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HOLD YOUR COTTON.



THE crisis for which the south annually watches with much anxiety is rapidly approaching. Within a few weeks the dimensions of the cotton crop will emerge from the estimate stage and we will know, with a measure of certainty, the seedings of this vital southern barometer for the impending fiscal year.

Reliable preliminary indications are such as to give heart to the planters and encourage them to steadily maintain the policy of clearheadedness that characterized their actions before and after planting season. The current estimates of the National Growers' Association and the census bureau vary, as is perfectly natural where so tremendous a field is to be covered under adverse and, in many instances, impossible conditions. Both however, demonstrate the effects of the consistent decline in the condition and acreage during the growing period, as against the unprecedented showing of last year. The census bureau has, doubtless, made every effort in the interests of accuracy; we should, however, be inclined to give a shade more credence to the lesser figures of the growers' association. Its intimacy with the intricate details of the business and its superior facilities for reaching the individual growers are all factors calculated to clothe its verdict with a definite degree of authority.

The main point, however, of both these estimates is that they unite in furnishing a logical basis for anticipating that the coming crop will be a short one—radically so as contrasted with the bumper yield of the past season. A short crop means good prices; good prices means a continuation of symmetrical prosperity visible throughout the South.

Therefore, there is rational ground for optimism on part of the planters, and cause for natural pride in the vindication of the organized resistance which has had an imminent bearing on the present likely state.

But, as has been stated, the determining crisis has not yet been passed. The experience of last year and of preceding years has taught us that estimates are not infallible. And bearing in mind the appalling abruptness of the disaster of last December following on the heels of wide spread confidence and premature jubilation, it is distinctly to the advantage of the men who control this all-affecting staple to keep their judgments unobscured and their actions calm and level, that not even a semblance of that temporary depression shall be repeated.

The Southern cotton planters, generated by cool and competent heads, have to a large extent already manifested their intention to shake off the demagogue of market gamblers; in this righteous campaign they have even gone so far as to fix a minimum price on the product of their soil and labor. We sincerely trust, now that the stakes are propitious and the reward of their foresight appears to be growing more tangible, they will have the firmness to hold true to the course they have marked out. Having decided that their cotton is worth a definite figure, let them not be satisfied with less than what their reasoning faculties and their sense of justice tell them it should bring.

The final stage of the fight is almost at hand. Farmers—hold your cotton until you get your own price for it.

The inherent modesty of the average citizen in admitting the possession of diamonds, rubies and other forms of jeweled adornment, especially when the questioner happens to be an assessor, is strikingly shown by the recapitulation of the personal assessment lists from the seventy-six counties of Mississippi, which has just been completed at the auditor's office. According to this summary the total value of all jewelry in Mississippi is only \$140,850, which is several thousand dollars less than the figures for last year, indicating that this spirit of modesty is steadily growing among the populace, and the time may come when the people of the State will not confess the possession of any jewelry at all. It is absolutely safe to assert that the sale value of the jewelry owned in one of dozens of towns in the State is almost double the amount of the entire State assessments on this item. A scanning of the rolls shows that the persons who are commonly known to be the owners of considerable jewelry report no property whatever of this character. The personal assessment summary reveals some other rather astonishing things. For instance, the total number of pistols assessed is 10,563, which, perhaps, is one-fiftieth of the actual number in the State, yet the valuations placed on these firearms is \$80,563.60, showing that the man who is honest enough to admit the ownership of a gun usually values it at about \$8. The principal owners of pistols in the State are negroes, and they invariably purchase good weapons. This is especially true in the delta section. When a killing follows a craps shooting soance and the murderer is arrested, it almost invariably happens that he is armed with one of the very best makes of a pistol.

As a last resort, the indicted packers will probably ask for a change of venue, on the ground that the people of the United States, including judges and juries, are all consumers of meat and consequently prejudiced against them.

MEN, WOMEN AND MARRIAGE.



WHY is the marriage rate declining; why are there thousands of young women vainly seeking husbands in this land today? hysterically questions a contemporary. It is easy to see that the writer is a woman and probably one who has suffered long and bitterly from the deprivation of which she complains. And, feminine-like, she proceeds to lay all the blame upon young men who "consider that matrimony would not only take away their freedom, but rob them of what they regard as indispensable pleasures in which two cannot share because of the expense." The writer further impales the hapless young man upon her caustic goosequill by accusing him of spending as much money upon superfluous amusements as would keep a wife, as though the matrimonial problem were one merely of selecting a new amusement.

Deeper and more sinister feeling is shown, however, by this languishing flower of womanhood of this paragraph: "But what about the thousands of young women who are eligible in every way to undertake the responsibilities of matrimony? It is a lamentable fact that though we possess domestic virtues and not a few accomplishments, though we are willing to share a man's burdens, minister to his wants and participate in his sorrows as well as his joys, we are not sought after in marriage. We are certainly not to blame for the falling marriage market. This must be ascribed to the blindness, and, if you will, the stupidity of young men."

The indictment is severe. No doubt the expressed resentment of many years is expressed in this final outburst of indignation against the frivolous, selfish and pleasure-deprived sex. But there is another side, and this is presented by an average young man thus: The position of this daughter of Eve is hardly fair. She should remember that since time began the same competition of women against amusements, if it may be so crudely put, has been going on. It is not probable that the young men of today are any more addicted to amusements than their fathers were, nor any less desirous of having homes of their own. Perhaps the girls themselves have contributed materially to present unfortunate conditions. Modern girls are essentially different from their mothers and grandmothers. Today girls have acquired more expensive tastes in dress and pleasure. They are born with high matrimonial ambitions which are usually encouraged and fostered by their mothers. They go in "society," and there they meet many young men who are leading spend thrift and but-erdy lives, and these girls are apt to learn to measure all men by such standard. After such women flitter away the most precious years and remain unmarried they lay the blame on the young men who have occupied rather obscure society positions because of early lack of ready money or the rigid exactions of their employments. These men may have gained a position where they can afford a household establishment, but too late to be considered a "catch" among the younger women still pursuing their butterflies. These young men who have not been inclined to attend dances and spend their time and money in frivolous enjoyments are blamed for not marrying, when it is almost impossible for them to meet eligible young women, and if they did meet them the deficiencies of these candidates in the ways of "society" would form a bar against an appreciation of their better qualities. Men of substance should not be blamed for hesitating to marry women who have ignored them in their more youthful days, turned to them after the gamut of social indulgences, with the freshness and youth sacrificed in younger and more frivolous company.

Thus briefly we have the two sides to the proposition. It must be confessed that the young man has made a good case. The argument may not cover the entire ground. It probably does not, but it is highly interesting in establishing too widely divergent views of the same problem.

All the preachers in Manhattan and The Bronx can't convince us that there are no feminine angels. If there are not, well we prefer to stay in this little old town where one can't throw a red rose without hitting one that could have St. Anthony asking her to marry him within a week. Even New York would be more desirable as a place of permanent residence than a world where there are no women, and if the New York ministers persist in teaching the doctrine of an Evesless heaven only the married men will want to go there. There may have been no feminine angels in the olden times. Back in the Neolithic age men did their courting with a club and women were subservient. But they have learned a few things since. There is nothing now that a woman wants that she cannot get, and if she wants to continue to be an angel in the next world, as she is in this, St. Peter will cut about as much ice as a floor walker in a department store on bargain day. When those New York preachers get to heaven they will find out whether there are any feminine angels or not. We see their fault, and it will serve them right.

William Allen White says there is an "ominous calm in Kansas." Why ominous? Kansas is simply overcome by her own fullness. She is too prosperous to howl and too self-satisfied to grant.

THE PATRIOTS OF MECKLENBURG.



THE controversy about the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence has broken out again. The one fact in the matter that cannot be rubbed out is that in May, 1775, shortly after the news of the battle of Lexington was received by the pioneer settlers of Western North Carolina, a meeting was held in Mecklenburg County, at which resolutions were passed looking towards independence and the assertion of American rights by war, if necessary.

Colonel Thomas Folk, grandfather of General Leonidas Folk, the Soldier-Bishop of the Confederate Army, presided at the meeting, and the resolutions are attributed to his pen. They were treasonable to the last degree, and they agitated the British Governor to an alarming extent.

But the copy of these resolutions first published long after certain expressions so similar to the language of the Declaration of the Fourth of July, 1776, as to cast some doubt upon their authenticity, though the Legislature of North Carolina officially adopted them as genuine.

Thomas Jefferson never heard of the Mecklenburg Declaration until near the close of his life, nor did John Adams, both of whom were of the committee that reported the Declaration written by Jefferson and adopted by the Congress. The similarity of language in the two documents is, therefore, at least puzzling.

The important thing is that the Mecklenburgers did leap to the front in the cause of American liberty at the first news of bloodshed. Patrick Henry's "gale from the north" had brought to their ears "the clash of resounding arms" and they were for fight, then and there. They were of the breed that whipped Tarleton at the Cowpens and Ferguson at King's Mountain.

They were of the same breed, also, as John Sevier's "all Watauga boys," who never tackled Indians or redcoats without whipping them. They were American patriots to the marrow and were not at all backward about saying so.

The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence is all right, however much antiquarian researches may differ about the wording of it.

AN ARCH-CRIMINAL.



THE last district attorney of New York has found some one whom he can punish for looting the life insurance companies. At the hearing before the investigating committee last week the fact was brought out that an office boy of the name of Plunkitt, seventeen years old, employed by a firm who supplies the Mutual Life Insurance Company with stationery, had received and collected a voucher for \$901, issued and paid by the insurance company. It was further learned that this sum had been charged on the company's books to "legal services." For several hours each day for three days Mr. Richard A. McCurdy, president of the company, had been on the witness stand and had more or less calmly testified to how millions of dollars had been diverted from the policy holders into the pockets of himself and members of his family; he told how thousands of dollars had been used in lobbying bills through legislatures, or preventing the enactment of other bills; how he and his family had toured the country in a special car at the expense of the policy holders of the company; he descanted upon the philanthropic and eleemosynary character of life insurance, and said that policy holders should not be entrusted with dividends on their money as they would spend them for "billiards and cigars," thus injuring both their morals and their health. But the law officers saw nothing in these things to censure, Mr. McCurdy dealt in millions and was therefore respectable. But when it was learned that the office boy got only a paltry \$900, the district attorney at once became alert and promised to get busy before the grand jury and have the boy indicted. Of course, it would be preposterous to think of molesting a financier like McCurdy, but no office boy should be permitted to sit in wrecking an insurance company and not be made to suffer for the crime. Besides, he is still young and if taken in time his career of crime might be stopped. McCurdy and his other confederates are too old to reform and too successful to be arrested. But Plunkitt should be held up before the world as an example to the coming generation of the mistake of being found out before and has fled enough to cease being an ambassador and become a financier. No punishment is too severe for this designing office boy. He should be taught that when millions of other people's money are in sight it is setting a bad precedent to get only \$900.

Thomas A. Edison says New York is too noisy for him. Let's see—wasn't it a man of the name of Edison who invented the phonograph?

"The smile is the best aid to health," says a London physician. But there is plenty of evidence that a man may smile most of the night and feel anything but well next day.

FEMININE ANGELS.



NEW YORK preachers, after a long and prayerful deliberation, have decided that there are no such things as feminine angels and have ordered a sculptor who had chisled feminine faces and head upon angelic figures in a church building to destroy them and replace them with good, orthodox male "phizes." And what the women are saying about those dear preachers strengthens their belief that they were right. So far as biblical authority goes, and in the absence of special statutes, this must be accepted, the preachers have much the better of the argument. At the time the Book was written angels seem to have been as common as English sparrows, and so tame that they would eat out of your hand. Thus our ancient progenitors had every opportunity to become real well acquainted with them and they are invariably spoken of as being of the masculine persuasion. Now, those were times of much mystery; nearly everybody harbored some deep, dark, secret in his bosom, and it is only natural to suppose that had there been any feminine angels they would have been flitting around trying to find out what was going on. The only thing that leads us to believe that there might have been feminine angels in those days, if not now, is the way Lucifer and Ariel cut up. In modern times no such trouble arises unless there is a woman at the bottom of it. But this is pure conjecture and is valueless as proof.

There is another instance, also purely conjectural, that gives some ground for belief that there might possibly have been a limited number of feminine angels at one time. In Revelations St. John tells us of meeting an angel who was carrying a book. St. John asked to see the book, and the angel, who, by the way, is alluded to as "he," said: "Take the book and devour it; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but in thy mouth it shall be as sweet as honey." The only reasonable conclusion to be drawn from this is that it was a cook book compiled by some young married angel. The things would taste all right, but dispepsia and indigestion would follow in their wake. St. John speaks of meeting many angels on that trip, but nowhere does he tell of any but strictly stag affairs. We think it may be safely assumed that he saw no female angels, for after all St. John was only a man, and knowing men, we believe he would have said something about it if he had met any of the ladies. In an indirect way St. John throws some light on the subject. He met the turnkey of the bottomless pit. It was a man angel, of course each one would have to draw his own conclusions as to who were in the pit, but as no women were in sight—but that, too, is speculative.

Personally, we have no doubt that there are feminine angels in the other world, as there are in this one. The fact that they did not go skylarking around meeting strange men or making political speeches in Lucifer's campaign, has no weight. Why should they? The men had to be kept busy to keep them out of mischief, and besides no ladylike angel would do such things anyway. It is the more probable solution of the matter to believe that St. John was entertained at the clubs and was not introduced to the bondola. He went there on business, had an assignment to write up the place, and there was no heavenly reason why he should try to butt into society. Besides, reporters are not to be trusted too far, anyway, even if they are staff correspondents. Even William E. Curtis or Lincoln J. Steffins couldn't have expected to see everything at one trip.

From St. John's account of his trip, we imagine he was like an Englishman visiting Chicago—he spent most of his time at the stockyards and the zoo. He tells us all about the cows, sheep, goats and many-headed beasts—not a word about the shopping district, and how could he expect to meet any of the ladies? Of course he couldn't. Yet he comes back and gives a bunch of New York preachers a chance to knock the women and have their marble faces caved in with a hammer. It's the first instance on record of a subsidized press. [Nor do we place much reliance in St. Paul. He always had his little old hammer out for the women. Couldn't see one with out saying something mean; but everyone knows he was not only a lawyer but an old bachelor, and, well—some young Jewess must have given him the merry ha, ha, and he never got over beeling about it.

A farmer near Davis, I. T., has devised a plan by which he can rid his cotton field of boll worms and other pests. He has experimented, and says 100 turkeys and 300 chickens will keep every boll worm and all other insects off forty acres of cotton. He says within a radius of fifty yards of his home ten turkeys keep the cotton field free from boll worms.

General Booth has no money. A very small legacy left him a few years ago suffices for his wants. He draws no salary from the Salvation Army, he wears one suit of clothes a whole year and his waistcoat is a red jersey. The tall, unpolished hats forms the sole insignia of "the general," and when he has finished with it no rag shop would give a penny for it. As he pathetically says, "My wife is in heaven and I have no home, merely a place where I keep some furniture."

There is always room at the top if you can push the other fellow off.