

PUBLIC COTTON GRADERS IN NORTH CAROLINA.

(By W. F. Wellons.)

During the season 1914-1915 Edgecombe was the only county in which expert cotton grading was done for the public. Four other counties took advantage of the public cotton grading work during the season 1915-1916. Since then the number has rapidly increased until on December 1st, 1916, we had expert cotton graders in twenty-one counties, as follows: Beaufort, Cabarrus, Cleveland, Craven, Cumberland, Greene, Halifax, Lenoir, Mecklenburg, Nash, Northampton, Onslow, Pitt, Robeson, Sampson, Vance, Wake, Warren, Washington and Wilson.

The plan of the public cotton grading work of the State is one of cooperation between the Office of Markets of the United States Department of Agriculture, the Division of Markets of the North Carolina Experiment Station, the County Commissioners of the separate counties, and farm organizations. If the County Commissioners of any one or more counties will appropriate a sufficient sum of money to meet the expenses of grading room, clerical help, and printing, the government will establish a grading office and furnish an expert grader, who grades all cotton of the county or counties sent in to him. The expense of each county depends, of course, upon the amount of cotton graded and the number of counties using the same grading office. In the case of two counties joining together the expense ought not to be more than from \$250 to \$300 each.

Sample are mainly received from the ginners. These are graded at the grading office and certificates of grades are mailed out to the farmers who own the cotton. The ginners are furnished with containers, blanks for labeling samples, tags for labeling bales in the case of the smaller gins, and franking tag for mailing samples to the grading office. In this way everything is made convenient, so that if a farmer wants his cotton graded all he has to do is to request the ginner to draw samples for each of his bales. Most ginners, feeling the educational value of the work to the farmers, furnish samples of all cotton they gin.

But if the County Commissioners fail to co-operate with the Division of Markets for the good of the whole county, still any farmers who organize a responsible organization to pool the sale of their cotton in ten to one hundred bale lots may arrange to have their cotton graded by expert government graders.

The purpose of the public cotton grading work is (1) to give the farmers a knowledge of the grade and staple of their cotton, together with some idea of what these grades and staples should bring on the market, and (2) to enable the farmers, when properly organized, to classify their cotton according to grade and staple and to sell it directly to the manufacturers or buyers in general, thereby eliminating the middle man's profits.

Local buyers do not generally take the trouble of styling each farmer's cotton or of being careful to buy it according to grade. It is easier for them to pay an average price for all grades, and they usually do this when the cotton has not been previously graded by an expert grader. Such conditions are poor encouragement for progressive farmers who exercise care in seed selection and picking, in order to improve the grade and staple of their cotton. They simply mean that either middle-men or manufacturers reap the benefit of the farmer's thrift and industry, since all values, due to superior grades or staple, above average grade and staple values, are under such conditions a dead loss to farmers and an unearned gain to middle-men or manufacturers.

The reader may get some idea of the actual loss suffered by individual farmers or any community of farmers who take the care to grow a superior grade and staple of cotton, when the grading service is not rendered, from the following quotation from the Farmer's Market Bulletin of April, 1915: "In a section in which the producers know what staple they have they are reported to receive twenty-five points more for 15-16 inch staple than for 7-8 inch staple, which is the basis; fifty points more for one inch, one hundred points more for 1 1-16, two hundred fifty points more for 1 1-8, four hundred points more for 1 3-16 inch staple." These gains range all the way from \$1.25 to \$20.00 per bale.

Investigations made by the Division of Markets of North Carolina during the season 1915-16 substantiate the above statement and show that there is an utter disregard of the length of staple by most local buyers. A comparison was made of the average prices paid for the same grades and staples on the same dates in eleven of the primary markets of the Coastal Plain section. It was found

that the average length of staple at a town has no apparent bearing upon its relative merit as a market. For example, Ahoskie with an average length of staple of less than 7-8 of an inch paid an average of 27 points, or \$1.35 per bale, more than Clinton with an average length of staple of one inch.

Again, the fact that a superior staple is produced in the vicinity of New Bern is evidently not known to the producers, as they are content to accept a low average for their cotton and insist on no distinction being made between different lengths of staple. Investigations showed that cotton only 7-8 of an inch in length of staple in every instance brought as much as cotton 1 1-8 and 1 3-16 inches in length of staple, although the difference in value is from \$10 to \$15 a bale.

Another example of the abuses which the classing service might hope to correct was observed in Mecklenburg County. One producer had been growing a superior staple of cotton of one and one-eighth inches length for six years, but had never before received more than average staple prices. The first year he saved \$20 per bale or \$400 for his entire crop by having his cotton graded. At this rate he had suffered a loss of \$2,000 during the five previous years that he had been growing this variety of cotton.

Although classing cotton is within itself a well paying proposition to the farmers, yet it is meant to be only the first step, and should be supplemented with selling organizations if the full benefits of classing are to be realized. Organization makes farmers independent of the monopoly of local markets and gives them a wide range of markets. They can now have their cotton graded and stapled and sell it in large lots directly to manufacturers, thus eliminating the expense of traveling buyers and the profits of local merchants. Almost all of the mills of the State are willing to buy their cotton from financially responsible organizations of producers, when it is graded by expert government graders; so farmers are in their own light if they do not take advantage of this opportunity.

The results of the public cotton grading work everywhere it has been tried have been very encouraging. Our State Agricultural Commissioner estimates that the public cotton grading service has been worth \$25,000 to the farmers of Edgecombe alone. During the 1915-16 season a comparison was made of the relative merit of fourteen of the primary cotton markets of the Coastal Plain section, three of which had the classing service. It was found that prices received in the three towns where classing work was done averaged 30 points, \$1.50 per bale, higher than prices received in the eleven towns at which cotton was not classed before sale. Basing our conclusions on this investigation, it appears that had all the cotton in the Coastal Plain section been classed before sale, the producers would have received approximately \$1.50 per bale, or a total of \$800,000 more than actually was received. The gain that would have been realized in the Piedmont section is estimated at \$200,000, which would have meant a total gain to the farmers of the State of \$1,000,000.

It seems to me that Mr. Wm. R. Camp struck the key note to the situation when he said: "Even were there no economic gain to the producers as a whole in having their cotton classed before sale, the fact that many individuals would receive more nearly that to which they are justly entitled is ample reason for rendering classing service."

MILL CREEK NEWS.

Miss Hattie Adams, of Rocky Mount, is spending a vacation at home now.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Barfield, of Goldsboro, spent last week in this community.

Mrs. Alice Rhodes, of Four Oaks, and Mr. W. A. Rose, of Rocky Mount, spent Saturday and Sunday with their mother, Mrs. Sallie Rose.

Miss Elsie Cole, of Wilmington, is making an extended visit to relatives in our section.

The pastor, Rev. O. Mattox, assisted by Rev. W. C. Jordon, of Tennessee, brought a very successful revival to a close at Mill Creek last Sunday. One addition to the church was made.

Mrs. Willie Taylor and her little girl, Mamie Rose, of Roanoke, Va., is visiting her brother, Mr. R. A. Rose.

Rev. and Mrs. Whitley Langston, accompanied by their two sons, Whitley and Warren, arrived last Saturday at the home of Mrs. Sallie Rose for a few days' visit. Rev. Mr. Langston is Presiding Elder of the Valdosta District of the South Georgia Conference.

You are liable to an attack of Bowel Complaint and should provide yourself with the best known Remedy. Dr. SETH ARNOLD'S BALSAM. Warranted by HOOD BROS., Smithfield, N. C.—Adv.

FOUR OAKS ROUTE THREE.

Mr. and Mrs. Billie Dunn, of Hazelhurst, Ga., have returned to their home, after spending several days with relatives in this section. They made the trip on a Ford car.

Mr. Thos. A. Creech and family are spending this week with Mr. Creech's brother, Mr. John Creech, near Coats. Mr. Clarence Hall, of Elevation, was a visitor in these parts last week.

Mr. W. L. Wallace began teaching a six weeks' summer school at Stewart school house Monday.

Messrs. L. C. and Jesse Keen, who live near Four Oaks, Sundayed in this section.

Misses Etta Parker and Minnie Polard, of Smithfield, spent Sunday in our midst.

Mr. and Mrs. Ira Allen, of Goldsboro, visited in this section last week.

TRAVELER.

Why Germany Suggests Peace.

Whenever Germany obtains a temporary advantage she is prompt in sending up peace kites. The situation in Galicia, resulting in German gains, offered an excellent opportunity for Chancellor Michaelis and the puppet foreign minister of Austria to issue one more of their sham peace overtures. This move was clearly foreseen by the allied governments, and even some of the arguments advanced by Michaelis were outlined in advance by allied diplomats.

Setting aside the cock-and-bull story of French designs on German territory, which was put out by Michaelis in the hope of deluding the Russians into thinking they were dupes of France, the substance of both Michaelis' and Czernin's statements is that both Germany and Austria are ready for peace "by means of an understanding," a peace "without conquest."

The recent statement by Sir Edward Carson that peace with Germany would come when the German lines were back of the Rhine appears to have stirred up a hornet's nest. The German rulers are trying their best to convince the German people that the Englishman's words were mere boastfulness; that there is no danger of the crumbling of the German lines.

Germany is badly winded. She sees innumerable dangers ahead unless she can make peace. Another twelve months will find her grappling with an entirely new enemy, more powerful and resourceful than any she has yet faced. This enemy knows nothing of boundaries, and cares less. No bribe, no threat, no offer of "readjustment" can keep this enemy off the back of Germany. The quarrel between Germany and the United States goes deeper than any European question. It affects human liberty. The nature of the struggle makes it impossible for the United States to desist until the danger that threatens self-government is forever destroyed. No promise by Germany will suffice. No compromise is possible between liberty and tyranny. One or the other will die.

Is it any wonder that the kaiser's new mouthpiece should make peace offers? Is it remarkable that he should try to stir up a quarrel between France and Russia? It is astonishing that the kaiser's tools in Vienna should try to deceive the allies with sham proposals of peace.

"Peace without conquest" comes sweetly from the German freebooters who are now looting northern France, Belgium, Serbia, Poland, Courland, Galicia and Rumania. Having made enormous conquests before the allies could meet German preparedness, Germany naturally is anxious to call off her enemies before they drive her out of invaded territory and compel her to pay for the property she has stolen.

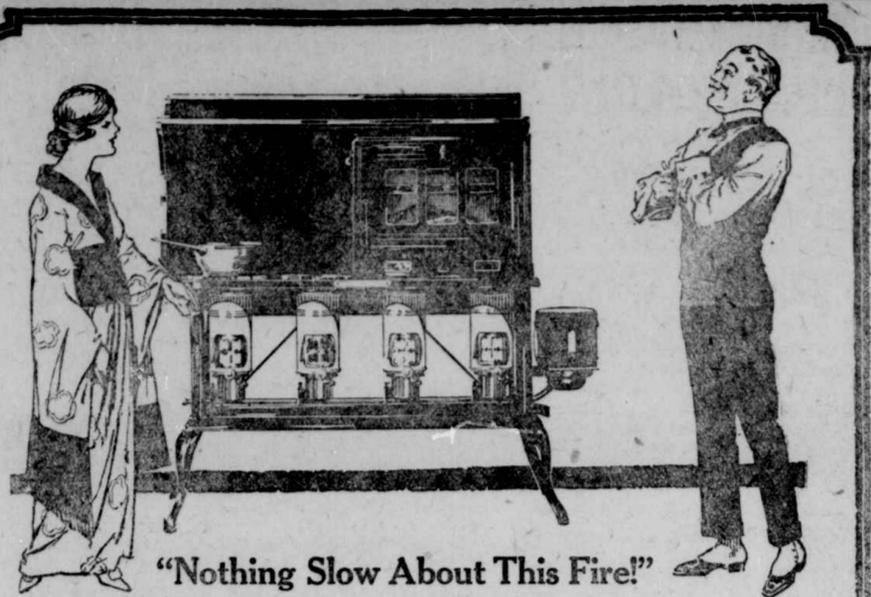
The peace proposals from Germany are as insulting to the intelligence as they are to the sense of justice of the allies. It is humiliating to see the Germans persist in the notion that the allies are gullible enough to cease fighting and talk peace while the Burglar is in the house packing his booty. This low estimate of the intelligence of the allies constitutes proof of the unconquerable stupidity of the Germans in international matters, and emphasizes the necessity for dealing with Germany with bullets instead of negotiation.

The days of peace with Germany are over. Germany will have peace only when the allies decide to give it to her, after she has been rendered incapable of breaking it.—Washington Post.

A Special Work Day.

Friday, August 10th, has been set apart for a work spell to clean out the old Webb Graveyard at Piney Grove church. All persons are invited to attend, especially those who have people buried there. Bring your dinner, stay all day. Please bring tools to work with.

MRS. W. R. WILKINS. Four Oaks, N. C.



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