

The Weather

BY GORDON HUGHES

Palm Harbor, Fla., Feb. 16.—Much has been said about the weather this winter and many people say it is the worst on record, but it is not my memory serves me right. I will go back to 1876-77 which is as far as I can go. This, no doubt, was colder than any winter since that time. There was much timber killed and some large trees killed. Uncle Tom Mackin, who lived on the Shelby-Polkville road, was farming with a black mule. He went to feed one morning and found some one had stolen his black mule and had left an old gray mule in his stable. He went to the house and told his wife about it and they went to the barn and while they were trying to identify the mule it ran out by them and ran until it turned black again.

Other cold winters with much snow since 76-77 were 1894-95. It started snowing, I think, on Dec. 23 and I don't think the ground was clear of snow any more until April. Rabbits and birds, most all froze or starved. I didn't see a blue bird for two years. The winter of 1898-99 also was a cold winter with a lot of snow. Peaches and black berries were killed in bud and none bloomed except those under the snow. 1917-18 was cold with plenty of snow. Also 1935-36. We had 10 inches on March 19, 1936, but our heaviest snow in many years was Feb. 13, 1902, which was 18 inches on the ground.

The driest years were 1881-1911-1925, and wettest were 1886-1902-1916. I lost my crop in 1881 from drought which was a corn field about four feet square and a gourd vine on the old Lattimore place near Rockville. I also lost my swimming pool by the heavy rains of 1886 that washed my dam away.

Some of the late killing frosts were April 6, 1903. The wheat was headed and was killed. May 10, 1906 peaches and vegetables were killed. I have no record of these dates and some of them may be wrong but I think they are correct.

Now I will give a little warm weather for winter time. 1906-07 was warm. We had snow Nov. 15 but it turned warm after this and stayed warm. Maple and elm trees bloomed out in January. Peaches bloomed in February and were killed in May when they were half grown. The woods were killed and didn't put out until mid-summer. 1932-33 we didn't have any winter. I got cucumbers out of my garden on December 16 that measured nine inches and took them to the Herald office. I had a piece of cotton south of my house that was white with blooms on Christmas day. They were never killed and where they were not plowed up made cotton. My Irish potatoes were hand high at Christmas and were not killed and by the middle of March we were getting potatoes for the table.

Now I will tell you about the Florida weather that we are enjoying. I came down here the first of the year, bought one-fourth cord of wood and still have some wood and an open fire place is my only source of heat. The sun has shined every day since I came down. The high temperature has been around 80 every day for two weeks and has been to 86. I went to Clearwater beach yesterday evening to watch the girls in bathing expecting to find it full of the teen-age beauties. It was only half full of them. They had not only had to make room for mama but also for grandma. They were both in there in case they should need a life-saver.

P. S.—I will tell you about the fishing later. You will see this is written in Chinese and spelled in Dutch, but you or Mr. Belk should be able to translate this in English, so if you can do so, you can print this if you wish.

Spring is the safest season in the accident records, the National Safety Council reports. But before you start thumbing your nose at fate, remember that "the safest season" still claimed about 250 accident victims a day.

Though traffic rules they disobey Kids always have the right-of-way.

Spontaneous combustion can start from oily rags used in cleaning the home, the National Safety Council says. Keep them in air-tight metal cans.



Wage-Hour Fixing

Thurman Sensing, who directs research for the Southern States Industrial Council, Nashville, Tenn., is a man who speaks with wisdom. Sometime ago Mr. Sensing released comments on our wage and hour law, in which he predicted there would be continued agitation to fix minimum wages at high figures. I think it is true, as Mr. Sensing suggests, that few people understand the implications of wage and hour fixing by the government.

Says Mr. Sensing: "The whole system of democracy is directly opposed to any sort of planned economy. . . . Deny it though we may, the fixing of wages by legislative action can be regarded as nothing else than part and parcel of planned economy. If the government is allowed to assume the power to fix minimum wages and maximum hours, there is nothing to keep the government from reversing this process and fixing maximum wages and minimum hours." With that democracy flies completely out the window, Mr. Sensing declares.

Real Guarantee

Everybody, he says, should have a living wage — or more — if he earns it. "But no one who believes in democracy will argue that a person should have a certain wage whether he earns it or not. Productivity comes first, not wages. The only real guarantee behind a wage in a democracy is the productivity of the person who receives the wage."

These words are so logical and the reasoning so plain that I would like to continue with Mr. Sensing's comments. Suppose an employer couldn't pay the minimum wages set up, and had to close down. There are two choices for the government: "either the business must be taken over . . . and workers paid without any reference to the earnings of the business; or the workers go on relief and are issued a dole at the expense of the general public."

False Promises

The first would be state socialism, which the people of America would never endorse willingly or knowingly. "Socialism never has and never will bring the people a strong government and a high standard of living." Mr. Sensing cites state socialism in England: "Promising them greater production, it has brought decreased production; promising them a higher standard of living, it has brought them a lower standard of living; promising them happiness, it has brought them misery."

Whence Prosperity?

The other alternative, says Mr. Sensing, would bring a great body of unemployed. "They are unemployed simply because the laws of the land have made it unprofitable for them to be employed. . . . They are living off the enterprise and productivity of the rest of the people. Their incentive is dulled, their energy is stifled, their initiative is warped. They are drones in a free society." When the drones are too numerous to be supported by the workers, Mr. Sensing continues, the government takes over and the society is no longer free.

"If minimum wages fixed by the law are to make us prosperous, we might as well set the figure at one dollar per hour or two dollars per hour or five dollars per hour. . . . In a democracy the requirement must always be that the individual shall earn his wage, whether it be ten cents per hour or ten dollars per hour; moreover, that it shall be fixed by free enterprise in a competitive economy. Our whole history has shown this to be the road to prosperity."

Prices paid by farmers in 1947, including interest and taxes, kept pace with those they received. In January the index was 251.24 per cent above December and 17 per cent above January 1947. The parity ratio was 122 in January, about the same as a year earlier.

Secretary of the Navy John L. Sullivan recently said that control of the seas, or at least the guarantee of freedom of the seas, is almost as important in time of peace as in time of war.

One of the chief causes of traffic accidents is following the car ahead too closely, the National Safety Council says. The rule of one car length for every 10 miles of speed is good except when streets are wet or icy.

The penalty in any state for careless wiring may be electrocution.



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Uncle Sam Says



If you don't mind blending romance and good business sense, Leap Year Day, February 29, offers the opportunity to take a look at the growth in value of United States Savings Bonds.

For example, here is what happened to the value of Savings Bonds as measured by the Leap Years:
\$25 Savings Bond — 1940, \$18.75, purchase price; 1944, \$20.00 and 1948, \$23.00.
\$50 Savings Bond — 1940, \$37.50, purchase price; 1944, \$40.00 and 1948, \$46.00.
\$100 Savings Bond — 1940, \$75.00, purchase price; 1944, \$80.00 and 1948, \$92.00.

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