

LABOR DRAINED FROM FARM.

With the Shortage of Labor the Farmer Has No Hope of Increasing His Acreage Over That of Last Year. High Prices Paid by Other Industries Cripple Farm Work.

The farmers of this country have never asked to be relieved from any task or burden which rightly belonged to them. They do not ask for class exemption or special consideration of any sort. They are ready now, as always, therefore, to do their duty to their country; to answer every call made upon them with their characteristic zeal and patriotic devotion to liberty and justice. But to call upon them now under the present condition of things to plant greater acreage in crops, demanding greater production this year of food stuffs and farm produce than was produced last year, is like the Egyptians calling upon the Israelites to make more bricks without straw.

When the world war began, in 1914, the munition plants and the manufacturers of war supplies in this country were swamped with orders from the European nations, and at prices which enabled them to pay the highest wages ever paid in this country for labor. The high wages then offered by these industries drew away from the farms nearly all the labor.

When our own country entered the war and begun making preparations in feverish haste for training an army, our Government let contracts for the erection of cantonments and for supplies on the basis of ten per cent profit to the contractor, let the cost be what it might. Then the demand for labor was so great and the prices paid were so exorbitant that the remaining day and month hands, available for farm work, were taken away. Then came the draft and in many instances the farmer himself and the farmers' sons were drafted into the army. This ended the tragedy. The stripping of the country of young, able-bodied men, who would till the soil was complete.

Our survey of the labor and the prospects of greater crop production in this State shows that in some sections the labor shortage is one hundred per cent and the shortage will average throughout the State no less than fifty per cent. Some of our correspondents state frankly that the Army and Navy have taken many men from their communities and that the munition plants and other industries have outbid the farmers for those that were left.

These are the conditions as they exist at present. Greater crops than those of last year cannot be grown with the present available farm labor, neither can the shortage in trained farm hands be made up by inexperienced boys from the high schools or laborers from the towns, as recent experience abundantly proves. Many thousands of acres were unharvested last fall because the necessary hands could not be obtained for the purpose. These conditions exist through no fault of the farmers. They never have at any time realized large returns, and especially do they not realize any such scale of profits as is commonly granted to the great corporations producing copper, steel, cloth, leather, coal, lumber and many other things less necessary than food. However burdensome the prices charged by the distributor to the consumer, what the farmers realize is often below the cost of production. He must get living prices for what he grows or abandon the farm.

It is a fact which cannot be denied that what the farmers will plant the coming season must be decided mainly by the prices they can obtain for what they harvested last year.

No food stuffs have yet been sold in this country at a price sufficiently high to pay for production with labor which cost from \$2.50 to \$3 per eight-hour day, and the high cost of fertilizer, machinery and other farm supplies added to that of labor.

The situation as it stands at present plainly indicates that if the farmers cannot realize for their produce a price based on the cost of production and a reasonable profit added thereto, as is granted to other industries, so that they can compete with the great corporations in the matter of paying wages to laborers, there will not only be no more food produced this year than last, but there will be much less produced, and if the production of more food is to win or lose the war, it will be lost, because there is a limit even to a farmer's capacity for work.

Assure the farmers of prices for their products, which will cover the cost of production and let them go into the market as business men and compete with other industries for labor and the production demanded will be met. Farmers are as much entitled to a guaranteed scale of profits as any one else and the time has come when they cannot produce for prices which do not cover the cost of production.—The Southern Planter.

Some times it is love at first sight of a hank account.—Memphis Commercial Appeal.

Thrift Stamps.

The campaign on the Thrift Stamp isn't going to end with a whirlwind wind-up. It is a matter that will take some time to finish. However, every man should come across right now for all he is worth, and maybe a little later he may find that he can come again. These thrift stamps are simply a loan to the government. They are an investment. Uncle Sam needs ready money now and he is asking his nephews and nieces to come across. And to refuse to loan Uncle Sam money is a serious thing. Because if he finds you won't lend it he will take it. He is going to have money, and the best way to appease him is to lend to him and receive interest. If he must issue bonds and sell them, we will pay them. If he increases taxes to get the money, the burden falls on us without getting any returns. Then why not come across and lend him all the money we can possibly spare for the purpose and let him in turn pay us a goodly rate of interest? The argument is all on one side, and that side is buttered. Better come across while we have opportunity.—Everything.

Bragged too Much.

A farmer, the other day, took a plowshare to the blacksmith's to be sharpened, and while the blacksmith worked the farmer chuckled and bragged about a sale of hogs he had just made.

"Them hogs was only eight months old," he said, "and none too fat, nuther; but I seen that the buyer was at his wits' end, and by skilful jigglin' I boosted up the price on him just 300 per cent. Yes, by gum, I got three times more for them hogs than I usen get before the war."

The plowshare being done, the farmer handed the smith 50 cents.

"Hold on," said the smith, "I charge \$1.50 for that job now."

"You scandalous rascal!" yelled the farmer. "What do you mean by treblin' your price on me? What have you done it for?"

"I've done it," said the blacksmith, "so's I'll be able to eat some of that high-priced pork of yours this winter."—Washington Star.

Shall the Price of Cotton Be Fixed?

We doubt if the average Southern cotton grower objects to having the price of cotton fixed; but he will object to having the price unfairly fixed, and to fix the price fairly, a good deal more study will have to be given it by those who loudly clamor for regulation.

We firmly believe that present high prices of cotton are not due to speculation, but to a world-wide shortage and a consequently more insistent demand. This shortage, in turn, has come about because of factors over which the farmer has little or no control—the boll weevil, adverse seasons, scarce and high-priced fertilizers, and labor shortage. In a word, a combination of untoward circumstances have served to greatly curtail production and at the same time greatly increase the cost.

We submit that any price less than thirty cents is unfair to the cotton grower. We submit, furthermore, that thirty-cent cotton is quite in line with \$2 wheat, corn at \$1.75, hogs at \$15.50, pig iron at \$50 a ton against \$10 before the war, and potash at thirty cents a pound against five cents before the war.

We resent the imputation that the cotton grower is unpatriotic; we question the motives and the judgment of any man who would penalize the Southern farmer for growing a crop that is vital in its importance to civilization.

A man who on one acre grows one bale of cotton provides 500 pounds of the best and cheapest material on earth for clothing ourselves, our armies, and the armies of our allies. But he does more. Off the acre that grew the 500 pounds of lint cotton there also comes 1,000 pounds of seed, out of which are made: 450 pounds of meal, capable of taking the place of 900 pounds, or about 16 bushels of corn as a stock feed, thus releasing the corn for human consumption; 150 pounds of one of the best oils or fats, for which the whole world stands in sore need; 300 pounds of hulls to feed our livestock; and 50 to 75 pounds of linters to feed the guns that are to humble the Hun.

Is it for the national good that the production of such a crop be penalized by unfair price-fixing? The three successive short crops are not accidental, and any lowering of prices will result in shorter crops still.

Let us have price-fixing if it will help us win the war, but let it be fair. Anything less will not only hurt the cotton grower, but the whole nation as well.—Progressive Farmer.

Good Advice.

Visitor—My poor friend, pause to consider when next you are tempted. Take time, my dear man, take time.

Convict—That's wot I done. I did take time—I took a watch.—Ex.

TO CRYSTALLIZE SPIRIT OF RALEIGH MEETING.

Col. Fries Telegraphs County to put Plans to Work. Have County Meetings and Provide Speakers for Schools on Washington's Birthday.

Winston-Salem, Feb. 16.—A telegram of four important requests was sent yesterday by Col. F. H. Fries, State Director of War Savings, to every county Chairman in the State. The requests made of the Chairman were that they arrange as soon as possible to utilize the information and enthusiasm obtained at the War Savings Institute held in Raleigh, Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, in a similar meeting to be held in their own counties; further, that they provide a speaker for every school in their counties to explain W. S. S.—War Savings Stamps and War Savings Societies—on the 22nd of February, Washington's Birthday; that they have War Savings Stamps on sale at every school house on that day, and that they organize War Savings Societies both in the schools and the school communities.

These requests were made, said Col. Fries, for the purpose of definitely shaping and putting to work the ideas and plans gathered hastily at the Raleigh meeting while they are yet clear in mind. To take home the spirit of the Raleigh meeting and make it mean to the people of the counties what it meant to the people of the State is the purpose of Col. Fries' suggestion to the county chairmen.

The plan of providing speakers for the public schools on the 22nd of February has been facilitated through the Governor's recent request that all courts adjourn on this day that judges, lawyers and other public speakers may be available for explaining and directing the work of the War Savings Stamps Campaign. On Washington's Birthday the first great drive toward getting every child a War Saver and a member of a War Savings Society will be made. Furthermore, every child will be given an opportunity to invest his savings in Thrift or War Savings Stamps.

Emergency Fund.

In some of the Eastern schools there are penny savings-banks for children.

Not long ago on a Friday morning a small youth walked up to the desk with an important air and withdrew three cents from his account. Monday morning, however, he promptly returned the money.

"So you didn't spend your three cents, Francis," remarked the young woman in charge.

"Oh, no," he replied, "but a fellow just likes to have a little cash on hand over Saturday and Sunday."—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

Not So Wide of the Mark.

"And now, children, we come to that important country, Germany, that is governed by a man called a kaiser," said the teacher. "Can any one tell me what a kaiser is? Yes, Willie!"

"Please, ma'am, a kaiser is a stream of hot water spring' up in the air and disturbin' the earth."—Life.

NOTICE.

The undersigned having qualified as Administrator on the estate of Sir William Johnson, deceased, hereby notifies all persons having claims against said estate to present the same to me duly verified on or before the 5th day of February, 1918, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery; and all persons indebted to said estate will make immediate payment.

This 4th day of February, 1918.

JAMES D. PARKER,
Administrator.

NOTICE OF SALE OF LAND.

Pursuant to the power contained in the mortgage of J. E. Hocutt and Dora Hocutt, his wife, to O. Marx & Son, dated February 1, 1916, and recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds of Johnston County, N. C., in Book No. 11, Page 210, we will, on Monday, the 25th day of Feb., 1918, at 12 o'clock noon, at the door of the Court House of Johnston County, in Smithfield, N. C., sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, for cash, a piece or tract of land lying and being in Johnston County, N. C., bounded by a line beginning at a stake in Wm. H. O'Neal's line on a branch; thence N. 76 1-2 E. 100 poles to a pine, said O'Neal's corner; thence N. 13 W. with W. H. O'Neal's line 70 poles to formerly a pine, now a stake W. H. O'Neal's corner; thence N. 86 W. along W. H. O'Neal's line 67 1-2 poles to a pine in said W. H. O'Neal's line; thence S. 87 W. 25 poles to a stake in W. H. O'Neal's and A. G. Bunn's line; thence S. 5 1-2 E. 95 poles to the beginning, containing 50 acres and 1 rod, more or less; excepting 1 acre on the road, lying east of this tract, sold to Wm. Holder by D. H. McCullers and wife by deed dated Dec. 7, 1897. For further description see Book No. 11, page 210, Johnston County Registry.

This January 19, 1918.

O. MARX & SON,
Hinsdale & Shaw, Attorneys,
Raleigh, N. C.

What Are Your Needs?

If It's a Nice Mule or Horse, we Have Just Received a Car of Nice Choice Mules and can Suit You in Looks, Quality and Price.

We have also received our season's supply of Plows and Plow Castings. We bought the largest stock of Plows we have ever bought, and therefore can save you money on your

Plows and Plow Casting.

We have just unloaded a car of International Harvester Co's. Improved Farm Machinery—Disc and Section Harrows, Riding Cultivators, Lime and Manure Spreaders, Guano Distributors, Cotton and Corn Planters. In fact anything you want in

Farm Machinery

We have it or will get it for you.

We invite you to inspect our "Acme" Harrows, B. & G. Sulky Plows, Farm Fence, heavy and light weight Poultry wire.

We have a ware house full of Feeds---Red Dog, Ship Stuff, Molasses and Dairy Feeds.

A Car of Good Flour Just Unloaded

We have already laid in a good supply of Fertilizer and can supply you with any analysis. We guarantee quality and price. Let us figure on your Fertilizer needs before placing your order.

We strive to make your visits to our store pleasant and interesting. We carry one of as large stocks as is carried in the county, and probably the largest of improved machinery, Kerosene and Gasoline Engines, and Corn Mills. Our Meadows Whole Wheat Flour Mills are just the thing to make your war flour.

They Are Cheap For Their Results

Roberts-Atkinson Co.

SELMA, N. C.