

EDUCATION, COÖPERATION, LEGISLATION

(1) Education to Develop Power, (2) Coöperation to Multiply It, and (3) Legislation and Good Government to Promote Equal Rights and Human Progress—Plain Talk About Men, Measures and Movements Involved

By CLARENCE POE

Use the Country Church More

OUR Southern farmers are just beginning to coöperate. Formerly they not only would not coöperate when living, but they would not even coöperate when dead. All over the South one finds family burying grounds going to ruin and "looking as if they did not believe in a resurrection," as Dr. Knapp used to say. In view of the frequent changes in land ownership in the South, it is a mistake to have family burying grounds; and we believe also that the community spirit would be fostered by abandoning the practice and substituting church cemeteries. Then with annual "clean-up days" to keep them in order, our rural burying-places might be made objects of beauty instead of examples of carelessness and neglect as is now the general rule.

Another thought that cannot be too often emphasized is this—that everywhere the country church ought to be a genuine social center for the community, a "meeting-house" indeed, and not simply a place to hear preaching once a week or once a month. The writer passed an old church the other day said to be 150 years old. "But there was never a marriage in it until just a few weeks ago," a friend said to us as we passed. Why should not more country people have church weddings, making a marriage an occasion for celebration and rejoicing by all the friendly neighborhood? Anything that helps get our people out of the individualism of the past and helps develop the community spirit ought to be encouraged.

Beware of the Credit System and "Big Schemes"

WHEN will our farmers learn that the credit system will sooner or later ruin any coöperative business? Some time ago we prepared some notes about a seemingly very successful coöperative enterprise. But before we had a chance to write up the notes for *The Progressive Farmer* the manager came into our office and we found he had begun to do a credit business. It was necessary, he said, in order to meet competition and get volume of trade.

We waited a little while and the next thing we heard, the boasted prosperity of that enterprise had vanished and it had gone into utter bankruptcy.

Another thing *The Progressive Farmer* has warned readers against in season and out of season, is that of investing in big far-away so-called "coöperative" enterprises. Coöperation like charity must begin at home. In one of our large Southern cities a big so-called "farmers' coöperative" enterprise has just gone into the hands of a receiver. It failed for two reasons. First, it wasn't really "coöperative" at all. The plan was to pay dividends according to the old capitalistic plan. That is to say, profits were to go entirely to stockholders regardless of patronage. Hence as the report comes to us:

"It appears that comparatively few stockholders patronized the store." If the patronage dividend policy had been adopted, so that stockholders would have received only 6 or 8 per cent on their stock, and then dividends in proportion to the amount of business they furnished, the result might have been different.

Second, this enterprise began on too showy a scale and with officers whose salaries were too big for the volume of business. All coöperative enterprises should begin cautiously, and an officer or manager should prove his faithfulness over a few things before he is made ruler over many things. Farmers are wasting time and money when they invest in big coöperative(?) enterprises in far-away cities before they have succeeded with small coöperative enterprises in their own neighborhoods. We believe everlastingly in coöperation, but it should begin at home.

White Neighborhoods for Profitable Farming

MORE letters just received from members of Southern legislatures reporting their intention to begin working for land segregation between the races indicate the sure and steady increase of interest in this problem.

And in this connection we should again express the hope that many readers caught the spirit of our recent article, "Where Brain Work Begins, There Profit Begins." There's an old proverb that we should not attempt to beat a man at his own game, and it is one our Southern white farmers especially need to learn. They are men of greater

intelligence than the Negro and it is up to them to use this intelligence as the weapon to outstrip the Negro—and thereby "defend" their higher living standards. And as we pointed out in that connection, the highest and most profitable types of farming, including business coöperation in all lines of farm work—crop production, stock raising, coöperation in buying and selling and in using improved machinery, etc., etc.—can develop properly only in homogeneous communities, communities where the people are of one race and blood. Otherwise they will not work together adequately. Hence it is true that even to meet the Negro's economic competition, as well as protect white social life, it is necessary to give white neighborhoods power to limit future land sales to white people, with the further provision, of course, that efforts should be made to get good white tenants to replace Negro tenants as fast as possible.

Progressive Legislation in Florida

THE next time a Southern governor wishes to send a message to the Legislature, he could hardly do better than to get a copy of Governor Park Trammell's message to the Legislature of Florida now in session, and follow the path blazed out by the Florida Chief Executive. Here are some of his main recommendations:

1. Economy in government. Heretofore the Legislature has employed two or three times as many clerks, laborers, etc., as were necessary, the principal labor performed by many of them, as Governor Trammell sarcastically observes, being

PUSH THE TWENTY-FIVE CENT OFFER

DON'T forget to tell every neighbor about our great offer to new subscribers, *The Progressive Farmer* every week from now until December 1 for only twenty-five cents and any man's money back if he's not satisfied.

It will help your neighbors to read *The Progressive Farmer* and it will help your neighborhood to have them read it, and what's more, we will pay you handsomely for your trouble. Once again look over the list of liberal premium offers in last week's *Progressive Farmer* and go after the one you want most. Send on your clubs.

"that of visiting the State Treasury to draw their unearned and unmerited salary."

2. Banks should be required to pay interest on county funds as well as state funds.

3. A yea and nay vote should be recorded on all questions decided by county commissioners.

4. Establish a marketing bureau to aid farmers in marketing vegetables and staple crops.

5. Authorize counties to give suitable aid to demonstration, corn club and canning club work.

6. Punish railroads for not furnishing cars for transportation of farm products, when sufficient notice has been given.

7. Establish a State Highway Commission to give expert assistance in road making.

8. Equalize school terms in town and country. Encourage traveling libraries and the teaching of both agriculture and domestic science.

9. Put convicts on public roads, provide fire escapes for jails, and give an allowance to prisoners when they are set free.

10. Require banks of the state to maintain a guarantee fund to protect depositors.

11. Enact a graduated inheritance tax law.

12. Reduce the legal rate of interest from 8 to 6 per cent and the rate permitted by contract from 10 to 8 per cent.

13. Safeguard the purity of elections by allowing watchers at the polls. Prohibit the giving of liquor on election days and authorize funds to prosecute persons guilty of election frauds.

14. Protect the public against sales of watered stock by requiring issues of stocks and bonds to be reviewed by the Railroad Commission.

15. Require separate and distinct places for whites and Negroes in all public theaters, etc.

16. To encourage home-owning, submit a constitutional amendment exempting from taxation "a reasonable amount of the assessed value of the

homestead when actually used and occupied by the owner."

17. Establish an immigration bureau.

18. Submit a constitutional amendment "granting to the people the right by petition to initiate legislation and the right by petition to vote upon laws enacted by the Legislature, when a desire to do so is expressed by a substantial percentage of the qualified voters."

Deacon Rockefeller and the Bedbug

EVERY now and then somebody tries to atone for the vicious system represented by John D. Rockefeller or Andrew Carnegie by referring to their personal good qualities. Mr. R. F. Beasley neatly replies to them by quoting Jerry Simpson on the bedbug:

"I will admit that the bedbug in all his religious and family relations is eminently above reproach. As far as I know he lives a life of probity, economy, industry, and represents all the domestic and civic virtues. He is kind to his children, loving to his wife, charitable to the poor, eminently a good citizen in every way. My only objection to him is on account of his official status—in short, the way he gets his living."

Mr. Beasley's own further comment is also worth quoting: "The Deacon (Rockefeller) has accumulated in one short life more wealth than a million men could accumulate in all their lives by labor in any useful capacity. It is foolish to say he did this by superior abilities. No human creature is so superior to others. If he were he would be a god, and not a man. The Deacon did it because our laws permit the monopolization of natural resources which God made and man must have." The remedy therefore lies rather in reforming the system than in denouncing individuals—and incidentally in inaugurating heavier inheritance taxes so as to get back for public use more of the people's wealth, which vicious legislation has heretofore enabled individuals to gobble up.

How One Farm Neighborhood Is Waking Up

I HAVE just received a letter from a cousin who lives in a farming neighborhood I knew very well twenty years ago, and with whom I keep up an occasional correspondence. His latest letter—simply telling me the personal and neighborhood news—is so suggestive of the new spirit abroad in Southern farming that I must pass it on.

The first thing he tells about is his plan for joining with a young tenant farmer neighbor in doing farm work—the sort of fellowship and comradeship we were arguing for on page 1 a few weeks ago. "He is young and needs encouragement and we are arranging to work together," etc. Incidentally, my correspondent is very glad that the owner of this adjoining farm refused to rent to a Negro, and by waiting finally got a good white tenant as neighbor for him and his family.

Next he mentions a new telephone line in process of erection—an improvement that would have sounded marvelous to the people there even fifteen years ago.

A recent election on a bond issue for improving roads is the next news in the letter. (It happens that this bond issue was defeated, but the fact that the people even seriously consider road improvement shows progress.)

In the next sentence my cousin says: "The members of our Local Union bought their fertilizers coöperatively. We get it a good deal cheaper than outsiders get theirs." This is another evidence of the new spirit.

Next he says: "I have been experimenting in making terraces. I had a man to come here with his level and show me how to run some, and then he lent me his instrument and I have been trying it myself. The work looks good to me."

Then comes mention of the fact that some Hereford and Holstein cattle are coming into the neighborhood and some Duroc-Jersey hogs. Twenty years ago a pure-bred hog or cow there would have been a curiosity.

And then my cousin ends his brief letter by remarking that the neighbors are discussing plans for shipping milk to a new coöperative creamery.

Who says the South isn't waking up? And isn't it a better thing to be having a hand in waking up a neighborhood, helping forward all the agencies of progress, seeing the community grow better and better year by year, than it is to be somebody's hired man in town? I know that in his struggles to get started on the farm this man was strongly tempted to quit and go to town. But he has stood by his work, and in the long run I have no doubt but that he will be happier and his boys better and stronger men because of his decision.

Eat and drink to live; live not to eat and drink, for thus do the beasts.—"The Talmud."