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North Carolina Forever!



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Patent-Extension Abuses.

One of the provisions of the Constitution of the United States is that:

"The Congress shall have power to promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing, for limited times, to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries."

It is of patents that we talk to-day. The framers of our national constitution acted wisely in authorizing Congress to secure to inventors for limited times the exclusive right to their discoveries. The object of patents is to promote the progress of useful arts. When a man has consumed time, labor and money, in planning and perfecting an invention useful to mankind, it is a righteous thing to give him, as a compensation, the exclusive ownership of that invention for a limited time. He and his heirs and assigns ought not to own the idea or combination of ideas forever in fee-simple; for, perhaps, he was only a few days ahead of some one else in presenting his invention to the public. But it is wise and just and politic in the government to stimulate inventive genius by giving it for some certain time the ownership of its combination of ideas. The people will all endorse patents and even patent extensions when conferred in conformity with the spirit and object of the

constitution. But certain abuses have crept into this department of legislation that should be fully exposed and unqualifiedly denounced through the country.

We see it stated that a mammoth combination, owning an important sewing-machine patent, that is about to expire, have sent \$50,000 to Washington to be used in the initiatory lobbying, necessary to secure their fourth renewal of their patent for seven years. They have already had it twenty-eight years—almost the term of one generation of men. They have already made millions of dollars out of their royalty, keeping sewing-machines up as high as fifty and sixty dollars that will be sold for fifteen dollars as soon as the letters patent determine. But they want more, more of the people's money! Because they control money by the million, they unblushingly propose to ask Congress in effect to give them yet other millions.

The sewing-machine patents have already accomplished all the objects of patent laws. They have given the owners princely fortunes. The success of this example gives all the encouragement to inventive genius that can be extracted from it. The people have borne the tax cheerfully for one generation. It is time now to take off the burden. It ought not to be laid on the back of the second generation.

Many persons do not know that all our leading sewing-machines sell in England for a little more than half the prices asked for them in this country. Our patent laws do not protect them in England.

Let the people speak out. Let the press denounce the project. Let the voter interrogate his Congressman, or his candidate for Congress about it. Let the Congressman who wishes to come before his constituents with clean hands and a clear conscience, consider well the proposition before he votes for it. It was disgraceful to have credit Mobilier stock distributed in our legislative halls where it would "do the most good." Let us hope we may be spared the deeper degradation, in the eyes of the world, of having a similar distribution of sewing machine stock.

Advanced Mental Culture Among the Farmers.

BY JOHN S. LONG.

Many persons, illiberal in their views, and shortsighted in their prophecies, have been of the opinion that farmers as a class should not be admitted to the higher mysteries of intellectual expansion and enjoyment. They have thought and said that only professional men should be thoroughly equipped with the furniture which a collegiate or university education can bestow. And this fatal error admitted, at the very threshold of life, by perhaps the large majority of the tillers of the soil, has been the direful spring from which has flowed a multitude of evils upon the agricultural interests of this country. Among the ancients, agriculture was not considered a mere muscular development, a mere physical illustration of the hardy qualities which are presumed to give effectiveness and skill to the plow and to the reaper. All over classic Italy are found the splendid remains of villas and country residences, whose foundations were laid and whose marble walls were built up by the educated taste of citizens, whose noblest pride was experienced in the fact that they were proprietors of the land, and that their wealth had been accumulated from its improvement. Virgil, Cicero and a host of other illustrious statesmen and authors, turned away from the cares of State and the anxieties of authorship, to contemplate and enjoy the landscapes and luxuries of their own farms. And in England, agriculture has furnished perhaps a larger proportion of talented men to politics, to literature and to positions of civil prominence and influence than any other avocation. The great landed aristocracy, whose intellectual culture is on an average superior to that of any other class of men in the world, take as much interest in their blooded stock, in the successful labors of their tenants, and in the increased fertility of their estates, as they do in the marriage of the Duke of Edinburgh, or in the effects of the Geneva Arbitration. The trouble with us is, that we have permitted our extreme political prejudices against what we choose to call aristocratic notions, to set us in opposition to the advanced culture of men, who earn their living by the sweat of their brow. Thus it has come to pass that the majority of farmers

excuse themselves from the thorough education of their children with the affirmation that it is not needed to qualify them for the duties of the farm.

Now see the effects of this false system upon the social refinements and pecuniary profits of agriculture. The farmer, starting out with the illogical theory that a finished mental training is not required for the exigencies of agricultural life, will, as a matter of course, undervalue the priceless benefits which such a training will bestow. He will place a discount upon polished manners, hold in contempt the indulgence of aesthetic inclinations, regard the classical and philosophical student as a vagabond and interloper, and elevate upon the altars of his devotion the mere exemplars of shrewdness, industry and economy. Then when his children come in contact with the perfect gentility and courtly etiquette of circles where cultivated endowments are rated at their proper value, they show to a disadvantage by the side of those who have been carefully and thoroughly trained. But this is by no means the worst consequence of such a ruinous system. We wish it were. The real profits of the farm are not dependent upon the steady industry and self-sacrificing energy of the proprietor and his laborers, but upon the outside combinations of capital, upon the unseen currents of legislation, and upon the ingenious contrivances of speculators and sharpers to plunder the farmer of his revenues. Think you that a skillful manipulation of the soil, or an extraordinary knowledge of fertilizers and crops will successfully grapple with these difficulties? Every avocation in the country has been sending forth its intelligence and learning to forge fetters of adornment for the fair limbs of agriculture. While the farmer has been holding to his spelling-book and primary arithmetic, and, like a little boy swimming on bladders, has been afraid to risk himself in deeper water, the great monopolies of the nation have been subsidizing the most powerful intellects and the sharpest scholars, to take advantage of his honest simplicity, to deprive him of his earnings, to shackle his liberty of action, to mortgage his little property, to control the marketable value of his products, and to plunge him in a maze of embarrassments almost beyond the hope of recovery.

In the meantime, he holds to the fastnesses of his purchased or ancestral property, grumbling at the inequalities of taxation, finding fault at the heartless cruelty of legislators, and hoping against hope, for the arrival of the day when the rights of agriculture shall be protected, and the lords of the soil shall be really the monarchs of their own material interests. Now how much better it would be, to go at once to the bottom of the difficulty, and apply the only relief which can reach the necessities of his condition. We do not hesitate to affirm, that if the farmers of this country had paid one-half the attention to education which they have devoted to the improvement of their estates, they would to-day be independent of the whole system of banks, railroads and mercantile combinations. If they would have a part in the making of laws, they must qualify their sons to be law-givers, and their daughters to be mothers of jurists and of statesmen. If they would successfully counterbalance the cunning efforts of adventurers and commercial spies, to buy up and control the political influence of popular assemblies, they must bring out the oratorical power that is in many a farmer's boy, and drill the stalwart young plowman in the principles of civil government, and in the electrical knowledge which will make him a dangerous adversary for tricksters and demagogues. And if they would have the entire policy of this nation shaped to satisfy the wants of agriculture, and to gratify the reasonable demands of a class who are the authors of all national prosperity and power, they must make the more physical duties of the farm, so far as their children are concerned, continually subordinate to their thorough mental development. It is a very important thing for a farmer's son to be industrious, to become a good manager of his father's business, and to show a prompt intelligence to generalize correctly in the difficult questions which are submitted to his judgment.

But if all these things are to be accomplished at the expense of his intellectual culture, if in making him a good farmer he is to be left an ignorant citizen, then the guardians of his youth are tearing down their own ramparts, dividing their own garrison, and preparing a shameful capitulation to the enemies of agricultural expansion and improvement.

Neither do we think farmers justified in looking to our system of common schools, to meet the educational deficiency of which we

write. We are by no means an enemy to those public institutions. We believe that they have done a great deal of good, and with competent officers to superintend and direct them; they ought to become an influential agency in the intellectual growth of our people. But our observation has taught us, that, in the agricultural districts, there is a strong temptation to make them a primary means of mental culture in hardly an individual case, but to consider them amply sufficient for all the purposes of the farm. A very intelligent corrective of this evil is suggested in the conduct of several neighborhoods we have visited, where a score or more of earnest gentlemen have got together, united their means, and made up very handsome salaries, to attract teachers of talent and scholarly attainments, to instruct their children. Such a course removes one of the most objectionable features of the common school system, the appropriation of mean salaries to secure competent teachers. We cannot employ brains and accomplishments for any service in this age and generation without a suitable recompense. If we desire thorough instructors, we must make generous payments. We must abandon the stingy theories which have caused us to rob the intellects of our most promising youth, to dwarf their ambition and their faculties, while they have been left to the conclusion that there is no brilliant eminence in the pathway of the farmer's boy. And above all, remembering that things are not necessarily impossible because they are difficult, let us aim at the highest grades of intellectual training for the sons and daughters of the farm. The suggestion has already been made, and we heartily endorse it, that the agricultural classes should at once set on foot an institution of learning, to be organized and operated in their own interests. It would necessarily take much time to consummate such an enterprise. But its ultimate success would be absolutely certain.

Memorial Day.

In the revolutions of seasons, Spring is once again by our sides, with her lap all filled with flowers. And from her bounty, our fair daughters give the first fruits of beauty and grace to the memory of our departed heroes.

It matters not what judgment may be formed of the causes, the true character and lasting effects of the war; whether it were possible to avoid the struggle or not. Those questions, our people may safely leave to the arbitration of time. Judges yet unborn may determine for posterity what manner of men were the Southerners of eighteen hundred and sixty-one. The philosophers and statesmen of another age may declare what evils might have been avoided, and what good accomplished by the success of that gigantic effort. We will not assume to decide, but it is certainly our privilege to remember.

Ingratitude, basest of all the vices, is said to be the besetting sin of nations. Forgetfulness, alas, too often spreads her pall over the sublimest efforts, the deepest throes, the most agonizing struggles of man.

The grass springs over the deepest furrow of the plough, the vine and tendrils hide the rugged chasm. Nature seems ever to invoke some airy ministry to hide out of sight all that is terrible in her convulsions.

The memories that come thronging to our hearts on Memorial Day are losing some of their bitterness, some of the poignant anguish that rent our souls, in the fearful years, immediately succeeding the great struggle. While we do not forget the innumerable privations, the hard and hopeless toil of our fathers, and sons, and brothers, their struggles, and sufferings, their wounds, captivity, starvation, blood, and death; while our heart goes out in deepest sympathy to the widow and the orphan, whose journey of life has ever since been shadowed by the recollections of the valley of death, yet it is not as it once was.

We feel that for the heroic dead there is not only mourning but glory. We know that their valor has been written in the chronicles of the age all over the world, that their imperishable renown has given a sacred benison to the soil that bore them, that dying, they gave themselves a cheerful sacrifice to the birth of a country's fame. We know that freed from mortal cares, theirs is the happy reward vouchsafed unto those who have obeyed the call of duty. Who would not exchange an imperial throne for the coffin of a Lee?

God bless the women of our land! Vestals in purity, theirs are fit hands to keep alight the torch of memory, and lead us with each recurring year to the altars of patriotism, there not only to sorrow for the loved and lost, but to rejoice in their fidelity to principle, to honor their devotion to duty, and so to perpetrate their fame from age to age and generation to generation.