

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF FORESTER OF THE UNITED STATES

**Importance of Better Marketing Methods Urged Upon Progressive Farmer Readers—Six Rules That Should Be Observed in Selling—In Many Cases Farmers Receive Only From One-Third to One-half the Real Value of Their Timber crop**

By Hon. H. S. Graves, Forester, U. S. Department of Agriculture

OF ALL farm crops, I presume that the average farmer knows the least about that of his woodlot. He does not know how much timber, in thousand board-feet of



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logs, in ties, poles, or cords, the woodlot contains, nor has he more than the slightest idea of the value of the material as it stands in the trees or when delivered at the sawmill or other wood-using plant. The inevitable result of this has been and still continues to be that shrewd men who are well versed in timber values and who are able to estimate quite closely the amount of timber in a woodlot are buying standing timber from farmers very often at their own figure, which almost invariably means a handsome profit to them.

Numerous instances could be cited of farmers receiving only one-third to one-half the value of their timber when selling it.

There are many other instances of where these men have bought both land and timber, and have then sold the timber alone for as much as they gave for both. The land has thus been clear profit.

### Find Out Prevailing Prices Before You Sell

THESE timber operators buy just as cheaply as possible. If they secure the timber on the woodlots at less than it is worth, the farmer has only himself to blame that he did not know the value of his property. What farmer would think of selling his hogs, cattle, grain, or other produce without knowing their quantity and the market prices within shipping distances? Why then is this course followed in the case of his woodlot crop? Why does he not inform himself upon this subject? In order to realize the best returns from his crop he must do so.

In spite of the farmer's general lack of knowledge in this subject of his timber, there was in 1909, according to the thirteenth census, used, cut for use, and sold standing, timber to the value of 195 million dollars from farm woodlots. Had woodlot owners throughout the country been fully conversant with timber values, I am sure the total value of these woodlot products for the United States would have greatly exceeded this sum.

In the past, the efforts of those engaged in forestry work have been largely devoted to interesting woodlot owners in the matter of better care of their timber, planting, etc. This phase of the subject certainly needs emphasis, for most woodlots are not producing nearly the amount of timber of which they are capable. I can readily see, however, why woodlot owners might not be interested in producing more timber when that which they already have brings such low returns.

### Six Good Rules to Remember

THERE are a number of different methods through which the woodlot owner may be assisted in this matter. A few simple suggestions may help, such as:

(1) Obtain price quotations for woodlot products from as many consumers, that is, sawmills and wood-using industries, as possible. In this way the woodlot owner can take advantage of the best market.

(2) A number of markets should

be investigated, both local and those at a distance.

(3) Standing timber should not be lumped off for a certain sum unless, through a careful estimate, the owner has exact knowledge of its quantity. It is usually preferable to sell by the log scale, stacked cord, or other unit.

(4) Since standing timber does not deteriorate rapidly, the woodlot owner is not forced to place his timber on the market regardless of market conditions.

(5) The responsibility of the prospective purchaser should be considered before making the sale in order to avoid slow payment, costly collections, and losses.

(6) In making a sale, the woodlot owner should protect himself through a written timber sale agreement.

### Has Your State a State Forester

THE United States Forest Service is always ready to answer inquiries from woodlot owners on this subject, and will endeavor to put them in touch with markets. Of the Southern states, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky and Tennessee, have state foresters who are glad to give aid and will often visit the owner for the purpose of inspecting his timber. The Professor of Forestry at the Georgia State College of Agriculture can also be called on for assistance.

Farm papers can perform a very useful service if every two or three months they will print quotations of the value of logs, bolts, billets, poles,

piling, extract wood, and tanbark at a number of the principal market centers for these products. Through the market columns of their local papers, farmers are able to keep track of the market values of all other classes of their produce, but except through a great deal of correspondence with sawmills, veneer plants, handle fac-

ories, etc., which might take their product, they have no ready means at present of knowing the market values of their timber. By publishing quotations for woodlot products, farm papers will make available to a large number of woodlot owners information that will undoubtedly be much appreciated by them.

## PINCHOT URGES COÖPERATION IN TIMBER MARKETING

**Individual Farmer Seldom Has Sufficient Quantity to Market Most Profitably—Coöperative Sawmills Also Suggested**

By Gifford Pinchot, Milford, Pa.

A VAST amount of our timber is wasted for lack of market. This has always been true, and will continue to be true until we have reached a more advanced stage of



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economic development; but it is especially true in many parts of the South now. When the South was first settled, and for a long time afterwards, the main need was to get rid of the timber in order to make place for field crops. In consequence of the lack of labor and capital and the general depression of industry which followed the Civil War, a great deal of cleared land in the South has gone back to forest, so that the work of making room for field crops must partly be done over again. In pressing the forest back from the tillable land, as room is needed for agriculture, the timber value must often be sacrificed. In such cases, the trees are simply an impediment to be got rid of as cheaply as possible. Under such conditions the man who owns timber that is really worth good money finds it hard to get its value.

The farmer who does not expect to

get the worst end of the bargain in taking care of his timber interests must be prepared to use his head. The importance of doing so in other lines of farming is being more and more fully recognized. Progressive farmers are eager to learn to apply the new agriculture, which means simply bringing to bear on every aspect of farming the best intelligence possible.

Forestry has not yet reached the point of equal recognition with other branches of scientific agriculture. Even those who are experts in farm matters seldom know much about growing and harvesting timber. In truth, not even the foresters know as much about it as I wish they did. There is need for many demonstrations, on individual farms, of what can be done, and of much study of the relation of the woodlot to the rest of the farm, before we shall be prepared always to do the right thing.

Here is a task for both the Department of Agriculture and the individual states to work out. Intelligent handling by farmers of their woodlots is impossible without thorough knowledge; and this must be developed for the farmers, since no farmer can undertake the task alone. But each man must use such knowledge as is already available, with intelligence, or he will lose much more than is necessary.

In dealing with the timber crop, more than with any other crop the land produces, intelligence calls for the exercise of foresight. Trees do not grow in a day, nor vanish in a day. Just when to harvest corn or cotton or fruit is a matter that does not admit of long debate, but the man with timber to cut can take his time about it without danger of losing his crop. There is therefore plenty of chance to consider whether future conditions may not afford a better opportunity for selling the timber to advantage than the present.

As good roads take the place of poor ones, and as the most accessible timber is removed, prices are bound to go up. In marketing timber, therefore, if the owner wishes to get the full value of what he has to sell, he should not hurry to take the first offer for it, but should inform himself carefully both as to its present value and as to what it may reasonably be expected to bring him if he holds it for a time.

If farmers are to secure for themselves the full advantage of their timber, they must act together. The amount of timber on any individual farm is seldom sufficient to permit of the most profitable handling. If farmers were more in the habit of getting together along coöperative lines, there would be many opportunities for joint woodlot operations. In some parts of the West, where farmers live in the neighborhood of Government-owned forests, they have what are practically community forests available both for the supply of their needs and as an opportunity to put in their time in off seasons. In at least one case a coöperative sawmill has been installed to cut for the farmers on a Government reclamation project the timber which they get from a nearby National Forest.

## SPEAKS FROM HIS OWN FARM EXPERIENCE

**Senator Theodore E. Burton, Probable Candidate for the Presidency, Contributes This Week's "Success Talk for Farm Boys"**

[Hon. Theodore E. Burton, of Ohio, long prominent in both houses of Congress, is a man who has won the respect of men in all parties by his courageous warfare against so-called "pork-barrel" extravagance in National appropriations. Mr. Burton is one of the men most prominently mentioned as the probable Presidential nominee of his party (Republican) this year. He has won a high place among the distinguished men of America by the exercise of the qualities he here recommends—namely, "industry, perseverance, reading good books." He is a great student. Next week's "Success Talk" will be by the great American inventor, Thomas A. Edison.]

FROM my own boyhood, I know much of the hardship and arduous labor of the farmer, but after all his happiness and prosperity are more thoroughly assured than that of any other element of our

population. His life is cast in the most wholesome of all theatres. His family is protected from the enervating influences of the city, and while his horizon may at times seem limited, his children are likely to be the heirs to the richest prizes of fortune. For in all the great branches of industry, in the fields of finance and in the activities of the profession, the sons of farmers have enjoyed the greatest pre-eminence. Nor is this surprising, for they are free from the distractions and the unwholesome surroundings which often make life but a travesty.

The boys on the farms have the best opportunity for the upbuilding and conservation of their health and the attainment of those habits of industry and perseverance which bring success in all the walks of life.

From my own experience as a farmer boy, I urge them to be faithful in their work, and to spend their spare time in studying scientific methods of farming and in reading good books which discuss the problems of the day so that in their manhood they may be qualified to discharge their highest obligations as patriotic American citizens. For to them the country looks for its highest standards.



Theodore E. Burton

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