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IF IT WERE TRUE, WHY NOT?

Have Not the Farmers the Right to Share in Progress?—But They Don't.

The following, taken from a recent issue of Frank Leslie's Newspaper, seems from the manner of its construction to imply that the farmer has no right to share in the advancing civilization. "Potatoes, hoe-cake and bacon," with carpetless floors and bare walls, are all that the tillers of the soil have the right to expect, and for daring to aspire to anything better they and their posterity shall be punished. But the charge of extravagance against the farmers as a class is arrant nonsense. If they are not frugal and industrious there are none such on earth. However, here is the article from Frank Leslie's Newspaper:

"Another reason for the existence of the so called farming depression, in America at least, is to be found in the fact that farmers live far differently now from what they did fifty or even twenty-five years ago. In The Ashtabula (Ohio) Sentinel recently comment was made on the fact that a tract of 105 acres near that place had been sold at administrator's sale for \$10.50 an acre. A veteran farmer name James Herrick was bantered about the matter, and replied that no farmer could buy land, even at a low price, and pay for it off the land "and live as farmers do now." He added:

"When I was a boy for months one year we did not have a loaf of bread in our house. One year we had three acres of wheat, which was very tall and heavy growth, and promised a great yield. About the middle of June it was struck with black rust, and we did not get a pint of wheat off the field. The same fall the frost killed the corn, and we did not have even a bushel to grind. We had sold our cheese at four and one-half cents a pound to Job Austin, and had not taken it quite all out at the store, and as a great favor he paid the balance in money, which my father took and went almost to the center of the state and bought six bushels of wheat for bread and seed.

"Mr. Herrick said the first money he earned after coming of age was ten dollars, which he got in cash, and very soon after bought twenty good sheep with the money. Now it would be ten very poor sheep you could get for twenty good dollars. Mr. Herrick's experience is that of every old farmer in the country. In other days the prices of farm products were far below what they are today, and the comforts and conveniences of the farm were far less. Very few farmers of those days could afford such a thing as a sewing machine, much less a piano. A common—very common—school education was all the farmer boy got.

"Now the district school is equal to the grammar school of twenty-five years ago, but even the district school is not sufficient. The farmer boy must go to the city high school or to the normal school and college. Carpets are on the farmer's floor today—not the rag carpets of twenty-five years ago, but good three ply ingrain and even Brussels. Potatoes and pork no longer make up the daily bill of fare. Angel food has taken the place of hoe cake, and beef and chickens have supplanted the pork barrel.

"The farm brings in more than it did. No man's sheep sells for fifty cents a head; but expenses have also increased. The farmer who was led to extravagant notions during the period of high prices in war times now feels the hardship of low prices, for he finds it difficult to go back to the severe economies necessitated in his earlier days."

Who Will Lift the Burden?

Many of our farms are heavily mortgaged, and it is gross injustice to collect a tax on the full valuation of property when some rapacious money lender holds a claim against it for half or two-thirds of its worth. Clearly such claim ought to be deducted from the valuation of the realty, and the mortgage itself be made to bear its share of the burden of taxation. And, further, there is great injustice in the fact that hidden property may escape all assessment. Our tax laws discriminate against the farmer, bringing him to account for possessing property which he cannot put into bank vaults, and allowing the bond holder, the speculator and stock gambler to secrete their wealth beyond the reach of the tax collector. Will either of the chief political parties of this nation, having as they do heavy capitalists for their leaders, ever lift these burdens? To look for such a thing would be to expect the impossible!—Rural New Yorker.

What Depew Says.

Chauncey M. Depew, president of the New York Central railroad, made a speech to the farmers at the Syracuse (N. Y.) fair, of which the following were the closing sentences:

"The English farmer first pays the landlord, then the parson, then the government before there is any left for himself, but three-quarters of the American farmers own their own land and most of the remainder farm upon shares, which is better than ownership, because, from my experience, it gives them all the profits and imposes upon them none of the burdens.

"With agricultural prosperity before us, so certain and so full of promise, the country can be confident of its growth in wealth and happiness."

Mr. Depew went to the grounds in his private car.

Bogus Crop Reports.

The flattering crop report of July and the receipts double that of last year are misleading. The flattering published prospects and reports with the present receipts have materially reduced the price of cotton. These facts out to be known to farmers as soon as possible. A great majority of farmers will have feed to buy at a high price, and next year will be one of the hardest years this part of Texas has known for several years.—A. M. Somers, Lawrence, Tex.

The farmers' cyclone is sweeping South Carolina. It looks as though only one or two of her members would be returned to the house. The veteran George D. Tillman is one of them, but he will have a fight for it with the state lecturer. His brother is the Alliance Democratic candidate for governor of the state.—Amos Cummings' Letter.

"The decalogue and the golden rule have no place in a political campaign. The object is success."—John J. Ingalls.

Christian friend, read that again.

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THE FEDERATION.

How the Big Railway Organization is Constructed—An Important Law.

Formerly all bodies of organized craftsmen or laborers were separate and distinct. The latest development of the labor movement is a tendency to combine these distinct bodies.

One of the most important of these federated organizations is composed of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, the Brotherhood of Conductors, the Switchmen's association and the Trainmen's association. It is called the Federation of Railway Employees. In all ordinary matters each of these organizations acts for itself without respect to the others, but in the event of a difficulty between the members of one body and the corporations employing them an order of the chief of the federation makes the difficulty the concern of all the others. The arrangement greatly facilitates the work of re-enforcing a body of strikers, as all the members of the federated organizations may be ordered out at once by a vote of the supreme council.

The supreme council is composed of the chief and three grand officers of each Brotherhood. The method of determining upon a course of action by the Federation is prescribed as follows in the constitution of the supreme council:

"The three representatives of each organization shall be convened separately by their respective chief executives, and each of them shall prepare his ballot with the word 'Approved' or 'Disapproved' written thereon. If two or more of the representatives vote in favor of approval such shall be the vote of the organization they represent, and the chief executive shall cast said vote accordingly; and if two or more of said representatives shall vote in favor of disapproval such shall be the vote of the organization, and it shall be cast accordingly by the chief executive. When all the organizations are prepared to ballot, the council shall be reconvened, and the secretary shall call the roll of organizations, each of which shall be entitled to one vote, predicated upon a majority vote of its representatives, and the vote shall be announced by the chief executive, and entered upon the minutes by the secretary. The secretary shall then announce the result of the ballot, and if it shall be found that all the organizations have cast their vote in favor of approval, such shall be the decision of the supreme council; but if it be found that one or more of the organizations have cast their vote in favor of disapproval, such shall be the decision of the body."

The chief of the Federation of Railway employes is F. P. Sargent, who for many years has been at the head of the Firemen's Brotherhood.

The other members of the supreme council are Chairman Howard, of the Brotherhood of Railway Conductors; Grand Master Sweeney, of the Switchmen's association; Grand Master Wilkinson, of the Trainmen's association; Eugene V. Debs, grand secretary and treasurer of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, Terre Haute; J. J. Hanahan, vice grand master of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, Chicago; William Sheehan, grand secretary and treasurer of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, Gaylesburg, Ills.; B. H. Morrissey, vice grand master of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, Peoria, Ills.; James Downey, vice grand master of the

Switchmen's Mutual Aid association, Chicago; John Hall, grand organizer of the Switchmen's Mutual Aid association, Chicago; George Lovejoy, assistant grand chief conductor of the Brotherhood of Railroad Conductors, Terre Haute, and James Carr, assistant chief conductor, Kansas City.

Generalities and Exceptions.

On August 23 the New York Herald printed an editorial, of which the following was a part:

"A strike is a revolution, not to be lightly entered upon, nor, once begun, to be hastily abandoned. It means, or should mean, the existence of some evil, some oppression so intolerable that the workingman will leave his work and bring privation to himself, suffering to his wife and children, rather than submit. There have been, unfortunately, many provocations of this kind, and the men who resented them, even at bitter cost to themselves, deserve praise for their endurance and courage."

But according to The Herald the New York Central strike was an exception, as the "evil" did not exist. It is always so. Principles which read well in a republic are always in order, but practices on a line with those principles never.

But one thing is beyond doubt: Any man who leaves his work, and brings privation to his wife and children, should first be sure he is right, then fight to the death for his cause.

WILLIS WILLIAMS.

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