

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

How a Town Was Reborn: A Lesson for Country Communities

COUNTRY communities need more organizations and committees charged with the duty of doing something or getting something done for the community. Perhaps you may need better roads, or a school library, or an auditorium as a community meeting place. And everybody in the community may know and acknowledge that the need exists. Still if no one person or group of persons is named to move in the matter,—in other words, if it is a case of "What's everybody's business is nobody's business,"—it may be years before anything is done. On the other hand, if you have a farmers' club or a farm women's club or a community league, you name a committee. Then the members of that committee will feel that they are called upon to act. And they will call upon other citizens for coöperation. Very soon something will be accomplished. Moreover, community spirit will develop, and one form of progress will lead to another.

I know right now a town that offers striking proof of this assertion. Six years ago, Raleigh was backward, sleepy, a "dead town." Other cities poked fun at it. They didn't believe it would ever wake up. It was a state capital, and rival cities even talked of taking the capitol away from it. Still the town slept on. Then came a movement to erect a Y. M. C. A. building. Expert organizers from a distance came in and helped the local forces. Soliciting "teams" of men were organized. Everybody in town was put to work. And they did work. And old men who had never before given anything for the public good loosened their purse-strings. And men who had never given time and effort to the public good found a new sort of happiness—the happiness that comes through coöperative comradeship with other workers in an unselfish cause. They got the \$70,000 Y. M. C. A.

Ever since that time this town has been a different sort of place. It got a baptism of grace, generosity and comradeship it has never gotten over. And many a country neighborhood needs to go through the same sort of experience. Get your local organizations—a Local Union or farmers' club, a farm women's club, and a community league if possible—and then get strong committees to make plans in behalf of whatever form of community progress you need most. Then let all the people come to the help of the committees. And very soon you will not only have many tangible and material improvements to boast of, but will have something still more important. You will have a spirit of comradeship and brotherhood in your neighborhood that you have never had before, and life for everybody will be made infinitely richer and joyous.

And in holding up this vision, kind readers, as to the organizations that should be formed and as to the work that should be done in your neighborhood, let us again repeat what we have often said before: "Somebody must lead; why not you?"

Don't Hate the Negro; Excel Him

TO A thinking man it is as plain as the nose on your face, of course, that E. B. Watson, a thoughtful Northern farmer who visited in the South sometime ago, was right when he reported in Wallace's Farmer on his return North:

"Since the war the bulk of the Negroes have been working on a bare living wage, a wage that permits them only a very low standard of living, and the white man who produces the same product in competition with them can hope to get a better return only in so far as he does better farming."

In other words, the white tenant or farmer who has no more ambition than to farm the way the average Negro farms thereby forces his family to live on the average Negro's scale of living. The way to be able to live differently is to farm differently—for the white tenant to use his superior brain by doing superior work. Let us see then what are the characteristics of typical old-time Negro farming:

1. **The one-crop** or "all-cotton" system. No well planned diversification putting "food, feed and fertility first."

2. **No new methods.** No farm papers. Laughs at "book-farming," demonstration agents, farmers' institutes, etc., and says that Gran'pap, "ole Mars-ter", the moon and the almanac are good enough for him.

3. **Shiftless methods.** Doesn't break land well, depends wholly on commercial fertilizers; uses old-fashioned tools and no machinery; lets grass get ahead of him; ignores peas, clovers, and feed crops for hogs and cattle; is late picking his cotton, etc., etc.

4. **Buys everything** from the store. "He lives out of a canned garden and milks a tin cow," as Dr. Knapp used to say.

5. **Doesn't save.** If he has anything left, is likely to spend it on whiskey or on some traveling-agent swindler instead of for pigs, cows, tools and horses.

Thousands of Negroes, of course, are doing excellent farming now, but these, we believe, will be recognized as five characteristics of the shiftless class of Negroes—the characteristics that keep them poor—and the characteristics therefore that will keep any white farmer poor who follows in the same path.

The white farmer must sell his products in competition with Negro labor. If he farms like the Negro does, he must live like the Negro does—sooner or later. The only remedy is for the white farmer to use his brain and show that white brain

is superior to Negro brain.

"Don't hate the Negro; excel him," is our advice. But we would also remind our white farmers that one of the best ways to excel the Negro is through coöperative effort—getting together as far as possible in all-white neighborhoods so as to have coöperation in making all farm products as well as marketing them—coöperation in getting and using improved machinery and pure-bred livestock; coöperation in buying fertilizers and supplies; coöperation in marketing all crops; and coöperation in getting credit and avoiding "time prices."

Give Farmers Representation on Official Boards

WE BELIEVE that in every Southern state an earnest effort should be made to put a greater number of worthy farmers on party executive committees and on official boards appointed by governors and legislatures. It too often happens that the men who dictate as to who shall go on such boards and committees are city men and do not know the ablest farmers of the state. Of course, we do not think that a man should be given official position in a party or a state just because he is farmer. But heretofore the fact that a man was a farmer has often kept him from being known to our political dictators, and farmers of ability and education have not been recognized as their number would justify. In proof one has only to look over the list of members of his party committees or of the various state boards, and see what a small proportion of the men are farmers.

We are glad to find that Mr. Roosevelt has called attention to this situation, and members of all political parties would do well to study what he says. We quote:

"Country life should be as attractive as city life, and the country people should insist on having a full representation when it comes to dealing with all the great public questions. In other words, country folks should demand that they work on equal terms with city folks in all such matters. They should have their share in the membership of commissions and councils; in short, of all the organized bodies for laying plans for great enterprises affecting all the people. I am glad to see on such bodies the names that represent financial interests, but those interests should not have the right-of-way, and in all enterprises and movements in which the social condition of the country is involved, the agricultural country—the open country—should be as well represented as the city."

If this situation is to be remedied, farmers themselves must take action. Why not cut out this clipping therefore and mail it to your Governor or to the chairman of the state executive committee of your party, naming some farmer you believe would reflect credit on the profession and the state if given official recognition?

A Thought for the Week

A MAN passes for what he is worth. What he is engraves itself on his face, on his form, on his fortunes, in letters of light. Concealment avails him nothing; boasting nothing. Men know not why they do not trust him; but they do not trust him. His vice glasses his eye, cuts lines of mean expression in his cheek, pinches the nose, and sets the mark of the beast on the back of the head. If you would not be known to do anything, never do it. A man may play the fool in the drifts of a desert, but every grain of sand shall seem to see. He may be a solitary eater, but he cannot keep his foolish counsel. A broken complexion, a swinish look, ungenerous acts, and the want of due knowledge—all blab.—Emerson.

Our anger and impatience often prove much more mischievous than the things about which we are angry or impatient.—Marcus Aurelius.

COUNTRY COMMUNITY OF THE FUTURE WILL BE CO-OPERATIVE

WHERE a dozen families are planted near each other we are able to secure coöperation in industries apart from agriculture. In other words, we establish a community instead of a family. Two families going out together and intending to occupy twenty acres each can build their houses in adjacent corners so that their neighborliness may be felt, especially in times of sickness. It is the woman who suffers most, and by this sort of building she is not cut off from a daily chat with her neighbor.

I have seen this scheme carried out on a larger scale by four families, each building on the corner of a sixty acre lot. Their lines ran into each other, and their fields were separated only by a line of wire. These four families had a common kitchen, with breakfast room and broad veranda in the center of the plot. There is no reason why every family in the world should have its own food laboratory. By combination the labor is greatly reduced and the cost of feeding four families is cut right in two. I am not so sure but that the future country home will lose its barns, as I have suggested it may also lose the kitchen and its cellars. This would certainly contribute greatly to esthetics, as well as to the sanitary side of country home making. There would be no lack of individualism if social life should go even further.

One thing is assured: the dream of the farmer has greatly changed of late. His vision is no longer that of an isolated house, quite distinctly severed from association with his neighbors, and while in one sense complete by itself, seriously lacking in its power to move with the world's evolution. He begins to think of a parked farm community, raying out from a central school and library and closely associated in almost all conceivable ways through miles of extent. The vision does not as yet go beyond the rural free delivery of mail and the use of automobiles for market purposes and for tillage, but he has an enthusiasm over something that is to make country life marvelously beautiful and rob it of its most severe features of isolation and toil.—E. P. Powell, in "How to Live in the Country."