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WOMAN SPENDS MORE FOR CLOTHES THAN SOLOMON

The World Is Going Pleasure Mad, According to Mr. David A. Houston.

HE URGES RETURN TO THE SOIL

By D. A. HOUSTON, President of Columbia Farm Loan Bank.

Henry Fabre wrote: "History celebrates the battlefields upon which we meet our death, but scorns to speak of the plowed field whereby we thrive. It knows the names of the King's children but cannot tell us the origin of wheat."

By nature we are loath to accept gratuitous admonitions, especially if they warn us against excessive pleasure. It is never popular to break the shrieks of laughter by the cry of "wolf," when frenzied gaiety dreams of love the optimist and to view with disdain, yea, merciless scorn, a casual interloper who would dare speak of things serious or that partake of the nature of caution.

We are being rocked in a cradle of deception, while our soul takes its ease in an unmoored drift toward a harbor of national hunger. "The lights of London" have lured by their glow the brawn and sinew of agricultural support, by holding out the numerical strength of the dollar, being offered by many non-essential preferred industries that are daily catering to the easy made and freely spent dollar of newly crowned money kings. As a Nation we are pleasure insane, having long ignored the divine injunction that "By the sweat of the brow man shall eat bread," and forgetting that proud empires of the past have marked their decline by the day of retreat from agricultural pursuit.

We Must Turn to the Soil.

Along the banks of the Nile, the earth once brought forth in abundance and supplied food for a proud Egypt, her merchant neighbors and her Rameses, but city gaiety and urban glow lured as a blinded moth the hearty yeomanry into the candle's flame—the plow trench was abandoned—the thorn and thistle grew in the place of the golden grain, and ere long fallow dust lay impotent and refused again to bring forth an abundant harvest because nature seemed to offer a stern rebuke to the gross ingratitude of man. For all these years we have boasted of the greatest agricultural production in the world; we have stepped up from a struggling band of colonies to the highest recognized pinnacle of farm production and to the most admired standard of governmental civilization on the earth, but back of all this stood the creative powers of agricultural, which is the bed rock of all permanent wealth and lasting civilization. The land is the only source of wealth in its origin; abandon it and forget its power and the hum of the spindle will cease. Speak of material reconstruction, there can be none, save that which man must seek among the secrets of nature. We must return to the clay and from it extract the only real wealth by the honest employment of brain, the application of brawn and muscle, augmented by the will of a beneficent Creator. Is it to the same man a sound thought that by a process of man-made transformation he is the creator of more wealth. Does he add one whit to our industrial or material wealth by frequent material transformations? There is no creation of wealth except through the agency of land contact; it comes only through the efforts of nature. It proves itself in the increased cattle and the shepherd's flocks on a thousand hills. It sustains its contentment in bushels and bales that lie in the granaries and warehouses of our country, awaiting their turn to serve as food and clothing and to content the aspirations of a happy and contented population. Successful agriculture; farm comfort; happy, wholesome farm surroundings have never been the breeding place of a bolshevist germ, but on the contrary is the real antidote to moments of socialistic discontent. Oh! yes, we are a strong and robust nation—full of youthful resilience and ready rebound, but are we not too rapidly dissipating these natural gifts while pursuing the phantoms of a "good time." Have we not side tracked the real back bone and producing sinews of our country for the too heartily welcomed non-essentials? Is it not a fact that we are still relying in a false faith that another and again another "parade of the garments" adds more cloth. Are we not plighting our faith and fixing our hopes too much upon following the lure of the rainbow, still seeking the "pot of gold" only to find when it is too late, that it was only a jack o'lantern or fox fire that constantly evades and mercilessly deceives its victim? Have we not too sedulously sought and impatiently striven to make the way of light heartedness lighter and branded with a damning disgust, a principle that would impede a lightning process? Have we not permitted ourselves to pin our faith to the dream of a pseudo wealth that is expected to result from a trading among ourselves? Is there not a bacteria in our bonnets or an insidious bacteria in our bodies that is daily conjuring us into the comforting belief that this high tide of inflation means more individual or material wealth, when in fact it is only a deceptive boost, accounted for by a difference only in bills payable and bills receivable, locally held, and can never be said to be profit realized until the whole transaction shall have stood the test of deflation, and the purchasing power of the dollar swings back to the column of sane exchange, which has never been reached except through creative production and sale of the bounties of nature, as they fall without the realm of a man made and manipulated law of supply and demand and compete with the luxury upon the same markets of the world.

From the realm of farm production, in excess abundance, comes the balance of trade and no stability of

values may ever be relied upon save that which is measured originally by a standard that is creative in purpose and origin.

Must Discourage Speculation.

Then the problem that confronts us now is not to count upon housing the last of an inflated dollar sent abroad on an honest mission in the hour of a national emergency, but to stop one moment and think upon the bed rock element of wealth—the land—and discourage this unwholesome, insensate and unending bobble of a few tissue paper propagandists who are seeking to comfort thousands of misguided people, who have been drawn from the rural districts, to the open and damning robbery of the needs of the farm and farm production, by holding out the basest of deceptions, in a most serious confronted period of food famine in our history. Should we not muzzle the mouth that proclaims that all this is permanent, when in fact it only means the passing of a load of worthless cash from one pocket to the till of the land lord or the grocery merchant at the end of each day or week, with the hope of nothing more than a repeated process that can only serve to prove the force of the fact that no wealth ever comes as the reward of manipulative financing with an impoverished dollar.

Will Regret Abandoning Soil.

It is the opinion of the sober minded, thinking and unselfish many who who are wise to the fictions of the hour that the man who has laid aside the sure and certain returns of the farm to take up the temporary gains of non-essential employment, will before the return or spring realize the mistake and find himself or herself in the midst of a realization of bitter disappointment because soundness in all lines is rapidly taking control and business men and methods are demanding that plan and purpose be unfolded and all the needed elements of creative and necessary employment of capital be convincingly shown and proven before cash or credit extensions are forthcoming. The play houses of speculative financing have recently received an unwelcome shock and many easy streets are closed, then before long it is safe to predict that there will be a necessary exodus to the fields of real production. The high cost of making the crop of 1920 is a real guarantee that food will swing to another zenith—house rent, food, clothing and shoes, wood, and coal must rise to meet the highly expensive demands of farm and field production. The man who has stuck to the land will and ought to come into his own; he alone has made the real sacrifice, and with the members of his good household, who have joined him in bearing the burden in the heat of the day, have the right to expect and will reap, in fact, a highly compensatory reward.

It requires no wisdom, no mathematical comparison of a wizard or sacrifice of time to judge the drift of prices; necessities of life, at the producing end are being gradually lopped off, with the consequent higher and higher swing of farm commodities, and there can be no hope for any average permanent decline until the pinch of hunger prompts a free exodus of labor from non-essential production back to the farm. For three years the law of supply and demand in farm production has been suspended and speculative combination has controlled a situation which in the demoralization of the times might be effectively concealed, but in the hour of peace and saner thoughts we are able to disclose the astounding fact that seventy-five per cent of our population is now residing within the limits of incorporated towns and cities against about a fifty-one per cent in 1910.

Farmer Has Made Good Fight.

The patient, sturdy, determined farmer has fought a good fight under a thousand handicaps and discouragements. He has seen his farm help drive his work stock back to the barn, lay down the shovel and the hoe and abandon him in the hour of his greatest agricultural need. He has witnessed his pride of years of attention, his productive fields, left to the ravages of weed pests and destructive erosion, unable to fight a winning battle alone, while deluded labor sought an easy dollar and frequent amusements of the city. He has stood by the highway and watched the per diem plutocrat speed his way to centers of safety. He has seen discrimination and let the sting, while non-essential industry worked night and day to appease the demand of the restless rich, with savage disregard for his pressing agricultural needs. He has seen the palatial passenger train and steamship loaded to danger capacity, hurtling across the continent and over the seas to make an outlet for the restless longings of devotees to a "good time." What else? While unions demanded a greater wage and refused to man the common carrier in the day of his harvesting, his grain has laid by the wayside, in wanton destruction of his wealth, while he plead a cause of righteous demands to no avail and while consumers of his products begged for bread. The clippings of his flocks are denied a price in the world markets, while a mere suggestion of wool in a garment to-day is license to the profiteer to unmercifully pluck the plumage of the proud prince who dares to pay the price.

Must Produce to Reduce Prices.

Now, those of us who yet retain a tiff of common sense, who are blessed with the precious endowment of mother's wit, who are satisfied to pursue with some faith the teachings of history, precedent and analogy cannot lean to the thought will come the expected decline in farm commodities in one, two, three or five years or really ever, unless there is a summer-sault in the practices that now obtain and a great equalization of our population between the fictitious needs of pleasure and the vital, basic demands of production.

"Soft Soap" Seeks Live Sheeps.

There is the greatest effort to-day on the part of the many to out run work, capture an easy dollar, and get

something for nothing than has ever been known. There are more non-producers and loafers and ease takers lining the side walks and streets of our cities, towns and hamlets to-day on short hours production, if forsooth at work at all, than were necessary to man the American army in France during the late world struggle with the Kaiser. There are more able bodied men and boys now attached to the easy positions of sitting down in the capacity of chauffeur and pleasure car drivers than were employed in any year previous in farm pursuits or agricultural production. There are now more professional "good time" seekers in the little cities of our nation than there were persons present on the day of the great "Sermon on the Mount." As a consequence of an ever growing and unnatural dependency of the greater part of our population upon the few in field and farm production, to provide the enormous requirements of food stuffs and the many other basic essentials to sustain life, it takes more cash for one month to meet the "good time" requirements of the youth, fifteen years old, either male or female, than it took in the days of our fathers to pay their part of the pastor's salary and then be classed not only as a most devout Christian gentleman, but with the added local honor and distinction of being termed a plutocrat.

Women's Dress Cost More Than Solomon's.

It requires a bigger draft, on the already strained average bank account, to gown in regular season changes, the individual woman of to-day, than it took to supply the wardrobe of Solomon for one year, in the very zenith of his vain glory.

It takes more filthy lucre to purchase a yard and three-quarters of cloth, the maximum linear requirement in a standard coat suit to-day, than it required under past reasonable demands of the feminine pride to caudally attire a fifty-fifty household blessed with a maximum defacement of the Rooseveltian theory of race suicide. It robs the purchaser's flanks of more coin to occupy two invisible pork chops to-day than it cost not long ago to get a fee simple title to a pure-bred pig. It takes more cash to purchase two eggs, of doubtful age, in a modern cafe, whither served "half moon," "scrambled" or "on one side" than most of our modern gentry contribute to the support, education or charity during the unnatural period of their existence. It requires more cash to lift a bill of lading for four car loads of humble spuds than many State statutes demand for the paid minimum capital of a state bank. It is a matter of portentous record, that based upon five hundred dollars per car, that there is more money invested or under contract to be paid for pleasure cars in several of our ostensibly wealthy states in the South, than there is combined capital and surplus in all their banks, showing a most unwholesome deflection of their stupendous, staggering sum, which will be dreadfully missed from the channels of necessary constructive business, to the wasteful patronage of the worthless scrap heap.

Throttling the Parasites.

A greater per capital wage, shorter work hours, and a consequent lowering of production—the disease of pleasure—the quest of a "good time"—the lure of the light—the curiosity and depravity of man have all lavishly contributed their part to a condition that must sooner or later suffer a rebound in individual want and national hunger. That action and reaction are equal and in opposite directions is a law of experience that has been well tested and has platted itself into the fabric of wisdom. Then if perchance the thoughts presented here shall have been looked upon by you with such favor as that they impress upon you some of the many disillusionments that have popularly conspired to bring about a condition that will soon amount to a real distress of the many, I shall feel that you are thinking thoughts with me that will lead to the discouragement of ease, the encouragement of the saner view of more work, longer hours, greater production and less loafing.

In a national sane rebuke of semi-idleness and stern discouragement of profitless pleasure directed to channels of thrift we throttle parasites of production and open the only avenue to nature's plan of co-operative abundance.

Just Preceding the Storm.

Mr. Brown—I had a queer dream last night, my dear. I thought I saw another man running off with you.

Mrs. Brown—And what did you say to him?

Mr. Brown—I asked him what he was running for.

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