

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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Where Brain Work Begins, There Profit Begins

SAYS Prof. Eugene C. Branson, in a sentence full of warning for our Southern farmers:

"A people with lower living standards will always prevail against a people with undefended high living standards."

In other words, wherever two men are doing the same work, the man who can live on fifty cents a day will always crowd to the wall the

man whose higher civilization and higher living standards require, say, a dollar or more a day to maintain—unless that higher civilization and higher living standard are properly defended. A case in point is the recent history of California, where the competition of Chinese and Japanese has forced the white people to take steps to safeguard their higher living standards. Another illustration is given by the Columbia State in its remark that the Negro who is thrifty and industrious, "living at half the cost of his neighbor of the same industrial condition, can acquire land in, say, half the time that the white man can."

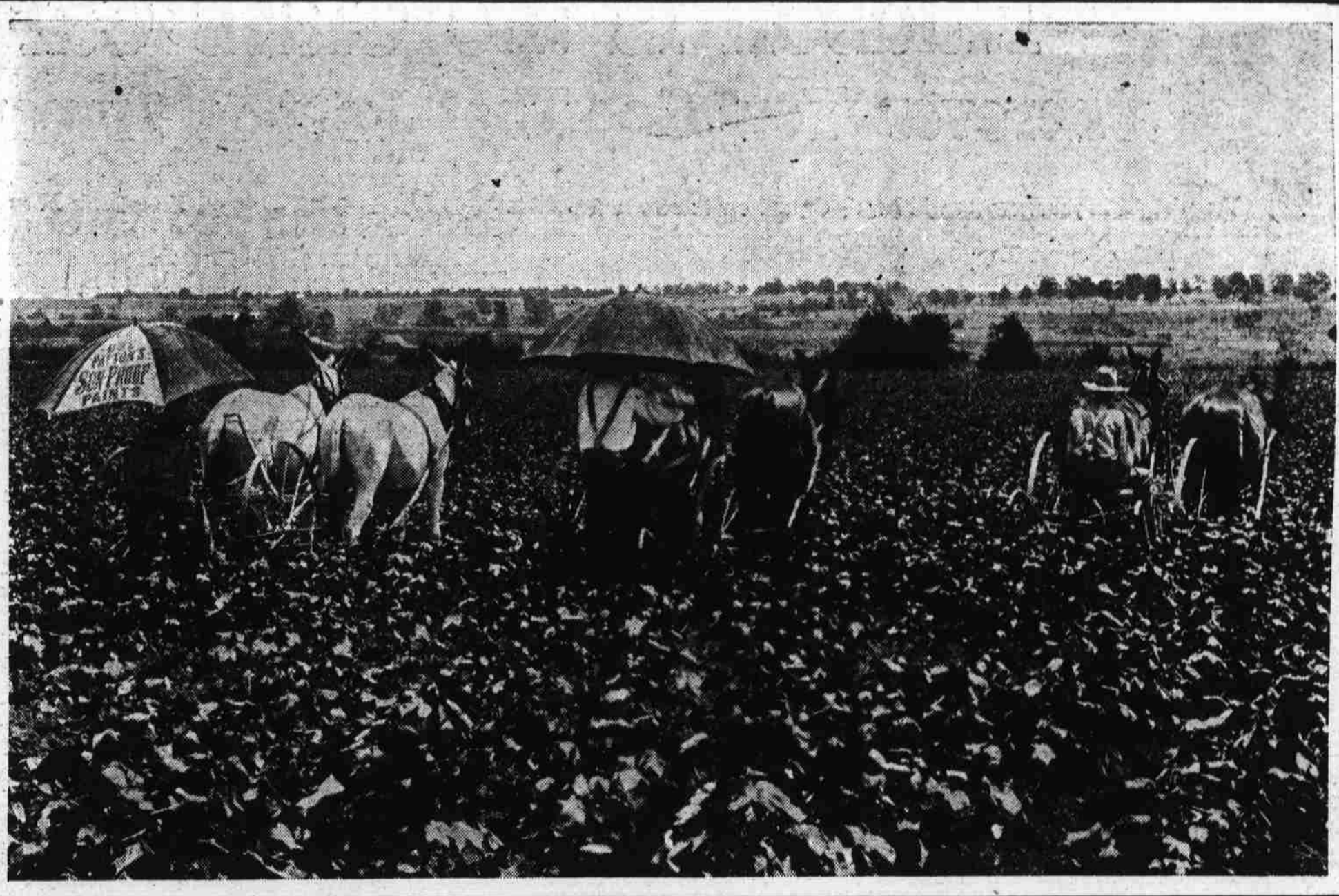
A peculiarly important problem in the South, therefore, is this: *How can the white farmer's higher living standards be defended?*

And the answer is: *By having the white man do a better type of farming than the Negro can do.* If he sets out to do the same sort of work that the Negro does, he is predestined to failure and defeat. If he *works* like the Negro does, he must sooner or later *live* like the Negro does—as soon as he uses up whatever capital he has.

Here then is the warning which all past history sounds to the race of higher living standards in the South: They must defend their higher standards by doing a better sort of farming than the race of lower living standards can do. Thirteen years ago the writer sought to make clear these fundamental principles, and on page 13 we are reprinting an article we then prepared, "Where Brain Work Begins, There Profit Begins."

The most ignorant Negro can follow the "one-crop" system of farming, buy all his soil fertility, and nearly all his meat and feed. Brains get but little exercise in that sort of work, and every time the white man sets out to do "all-cotton" farming he deliberately puts himself and his family into hopeless competition with just such ignorant, muscle-only labor—the sort that pays no profit. Recently a friend was complaining to us that there was little chance for a bright, ambitious boy to beat ignorant labor growing

cotton, but almost the next minute he was telling us of an up-to-date young farmer neighbor who by diversified methods grew 27 bales last year on 16 acres—almost two bales to the acre, whereas the South's average under our general poor-farming methods is little over one-third of a bale an acre. And there is just the point as to what Intelligence, with diversification, rotation, brain-plus-brawn methods will do. It will



WHY NOT DO IT THIS WAY? SCENE ON FARM OF T. B. BLAIR, DALLAS COUNTY, TEXAS.

"make the farm feed itself" and then raise *as a surplus crop* as much cotton as Ignorance will produce on the same farm under the "all-cotton" soil-exhausting plan.

There is just one point which the writer briefly mentioned thirteen years ago but to which we would now give double emphasis. This is the importance of coöperation. And coöperation, as all European experience shows, can develop properly in homogeneous communities—

communities in which the people are practically of one race and have the spirit of brotherhood. By building up white communities in the South with the tonic atmosphere of equality, democracy, comradeship and a higher intellectual life, we shall be able to develop a more highly organized and scientific agriculture. Then through more scientific farming, through coöperative ownership of improved machinery, coöperative breeding of better livestock, coöperation in crop production, crop marketing, and in all forms of farm business, our farmers will indeed be able to do a sort of work an inferior race cannot do, defend their higher living standards, and work at all times upon the basis of the fundamental principle—

"Where skill and intelligence begin, there profit begins."

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