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'THE OBSERVER,' AND CONSULTING CITY EDITOR OF 'THE TIMES.'

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MINING INVESTMENT," ETC.

SIXTH EDITION



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REVISER'S PREFACE

CHARLES DUGUID was in several ways a notable man, as were so many of those whom Lord Northcliffe, then Mr. Alfred Harmsworth, gathered about him in the early years of this century. Not the least of his claims to be remembered is as the author of this little book, modestly conceived and written in the simplest language, though at the time when it was first published the author had already made his mark as an expert in matters of practical finance. That he was right in thinking that the public asked for a popular explanation of everyday financial happenings is shown by the reception that *How to Read the Money Article* received. It rapidly became known as something like a standard elementary work on money matters and has been in steady demand now for thirty years.

Practically every one of us, in every walk of life, first has his or her attention drawn to financial happenings through seeing them recorded in the

newspapers; from the time when he or she is grown up the City page—at least the headlines—is seen daily, or twice daily, for perhaps forty or fifty years. So it was an eminently practical idea on the part of the author to make the City notes the basis of an explanation. Now, as then, probably not one newspaper reader in a hundred—perhaps not one in a thousand—understands what a bill of exchange is or what “backwardation” means; then, too, many who know a fair amount about certain stocks and shares are quite unaware of the real forces that cause higher or lower prices. The deduction is that a popular book illustrating the workings of finance can hardly be too simple.

Charles Duguid was born in 1864 and his first important position in financial journalism was as assistant editor of *The Economist* from 1890 to 1892. Then, for ten years, he was City editor of evening papers, of *The Pall Mall Gazette* from 1893 to 1897 and of the green *Westminster Gazette* from 1897 to 1902, during which period this book was written. The first great morning paper with which he was associated was *The Morning Post*, of which he was City editor from 1902 to 1906.

The next fourteen years were the busiest and the most successful in his career. During the whole of that period he was City editor of *The*

Daily Mail, which in his time built up its reputation for financial impartiality ; further, from 1906 to 1911, he was City editor also of *The Observer*, and from 1911 to 1920 consulting editor of the financial section of *The Times*. It is not surprising, though it was generally regretted, that after so much activity he decided in 1920 to leave financial journalism for the less arduous business of finance. His career as a City editor had been unique. He died in December, 1923.

Thirty years ago the financial articles of even the best papers were apt to be abysmally dull ; indeed, little attempt was made to make them interesting. Charles Duguid will be remembered as one of the pioneers of the new journalism which sought to make everything in the newspaper acceptable reading matter to the general public. He effected considerable improvements in this respect, improvements which have since been carried much farther by the four great papers now remaining of those with which he was associated, and by many of their contemporaries.

The reviser, in bringing such a well-known book as *How to Read the Money Article* up to date, has had a rather thorny task, as those with knowledge of such work will appreciate. He has had to make hundreds of minor alterations to suit changed

conditions and practice, while maintaining the purpose of preserving the original style and character of the book. He has so contrived, however, that only in three chapters has the subject matter been altered to any material extent.

F. W. H. C.

31, MANCHESTER STREET,
LONDON, W. 1; 1931.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

OF course any City Editor and many other people could easily have written this little book. It is based, with kind permission, mainly on a series of articles the writer contributed to one of the Newnes weeklies and on certain contributions to other papers. The modest object of the book, even if not sufficiently indicated in its title, is explained in its opening chapter. Its chief aim is to enable the uninitiated to cope with the technicalities of the newspaper City page; but, here and there, especially in such chapters as those on "The Writer of the Article," "Prospectus Notices," and "Company Meetings," it also aims at showing how to read between the lines.

Those who know all about the matter may possibly deem some of the technicalities explained trivial and commonplace, but then, if they know all about the matter, they will recognise that these trivial and commonplace technicalities are just what puzzle people. The writer has been sorely tempted to be more exhaustive and profound, in

such chapters as that on "The Rates of Exchange Table," for instance; but, having resisted the temptation, he hopes the superficiality of the little book will appeal to those for whom it is written—those who, having many other things that claim their attention, are not averse to obtaining easily a general idea of how to read the money article.

C. D.

PARK LODGE,
NEW BARNET,
HERTS; 1901.

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