

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

A Variety of Comment

EVERY country school ought to have an exhibit showing the common wild plants, weeds, flowers, insects, etc., with their common and scientific names, together with specimens and names of all grasses, clovers, etc., that are found in the community or that should be found there. In other words, an exhibit which will enable any boy to identify all the common wild and cultivated plants with whose names he may not be familiar, and all the insects. Why not urge this upon your teacher along with the other suggestions mentioned in last week's paper?

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The Texas Democratic state platform "recommends the submission by the Legislature of a constitutional amendment exempting from taxation all factories in the manufacture of cotton or worsteds or woollens in Texas for a period of ten years." And we again raise the question why money put into a silo, a creamery, a pure-bred sire, or any other improvement a farmer or group of farmers may propose in a neighborhood is not just as much entitled to exemption from taxation as money put into a cotton factory? It may be well to stimulate industrial progress by tax exemptions, but if so, then agricultural progress is also entitled to like encouragement.

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The South Carolina state warehouse system is too important an institution to be made a football of politics. For this reason we regretted State Commissioner McLaurin's active part in the recent bitter factional fight in the Palmetto State—resulting not unnaturally in his resignation now that his faction was defeated. In his letter announcing his resignation Mr. McLaurin says:

"What the system now needs is (1) licensed graders; (2) direct sales; (3) to become self-supporting. The insurance, properly handled by the Legislature, can be made to support the system and furnish aid in establishing direct sales. Few realize the tremendous profits made upon insurance. We have paid out around \$80,000 in premiums, while the losses during that time amount to only \$1,197."

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Every cotton state ought to supplement the new Federal warehouse law by providing a state warehouse system in harmony with it. The National government provides the machinery for making warehouses what they should be. Now the states should appoint warehouse commissioners (1) to help get the warehouses started, (2) to keep down insurance rates, (3) plan for general coöperation among warehouses in the farmer's interest, etc., etc.

Anniston, Alabama, falls in line with the movement for exempting new industries from taxation. Says a daily paper in reporting the action of the city council:

"The ordinance exempting the Anniston Ordnance Company and Anniston Steel Company from taxes for a period of five years was read for the third time by Councilman Hamilton and passed. The passage of this ordinance was in accordance with the city's plan to foster new industries."

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For our part, we are entirely in sympathy with the plan to use taxation so as promote material development and the general welfare. What we want, however, is to have the principle applied in such a way as to encourage not only manufactures and town development but agriculture and rural development. Suppose, for example, we should tax a resident's first \$1,000 worth of real estate at only half the rate at which holdings in excess of \$1,000 worth are taxed. Would not that discourage large holdings and absentee landlordism and promote instead small holdings and home-ownership? If these Texas and Anniston ideas are good, there's no use limiting their application to manufacturing industries alone. Let's see where they can be applied to the benefit of agriculture also.

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"We didn't get a very large proportion of the farmers of the county to join in our cottonseed pool," said Business Agent Nichols of my County Farmers' Union in our office the other day, "but we got 2,400 pounds of cottonseed meal in exchange for each ton of seed, when farmers selling individually were getting only pound for pound,—that is to say, 2,000 pounds of meal for each ton of seed—and some of them not so much as that. In other words, for each ton of seed sold coöperatively we got 400 pounds of meal extra simply by

selling together instead of each man selling for himself." In nearly every county similar good results may be had by pooling cotton seed. In fact, the farmers in a section of a county may organize with almost equally as good results. With the present high prices of cotton, there is going to be a wild scramble for seed long before the season closes and farmers who hold seed until next spring are likely to get record-breaking prices.

"Somebody Must Lead; Why Not You?"

"BY SHIPPING hogs coöperatively," said a farmer in our office the other day, "my neighbors and I cleared \$200 profit on 130 head shipped." And another farmer from the same section told us that peanut-growers by combining and ordering in wholesale lots saved 33½ per cent on bags. In the same county the Farmers' Union secured substantial reductions in freight rates on fertilizer and lime, whereas without organization on the part of the farmers the rates would have undoubtedly stayed as they were.

And in nearly every other county the opportunities for organization and coöperation are just as good. Right in your own neighborhood, Mr. Farmer, we doubt not, there is a chance for ten times more coöperative effort than is now being put forth. Somebody must lead; why not you?

Coöperation and Neighborliness

IN TALKING about coöperation let it be always remembered that coöperation is not confined to buying, shipping, selling, running coöperative enterprises and other forms of commerce or "business." All this is good and necessary. It means better profits for the individuals interested; and we need bigger profits in order to make farming and farm life more attractive.

Along with coöperation for bigger profits, however, let's never forget that the biggest, noblest, and most inspiring of all forms of coöperation comes when the human heart is stirred by sentiments of sympathy and friendship, and men and women join in helping somebody in distress having no thought whatever of future profit or advantage.

We like to record incidents of this kind just as much as we like to report successes in coöperative marketing or other profit-making coöperation. Here, for example, is a story a farmer has just sent his local paper telling what happened the other day when his barn burned, destroying 45 tons of hay:

"Before the fire died down a man I had never known or seen offered me the hay that was standing on a farm which he owned. Other Cummington men made it their business to see that the hay was cut and raked. Five teams with mowing machines and several men with scythes attacked that grass one morning, being followed by several horse rakes and hand

helpers. These in turn were followed by my nearer neighbors from Goshen equipped with six two-horse hay wagons and helpers. The result was that in a surprisingly short time I had 15 tons of hay stacked at a convenient place near my home."

Life is worth living in a neighborhood where such a spirit of true coöperation exists. And if the reader will only watch out, we doubt not that some opportunity will soon appear in his own community for increasing the happiness and neighborliness of everybody by just such coöperative helpfulness.

Community Singing

WE HOPE Mrs. Boylin's suggestion in last week's paper, "Sing More—In Church and Sunday School," will set a lot of our people thinking. We don't sing enough in this country, as anybody knows who has witnessed the good results of community music abroad. We ought to get people together in singing classes. We might hold "all-day singings," as is already done in some sections. We ought to introduce spirited songs into public schools and into farmers' and farm women's clubs. Dr. Charles W. Eliot in a recent publication strongly urges the need for more attention to music in schools. And then, too, as Mrs. Boylin suggests: "Why not sing after Sunday school each Sunday? There is no need to hurry home. Sunday is rest day, so make the best of it, even by having a little social time at the church."

Getting people to sing together will promote that spirit of neighborliness which must be the foundation of all true coöperation. A recent writer in the Atlantic Monthly points out that when men sing together, it not only "gives them the most wholesome of diversions, but it equalizes them; it creates a sort of brotherhood." As he continues:

"The possibilities in music to weld together socially disorganized communities have never been fully realized in America. Were we to set about using it directly to that end, we should find out how valuable it is in breaking down artificial barriers. By choral singing, people in any one locality can be brought into a certain sympathy with each other. Groups who attend the same church, the fathers and mothers of children whom the settlements reach—wherever there is a 'neighborhood' there is a chance for singing. It needs only a person who believes in it, and who will rigidly select only the best music. And where neighborhood groups have been singing the same fine music, any great gathering of people would find everybody ready to take part in choral-singing."

The Social Element in Land Sales

A LAWYER writing us regarding race segregation in land ownership says: "The supreme courts are awakening to the fact that such questions, like labor laws, are not merely contractual but social, and the judges are broadening their visions like all the rest of us in the last decade or so."

There is the whole point. In the sale of land the social element is one of the most important. Men are not merely animals. They do not exist merely to eat and drink and pile up certain heaps of material things called property. Their most sacred treasure is their home life and their social life; and for this reason it seems to us the height of folly to say that the Southern white farmers have a right to protect their barns and houses and lands, but have not the right to protect their higher treasures—their home life, social life, neighborhood life, with all that these terms imply.

If my neighbor sells a mule or a load of lumber, that affects me in no serious way. But the sale of land involves the right to say who shall be my neighbor, who shall be available as associates for my wife and children, who shall be co-workers with me in all my efforts to develop a satisfying life for me and mine. The transaction is indeed "not merely contractual but social."

We want no injustice done any race, but the law must come to recognize coöperative effort and a richer social life as the basis for a rural civilization and take steps to promote these ends.

WANTED!

WANTED by all the people:

A servant,
Born of those who serve and aspire,
Who has known want and trouble
And all that passes in the Little House of the Poor—
Lonely thought, counsels of love and prudence—
The happiness born of a penny—
The need of the strange and mighty Dollar—
And the love of things above all its power of measurement—
The dreams that come of weariness and a hard bed—
The thirst for learning as a great Deliverer;
Who has felt in his heart the weakness and the strength of his brothers,
And above all, the divinity that dwells in them;
Who, therefore, shall have faith in men and women,
And knowledge of their wrongs and needs and of their proneness to error,
Humbly must he listen to their voice as one who knows that God will often speak in it,
And have charity even for his own judgments,
Thus removed, far removed from the conceit and vanity of Princes,
Shall he know how great is the Master he has chosen to serve.

—Irving Batcheller in the New York Times.