



NEED A DIFFERENT SPIRIT IN DEALING WITH FARM ILLS.

(Written Specially For The Bulletin.)
I get very tired and a little inclined to be touchy reading the lucubrations of congressmen and editors and other big-heads over "What the Farmers Want." I look with something more than amazement, with something closely approaching disgust on the hundred-and-one nostrils which self-selected delegates to farm commissions and farm councils and farm conventions set out on their three-card-monte tables as panaceas for agricultural ills.

According to some, the farmers want more representation on the federal reserve board.
According to others, they want the "agricultural bloc," so-called, to take control of congress.

According to still others, they want a tariff which shall shut out of the country all importation of foreign-grown farm products.

According to many they want more consideration at the hands of banks and bankers, and the privilege of borrowing more money at lower rates and on more liberal terms as collateral.

All, whether belonging to the classes mentioned above or to other classes, not specially named, seem to agree that the thing needed in order to smooth the farmer's rocky road is something in the way of government action. They call for more and different legislation. They want boards of investigation authorized and laws passed and business restrictions relaxed for the special benefit of farmers. Or else they want different laws passed and additional restrictions imposed—again for the special benefit of farmers. But they all unite in holding that the farm situation demands a lot of legal tinkering and the appointment of more officials.

In other words, they propose to still the farmer's complaints by feeding him a few more bottles of specially prepared Political Pap. Always with the understanding that said Political Pap shall be the sort prepared in their own laboratories and according to their own specifications.

Yes, would think to hear them talk and spout that they have an intimate and exact knowledge of the situation; that they know precisely what is the matter with the patient, and have in their pill-boxes the one and only sovereign and unfailing cure for every symptom. Also that their guide-books are the only and infallible rules of the road. I am irresistibly reminded of what Little Tom saw in the island of Polynap, as described by Charles Kingsley in his highly educational if not always strictly veracious fairy story of "The Water Babies." I quote:

"There Tom saw ploughs drawing horses, nails driving hammers, and 'keeping china-shops' etc. When he got into the middle of the town, they all set on him at once, to show him his way, or rather to show him that he did not know his way; for as for asking him what way he wanted to go, no one ever thought of that. But one pulled him hither, and another poked him thither, and a third cried—

"You mustn't go west, I tell you; it is destruction to go west."
"But I am not going west, as you may see," said Tom.
"And another, 'The east lies here, my dear; I assure you this is the east.'"
"But I don't want to go east," said Tom.

"Well, then, at all events, whichever way you are going, you are going wrong," cried they all with one voice—which was the only thing which they ever agreed about; and all pointed at once to all the thirty-and-two points of the compass, till Tom thought all the sign-posts in England had got together and fallen fighting."

Now, whether all this happened to Tom, the water-baby, on his remarkable journey to The-Other-End-of-Nowhere, even Mr. Kingsley admits to be a matter of some doubt. But it is what is happening to Hank, the farmer, all over the United States. He is being pulled one way and hauled the other, prodded, punched and par-handed, twisted up back alleys and steered into blind ditches by the most prominent set of Mulberry Sellers who ever proposed to make millions by the sale of eye-water distilled from turps.

It is very rare that any one of these loud-voiced friends of the farmer knows even a little bit of what he is talking about. I would be willing to bet something that not many of them could tell the difference, off-hand, between a chisel and a clove-hitch. Or between poison ivy and woodbine. Or how to manage quick-grass. Or what to do with the maggots in an onion-bed. Or how to get a decent living out of a hilly, stony, steep-sided and thin-soiled New England farm.

Yet they are all cock-sure that they know more about the game than the man who makes the cards.

If I wanted to know what was the trouble with farming, and what is needed to restore agriculture to its proper standing among our national industries, I shouldn't go to any convention or committee or congress of speech-making pap-seekers. I should go with my flivver or my old horse and buggy across two or three counties, stopping wherever I saw a real farmer really at work, and seeking his viewpoint—if he was willing to give the plow-team a five-minute rest and talk to me over the fence.

The result of such an inquiry would unquestionably be the development of a good many crude theories and the production of a good many one-sided statements. But they would all have come out of the honest and permanent dirt of the farm—not from the shifting caverns of a delusive fog-bank waiting for the rising sun to abolish it.

So far as my conversations with real farmers have enlightened me, I should say that very few of them understand and practically none of them care a rap for the schemes which are devised or advocated by "agricultural congresses" called by politicians and composed of politicians, mainly. Nor are they interested in the operations of any "agricultural blocs." They may not be able to tell a hawk from a hand-saw, even when the wind is northerly, but they do know the difference between a spoonful of pea and a baked potato, or between a hill of corn and a stalk of pig-weed.

There is no doubt that a great many gentlemen who are holding office or running for office or secretly hankering after office would like to have the voting farmers regard them as devoted friends and champions. But they insult the intelligence of even the dumbest-headed farmer in two states when they undertake to enlist his support for any set of cranky innovations, conceived in utter ignorance of the real facts and misquoting in imitation garments.

There are others who hold the same feeling as I do about this matter. The number is growing, I think. Even the editors of big city papers occasionally "strike twelve," as the saying is, in discussing "fliers," for example, in an extract from a recent editorial in the Toledo, O., Blade:

"From the plain statements of a farmer—an everyday, dirt farmer—to us we venture to say that what the average farmer wants are lower freight rates, a fairer share in the prices paid for farm products by consumers, a higher return on investment and labor, a lower price for farm implements, relief from the evils that make a gamble of farming, an income in proportion to the services rendered society.

"The man who tells the farmer that politics will bring these things is peddling a nostrum. Legislation can do little. Tempestuous talk can do nothing. Relief for the farmer must be in the direct road of better business and he is infinitely more likely to obtain this relief by his own power and that of his non-political organizations than through legislation which puts smoky powder into the works at Washington.

"Whatever it is the farmer wants, it will not be political horseplay which gives it to him."

That seems to me to cover the ground and express the plain truth about as well as you or I could do it.

As a matter of fact, it isn't new legislation or more legislation which is needed to cure farm ills. It is a different spirit in dealing with them. And that is something over which legislation is as powerless as it is over the moral law. It is simply impossible to make men either virtuous or wise or just by act of congress—or even by constitutional amendment. When Humpty Dumpty has once tumbled off the wall not all the king's horses nor all the king's men can set Humpty-Dumpty up again. It is against the course of nature.

And the course of nature runs its own way, utterly regardless of human acts or edicts.

So far as I know him, the American farmer wants special privileges nor special rights, nor special legislation. He wants simply his full share of that which he produces. He wants just an honest deal and a fair show in the game.

He doesn't want Political Pap, but he does want three square meals a day and what Mr. Hohenzollern once described as a "place in the sun." He doesn't want charity, but he does want what he earns.

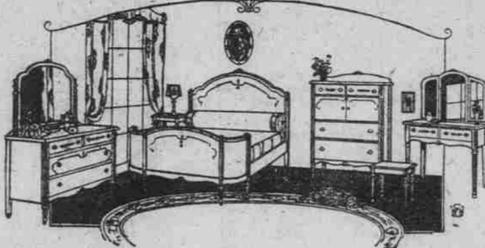
If the rest of the world is composed of foreseeing and really intelligent beings, they will see that he gets this much. They will heartily support him in taking this much.

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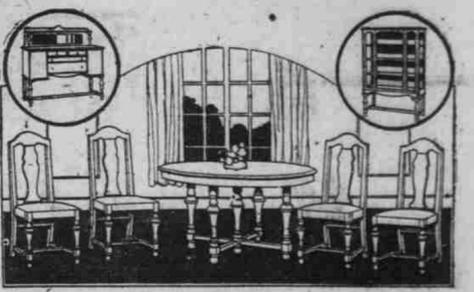
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YANTIC
A family reunion was held at the home of Edward Jones over the past week end at which twenty-two were present. Mr. Jones' six children and six grandchildren with other members of the family were in the party. Among those present were: Mrs. Sarah Schluoh and son, George Schluoh, and son-in-law and daughter, Mrs. Elwood M. Parley of Waterbury, Edwin Jones of Yantic, Mr. and Mrs. John Jones of Waterbury, Mr. and Mrs. William Jones and daughter, Shir-

ley, and guests, Mrs. Ruth Ferguson, Mrs. Grace Hartwell and son, Donald, and Mr. Smith of Oakville, Mr. and Mrs. Evan Jones and son, Edward and daughter, Elizabeth A., of Waterbury, and Mr. and Mrs. Howard Bishop and daughter, Olive, of Yantic. Mr. Jones, who is nearly 80, thoroughly enjoyed the reunion and was as usual very active.

The baseball games that have been held on the Franklin road baseball lot recently have revived a great deal of the sporting spirit in the village and the members of the American Woolen company's team have on hand a contributed sum toward the purchase of baseball suits. To further the interest in the game, many of the old-time favorites in Yantic who are now members of the Yantic Fire Engine company have challenged the American Woolen company to a game on the home lot Saturday. The Yantic Fire Engine company has as batteries

John Lamphere, William Counterman and Joseph Wheeler, while Ellis Bentley and Ernest Sherman will be catchers. It is not known who the American Woolen company will have, as it is understood that they are going out of town for their battery.

Mrs. John Ayers leaves this (Friday) morning for Detroit, Mich., where she will spend the summer with her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Hiram Ayers.
Miss J. M. Pendleton, R. N., was in Yantic, Hartford and Meriden this week in the interest of the state board of education.
Thomas Pflieger has received one of the large photographs taken of the 201st Field Signal Battalion's triennial banquet which was held at the New American house in Boston this spring and which was attended by 120 members of the battalion, including Mr. Pfeiffer.
Mrs. John Kilroy entertained the members of the Woman's guild at her home Wednesday afternoon. After the business meeting a social hour was spent during which the hostess served delicious refreshments.