

BIBLICAL RECORDER

RALEIGH, N. C., WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1903.

JOSIAH WILLIAM BAILEY, EDITOR.

VOLUME 69, NUMBER 11.

IS THE LABORER UNREQUITED?

In his Virginia Bar Association address Chief Justice Clark, of North Carolina, dwelt at length and with much stress upon the unrequited labor of today—that is, unworthily-paid labor. He was so bold as to compare the enslaved Hebrews building the pyramids of the Pharaohs with the laborers of the present time.

In comparison with the great salaries of the heads of corporations or the great incomes of the stock-holders, the daily wage of a laborer is quite insignificant. So, too, is the salary of a Chief Justice compared with that of a day laborer. But we would not, therefore, say that one's labor is unrequited and the other's not. The difference in incomes is accounted for on other grounds.

Why Abraham had a big income and his neighbors a little one, is not to be accounted for in the allegation that Abraham was a robber. Scripture neither gave this explanation nor encouraged the jealousy of Abraham's neighbors. Men have genius for making money. Others have genius for throwing it away. One man's labor is worth more than another's. One region pays more than another. A Chief Justice's labor is worth more than a chief hatter's in North Carolina; but a chief hatter's in New York commands more than a Chief Justice's in North Carolina. A lawyer in New York works for a \$500 per month, while a lawyer in North Carolina works for a \$500 per year. The difference is the New York lawyer commands more than a North Carolina lawyer. In Raleigh, a lawyer is paid \$100 a month. In New York, he is paid \$1,000 a month. A chief hatter in New York makes \$100,000 a year. A chief hatter in North Carolina makes \$10,000 a year. The difference is the New York hatter commands more than the North Carolina hatter. In Raleigh, a hatter is paid \$100 a month. In New York, he is paid \$1,000 a month. The difference is the New York hatter commands more than the North Carolina hatter.

The following table will show what share in commerce the modern laborer receives:

Spent in	Pay-Labor to Wages
Labor	\$1.51
Revs. and shoes	25.85
Furniture	29.18
Coopering and building	26.06
Bricks	49.85
Corn	22.08
Clearing	21.82
Cotton	21.10
Woolen goods	16.07
Sewing machines	33.33
Books and papers	33.62
Wasted goods	16.41
Bakery products	15.48
Flour	31.02

Clearly the laborer receives more than any other one man in the marketing of a pair of shoes or any of the other products in the foregoing list; and he runs less risk. Remember that part of the \$100 must go for material; part for machinery; part for rent; part for loss; part for

freight; part for selling; and you will see that the maker of the material and the manufacturer-in-chief have very little left for their care, thought, labor and investment. They make far less than the laborer does in a sale of \$100; they make so much more at length by taking a little profit in each sale of many hundreds of dollars. But no one should blame them for having the capacity for organization, the thrift to save, the enterprise to invest and the energy to manage. It is a gift of fortune or the acquisition of pains. Nor should the laborer complain. He cannot organize if he cannot; and if some one does not organize, he cannot get decent wages. So far from being unrequited, his labor is paid the better by reason of the superior capacity of men to establish and conduct great plants. If left to his own devices, he might not make anything.

Printers in Raleigh charge 33 1-3 cents per thousand ems for setting type (there are 2,200 ems in one of these columns). When a man wants to have a piece of printing done the owner of the establishment charges him only 40 cents per thousand, and the rule of rate is to charge 33 1-3 per thousand or less. That is, the laborer gets 33 1-3 cents, leaving the employer at most only 6 2-3 cents to pay his expenses. Of the two, whose labor is requited and whose unrequited?

We take it that it will be granted them that as a rule the labor of the modern wage earner is not unrequited and that on the other hand the modern wage earner is richly well paid for his share of the world's work.

Perhaps the Chief Justice had the farm in mind. We call the farmers to witness that farm labor is not unrequited. The farmer for the moment at least is in the same relation as the manufacturer of that he is employer. Of the farmer's crop part of cotton, how much does the laborer receive? He receives between 10 and 50 cents per hundred pounds of raw cotton for picking alone. That is about \$300 on the bale, whether the farmer gets \$200 or \$250 or \$290. The average annual labor is negro labor. In the report of the N. C. Bureau of Labor we find that the average wage of farm labor in North Carolina is \$1.67 per month. This is the lowest class of labor in the lowest wage paid in the State. We found the farmer receives an average of \$935. In 1902 the farmer's income is reported to nearly all of them it is reported that labor is not unrequited. In practically all it is reported that labor is not unrequited. We judge they get as much as they are worth. A slave used to be valued at \$1,000. Six per cent interest is \$60. The modern laborer today collects \$180.00 three times that.

We do not believe that Justice Clark meant to say that the farmers of North Carolina do not pay their laborers worthily, though he means them, if he means anybody, since the farmers pay far less for labor than any other class of employers. So far they have escaped the demands of organized labor. For our part we do not believe that there is any oppression of North Carolina farm labor. Labor is in demand on the farms every where, and men are accumulating their full value.

But how is it with the farmer? Is his labor unrequited?

Fortunately we have the direct testimony of the farmers of North Carolina. In the latest Report of the North Carolina Bureau of Labor Statistics the cost of producing a 500-pound bale of cotton is put at \$26.80—that is, 5 1-3 cents per pound. Let us reckon it at six. If the farmer sells at seven cents he takes a profit of 16 2-3; if he sells at eight he takes a profit of 33 1-3 per

cent—quite as high as any other class of sellers. If he sells at nine, he takes a profit of 50 per cent. If he sells at ten he takes a profit of 66 2-3 per cent. If he sells at twelve, he takes a profit of 100 per cent.

Is his labor in cotton unrequited?

The average cost of a bushel of wheat is put—on the statements of the farmers—at 61 cents; a bushel of corn at 43 cents; a bushel of oats at 31 cents; a pound of tobacco at 6 1/2 cents. Wheat is quoted on the market today at 88 cents—a profit of 26 per cent; corn is quoted at 58—a profit of 25 per cent; oats at 42—a profit of 33 1-3 per cent. In tobacco alone is the profit low. Tobacco is selling now at from 3 to 16 cents, the higher grades having yet to come on the market. We have no doubt that the American Tobacco Company has depressed the price of tobacco. We regard this as wrong and we protest against it. But to the purpose of this article, we have only to point out that the present depression is unusual, and that for years tobacco has been profitable. Indeed its very profitability has induced such large production that this in a measure accounts for the present depression.

We have made it clear in detail that the farmers of North Carolina get fair returns for their labor. Now take the matter at large. The Census Report for 1900 states that the gross income of total investment in North Carolina farm property is \$329, that is, more than one-third.

On the whole, then, is labor unrequited? Is it not rather better paid than ever before? And seeing that there is enough of envy, strife, and bad feeling between men—and especially in respect to their possessions and incomes—is it not wrong to give God to those first? Is it not dangerous? We take it that Justice Clark had not examined these statistics of our State and Nation.

It need be, it is here to speak out in such a manner. But if there be no need, and we do know that the wage-earning labor of this country is the best paid in all the world, and we do know that the farmers of today are better off than they have been since 1860, if there be no need, it is a wrong against them, the Commonwealth and the Kingdom of God, to sow in their hearts the seeds of envy, jealousy and hate.

EDUCATION AND RACE SUICIDE.

The grave charge has been made against the American system of education that college training is conducive to race suicide. After scientific research for the purpose of ascertaining the correctness of the charge, we are returned by some of the most reliable scientists that the data now available indicate that the highly educated among the male element does more toward reproducing itself than any other large group of the native population; that the marriage rate is the same and the number of surviving children to the family is greater than it is for the native population at large; so that we can no longer accuse the college graduate of having an exceptionally small family. This alters the situation and admonishes the complainant not to lay the blame for the low fecundity of the native American family on higher education. Exchange.

SEPTEMBER.

Little shine of goldenrod,
Down beside the river,
Little look of winter time
Makes a fellow shiver.

Leaves a droppin' now an' then,
The' the sun's a shinin';
Fall an' summer with their weath'—
Kinder interwinin'.

Little flurries blowin' up
Bring you to remember,
Goldenrod an' flyin' leaves
Help to make September.

—Paul L. Dunbar.