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WRECKED HOMES IN AMERICA

STATE-AID TO TENANTS

At the meeting of the North Carolina Club Monday night, November 17, Mr. Reid Kitchin, president of the Club, presented a paper on State-Aid to Landless Farmers. The following is a synopsis of Mr. Kitchin's paper.

There are 64,000 landless white farmers in North Carolina. Should the state extend its aid to these landless or tenant citizens, and, if so, under what conditions, and why or why not, were the questions discussed by Mr. Kitchin.

Of North Carolina's 269,000 farms 43.5 percent are operated by tenants. This figure has been attained by a steady increase in tenancy since 1880, when the rate was only 33 percent. The present percentage does not seem to be the peak of tenantry, for the rate is steadily increasing.

These tenants are so handicapped that they do not become the most effective citizens. They get few advantages because of their state of poverty. They have little reading material; they know little of sanitation; they seldom get a fair education; they receive poor religious instruction; in fact, they are deprived of the essential things that go to make cultured citizens. Naturally, they develop the "don't care" attitude and may be considered as a "doubtful economic asset and a distinct social menace."

Advantages of State-Aid

State-aid to the landless farmer has three main advantages: (1) a state readily demands financial credit; (2) a state is particularly competent to select and acquire land needed for any farming venture; (3) through the aid of its colleges and agricultural department, a state has at hand men and women well qualified to practically apply any policy it may adopt.

The questions now arise, should the state extend its aid to these landless or tenant farmers, and, if so, under what conditions, and why or why not?

Various types of state-aid to landless farmers have been tried by a number of states such as California, Kansas, Oklahoma, and North Dakota. Several foreign countries such as New Zealand, Australia, Italy, Holland, Denmark, and the British Isles have successfully carried through plans of state-aid.

The Proposed Plan

One of the most successful plans, and the one that North Carolina might well try, is that one being used by California, which has as its outstanding features: (1) small colonies of farmers settled in farm communities, applying community cooperation in marketing products; (2) careful supervision on the part of the state executive agency, costing the state nothing but its loan of credit; (3) actual successful demonstration to private owners that such a plan can work successfully. From the standpoint of the tenant state-aid has the following advantages: (1) profits of private colonizers are saved; (2) low interest rates; (3) extended payments; (4) expert advice and direction; (5) lessens the time in which each farm may be improved, and (6) places the owner in a position to earn enough money to pay his principal and interest when due.

Under the California plan the Land Board can either improve the land before selling as farms to the settlers, or lend the settlers up to \$3,000 each for making the improvements themselves. The state asks a small cash payment on the land and requires the settler to provide one-third of the money needed to improve and equip the farm. Thus, capital and credit are the twin keys needed to unlock the door to farm ownership in California. The plan worked so well in the establishment of the Delhi and Durham colonies that not a farmer or laborer was in arrears at the completion of the first several years, and before Durham, the first settlement, was a year old, it had been visited and studied by officials of ten American states and five foreign states. This undertaking has entered California on a new economic era and has given that state a new social background to rural life, and a rural civilization worthy of the

state.

Many believe that this would weaken the self reliance of the people. North Carolina, along with other states, has already the advantages of the Federal Land Banks and Loan Associations, through which a loan may be gotten up to fifty percent of the value of the land purchased, the loan not to exceed \$25,000, payments to extend from 5 to 40 years, interest not to exceed 6 percent, paid in semi-annual or annual installments.

Still other plans have been thought of but they have not materialized. There was an effort to aid the tenant farmers in North Carolina in the 1923 legislature, but as yet nothing but investigation has resulted from this effort.

Stark Reality

"Some people see a remedy for farm tenantry from the viewpoint of legislation; some see it in socialistic reforms; some from the viewpoint of education, assisted by religious training; probably an intelligent application of them all would aid", said Mr. Kitchin.

"But we are yet face to face with stark reality. The tenant system in North Carolina has enslaved a negro population of 250,000 and a white population of 300,000; it involves 117,000 farms. Altogether forty-three percent of our farming population of 1,500,000 are so engulfed. It will require years of patient and intelligent labor on the part of our economists and sociologists to turn back the tide of farm tenantry in North Carolina and justify farm ownership by white men. It is essentially a white man's problem."

After Mr. Kitchin's presentation of the subject, many members of the Club questioned him regarding the feasibility of several phases of the question. Dr. E. C. Branson was present, and declared himself as being heartily in favor of the community colonization plan. He told the Club how Denmark had practically eliminated tenancy, town and country. Dr. Branson expressed himself as being uncompromisingly opposed to a state-aid plan of any sort by which the State would act as creditor to the landless individually scattered here and there all over North Carolina. Such a plan he believes thoroughly impracticable. Furthermore, North Carolina does not need more farmers. What she does need is to develop farm communities, for it is only when farmers live together in farm communities that true cooperation succeeds. This is the argument for the California farm community plan.

NOT IN OUR CLASS

The Presbyterian Standard calls attention to and views with alarm a statement by the professor of sociology in the University of South Carolina, to the effect that there were 204 homicides in that state during 1923, and 93 during the first seven months of the current year.

The esteemed Standard may not know it, but at that South Carolina isn't in our class at all. For the year ending July 1, 1924, 366 homicide cases—one for each day in the year and one for the extra day of leap year—were heard in the courts of North Carolina.

Take notice, please, that the 366 cases were actually brought to a hearing in the courts. It is a reasonable assumption that there were quite a number of homicide cases not brought to trial for various reasons. Therefore the 366 do not account for all the homicides in our state during the year under consideration. It is probable that the number reached 400, or thereabouts; and the rate since July 1st indicates a considerable increase by next July. But with the 366 cases we are so far ahead of South Carolina that that state isn't in our class. In fact it is believed that along with our boast of good roads and industrial and educational progress, it could probably be said we are killing more folks according to population than any other state. In any event we are well up ahead. South Carolina is no doubt doing the best it can according to its opportunities, but the 204 killings down there are but little more than half our record, if it

KNOW NORTH CAROLINA

It is sometimes lost sight of that the United States is still a growing nation, that vast portions of it are undeveloped and that its rate of expansion is increasing rather than diminishing. Everywhere new cities are springing up in the wilderness, small communities grow over night into thriving cities and unclaimed lands are converted into rich agricultural lands.

A first hand example of this current growth is afforded by the state of North Carolina.

The story of North Carolina draws the imagination like a magnet, so fascinating is the progress of its people in the last quarter of a century. Many a man looking at a map of North Carolina, with Pamlico sound and the Atlantic ocean on the east and the towering Appalachian range in the west, so that it is blessed with every climate of the temperate zone, has envied its inhabitants their natural advantages.

But to North Carolina's natural wealth, the energy and industry of its people have added taxable material wealth, with the result that cities have sprung up from backwoods settlements, straggling villages have become handsome towns, modern highways have been constructed from sea to mountains and where were poverty and privation not many years ago are now plenty and luxury.

The further North Carolina goes on the road of progress the faster she seems to move. Seven years ago she spent \$4,000,000 on school maintenance. Last year the amount was \$23,000,000. In 1900 the value of her school buildings was \$1,000,000. Today it is \$48,000,000. In three years she has spent \$76,000,000 on concrete and macadam roads to connect the seats of her 100 counties. Her wealth has been multiplied by 10 in the last 20 years. In 1900 her bank deposits were \$16,000,000. By 1923 they had risen to \$345,000,000. She has practically no immigration. Her fortunes have been piled up by the brains and sinews of a native stock that is not afraid of work. North Carolina is increasing in wealth faster than any other state in the Union.

North Carolina is only one of many states which by their progressiveness in recent years are making themselves factors in national affairs. In the same manner are formerly isolated and undeveloped sections of all states making themselves factors in state affairs. The country still displays the healthy glow of growth.—Tampa Tribune.

is really half.

Instead of trying to boost South Carolina the Standard would do well to invite attention to our own progress. Can't say that it is cause for boast, but it is well to let the public know that we do not propose to let South Carolina get ahead of us even in number of murders.—R. R. Clark.

NORTH CAROLINA LEADS

During the month of October North Carolina led the states of the Union in the aggregate number of spindle hours—the number of active spindles times the number of hours in operation during the month. North Carolina has only one-half as many spindles as Massachusetts, but the cotton spindles of North Carolina ran an average of 281 hours each during October, against only 128 hours in

Massachusetts. Both North and South Carolina ranked ahead of Massachusetts in aggregate spindle-hours. North and South Carolina led all the states not only in aggregate spindle-hours, but in the number of hours the average spindle in place ran during the month. Measured in terms of aggregate spindle-hours per month North Carolina is now the leading textile state of the Union.

DIVORCE RATES GROWING

The table which appears elsewhere shows how the counties of the state rank in divorce rates for the year 1923. (The rank of the states was presented in last week's issue of the News Letter.) In five counties no divorces were granted during the year, according to the reports filed by the Superior Court Clerks. Exclusive of these counties, Franklin county, with one divorce for every 285 marriages, ranked best in North Carolina. Cherokee county with one divorce for every 3.7 marriages had the highest divorce rate in the state.

Cherokee Leads

Cherokee! Why Cherokee of all the counties of the state? The divorce habit is supposed to be, and usually is, an urban one. But the three counties with highest divorce rates are sparsely settled, remote, rural mountain counties—Cherokee, Avery, and Polk. Of the ten counties with the highest divorce rates, six are in the mountains where family ties are supposed to be strongest. Of the ten counties with highest divorce rates, only two could be classed as urban. Seven of them are sparsely settled, remote and rural mountain and tidewater

counties. Is it possible that the lot of the farm wife in these remote areas of the state is excessively hard? We don't know. We are merely asking for information.

While the above is true, the divorce problem is mainly a problem of urban areas. The rate is high in several rural counties, yet the great majority of divorces are granted to urban dwellers. About one-half of all divorces granted in the state in 1923 were granted in the ten counties which contain the ten largest towns. Not a single one of the state's large towns is found in the fifty counties that rank best—the ones having from 20 to 285 marriages per divorce. The ten counties which contain the largest towns all had fewer than twenty marriages per divorce.

Large Increases

The divorce rate in North Carolina is growing at a very rapid pace. In 1916 the only state that had a better record than North Carolina was South Carolina which grants no divorces. At that time our rate was one divorce for every 32 marriages. Our rate is now one divorce for every 16 marriages and the rate steadily increases from year to year.

In 1890 only 163 divorces were granted in the state. By 1906 the number had increased to 380, by 1916 to 968, and by 1923 to 1,497. Or to put the facts on a comparable basis, from 1890 to 1923 our population increased 67 percent, but our divorces increased 818 percent!

Manifestly it will be not many years before the divorce problem will have become a grave one in North Carolina, even if it is not so considered at the present time.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE RATES

In North Carolina in 1923

Based on the Bureau of the Census report on marriages and divorces, showing the number of marriages for each divorce granted in each county.

North Carolina now averages one divorce for every 16 marriages, against one for every 32 in 1916. The rate for the United States in 1923 was one divorce for every 7.4 marriages. A total of 1,497 divorces were granted in North Carolina in 1923, against a total of only 239 in 1903, or two decades ago. The total number of divorces granted annually has steadily increased from 159 in 1887 to 1,497 in 1923.

Buncombe leads with 99 divorces, Guilford comes second with 87, and Forsyth third with 85.

The best record is made by Clay, Gates, Jones, Person, and Tyrrell counties—all rural counties—which report no divorces in 1923.

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Rank	Counties	No. Marriages Per Divorce	Rank	Counties	No. Marriages Per Divorce
1	Franklin	285.0	49	Orange	20.5
2	Camden	90.0	50	Moore	20.2
3	Johnston	80.0	51	Wake	19.9
4	Randolph	77.3	52	McDowell	19.6
5	Yadkin	76.5	53	Beaufort	18.8
6	Montgomery	73.0	53	Duplin	18.8
7	Sampson	72.0	55	Stanly	18.7
8	Bladen	69.0	56	Anson	17.8
9	Davie	68.5	56	Brunswick	17.8
10	Stokes	66.0	58	Onslow	17.3
11	Scotland	57.0	59	Rowan	17.0
12	Warren	56.2	60	Cleveland	16.8
13	Ashe	51.7	61	Columbus	16.7
14	Hertford	46.5	62	Iredell	15.9
15	Alleghany	42.0	63	Pender	15.2
16	Currituck	41.0	64	Vance	14.6
17	Chatham	38.5	65	Wilson	14.5
18	Watauga	38.0	66	Macon	14.0
19	Yancey	37.5	67	Henderson	13.5
20	Graham	37.0	67	Union	13.5
21	Lee	35.6	69	Guilford	13.3
22	Catawba	34.5	70	Lenoir	12.9
23	Harnett	33.8	71	Edgecombe	12.8
24	Cabarrus	33.6	72	Rutherford	12.6
25	Hyde	33.3	73	Mecklenburg	12.3
26	Cumberland	31.5	74	Richmond	12.2
27	Lincoln	31.4	75	Nash	12.1
28	Burke	31.2	76	Forsyth	12.0
29	Caldwell	28.7	77	Madison	11.9
30	Mitchell	28.0	78	Durham	11.7
30	Pamlico	28.0	78	Halifax	11.7
32	Alamance	27.8	80	Wayne	11.6
33	Craven	26.6	81	Greene	11.1
34	Hoke	26.4	82	Catawba	10.8
35	Alexander	25.8	83	Chowan	10.7
36	Caswell	25.0	84	Pitt	10.3
37	Perquimans	24.8	85	New Hanover	10.0
38	Dare	24.0	86	Haywood	9.8
39	Martin	23.9	87	Transylvania	8.6
40	Rockingham	23.4	88	Northampton	8.1
41	Swain	23.2	89	Buncombe	7.4
42	Granville	22.9	90	Bertie	6.6
43	Jackson	22.0	91	Robeson	6.2
44	Washington	21.8	92	Gaston	6.0
45	Wilkes	21.7	92	Polk	6.0
46	Davidson	21.4	94	Avery	5.4
46	Surry (1922)	21.4	95	Cherokee	3.7
48	Pasquotank	20.7			