

NORTH CAROLINA HAS BIG TASK IN AIDING TO FEED THE WORLD

With Population Increases of Several Millions Each Year America and Europe Must Have More Food, and the Supply Must Come Chiefly From America; for Much of the Globe Lacks Rainfall to Make Crops.

BION H. BUTLER.

Do you know what the world depends for its livelihood? Rainfall. Around this earth are different amounts of rainfall, and where the rain reaches twenty inches or more of rain a year is where we are obliged to look for our food. Twenty inches is a small amount, and not dependable, but a large part of the earth does not have so much as that. For that reason a large proportion of the earth can not feed many people. Half of the United States is not dependable on that account, for west of a line running north and south through about the center of Kansas it is impossible to make crops with any certainty. Millions of acres of the western part of the United States cannot be relied on to raise any considerable amount of stuff to eat or feed farm stock. The Central American states are not very reliable, and a great proportion of South America is lacking in rain. So is the bulk of Asia and Africa and a large proportion of Eastern Europe.

The result is that the countries with the rainfall must be the countries that raise the food, and the countries without rainfall must have a scant population or get their food from the countries that have the rainfall. The really satisfactory rainfall in the United States is in the region from Detroit, Michigan, southwest by way of St. Louis to the eastern strip of Texas. West of that the rain is less and less the farther westward you progress until in Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma and the Dakotas it is uncertain, and beyond that insufficient. It is that territory that must feed this country. On the Pacific coast is a little area that is dependable, but not a great deal in comparison with the whole country. Canada has some dependable territory, but not a great deal.

More People Every Year.

The continent of North America is increasing in population at the rate of nearly two million people a year now, or say the equivalent of the State of North Carolina. Each year we must find food for that many more people. It is impossible to produce a great deal of it outside of an area that is already well defined and fairly well cultivated. We must get outside of the rainbelt and be self-sufficient. We might get a crop there once or twice or three times, and then have a drought that would mean a famine in that dry belt, as has been the case times enough already to show how helpless the region of scant rainfall is. We are overlooking the limit of our rainfall. Henceforth we must pry out of the older sections food for the increasing numbers in some way, and do it with the rainfall we have, for that cannot be increased.

Europe has the same problem. In fact, Europe has passed its margin of safety, and famine is the occasional fate over there. Asia has had some such severe famines that the memory is pitiful. Europe has a population about four times as great as we have in this country, and on a territory about as big as ours. That population is increasing faster than ours is, not in population, but in total number. Europe must be fed, and is already crowding on the quantity of food her rainfall will make. The world today is faced by an insufficiency of rainfall to feed its people. The safety of the hundreds of millions of people is largely a matter of that strip of land from Chicago to Galveston, Texas, and every year the pressure is bound to become more strenuous, as there is the one part of the globe that has the rainfall and the climate that will make crops grow, and the soil that will provide them the mineral fertility essential to their development.

Among the most favored of all the states in this location is North Carolina, with close to fifty inches of rainfall in the most equable climate, living by the coast, and with a soil sufficiently fertile to produce to the limit. North Carolina is a state in a bunch of states that must be the salvation of the civilized portion of the globe and much of the rest of it.

A Startling Fact.

We would be all right if it were not for that increase of millions of people each year who must be fed. At the present time not less than four or five millions more come each year to America and Europe. Every year the increase is greater than the year before, and now we have reached a point where that increase adds to America and Europe the equivalent of at least two states equal to North Carolina. They must be fed, and clothed and shod. We must make food and clothes and shoes. Twenty years from now if this thing keeps up as it is going, or in less time if the increase keeps on as it is increasing, we must count on feeding and

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clothing and providing shoes for at least another hundred million more than now. That is a startling fact, for it means taking care of at least another country equal to the present United States.

And the rainfall is limited to the same area. Siberia is a broad, fertile, unsettled region, but it is devoid of rain sufficient to depend on. South America has countless millions of acres that do not have enough dependable rain to give it the slightest value in providing for that innumerable population that is coming. Argentina, portions of Canada and the Eastern United States must take on themselves the principal part of the big job of feeding the coming increase.

We thought that in North Carolina we had done amazingly well when we brought our agricultural production up to nearly two-thirds of a billion dollars last year. We have got to pass that record and make it look little in the next few years. North Carolina has the rainfall to make big crops. Do you know why the record for big average yields of corn are held in the South? Because the South has the rainfall. To make fifty bushels of corn requires the evaporation of a certain number of tons of moisture that the moisture evaporated by the corn leaves may carry up the tubes of the corn plant the mineral solution that brings the nourishment from the ground, and which carries the carbon accumulations that the plant derives from the air. You cannot make a big corn crop without liberal supplies of water to the plant. The North has a lot of good corn land, but the South can push its corn lands because it has more water. The North can push to the limit of its water, but it cannot go farther.

More Corn Must Be Made.

So we will be compelled with our more liberal supply of rainfall to ultimately make our corn crops compare with our moisture supply. With fifty inches of rain we will have to get our land in shape that we can raise the crop that fifty inches of water will care for. It is not whether corn is our most popular crop. But because we have more rain we must make the crop that rain can make. We must make all the crops that rain can make, and that means nearly all of them, for we can turn on energy in all the other forms. We have the climate and we can raise live stock and leguminous plants and all that sort of thing to make fertility, for we have—the one essential, the rainfall.

North Carolina will have to make a crop worth a billion dollars in a year before a great many years because we can do it, and the world will have to have it. All these big ships that are building to carry cargo to Europe are no building for fun. They are going to do business with North Carolina, which is easy to reach when it makes its big surplus crops of cotton and cotton oil, and soya bean oil, and peanut oil, and peanut meal, and pork, and corn, and anything that can be added to the food supply and divided with the world that will be coming here for something to eat and wear.

It is apparent that the farm is to be an institution in North Carolina. It is not likely to be long until land in North Carolina will be figured in value by its productiveness. In the past it has been figured by its ability to command a buyer. That gives it no actual value at all. Land that will yield six dollars on an acre after taxes and operating expenses are paid is worth a hundred dollars an acre, for it pays six per cent. Land that is able to pay fifty dollars an acre after everything is paid is worth \$500 an acre. It may sell for much less than that sum now, but when the ultimate scramble comes for land in the next twenty or thirty years land that will make fifty dollars above taxes and operating expenses will bring eight hundred dollars an acre, for it will be a safe investment, good for six per cent.

Now here is one of the things that is adding to the high cost of living. In Illinois, Iowa, Indiana and that section where they make much corn, land has gone high in value. Three to five hundred dollars is not a high price for land out there now. Say we call a piece of corn land worth \$400, and that land

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will make 50 bushels of corn to the acre. Every bushel of corn has to stand for an interest charge of at least eight cents, and it has to stand for a tax of perhaps half as much more on the land, for the corn must pay the interest and taxes. Every acre of such land must pay twenty-five or thirty dollars in interest and taxes before it can pay anything to the farmer and his helpers, and the buyer of the corn has to pay. Fifty years ago cents would have paid what it takes dollars to pay now in interest and taxes on that western land, and it is coming to be the case that land is getting in many parts of North Carolina where interest and taxes are going to count in the price the buyer has to pay for what he gets of farm produce. There are places now where farm lands cannot be bought for less than four or five hundred dollars an acre in this state, and those places are going to be more numerous each year because people are willing to give that much for productive lands and the lands will bring a profitable return on that amount of money.

Necessity Main Consideration.

Do you see what is ahead of this state? Practically we have passed the line that we call opportunity and come to the point that we must accept as necessity. The compelling needs of the world are going to force North Carolina to increase all agricultural production, and to improve methods and acreage yield, and the number of acres tilled, and the return for each acre and each worker, and each unit in every way. We will be compelled to adopt new agricultural methods, whether we want to or not, for we will have to do our share in caring for the increasing population.

We are through one of the most singular experiences the world has ever seen, the development of a new empire. When Columbus found America he found the pick of all creation. Slowly at first men commenced to utilize his new discovery. Then rapidly they expanded the new nation that was formed. Fifty years ago the expansion was in its most enthusiastic growth. Then it began to press against the limits of opportunity. Now it has pretty well reached the boundaries and it has begun to work back and over the old trails. We have robbed the new world. From now on we have to work it, and as the stimulus of that new field has encouraged a great growth in population all over Christendom we have a bigger world to care for that is many times bigger. We can't repeat the discovery of a world. We have found all of them. We have just the one flour barrel now. No undiscovered ones are around the corner.

If ever there is to be a time for a man to buy himself a piece of land that will be his own now is that time. North Carolina has no more cheap land in the sense that land has been cheap in the past, but it has millions of acres of land cheap now as rated by the price that will prevail twenty years from now. We ought to have a state and community movement to establish on the land as owners and operators as many people as possible now before prices get where land will go into strong big hands. We all ought to help in putting many people on land of their own that each community might become a community of owners who are interested in their land and their community instead of shifting tenants. In this necessity of feeding and caring for the world North Carolina is coming face to face with the big problem of its history, and it is to be

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decided pretty soon whether we are going to do it as substantial resident owners or as tenants and a population indifferent to anything but fat pork and sundries, the weekly rations and the job. It is a mighty difference to the welfare of the state who owns the land, and now is the time to decide that question.

POSTMASTERS IN SESSION AT WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

Their New Mail Order Business Chief Topic Of Discussion At Convention

Wilmington, Aug. 18.—The North Carolina Postmasters' Association met at Wrightsville Beach this morning for a two-day session. Rev. Dr. John J. Hurt, of the First Baptist church, spoke the invocation and the mayors of the city and beach welcomed the visitors. A Wayland Cooke, postmaster at Greensboro, responded and Postmaster H. Mel. Green, of this city, extended a welcome.

Addresses were given by Bart M. Gattling, of Raleigh, on what the postmaster did during the war, and by O. F. Croxson, of Burlington, on the alleged status of the postmaster under civil service. Tomorrow G. D. Ellsworth, superintendent of service, Washington, D. C., will speak, together with J. H. Weddington, of Charlotte, and L. M. Michaux, of Goldsboro. The attendance is small. The postmasters are discussing their new mail order grocery business.

STILL UNDECIDED WHERE COL. WATTS WILL HAVE OFFICE

Greensboro, Aug. 18.—So far it seems undetermined as to whether or not Col. A. D. Watts, supervisor of internal revenue for North Carolina, will move the office of the chief of income tax collection from Greensboro to Statesville. Those interested in the revenue service here are of the opinion that it has never been the purpose of Col. Watts to move this department of the revenue work. Col. Watts himself will no doubt, continue to have his offices in Statesville, spending one or two days a week here if the income tax division is left here. Col. T. H. Vanderford, who is to have charge of the enforcement of the prohibition laws in the State, will move his office to Salisbury right away. That is Col. Vanderford's home town, and for his work is probably the best location in the State.

SPONSORS STAFF NAMED FOR CONFEDERATE VETERANS REUNION

Atlanta, Ga., Aug. 18.—The sponsors' staff for the United Confederate Veterans Reunion here October 7 to 10, appointed by General K. M. Vansandt, of Fort Worth, commander-in-chief, were announced today as follows: Mrs. Charles R. Hyde, Chattanooga, matron; Mrs. Adolph Bocquet, New Orleans, chaperone; Miss Eliza Bonet Young, Louisville, sponsor; and maids of honor, Misses Annie Bryan, Memphis, and Amanda Dye, Searcy, Ark.

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MANY CAROLINIANS JOINING PEACE ARMY

Probable State Will Make Bid For First Place for First Half of August

Greensboro, Aug. 18.—Col. Anderson, in charge of recruiting in North Carolina, believes that the State will be able to make a bid for first place in the number of recruits obtained for the new peace army during the first fifteen days of August. About 110 men were accepted for enlistment during this period. Eight of the number were negroes. The air service and the motor transport corps seem to be the most popular branches of the service. Next to these come the quartermaster's corps, and the coast artillery. These four branches of the army afford almost one hundred different trades, and this accounts for the majority of men being attracted to them. More than one-third of the men who joined had been in service before, and nearly all of these selected the air service, motor transport, and quartermaster's corps, and gave as their reason for doing so that they desired to learn the trade. Henry Burleigh, of Raleigh, who served in the field artillery for nearly two years in France, and was in the thick of the fighting, is among those who have re-enlisted. B. B. Gillen, who was also in service in France, has re-enlisted. He was twice wounded, and was accepted this time only for recruiting purposes.

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Lumberton Market Re-opens.
(Special to News and Observer.)
Lumberton, Aug. 18.—The Lumberton tobacco market reopened today after being closed a week as a result of the strike of railroad employes. All the warehouses were filled with the weed and prices were so high, if not higher, than before the market closed a week ago. The Lumberton warehouses will be open until the crop has been sold. Other markets in Robeson also reopened today.

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