

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 Community Fair Helps

SPEAKING of community fairs, did you notice what Miss Carrie Wilson, of Abilene, Texas, wrote in our Educational Edition, about what an inspiration the community fair has been in her section?

"Through it we generate a desire to grow the best crops; to have the best all-round livestock; to show the healthiest, dimple-darling baby; to exhibit the most tempting, appetizing canned fruits and vegetables; to display the most perfect stitch, the smoothest embroidery, the daintiest tating, and finery; to write the best essay, to draw the most perfect examination-paper, to work up the best note-book, to read the most library books; to play the best ball, to run the fastest, to be the strongest. Prizes are given, and honors announced."

Wouldn't it be worth while for every neighborhood in the South to have such a contest this fall?

Don't Put a Tax on Knowledge

FOR weeks now Congress has been looking for sources from which to raise revenue to finance the war. The House passed a bill which would seriously cripple many industries, and impose an undue share of the burden upon poverty and industry.

Especially vicious, it seems to us, is any plan for the taxation of intelligence and its dissemination; or anything which hampers communication between people. Increasing the price of postage stamps and postal cards will inevitably have this effect. Then, too, all the overhead expenses of the Postoffice Department must be continued anyhow, and the net result will be a serious crippling of the service rendered the people, with no material increase in revenues. Canada's experience proves this.

Or take the increased postage rate on newspapers. In our own case, the increase recommended by the Ways and Means Committee would amount to more in one year than The Progressive Farmer Company has been making in three years, whereas we are already having to pay 66 per cent more for paper than a year ago. What would be the result of such an increase? Hundreds of papers would, of course, be forced into bankruptcy, while the survivors would have to inaugurate wholesale increases in subscription rates.

All talk about low postage rates being a "subsidy to publishers" is utterly incorrect and absurd. The processes of competition fix all that, the benefits being wholly passed on to the subscribers in the form of lower subscription rates. Higher postage rates would mean higher subscription rates and that would mean a decrease in newspaper reading among the very class of people who need it most—our poorest class, among whom it is impossible to have a general diffusion of current knowledge except by low-priced publications.

Moreover, we submit this question to our Senators and Representatives: We have a democratic government and in such a government the safety of all worthy institutions depends upon the intelligence of the people. Is it not therefore just as much the duty of the national government to foster the dissemination of knowledge among grown people by providing low postage rates on publications, as it is the duty of a state government to encourage the dissemination of knowledge among its youth by means of public schools? We believe it is.

The Right Place to Put the War Tax

BUT now a word as to the right place for Congress to get the money to finance the war. We believe in a pay-as-you-go war and we first favored the general plan suggested by the American Committee on War Finance for heavy

and progressive taxation of all large incomes, conscripting during the war period all of any man's income in excess of \$100,000 a year. Such conscription is certainly not to be thought in a class with the conscription of life itself, and we still think the income tax in both House and Senate bills is far below what it ought to be.

A still wiser plan, however—and the wisest of all war tax plans yet presented—is that of getting war taxes from war profits. In other words, make the people who benefit by the war pay the expenses of the war through an excess profits tax—a tax on the excess profits these companies are now making as compared with the profits they were making prior to the war outbreak. And it is just as practicable as it is everlastingly just to raise a tremendous proportion of our war revenues in just this fashion. For example, a table has been prepared showing how tremendously 104 great corporations of a class to profit by war expenditures have been enriched, and how fittingly an "excess profit tax" might be applied to them. These companies made profits in 1916 aggregating \$1,273,992,854 as compared with \$263,153,892 in 1914, or more than a billion dollars excess profits in 1916 as compared with 1914. We have not room for the entire list, but here is a list of those companies earning over \$10,000,000 last year, together with a comparative statement showing what were their earnings in 1914 and 1915:

Company	1914	1915	1916
American Brass Co.	\$10,000,000	\$6,138,454	\$1,450,247
American Locomotive Co.	10,700,429	1,491,980	2,076,127
Bethlehem Steel Corp.	43,503,900	17,072,813	5,590,030
BHSS (E. W.) Co.	10,585,321	5,532,101
Cambria Steel Co.	25,422,073	6,403,538	1,969,390
Crucible Steel Co. of Am.	13,222,855	3,073,750	1,015,039
DuPont (E. I.) DeNem. Co.	28,013,020	57,237,308	4,831,783
General Chemical Co.	12,230,826	5,933,740	2,352,322
General Electric Co.	18,539,523	11,737,909	11,237,826
Hercules Powder Co.	16,659,823	4,826,123	1,247,235
Lackawanna Steel Co.	12,218,234	2,409,108	1,652,444
Midvale Steel & Ord. Co.	31,480,213	1,441,386
Republic Steel & Iron Co.	14,739,163	3,515,819	1,023,748
Seoville Mfg. Co.	13,403,492	3,974,362	460,995
U. S. Steel Corp.	271,531,730	75,333,333	23,436,788
Am. Smelting & Ref. Co.	25,292,248	14,492,732	9,271,065
Am. Sugar Refining Co.	11,435,107	5,394,415	4,435,430
Anacosta Cop. Min. Co.	57,941,533	16,695,397	3,789,588
Armour & Co.	20,100,000	11,000,000	7,509,908
Central Leather Co.	15,489,201	6,628,397	4,374,924
China Copper Co.	12,527,948	6,658,719	2,992,399
General Motors Co.	28,730,560	14,457,304	7,243,733
International Nickel Co.	11,748,279	5,598,072	7,792,905
Kennecott Copper Corp.	27,681,713	6,587,052
Nevada Con. Copper Co.	15,092,031	5,598,119	4,470,472
Empire Dist. Corp.	21,974,295	9,720,475	6,064,339
Rag Cons. Copper Co.	12,084,166	4,589,143	2,395,623
Standard Oil Co. of Cal.	17,604,304	9,329,340	10,553,383
Standard Oil Co. of Ind.	29,043,616	15,938,376	6,590,924
Standard Oil Co. of N. Y.	36,833,496	16,761,663	7,735,910
Swift & Co.	20,465,000	14,087,500	9,450,000
Texas Co.	13,899,861	6,399,327	6,183,974
United Fruit Co.	11,542,151	5,300,522	2,364,211
U. S. Rubber Co.	11,326,203	8,093,203	8,091,333
Utah Copper Co.	29,738,675	17,913,481	8,073,491
Western Union Tel. Co.	13,561,830	10,167,592	5,371,395
Culmet & Arts Min. Co.	11,156,835	5,458,129	3,215,624

Total profits of only 37 leading companies 1914, \$67,034,364; 1915, \$435,901,566; 1916, \$851,093,509. Excess of 1916 profits over 1914, \$784,019,145.

We believe this is manifestly the right place to put the war tax, and we are glad that the Senate has greatly increased the burden here. But it should be made still heavier in order to relieve the burdens on poverty and small industries.

CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS MAY MAKE A REPUTATION WORTH MONEY

EVEN in the case of those commodities where uniform grading standards are largely impossible, much can be done by individual growers, or associations of growers, by developing both honesty of pack and uniformity in quality; in other words, individual standards of quality may be established which will result in a reputation for the shipper or shippers, which in turn results in higher prices to producers and a lower cost of marketing all along the line.

There are no well-recognized standard grades for Bartlett pears, at least among eastern growers, but there are instances where individual growers have standardized their packs to such an extent that city buyers will pay the top of the market to such individuals without even bothering to inspect their offerings. In spite of a lack of uniform standards of potato grades, the Eastern Shore of Virginia Produce Exchange has so standardized its offerings of potatoes and made them known in the trade under its own brand, the wholesalers order by wire without seeing the goods.

Numerous other instances of this sort might be given—illustrating one of the principal benefits that may be derived from coöperative marketing.—From Weld's "Marketing of Farm Products."

We Should Reform the Cotton Tare Evil

IN CONNECTION with last week's discussion of our unscientific system of marketing cotton, the enormous waste through the cotton tare evil should also have attention.

The situation, of course, has been frequently explained to farmers. Europe takes most of our cotton crop, and is hence the dominant factor in fixing the price of cotton. Now Europe buys cotton on the basis of 6 per cent tare. That is to say, on each 500-pound bale of cotton she assumes that the bagging and ties will weigh 6 per cent, or 30 pounds. In other words, Europe buys a 500-pound bale of cotton on the assumption that it will contain only 470 pounds of lint. But as a matter of fact, the Southern farmer does not put on 30 pounds of bagging and ties, and so he gives buyers more lint cotton than they pay for.

The Progressive Farmer has been saying this for years, but our position has been frequently combated. We are glad now therefore to quote the authoritative opinion of the United States Government. Every farmer in the South ought to get a copy of Farmers' Bulletin No. 764, "Cotton Ginning Information for Farmers" (see list of valuable marketing bulletins on page 11 last week) and any farmer who does so will find the following statement on page 16:

"It is the usual custom to compress cotton at concentration points, where the bale is 'patched' that is, extra pieces of bagging are put on, ostensibly to cover sample holes, but really to add weight. On arrival at the compress a bale of cotton usually does not have the full amount of 'tare' (weight of bagging and ties) permitted by the practices of the cotton trade, and this factor is considered in determining the price. The patches are of sufficient weight to bring the weight up to the maximum limit. Heavier bagging might be used at the gin, and the extra weight thus gained would benefit the producer."

Of course, it is true, as the bulletin goes on to say, that "a more economical way however would be to reduce the limit of tare to approximately 25 pounds per bale, and then a better price, based on the actual weight, might be obtained by producers." The only way to reduce the tare is by international agreement, and we are at a loss to understand why Southern Congressmen and Senators and our Southern-born Secretary of Agriculture have not brought this about. Farmers' organizations and individual farmers should keep agitating this reform.

And meanwhile, if Europe allows 30 pounds for tare and fixes cotton prices accordingly, the farmer as well as the exporter should be allowed to put on the extra weight.

Why Put Cotton in the Food Control Bill?

THE writer has addressed the following self-explanatory letter to a group of the most influential members of the United States Senate:

Dear Senators:
"I earnestly hope you will use your utmost endeavors to have cotton exempted from the provisions of the food control bill.

"What are the outstanding facts in this matter? The facts are these:

"1. That it has only been three years since tens of thousands of Southern farmers were forced into utter bankruptcy by the stupendous collapse in cotton values.

"2. That no other crop—in fact, no other important American product of any kind—has suffered so seriously from the war as cotton suffered then. And if it had then to suffer losses—as it did—because it was not a food product, it ought not now to be curbed as if it were a food product.

"3. Congress positively refused at that time to do anything to help the Southern farmer out of the losses created by war; and if it declared for a strictly 'hands off' policy then when the Southern farmer was drowning, it at least might be fair enough to pursue a like neutral policy now and not beat back the cotton grower when he is about to get on shore again.

"4. Finally, this policy is made the more just and imperative because of the fact that while cotton alone suffered ruinous losses in the beginning of the war, its prices have not yet advanced so much as prices of some other products that suffered no war loss at all.

"Earnestly hoping, gentlemen, that you will present these facts to your colleagues, and that you will succeed in making them see the justice of your position, I am,

Yours sincerely,
"CLARENCE POE, Editor."