AMERICAN FARMER'S PATIENCE HAS A LIMIT

(Written Specially for The Bulletin)

I clip the following from Capper's Weekly, the paper of Senator Capper of Kansas:

"Only 19 per cent. of the farmers got back their cost of operation in 1921, and their returns were only 2 per cent. on the outlay. The agricultural conferences brought out these facts. Farm earnings in 1920-1921 represented between $416 and $460 a family for each working farmer. The striking miners and shopmen all do better than this. The farmer's return last year was less than the lowest union wage scale."

In a recent address before a gathering of Virginia farmers, Secretary Wallace of the department of agriculture more than confirmed the above quotation. He took up the average earnings of the striking miners, railroad men, etc., and the average earnings of farmers, and showed that, while the strikers' present wages enabled them to buy more farm products than in 1913, the farmers' present receipts, i. e. their average earnings, were from 25 to 45 per cent. less than in 1913.

Take for illustration the miner who is paid a certain wage for getting out a ton of coal. In 1913 the average wage for mining a ton of coal would buy one and one-tenth bushels of corn from the farmer; in 1921 the same miner's wage for mining a ton of coal would buy two and a half bushels of corn from the same farmer. The miner's ton-wage would buy seven-tenths of a bushel of wheat in 1913; nine-tenths of a bushel in 1921. It would buy seven pounds of pork in 1913; fourteen pounds of pork in 1921. It would buy three-quarters of a bushel of potatoes in 1913; a bushel and a quarter in 1921. It would buy two and four-tenths pounds of butter in 1913; three and two-tenths pounds in 1921.

The same ratios hold for numerous other products, and run even higher in the case of railroad workers. Summing it all up, the purchasing power of miners' wages is about thirty per cent. greater in 1921 than it was in 1913; and the purchasing power of railroad employes' wages is about fifty per cent. greater, while, as has been already stated, the earnings of farmers average from twenty-five to forty-five per cent. less.

Secretary Wallace made no bones of saying, with all the emphasis he could convey, that farmers have suffered more by the necessary after-the-war deflation than other forms of labor. Nevertheless, he added, "they have not struck. They have not created disorders. They have kept on producing. The farmer believes in law and order. He believes in government. He believes in working hard and producing efficiently. He is disgusted with recurring disputes between labor and capital especially in essential industries. He sees no reason why such disputes cannot and should not be settled in an orderly and lawful way and without interruptions of services which cost him so dearly. He has a right to demand that coal be mined continuously, and that trains be kept moving."

And he added the significant warning that if these various groups continue to "prey upon one another and abandon law and order for strong-arm methods the farmer can take care of himself."

Unctuous. He can, and by jiminy, if things continue much longer as in the immediate past and present, he will have to!

As I see the American farmer, he is unusually a rather slow-thinking, careful-acting chap; one who prefers to follow the old rut, so long as he can do so without too imminent risk of tipping his apple-cart over; a rather patient plodder, so accustomed to the naggings and broom-handlings of Step-Mother Nature that he becomes slow to resent the impositions of his fellow-men. With all this, he is apt to have a fair share of the old Adam in him. It takes him a long time to get mad. When he once does, however, it take him an even longer time to get over it. Also, when he is mad, he is mad clear through. It is no superficial flurry of thin-skinned irascibility with him, but a flood of anger which swells from the toe of his boot to the crown of his hat.

It wasn't the peppery tea-drinkers of Boston town who laid the corner-stone of American independence, though their dumping of taxed tea into the harbor has become a tradition. Rather it was "the embattled farmers" who, by the crude bridge which spanned the brook at Concord, "fired the shot heard round the world." It was the farmer-armies in their ragged regimentals, led by Farmer Washington of Virginia, who achieved the final victory. They bore misgovernment and over-seas tyranny without revolt for generations. But, when at last their anger was fully roused, it burned for seven long years of hardship and struggle and suffering, through defeats like Brandywine and starvation winters like that at Valley Forge, till it swept our shores clean of foreign domination and hurled it back across three thousand miles of sundering ocean.

"Beware the fury of a patient man," said Dryden. An old Roman, Publius Syrus, said much the same thing, two thousand years ago, "An over-taxed patience gives way to fierce anger." That same wise old Roman added in another place, "The bow too tensely strung is easily broken."

It is hardly conceivable, in view of their descent and their character and their environment, that the farmers of America will always bear with bovine patience the domineering rapacity of organized greed, whether it wears the livery of predatory wealth or the uniform of so-called "labor."

It is only a question of how far the bow will bend before it breaks; of how much over-taxation the patience will endure before it flames into fury. The limit is not so very far away, either. It may not be reached today or tomorrow, but it will be reached, sooner or later, if things continue along the lines of today's unregulated industrial anarchy.

I talked, the other day, about the short-sighted foolishness of picnic vandals. What shall be said of the short-sightedness of the millions who are today doing their selfish worst to bring about their own undoing?

Can't they see that the farmer holds the keys to the food cupboard? Can't they see that, if worst comes to worst, he can at least live on the products of his soil, while they can't exist unless he shares those products with them? Haven't they any better brains than the idiot who killed the goose which laid him a golden egg every day?

Just as a matter of simple common sense, it would seem as if even the greediest of profiteers, whether in the capitalistic or the labor field, might see the folly of endangering his own ration. What will it profit him to fill his pockets if in the process he shuts off the supplies for his stomach?

So far as I can find out from the talk of my fellow-farmers, they have precious little sympathy with the operators and railroad executives in the present ruction. They haven't a bit more for the striking employees. But they are more than disgusted at the way in which both combattants ignore the rights of the vastly more numerous public. I haven't found many farmers who profess to know who is in the right regarding the pretexts now being squabbled over. But I have found many who think that the government, which represents that greater public and is supposed to act for it, ought to take both parties by the nape of their necks and the seats of their breeches and souse them impartially in the duck-pond till they are ready to listen to reason, and act henceforth less like hogs and more like human beings.

I don't think the ideas of the farmers, any more than those of others who compose the general public which is always the biggest victim in industrial wars, are very clear as to the distinction between government management and government control of mines and railroads and other public utilities. As I heard them talk, I should say that the more thoughtful look with much misgiving on any proposal to so greatly extend the functions of government.

But "any port in a storm" is a perfectly natural human feeling. It won't take a great many recurrences of strikes aiming at the freezing and starvation of the country to drive public sentiment into a demand for any action, however drastic, which shall put an end to such occurrences.

If employers and employees areither or both so greedy and so stubborn and so short-sighted that they can't agree upon what are fair profits and fair wages, why, then, somebody with a big stick has got to lay down the law to them and stand over them to see that they obey it.

If they are prudent men they will foresee the evil and hide from it. That's up to them and not to us farmers,—yet.

THE FARMER.

HOPKINTON

Teachers of the public schools of this town have been so far engaged as follows: Hope Valley, Maybelle C. Kenyon, principal of high school; Laura S. Yeaw, assistant principal; Mary H. Mulligan, grades 7-8; M. Ida Deckery, 5-6; Pauline Elina Thomas, 3-4; May E. Hoxsie, 1-2; Annie D. Bohning, kindergarten.

Ashaway—Robert J. Torrey, principal of high school; L. Gertrude Stillman, assistant principal; Inez Jordan, grades 7-8; Mrs. Samuel Watrous, 5-6; Elsie Jordan, 3-4; Sara B. Welch, 1-2; Lillian Budlong, kindergarten.

Barberville—Ella F. Barber.

Rockville—Ruth G. Lindahl.

Deacon Roger W. Lewis, who was operated on at a Providence hospital last Friday, is reported as recovering.

Rain Saturday and Sunday somewhat affected the attendance at the Seventh Day Baptist conference at Ashaway, still a large number filled the church, also made a good audience in the parish house. The music and speaking were of high order and all the services of the week were interesting.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Brown and daughter Bettie and Rev. B. F. Mathewson attended the picnic of the Pendleton Hill Sunday school and community at Beach pond Wednesday, Aug. 23d.

During the past week many former residents have been welcomed back to town as visitors and attendants upon the S. D. B. conference.

COLUMBIA

Mrs. Anna Peck of Danbury was in town last week visiting her cousins, Mrs. A. E. Brown and Mrs. J. N. Clark. Mrs. Peck returned recently from a three months' tour in Europe.

Miss Mildred Robinson of New Haven is the guest of Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Porter.

Miss Lily Little of East Hartford is the guest of her sister-in-law, Mrs. Abbott Little, on Woodward Hill.

Miss Mildred Little of Springfield, Mass., is spending a vacation at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fred A. Hunt, at whose home her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Little, have been during the past week.

The Willimantic Salvation Army building campaign in the town of Columbia during the past week resulted in the collection of $75 at the close of the week. The local committee collected $55 from the Chestnut Hill section and the Center and $20 was collected by a member of the Salvation Army from the summer residents at the lake. It is expected that further contributions will be received from other sections of the town when the solicitors have had the opportunity to visit the people.

A very successful supper and sale was held Thursday afternoon and evening at Yeomans hall, the attendance being estimated at from 300 to 400. The supper was delicious and the fancy articles were handsome. The total receipts were about $250. The net receipts will go for the use of the Columbia Improvement society, which has already made improvements on the Green, while others are in contemplation.

At the church service Sunday morning William A. Collins, Jr., sang as a tenor solo Ave Maria, O Divine Redeemer. Rev. T. Newton Owen preached on the desire of our lives to do great works, which desire is not always realized, as illustrated in David's wish to build a beautiful temple for the worship of Jehovah, but was allowed only to collect the materials for his son Solomon to finish the work.

The Saturday evening dances held during the summer under the management of the Victor orchestra of Manchester have all been well attended.

PHOENIXVILLE

Bids are still open for transportation of pupils from General Lyon school to Phoenixville.

Mrs. Sarah Latham is visiting her sister, Mrs. Jane Barrett, of Manchester.

Mrs. May Ethridge took four fresh air children who were from New York to Putnam Wednesday so they could return with the party with which they arrived.

Mr. and Mrs. Lee Lyon, Mrs. Anne Ruem and Daniel Lyon attended camp meeting in Willimantic Sunday.

Friday the community picnic at Crystal lake was attended by the pupils of the three schools.

Peter Ozut was a Putnam visitor Sunday.

Stanley Schumanski carried a party of friends to New Bedford Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Towne and family were recent visitors here from Thompson.

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A handsome, exceptionally well made Suite in the Queen Anne design. Comprises Extension Table, China Closet, Buffet, 5 Side Chairs and 1 Arm Chair with genuine leather seats. A wonderful value you should not fail to see.

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EIGHT-PIECE QUEEN ANNE DINING ROOM SUITE in American Walnut. Consists of Extension Table, Buffet, 5 Side Chairs and 1 Arm Chair with seats upholstered in genuine leather. **$119.75**

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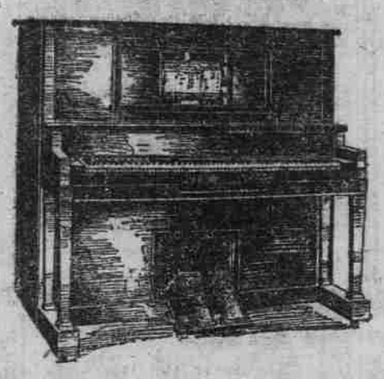

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See the List of New September Records Elsewhere In This Paper

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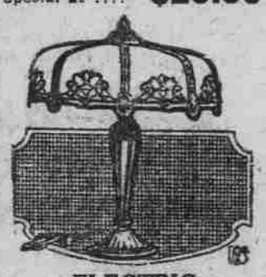

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