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Published Weekly by the University of North Carolina Press for the University Extension Division.

NOVEMBER 28, 1923

CHAPEL HILL, N. C.

VOL. X, NO. 4

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Entered as second-class matter November 14, 1914, at the Postoffice at Chapel Hill, N. C., under the act of August 24, 1912

## NURSERY POSSIBILITIES IN N. C.

### XX—THE PEASANT WOMEN OF DENMARK AND GERMANY

What one sees in the fields of Denmark is farm animals in millions—dairy cows, beef cattle, horses and sheep. Women and children are what one sees in millions in the fields of Germany. In ten weeks of travel in Denmark I have seen just nine girls and women doing field work. I kept tab on every one I saw and the count is accurate. I saw more than that in ten minutes in one field in North Germany the other day—women bent double following the harvesters and gleaming the wheat fields like Ruth and Naomi of old. The contrast between the lot of the Danish and the German farm women is extreme and startling.

#### German Women's Work

I have never seen farm women work less than the peasant women of Denmark and I have never seen women work harder or work at harder tasks or during longer hours than the peasant women of Germany. They do the work of women in the house and they do a man's work in the farm patches. They are pack horses and draft animals out to the fields or into the market town and back home again. With all the rest of the household they swing the flails that beat out the seeds of the harvest on the barn floors. The rat-tat-tat, rat-tat-tat of these family flails can be heard all day long and far into the dark in every farm house. Every farm village in Germany is noisy at this very hour with exactly the same noises that filled the household of Abraham in the harvest season, in the land of Uz, in the twilight times of Bible history.

They work on their knees in the fields within twenty yards of the railroad track in the earliest morning light without once looking up as the Miteuropa Express goes thundering by. They even work, these German peasant women, in track gangs, building and repairing the railway beds and station yards, and they work at these back-breaking jobs without pause in the down-pouring rain. I saw them doing it in Bavaria more than once along the way from Ulm to Munich.

When one sees an old soul staggering down a row of beets or turnips with a heavy liquid-manure tank strapped to her back and stooping low at every step of the way to pour a cupful with a twist of her shoulders into every hill, one wonders if anything like it can be seen anywhere else in Christendom. And where else outside of China or Japan can one see a gray-haired woman of seventy or so dragging a manure wagon along the highway and stopping every little while to sweep into a shovel the animal waste dropped by the passing oxen, cows, and horses? It is the peasant women's work in Germany and commonly it is the work of old women aided sometimes by the old husband or the grand-children. It is a moving spectacle that I have seen too often to count.

No such thing can be seen in Denmark, nor anything that even remotely approaches it or faintly suggests it. I shall later on be considering the causes but just now I am bent upon photographing the facts of difference.

#### Danish Women's Work

The Danish women work and work hard, but they do not work in the fields nor at men's jobs on the farm, unless it be wives of the little farmers, and not even these farm women except in a pinch in the harvest season to get the grain and the root crops housed. As a rule the wives of the small farmers do the milking but it is the men who lug the heavy milk cans to the roadside for the wagons of the cooperative creameries. The poultry-end of the small-farm business is commonly the job of the wife and children, but I must get inside the farm squares to catch them at it. They water the two or three cows picketed in the nearby pastures and lead them afield and back again for milking, but I see the boys and men oftener than the girls and women performing this farm task. The women keep the farm courts swept and redded but the heavier work of cleaning and whitewashing the piggeries and cow stalls falls on the men folk of the family. And so also the cutting,

mixing, and distributing of feed for the farm animals. I find the men, and not often the women and children, washing the big milk cans. There is no more any such thing as churning for anybody to do in any farmstead in Denmark. And no cream separators. The milk goes whole to the creameries and the skim-milk comes back in the creamery wagons without bother to anybody in the little farm house. The pigs fatten on this blue-john as our western farmers call it, and the farm family buys butter in the store or at the creamery like all the rest of the world. That is to say, if the family can afford to eat butter. Which is not often in the small-farm households. The farmers generally sell their butter at fifty cents a pound or something like that figure in the English markets and live on vegetable margarine at twenty cents a pound. This artificial butter is made in fifty-odd factories scattered all over Denmark, some of them cooperative farm enterprises. It is appetizing and wholesome and tastes so like real butter as to fool the very elect.

#### The Contrast

The women in the little farm homes do the family washing, and the ironing is frequently done with electric irons. The housekeeping tasks are theirs and the Danish housewives are famous. As for immaculate cleanliness, they beat the world Holland included. The point I am making is that the farm woman's work in Denmark is feminine. In Germany the peasant woman's work is masculine, feminine, neuter and common, all in one. She is child-bearer, housekeeper, farm hand, work animal, drudge, scavenger, whatnot, all without any apparent evidence of being aware of her hard lot in life. And nobody else seems to be aware of it, least of all the men in the peasant farm homes. It has always been so in Germany. The war does not explain the sad estate of the German farm women, or not entirely. To be sure they work harder now than ever before, but the character of their work is essentially what it has been for centuries. They are doomed to their lot by the type of farming that prevails among the peasant farmers of Germany.

#### Some Causes

The German peasant is a small-scale, hand-labor, crop-farmer. He has farm animals, but they are work animals not milk and meat animals, or only incidentally so. His ready money comes mainly from the sale of vegetables, fruits, cider and wine produced on small patches in densely crowded rows and hills. He is a farmer of the gardener type and his implements are hand tools and bare fingers. His vineyard on a sunny hillside is too steep for plowing with horses, cows, or oxen. The vines are set so thick in the small lots that they must be kept clear of weeds and grass by hand. They must be trained by hand, the grapes must be gathered by hand, and carried by hand to the wine presses. The vines must be cut back and tied up by hand when the harvest season is over. His fruit trees are also set thick on a hillside and his orchard is invariably a grass or grain field that must be cut by hand to protect the trees. His meadow lands might be cut with machines, and frequently they are so cut in the areas of marginal land where the scale of farming is larger, as in the plains of Bavaria and north Germany. But as a rule the peasant is so used to hand tools that he still cuts his grass and grains with simple blades that look like the scythes and sickles of Old Testament times. I have seen very few grain cradles, mowers and reapers in the fields of the peasant in Germany.

To say it in a word, the German peasant is a hand-power crop-farmer working at tasks so small that the wife and children can share in them. Besides, for many hundred years he has owned the land he tilled and it is human nature to work for oneself harder than for anybody else. He and his household have therefore been bred to terrible toil for countless generations, and bred to hand-labor and knee-farming long before modern farm machinery came into use. He is the crea-

### DEMOCRACY'S CREED

I believe in the free public training of both the hands and the mind of every child born of woman.

I believe that by the right training of men we add to the wealth of the world. All wealth is the creation of man, and he creates it only in proportion to the trained uses of the community; and the more men we train the more wealth everyone may create.

I believe in the perpetual regeneration of society, and in the immortality of democracy and in growth everlasting.—Walter Hines Page.

ture and the victim of inveterate habit. He shirks no task however hard or long, and his wife and children are an essential part of his farm system. Whatever was drudging, menial, and revolting was always their end of the farm burden, and since the war they carry the whole load or the heft of it, for their husbands and older children are at work in the numberless new factories of the war and after-war period. And so they bend under the weight of their heavy loads, uncomplaining and unconscious of their cruel lot in life, the children, the mothers, and the old grandmothers all together. The pity of it is beyond words.

#### Quite Another Story

The lot of the Danish housewives is in startling contrast with that of their peasant sisters in Germany. The wife of the middle-class farmer in Denmark never works in the fields. She rarely ever charges herself with responsibility for the farm animals in the barns. She's a housewife and her place is in the home. If she appeared in the field, the neighbors would say, Her husband must be drinking lately and is getting to be trifling, it looks like he's down and out. Field work for her means a loss of social rank in the farm aristocracy. The little farmer's wife is expected to share in the field work in seasons of emergency and to be more or less active in and around the farm buildings; but her tasks are light as a feather compared with those of the German peasant woman.

And as before, her happier lot lies in the farm system. The Danish peasant is a small-scale livestock-farmer. He is not interested in crops primarily except as food for his family and the farm animals. His money income is derived from the sale of livestock—pigs, calves and beef cattle mainly, and even more from the sale of milk and eggs. His fruits and vegetables are a small detail of his farm business—a garden proposition of small proportions. Grains, grasses and roots are his field crops and they are all sown, cultivated and harvested by machinery, or all but the root crops that call for hand work in the harvest season. He is a machine-farmer who reduces hand labor to a minimum for himself and all his household. He's even a machine-farmer in financing his farm operations, selling his products, mining marl, and buying fertilizer ingredients, seed-cakes and oils from abroad. His cooperative societies are his business machines.

The Danish peasants were serfs for five hundred years, not stupidly but placidly, for the Danes have never been a revolutionary race. And five hundred years is a long time for a quick-witted people to think upon the things they could not have and might not do. Their suddenly announced freedom in 1788 exploded a bomb in their brains, and during the following seventy years they broke completely away from their old-time habits of work, methods of farming, and views of life. They added economic freedom to the political freedom that Frederick Seventh gave them, and they did it not by sweating their backs like the German peasants but by sweating their brains.

The German peasant works so hard that he does not think and the Danish peasant thinks so hard that he does not work. It is perhaps an extreme way of stating the contrast, but it is not far away from the truth, for the Danish peasant and his household are less bowed down by the weight of work than any farm people I know in any land or country.

#### Victims of a Farm System

The German peasant is a small-scale,

man-power, crop-farmer and his wife and children are the victims of his witless farm system. The heathen god Moloch was never more cruel.

And a like fate awaits the small-scale, hand-labor, crop-farmers and their households in the South. The intensive cultivation of cotton and tobacco on a farm tenancy basis may mean more per acre, but it also means less per worker and a lower level of life for our seven hundred thousand farm tenants and their families.—E. C. Branson, Berlin, Sept. 10, 1923.

### OUR NURSERY POSSIBILITIES

In analyzing the possibilities of the upper South from a horticultural standpoint, one is almost overwhelmed with the obvious potential wealth and possibilities of this section of the country. By the Upper South is meant that region south of the Mason and Dixon line and north of the latitude of Atlanta, Ga. Of the extreme Southern States with the citrus belt we need say nothing at this time, as it is somewhat distinct from the region under consideration in a horticultural way of speaking.

#### Changing Flora

To get a vision of the possibilities of this region it is necessary to analyze the flora in this section of the country. Starting on the coast of North Carolina, say at Pamlico Sound and going west to Asheville, one goes through a flora ranging from the subtropical to almost the northern limits of the temperate zone. Or in other words, it is somewhat equivalent to travelling from North Carolina to Canada, as far as plant life is concerned, yet it is all in the one state of North Carolina. At the coast one finds Mangrove Swamps, Bald Cypress, the Live Oak, trees covered with Tillandsia or Spanish Moss, and growing out in the yards and gardens are such things as Camellia Japonica, Rhynchospermum, Bouganvillea, Azalea Indica, Marechal Niel Roses, Pittosporum, Aucubas, Figs and other plants that the plantsman only sees growing under glass in the North. The long-leaf pine is ever present, but as he travels west this gives place to the shortleaf pine, which seems to cover the coastal plains, where the peanut and cotton seem to be prevalent crops.

As you travel inward, and reach the Piedmont district, the ground, of course, gradually rises and the flora changes, giving place to deciduous trees and shrubs that are more commonly met with in the north, until one reaches the mountains, where Asheville is located, and he finds the flora, due to the altitude, of a type similar to that of a

much more northern latitude.

If such a region were cultivated to the same intensity as that of Holland, and Belgium, it would seem as if the one state of North Carolina alone could supply the needs in a horticultural way, at least, of the entire Atlantic seaboard.

#### A Home for Every Plant

Although wonderful strides have been made in the last few years, it is still doubtful if the nurserymen of this section of the country are yet alive to its possibilities. In fact, it is very difficult even to grasp what they are until they have been actually tried out, but in any view one may take they seem to be almost unmeasurable. It would seem that every plant that is grown by the ornamental horticulturists would find a home where it could be grown to perfection in this region, without the heavy overhead costs that are required to cultivate such plants under glass in the North.

The mountains of North Carolina are already well and favorably known in the trade as the home of rhododendrons and azaleas and it is more than likely the future will see this group of plants grown in very extensive manner in this section of the country that seems to be so favorable for their development.

The fruit-growing industry, in apples and peaches at least, is already well proven. In fact there does not seem to be a line which the nurseryman is interested in that cannot be brought to perfection in some part of this favored region.—Ernest Hemming, in National Nurseryman.

#### SELLING FRUIT

Cooperation in the marketing of fruits is the custom these days. During 1922 a total of 100,519 cars of fruit marketed by 667 farmers' business organizations brought more than 183 million dollars. There were 223 citrus fruit organizations which marketed nearly 72 million dollars' worth of fruit. The one raisin organization sold more than 35 million dollars' worth of raisins. More than 11 million dollars' worth of apples were sold by cooperatives.

Nearly every fruit, both large and small, is sold to some extent through cooperative channels. Nearly 40 million dollars' worth of miscellaneous fruits were marketed by farmers' business organizations.

The value of cooperative organization is brought out in the wonderfully improved freight service the citrus fruit growers have received. A new reduction in transcontinental freight rates has been granted which will net the growers three and a half million dollars. When would such a reduction have been granted had the California growers not been organized? The benefits of cooperative marketing are innumerable.

### FOOD ANIMALS AND POPULATION IN N. C. Census Years 1870-1920.

From Agricultural Graphics, by Miss Henrietta R. Smedes, Department Rural Social Economics, University of North Carolina.

Year	Population	MILCH COWS		OTHER CATTLE		SWINE	
		Total Number	Per Inhabitant	Total Number	Per Inhabitant	Total Number	Per Inhabitant
1870	1,071,361	197,000	0.18	324,000	0.30	1,075,000	1.00
1880	1,399,750	232,000	.17	425,000	.30	1,454,000	1.04
1890	1,617,949	223,000	.14	407,000	.25	1,251,000	.77
1900	1,883,810	233,000	.12	391,000	.21	1,300,000	.69
1910	2,206,257	309,000	.14	352,000	.16	1,225,000	.56
1920	2,559,123	354,000	.14	291,000	.11	1,271,000	.50

Number per inhabitant of important food animals in North Carolina for census years 1870-1920.

