

Crude Drug Business Flourishes in The Western Section of the State

Combined Business of the Industry in a Year's Period in Ashe, Watauga, Alleghany and Wilkes Counties Totals a Value of Several Million Dollars

By HENRY BELK.
Boone, Oct. 4.—You have heard many stories, many of which are a combination of exaggeration and imagination, of blockading in the mountainous counties of the state, but have you heard of a crude drug industry which flourishes in this western section.

G. H. McGreer, dealer in crude drugs, of West Jefferson, estimates that the combined business of this industry during a year's period for the counties of Ashe, Watauga, Alleghany, and Wilkes totals a value of several million dollars. Each year the business carried on by Mr. McGreer alone approaches \$75,000.

There are families, says Mr. McGreer, which devote their entire time to gathering the precious herbs from the mountain sides. Some of these families live in tents and move from place to place as the supplies of valuable herbs are exhausted. Choosing a good camping spot, where some herb or root is present in abundance, the tent is pitched and here it remains until the stuff, which will later be compounded in various medicines, is gathered and prepared for the dealer. Then a new location is sought.

Only a small part of the crude drug gathering, however, is carried on in summer. A good many of the farmers spend a part of their time in gathering the medicines for market. Needing some ready money, the farmer goes out and gathers a quantity of wild cherry bark, mandrake, cohosh or other drugs in the crude state. His need is thus soon supplied.

The gathering of crude drugs is said by Mr. McGreer to be much more profitable than laboring for wages in these parts.

In addition to the profit to be derived from the business, there is something romantic in it. Those who spend their time gathering the crude elements which later go toward curing ailing humanity in all parts of the world are kept in the great outdoors. They back to nature, and they learn to love it. There is an element of danger, too, connected with the work, for often the most valuable herbs may be found growing in the most inaccessible parts of the mountain; that is, inaccessible to all but the herb-gatherers. A keen eye and ear must be on the alert in order that no deadly rattler may be bumped into unaware. No doubt the man who has followed this life for years could recite tales of narrow escapes which would make some of the fiction writers turn green with envy.

The most common drugs found in the crude form in the counties mentioned are wild cherry bark, hazel

leaves, mandrake, cohosh, ginseng, and golden-seal. The most valuable of these elements are ginseng and golden-seal which bring from \$10 to \$12 per pound.

It is not the medicinal qualities of ginseng alone which make it so valuable, according to Mr. McGreer. A tradition has grown up in China to the effect that a root of the ginseng worn around the neck will keep witches, bad luck, and evil in all its forms from the wearer. Chinamen, therefore, vie with each other in attempts to acquire the best specimen of the herb. The one who wears the biggest piece of the herb is looked upon with honor by his fellows. It marks him as a distinguished man. As the ginseng must be imported to China, the demand in that country has grown so great that now only the inferior pieces of the root are used for medicinal purposes, the largest and best specimens going to slake the superstition of the yellow men. All of this, however, does not worry the men who are engaged in gathering it, for it means that the broader this superstition becomes, the better will be the price of the root.

The gathering of the crude drugs continues the whole year round, but the months when the mountain sides give up their most precious of the herbs are August and September. When gathered, the stuff is subjected to some treatment which prepares it for the market and according to what it is. In all of the counties there are crude drug dealers who do an enormous business, purchasing the herbs from the gatherers, classifying them and preparing shipments for the large manufacturers. Most of the purchasing, however, is probably done through the general stores scattered over the region, most of them usually being in the market for the drugs.

Truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long.—Shakespeare.

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- 30c Dress Gingham, Perfect Short Lengths, the yard 15c
- 35c Plaid Dress Gingham, Perfect Short Lengths, Revised to the yard 18c
- 32-inch 50c quality Plaid Gingham and Zephyrs in perfect short lengths, Revised to the yard 25c
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- One lot 33-inch real Pongee, on sale at only 98c

OUTING FLANNELS REVISED TO PRE-WAR PRICES

- Amoskeog Plain White Outing, the yard 25c
- 50c quality Pink, Blue, Cream and White Outing Flannel, Revised to 29c
- 27-inch Pin Stripe and Checked Outing Flannel, 50c quality; Reduced to 29c
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YARD-WIDE 25c BLEECH DOMESTIC, as long as it lasts 15c

STANDARD DRESS GINGHAM AND ROMPER CLOTH

- Amoskeog 22-inch Romper Cloth, 60c quality; Revised to the yard 38c
- Amoskeog 32-inch Dress Gingham, 60c quality; Revised to, yard . 35c
- Amoskeog 32-inch Bookfold Chambray, the yard 35c
- "Red Rose" Plaid Gingham, 50c quality, at the yard 33c
- Utility Dress Gingham, at the yd 33c
- 32-inch Renfrew Zephyr Gingham at the yard 38c
- Renfrew 32-inch Devenshire Cloth. White and colors. 65-cent quality. Revised to the yard . . . 45c
- Applewren Dress Gingham, 50c quality, at the yard 33c

EFIRD'S Big Revision Sale Is a Regular Bargain Feast.

This Message of Economy Rings Loud Throughout the Carolinas. Thousands Visited Our Store Last Week and Went Away Rejoicing at the Big Values They Purchased at a Great Saving. "Twill Pay You to Attend this REVISION SALE and Lay in Your Needed Supply at a Great Saving All This Week.

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SAME GOODS ALWAYS FOR LESS.

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Colors Fast. Some in lot up to \$3.98. Revision sale price . \$2.29

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28-inch Romper Cloth. Perfect short lengths. 50c quality. Revised to the yard 25c

ALL WOOL GOODS REVISED TO PRESENT BASIS OF WOOL.

- Black and Navy in All Qualities.
- All Wool Serge 98c
- All Wool Storm Serge in Black and Navy. Revised to yard 98c
- 54-inch Storm Serge. Black and Navy only. Most All Wool. \$2.50 value. Revised to yard \$1.45
- Atlantic Woolen Mills, 40-inch Imperial Serge. \$3.00 quality. Revised to the the yard . . . \$1.98
- Amoskeog 50-inch Fine Serge. Black and Navy at the yard \$1.98
- Allington Mills 54-inch Manish Serge \$4.00 quality; Revised to yd \$2.85
- 40-inch Pacific All Wool Serge at the yard \$1.85
- 54-inch Pacific All Wool French Serge at the yard \$2.85
- 36-inch School Plaids. New Vogue. Revised to the yard 69c
- 36-inch Woolen Novelty Plaid Skirt Ing. Revised to the yard . . \$1.38

WIDE SHEETS AND SHEETING REVISED

- Heath 81-inch Brown Sheeting . 48c
- 9-4 Mohawk Bleached Sheeting at the yard 79c

SHEETS AND CASES

- 81x90 Wear Well Sheets . . . \$1.98
- West Wind 72x90 Sheets . . . \$1.35
- Dreadnaught 81x90 Seamless Sheets \$1.79
- Mohawk 81x90 Seamless Sheets \$1.98
- White Star 81x90 Seamless Sheets \$1.98
- West Wind 42x36 Pillow Cases . 35c
- Mohawk 42x36 Pillow Cases . 49c
- White Star 42x36 Pillow Cases . 49c
- Wear Well Pillow Cases 49c

STEWART AND WENTZ LANDS SUBDIVIDED, AT Auction Monday, Oct. 11 AT 10:30 A. M.

LOCATION—The Stewart and Wentz Lands are located on the Indian Trail and Monroe to Charlotte Road in the very extreme part of Union County, N. C., 17 miles from Charlotte, N. C., 8 miles from Monroe, N. C., 3 miles from Matthews, N. C., and 3 miles from Indian Trail, N. C.

DESCRIPTION—This property consists of approximately 251 acres of which about 71 acres are cleared, about 30 acres in pasture and 150 acres in woods. The entire property is slightly rolling which insures proper drainage, being watered by a creek, well and spring. The cleared portion of the property is in a very good state of cultivation, the soil consisting of a dark sandy loam top soil with a clay subsoil producing most crops adapted to this section especially cotton, corn, wheat and tobacco. On the wooded portion of the property is about one million feet of merchantable pine, oak and hickory timber, also about five thousand cords of wood.

IMPROVEMENTS—One orchard in good condition, one 3-room tenant house, two stables and other necessary outbuildings.

TERMS—¼ cash on day of sale, balance one, two and three years. Possession to be announced day of sale.

ADVANTAGES—The nearness to nearby cities and towns which furnish exceptional advantages in the way of graded schools, high schools, banks, warehouses, churches, stores, markets, manufacturing establishments, railroad connections, etc. All of these places are easily accessible the year round on good roads. In addition to these conveniences, on the property is located school and nearby a store and church. The farm borders on the public road for a distance of about one mile and a half and practically all tracts have been sub-divided with frontage on this road.

SPECIAL NOTICE—Inspect today the small farms into which the Stewart and Wentz lands have been subdivided. It will pay you to do this. Our advertising representative, Mr. E. B. Walt hall, stopping at the Hotel Joffre, is in charge of the sale and will be pleased to accompany you over this property or explain any details in connection with the sale with which you are not entirely familiar. This sale will be conducted regardless of weather conditions.

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