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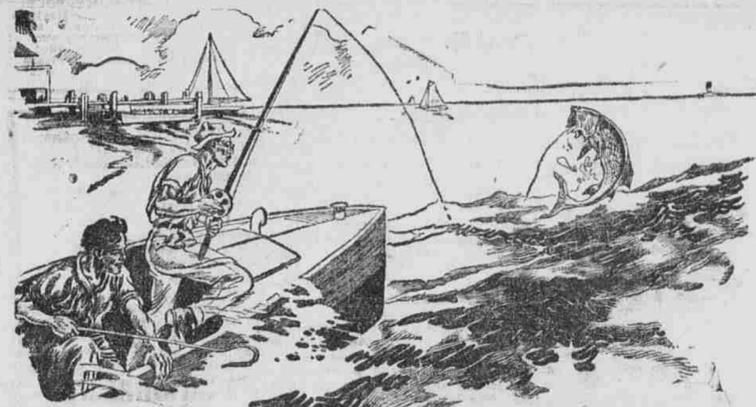
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Bennington Banner

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1919.

A COMPARISON IN PRICES

A reader of the Banner who, like many of us, is considerably peeved over the high prices he is compelled to pay for provisions and other articles, has unearthed a copy of the Vermont Gazette of February 15, 1848, and published here in Bennington by Edwin Robinson. The paper contains a New York market report and some of the prices quoted are so low that a few of them are mentioned. Table butter was quoted at 15 to 25 cents a pound, anthracite coal at \$5.00 to \$6.00 a ton, flour at \$6.00 to \$8.25 a barrel, beef at \$8.25 to \$12.00 a hundred, smoked beef at 7 to 11 cents a pound, mess pork at \$11.75 to \$12.00 a hundred, smoked ham at 8 to 13 cents a pound.

These prices would "look good" to all of us here in Bennington to day, but there is another side to this problem. There is residing in town at the present time a man who can remember when he could find all the men he wanted willing to put in a ten-hour day at hard work for eighty cents, and that was some years after 1848. In 1848 the Mexican war was in progress and the settled portion of the present United States was comparatively small. According to the geographies published at that period the section of the country west of the Mississippi river was known as the "Great American Desert" and in New England the people had not progressed far from the pioneer stage of existence.

The country was then so predominately agricultural that there was only a limited market for farm produce and the large majority of the inhabitants were living directly off the land. At a time when people here in Vermont raised their own flax and made their own linen, wore outside garments that came originally from the backs of their own sheep, and shoes that never went outside the township from the time the calfskin in the leather first made its appearance in the world, when they harvested the wheat that went into their bread, when they butchered their own beef, pork, mutton and poultry, a dollar went a long way toward supplying the needs of a farmer's household that could not be produced with his own hands.

Seventy years ago there could not have been an extensive market for produce because there were comparatively few large cities and because many of the residents in the villages and small cities followed as closely as circumstances would permit the living methods of the rural inhabitants. If the number of cows owned in Vermont in companies like Bennington, Rutland, Burlington, Brattleboro, Montpelier and St. Albans not later than forty years ago could today be assembled in a single pasture they would make several fairly good sized dairy herds.

With a production always in excess of the demand, and the demand limited, prices were naturally low. It is not so many years ago that one frequently read in the papers of the losses of thousands of dollars worth of produce of different kinds that had been shipped to the cities and which

there went to waste because there was no market. Competition of a larger production than could be consumed worked to the disadvantage of the man who tilled the soil and his returns in money were small. To be sure, he was fortunate in that he required so little that he could not take from the land.

In recent years the demands of the rapidly increasing urban population have been taking all that the land under cultivation will raise. We are eating all that we produce in this country and with the increasing cost of production the prices go up and must continue to go up. The future may bring a readjustment of some nature that will result in a change, but in the face of a greater demand and larger expense in production the consumer must continue to carry the burden. And in many instances he is better able to do so than he was in the days of low prices.

RECENT GAS ATTACKS

Clippings and Other Debris From the Short Column of the Brattleboro Reformer

The Meeting. They met by chance. They'd never met before. They met but once. And she was smitten sore. They never met again. Don't wish to fill allow. They met but once. The auto and the cow.

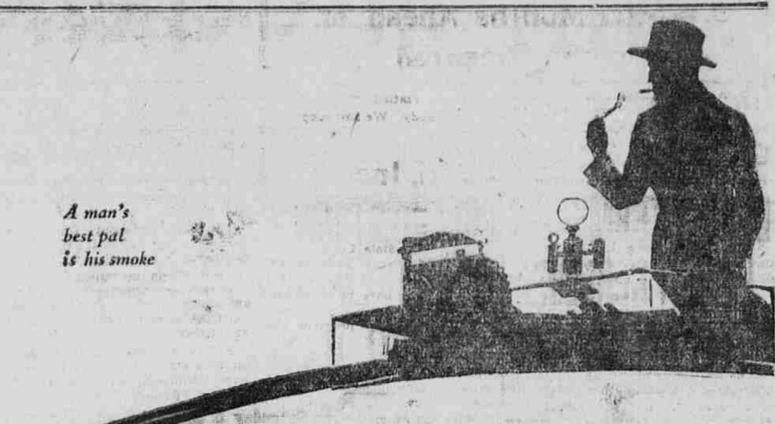
The Good Old Days. Mr. Tomman says he can recall the time when living on the "old hill" turkeys sold for 10 cents a pound.—So. Pomfret item.

The Age of Substitutes. In an Elm street doorway is a market basket, on the side of which is painted in large letters, "Cold Storage Eggs." In the basket are onions.—Manchester Union.

Getting a Good Start in Her New Home. Mrs. L. Sykes moved to Brownsville, and she had to descend the stairs, laming her considerably.—West Windsor item.

Eara says he's heard that the hair

A man's best pal is his smoke



"Knew we'd get together"

—Ches. Field

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across the street has struck for a nickel bank instead of a penny one.

The mourners.

The fat girl, who's a modest lass, Weeps that she is not thin— She has to wear her gown so low To make room for her chin.

The thin one mourns because her skirts Must hide her silken hose; She dares not wear them shorter And her lack of shape disclose.—Petunia.

Charles Kneeland had a birthday and the neighbors found it out. They gathered a crowd and went over and helped him celebrate the event.—No. Hyde Park news.

When the Coal Bin's Full. Mrs. Manning finished her visit and went back to her home in Cady's Falls. No place like your own beside.—Mottsville Messenger.

A lady received an invitation to a

tea party the other day and down in the corner were the initials "B. Y. S. W. Y." It was a long time before she found out that it meant "Bring your sugar with you."—Silton Springs Herald.

Invitations to little masquerade affairs probably change S. to D.

Tullo wishes to nominate for the class in department Miss Vera Rood of Springfield.



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