

# The Progressive Farmer

AND THE COTTON PLANT.  
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## CURRENT EVENTS: THE TREND OF THINGS AS WE SEE IT.

"What is the news?" The best news, as we intimated in the opening paragraph of this department a week ago, is just that the glorious autumn season is here again, and that again the ploughman finds the reward of his labor in a plenteous harvest. To a man who spent his earlier years in farm work, but whom business now keeps most of the time in town, certainly no news could be more alluring or tantalizing than this little item in an exchange picked up as we begin writing this department:

"Millions and millions of daisies, black-eyed susans and golden-rods everywhere; the air clear and buoyant; the streams dark and flowing in silence; the corn and pumpkins ripening and yellowing in the bottoms; the fodder pulled and neatly shocked; the wild muscadines clustering in the woods; chinquepins open, and for-grapes for the climbing—then the soft nightfall and the call of the big owl on the ridge; the sharp bark of the fox on the mountainside; the dreamy bank of fog hanging over the valley; the rise of the full harvest moon in all its glory, and the answer in the bright fires that burn on a thousand hills where the merry tobacco-curers keep their lonely vigils, cheered by the music of the untamed banjo, and the sweet potatoes roasting in the flue. This is autumn in Stokes."

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### A Year of Big Crops.

But not only is this a season when the heart is made glad by the beautiful in Nature, but again, too, we share the joy of the Psalmist as he looked out on some September scene in old Palestine centuries and centuries ago: "The pastures are clothed with flocks, and the valleys are covered with corn. . . . Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness."

For indeed this is a year of plenty. All the great staple crops have yielded bounteously, except cotton—and the price for that is too good for there to be much discontent as to the shortage. Our American corn crop this year, it is said, will be 2,717,000,000 bushels. The wheat crop is estimated at 704,000,000 bushels; oats 930,000,000 bushels; rye 30,000,000 bushels; potatoes 283,000,000 bushels; barley 135,000,000 bushels. "Of these crops," says the Charlotte Chronicle, in commenting on the estimates, "it is said that it is the largest production of corn ever known." And it continues:

"The highest previous corn yield was 2,523,000,000 bushels. Only in 1901, when it was 748,000,000 bushels, did the wheat crop go above the 1905 yield. Oats never beat this year's figures except in 1902, when the output was 988,000,000 bushels. In 1901 and 1902 rye went a little above the year's level. In 1904 barely beat the 1905 output by about 4,000,000 bushels. Potatoes have several times scored higher totals than they did this year, but averages of the cereal crops for 1905 are much above that of an previous year. And while cotton may be short, the prices the farmers get will average as good as that of the previous year. Taking all things into consideration, it is reasonable to say that the present year is a year of plenty, and let it go at that."

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### Campaign Funds and Political Corruption.

The most startling developments of the last fortnight have been the revelations as to the mismanagement of the great life insurance companies in New York, notably the publication of the fact that President McCall of the New York Life contributed \$50,000 to the Republican campaign fund in 1896, and the same amount again in 1900 and in 1904. It will be remembered that Judge Parker charged in the last campaign—not very

earnestly until the eve of the election, however—that the great corporations were buying future protection by contributing liberally to the Republican campaign fund, which charge President Roosevelt vehemently denied. And even now it is not generally believed that the President was informed as to what his party managers were doing. It is even said that he may insist upon the party returning the New York Life's contribution of \$50,000.

But Mr. McCall's donation is only one instance of many—only one illustration of that corruption through campaign funds which is becoming about the most serious political evil of our time. The people's (?) representatives go to Congress. But the sugar trust must not be disturbed because it has given \$100,000 to help the party. The freight rate bill must not be pressed because six railway magnates have contributed liberally to the campaign fund. Reciprocity treaties must die the death because certain great protected interests deserve returns for campaign favors. And so it goes until government of, by, and for the people becomes a sham and a mockery. The guards of the people have been bribed by their plunderers. The only hope lies in a general public awakening and the passage of some such act as that recommended by President Roosevelt in his last message to Congress "providing for the publication not only of the expenditures for nominations and elections of all candidates, but also of all contributions received and expenditures made by political committees."

It is to be hoped that the President is broad enough not to weaken in his support of this policy now that it becomes apparent that his own party would be most sorely humiliated by its enforcement.

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### Growth of Rural Mail Delivery.

Some figures recently given out as to the cost of rural mail delivery bring out in striking fashion the growth of this important branch of our postal service. "The net loss of the system up to June 30 of this year is estimated at nine millions of dollars," says one exchange. "This seems rather a high price to pay, but the Congressmen from the rural districts can be depended upon to fight any proposition to discontinue free delivery."

And well may "the Congressmen from the rural districts" fight any proposition to discontinue the service. It is the greatest boon our farmers have ever had from the National Government—the and the rural half of our population certainly deserves some consideration. But it is not really in the interest of farmers alone. By the promotion of intelligence and quicker communication between all sections, every class of people is benefited. We have no doubt in the world but that the real prestige and power of America is far more strengthened and better safeguarded by the \$9,000,000 spent for rural mail delivery than it would be by twice that sum spent for battleships and fortifications. The interests of the entire country demand the extension of the rural mail service, and it should be extended, even if it does involve the painful and unusual proposition that the farmer himself is to get back some of the heavy tariff and revenue taxes he is called upon to pay.

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### Political News Notes.

Mayor Weaver of Pennsylvania has made himself a popular idol by breaking with the machine which had elected him and which had long plundered the city, and coming out of municipal reform. A great ovation was given him at the citizens' mass meeting last week. It begins to look at last as if Philadelphia may be taken out of the grasp of the corruptionists and plunderers who have long made it one of the worst governed cities in the world.

The dispensary is still the chief topic of discus-

sion in South Carolina. Governor Heyward, replying to Senator Tillman's suggestion, says he will remove the members of the Dispensary Board as soon as official proof of the charges against them is laid before him, but not until then. Marion County last week declared against the dispensary by a vote of 1,008 to 215. It is evident that the institution will either have to go or be radically reformed in management.

The Democrats and Populists of Nebraska again fused on a State ticket last week. Mr. Bryan addressed the Convention, declaring that "Roosevelt has not in a single thing earned popular favor save where he followed Democratic precedent, and placed himself upon Democratic doctrine. I am glad the President has taken the stand he has and the Democrats ought to stand back of him." Mr. Bryan says he is not a candidate for the Presidential nomination in 1908. Three years, however, may bring a change.

Over in Georgia the contest for the gubernatorial nomination goes merrily on, the Constitution and the Journal having become mere personal organs of Clark Howell and Hoke Smith. Mr. Smith is attacked because he owns a hotel in connection with which there is a magnificent bar, and because he appointed some negroes to minor positions while he was Secretary of the Interior. Mr. Howell, it is claimed, is the favorite and representative of the great railway corporations. Meanwhile there is another Oliver in the field—Col. Jim Smith, the millionaire bachelor farmer of Oglethorpe who promises to get married if the people elect him. And if Clark Howell and Hoke Smith succeed in swallowing each other, the people may call on Col. Jim to make good.

### THIS WEEK'S FARM ARTICLES.

J. H. Parker's "Timely Farm Suggestions" are just the sort of reminders our people need. And elsewhere in this number Mr. Parker says just what ought to be said about the renter and tenant question. We congratulate "Ellis" and "Rustic" upon the eloquent, lawyer-like pleas they made for their respective sides, but lawyers are seldom fair to the opposition, and in this matter no good can come from stirring up ill feeling. Let us take "Judge" Parker's opinion on page 10 as correct and dismiss the case.

Don't overlook Director Soule's letter on "Cheap Milk and Butter." Well made shredded stover, he says, can often be used to advantage as a substitute for timothy hay; and timothy costs \$10 or \$15 a ton, while the stover is now a waste product—though it ought not to be. Look up the figures as to the relative feeding values of different parts of the corn stalk as given in another column, and make your own decision. Observe, too, that Director Soule says that "the farmer who buys wheat bran pays three times as much for digestible protein as he would in cottonseed meal."

And this brings us right up to our discussion of the value of cottonseed, printed on page 3. The articles by Messrs. Jordan and Petty leave little more to be said. They certainly make it clear that cottonseed ought not to be sold at the prices now prevailing.

Of our other agricultural features Mr. Hobb's plan for curing peavine hay and Uncle Jo's letter on poultry feeds and breeds deserve especial mention. The Experiment Station report on page 3 calls attention afresh to where the South loses. We ought to feed our food crops to stock and thus get two profits instead of one.

Last week we began a rather notable series of articles on "Teaching Agriculture" compiled by the authors of that popular text-book, "Agriculture for Beginners." These articles ought to be read not only by all our regular constituency, but also by every rural school teacher in the South. Tell your teacher about them, if he doesn't already know—but as a matter of fact, now that agriculture is a required study in country schools, no man or woman who doesn't read the Progressive Farmer or some other good farm paper, ought to be allowed to teach at all.

Speaking of the tenant question again, there is no reason why any renter should be discontented with conditions in this and adjoining States. Land is cheap—literally dirt cheap—and he can soon own a farm of his own if he will. But if he prefers staying a renter, he can be just as independent as the one Mr. W. D. Troutman describes—if he will make himself equally useful and energetic.