NOW AND THEN

THE OXEN

KADRA MAYSI

We are the humble oxen which you
pass upon your road—
The bearers of the burden and the
drawers of the load—
For centuries accustomed to the
heavy yoke and goad.

We are the ancient oxen. For the
grazing herds of kine,
We broke the stony pastures in the
hills of Palestine.
From our tilth there sprang the
grain fields for the asses and the
swine.

We are the patient oxen. Man has
never paused to heed—
When he strokes his dog for courage
and he cheers his horse for
speed—
That, beyond the trough and manger,
we may have another need.

We are the clumsy oxen. With our
splayed and swaying pace,
We walk devoid of beauty and we
rise devoid of grace,
Hindquarters first, as though we
paused to kneel upon the place.

We are the weary oxen. But—when
we kneel—we are
Again beside The Manger and, two
thousand years afar,
Beneath the shining splendor of a
silver eastern Star.

For, we are the beasts who wor-
shipped by the Crib wherein He
lay.
Although dumb, we bowed, adoring,
upon that first Christmas Day;
And, in memory of the Christ Child,
still, we kneel as though to
pray.

The Story of Creation is a wonderful stroy, as it tells how one after another thing was made for the use of man, long before man himself was created. Then when God breathed into him the breath of life, He gave unto man, who was His greatest creation the care of these lower animals. Has man accepted this care? Is he taking charge of them seeing that they are not cruelly treated and exterminated by the gunman? The world in summer would be a sad place without the song of birds, and animal life, the latter which is fast disappearing.

And the oxen! So useful in their turn.

God has said "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out his Master's Corn." Poor patient beasts as they are. They too were blessed when our Lord was born in the stable.

The sun never sets on the British Dominion. North, East, South and West there are her possession. She has been wise in the government of these colonies, and therefore she in all the years, has lost but one, and that was her fairest and best, the United States of America.

Now when the King of these possession is calling upon his country to forsake all their old laws and traditions concerning the King of England's marriage, will it not weaken the Nations control of these distant lands?

Surely the King's example will be followed by those under his rule?

The Blarney Stone is one of the famous objects of Ireland. Not very spectacular it is only a stone that one has to climb up to kiss, for it is said that if one kisses it he will be endowed with the art of saying very pleasing things.

Hence the saying when one is flattering another, he is said to be giving him blarny.

The old stone stands in southern Ireland, and that is why, they say, that the Irish are so effusive and full of compliments. Perhaps that is why, too, that Farley, an Irishman is said to be such a vote getter. Certainly in the last presidential campaign it proved it.

Old Boston was a very different place from the modern City.

Then the now beautiful Commons, was a cow pasture and the cows in going to and fro made the narrow crooked street which are still found in the older parts of the city.

Life in the early days was very strict. In fact Governor Hancock himself, was arrested and made to pay a fine for taking a ride on Sunday.

In derision of her strict laws some one made the following verse:

In superstitious days 'tis said.
Hens laid two eggs on Monday:
Because a hen would lose her head,
That laid an egg on Sunday.

An so according to the law,
No one could wash on Sunday.
So Boston folks must dirty go,
And wash them twice on Monday.

Remember the birds during the winter. They will repay you a hundredfold for the suet and grain and crumbs you place for them about your home.

WOMANS PAGE

She is living alone this New England woman. Her name is Miss Beckwith, years ago she was one of a large family. Being the beauty of the family she was always expected to marry first, but perhaps she was hard to suit, any way her less attractive sisters married, one by one, leaving her at last the sole attendant of an invalid mother. Years passed and finally the mother died leaving her daughter alone. She might have had some girl to live with her, but she preferred to live by herself. One great solace, she had and that was her apple tree. It bore golden grime apples as sweet as they could be. Under its spreading boughs she loves to sit in the summer time and when the fruit is ripe, she cans, preserves and dries it. But last summer the boys in the town discovered how sweet and juicy the apples are. Time and time again she came out to drive them away. Finally she told them she was going to get a gun. Archie Blair the oldest and the most troublescme one of the bunch, laughed at the prospect.

She hastened down town and purchased an air gun. Then when the boys came she shot at them and Archie was slightly wounded in the hand. His parents were dreadfully angry and presented her to court. When she received her summons, she dressed herself and went to the Court House. In the meantime the Judge on examining the evidence found that the plaintiff had no case, as he was intruding on Mrs. Beckworth property.

So when she appeared he told her that he had no case against her and that she could go home.

But no! She had prepared to go to Court and there she would stay for the rest of the day. It was rather embarrasing to the Court to have her fix her great black eyes upon them as she watched the proceedings, only going home at the adjournment.

Miss Beckwith is a great thorn in the side of the Town Council.

In erecting one of the Municipal building a foot of her land was used by the council, not knowing it was hers. Now she is insisting upon their removing it, or granting her freedom from taxes.

Isn't it rather strange that most of the appliances invented to make house work easier is put on the market by men, the inventors?

The secret is, perhaps that when the men have to do it, they begin to think of some way to make it easier. We were reading a few days ago of a woman being in dispair as her husband preferred to sit and dream rather than to make a living. In desperation, she told him she was going to work herself, leaving him to take care of the house and the children. At first things seemed to be very bad, but gradually she noticed. things were looking so neat and the cooking was better than hers had been. At first, suspecting that some woman was doing it secretly for him, she became miserable with jealously, so she determined to find out. Coming home unexpectedly she found him busy with a vacuum cleaner which he had made himself, and other inventions which he had concocted to save him trouble.

Therefore leaving him home to do all the work was the means of making their fortune.

The Arc de Triomphe

The Arc de Triomphe was begun in 1806 by Napoleon, who intended it as a monument to the glory of his army after the battle of Austerlitz. The great arch was not completed and inaugurated until 30 years later. It cost the state over nine million frances, because of its substructure, which extends 45 feet below the ground. The figures in the great frieze running around the top are over six feet high and represent a departure and return of the French armies. The handsome arch suffered badly at different periods of its existence at the hands of friend and foe alike, notably perhaps at the fall of the Second empire, while the Commune raged in the city. It was calculated that for three weeks 90 shells were fired at it daily. With the restoration of law and order the Arc de Triomphe was completely restored. To reach the summit 273 steps have to be climbed.

ANNUAL REPORT OF AGRICULTURE HEAD

Gives History And Future of National Legislation

The following are excerpts from the 1936 annual report of the secretary of agriculture.

National Agricultural Policy

It is commonly believed that the United States never had a truly national agricultural policy until after the World War; but the country has always had a national agricultural policy. In the period of westward migration, of rapid land settlement, and of ruthless exploitation of natural resources, the policy was negative. It was mainly one of noninterference with the private appropriation of land for use or misuse. Despite its laissez-faire character, we cannot call that procedure a mere lack of policy. It expressed a definite philosophy and, indeed, a definite program. It was what the dominant forces in the country wanted and what the majority of the people at least tacitly accepted. Our national agricultural policy in the nineteenth century reflected the belief that national welfare could best be promoted through individualism and unrestricted competition.

For a long time this theory apparently stood the test of practice. With abundant land, an open frontier, and a relatively sparse population, the quickest way to increase production, and therefore wealth, was to get the resources into private handse. Occasionally production overshot the market; but the resulting depression did not last long and did not shake the country's faith in the exploitation program. Various administrations encouraged farming, ranching, lumbering, and other land uses through homestead laws, grazing privileges, land grants, favors to transportation companies, tenement taxation, and irrigation. Few looked forward to the closing of the frontier and to the ruthless competition that would ensue. Most people seemed to think the policy that had been adopted could be continued indefinitely.

As a matter of fact, as most people now perceive, the exploitation policy created problems that today necessitate a conservation policy. Recklessness in one age inevitably imposes prudence on the next. There are sharp contrasts between the agricultural views and programs that dominated the nineteenth century and those that shape our agricultural policy today. But the contrast does not mean that the present has broken with the past or that tradition has been sharply wrenched from its natural path. On the contrary, it signifies that cause and effect have operated normally. The new agricultural policy is the direct result of the old one and of the conditions and problems which the old policy created. As the occupation of the continent proceeded, the expansion program ran out of material. It ran out of land and forced the land hungry into submarginal farming, destructive grazing practices, and forest devastation. Land charges accumulated on the older-settled land and drove producers into overproduction. Exploitation, in short, created the need for conservation, and simultaneously excessive competition generated a need for corrective regulation. It is because our forbears went too far in one direction that we must now move in another.

Economic Changes Reflected

Agricultural policy draws its inspiration, not from the accidents of politics but from fundamental economic changes. In the shaping of American agricultural policy distinguish two great controlling forces, each of recent origin. First, of course, is the disappearance of the open frontier and the resulting pressure of population on the resources available with its threat of soil wastage and soil destruction. Second is the world-wide growth of economic regulation not only in trade but in production. Governments are assuming greater and greater responsibilities for the regulation of commerce both domestic and foreign, and industry is becoming cartelized throughout the world. Into an economic system of that kind, a purely competitive, wholly unregulated agriculture will not longer fit. These two great forces seem destined to exert an increasing influence which will express itself in legislation and policy no matter what political party may be in power. Modern agriculture's policy in the United States is not the arbitrary invention of an economic group with a special interest to promote but is a national response to an altered economic world. It is not merely an attempt to deal with temporary evils but a profound readjustment to permanently changed conditions.

Production Adjustment

The present phase of drought-caused shortage can only be temporary. Under normal weather conditions our agricultural industry can oversupply its market, and the natural reaction from the present drought will be for it to do so. For the moment it may seem premature to talk again about overproduction, but experience proves that under blind competition one or two good crop years can pile up surpluses.

It will be well to remember, when overproduction impends, that soil conservation alone is not a sufficient preventive. Soil-conservation practices tend to have more effect on output at first than they do later. In their early stages they reduce the average intensity of cultivation significantly, and therefore, the tendency to oversupply the market. Eventually, however, they increase soil productivity; it is obvious, moreover, that less intensive cultivation of part of the farm area may promote more intensive culitvation of the remainder, particularly if the farm population is excessive. Unless the foreign as well as the domestic demand for American agricultural products revives, the rehabilitation of the soil through soil-conservation programs will combine with other factors in the agricultural situation to confront the country again in the near future with the absolute necessity of establishing a good adjustment between production and market requirements. Permanent agricultural policy should achieve soil conservation, consumer protection, and crop control together.

Crop Insurance

In the farmer's life luck and chance are important factors. Each crop planted is a speculative venture. Unfavorable weather conditions, floods, insects, or disease may cause a partial or a complete failure of his crop. Studies of total farm income for all farmers do not tell the whole truth. Increases in prices in years of low production inhance the income of farmers who have a good crop, but benefit very little those whose crop fails. The distress due to widespread crop failure and the resulting necessary expense for relief suggest the need of some form of crop insurance. * * *

Crop insurance must not benefit the shiftless at the expense of the thrifty, and the poor land at the expense of the good. In large measure the insurance coverage and the premium rate should be based on the experience of the individual farm. The insurance coverage for an individual farm should probably be a given percentage of the average yield for that farm. The premium rate should probably, in a measure, be based on the average crop losses of that farm. That data acquired for individual farms in the agricultural-adjustment program might provide a starting point.

Farm Tenancy

The development of better land use is largely dependent on the improvement of land-tenure systems. Most people now recognize that not all the land should be in private hands. Public ownership is better for parks, for various recreational uses, for wildlife refuges, and frequently for forests. Certain types of grasslands, as well as forest lands, can be best managed as public property. These facts, which scarcely anyone now denies, do not warrant going to extremes in the public ownership of land resources. They simply indicate that the public ownership of land has a place in a good land system, and that tradition and custom should not be allowed to block reform.

There are good and bad methods of private ownership. Certain widely established practices stimulate unwise speculation, soil mining, absentee landlordism, and excessively high rates of tenancy. These are not the inseparable and unavoidable results of private ownership. Methods can be developed which tend to minimize them, as the experience of some other countries amply demonstrates. Our traditional land-tenure system has shortcomings which can be remedied without changing its fundamental character. But it is necessary to recognize that there are different types of land, some of which can best be used as private property and some of which can best be used in public ownership.

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Other countries have taken steps to reduce tenancy or to change and improve it, and eventually the United States must do the same. It must face the problem of providing security for its great mass of landless farm people. The farm census of 1935 reported about 2,865,000 tenant farmers, whose families aggregated 12,500,000 people. This was the largest number of tenant farmers ever reported by the census. In most States the percentage of tenancy increased significantly between 1930 and 1935. In certain areas more than two-thirds of the farm operators are tenants. Many of them frequently shift from farm to farm to the injury of the land, to the deterioration of community institutions, and to the decline of their own morale. Also, our farm population includes several million farm laborers, a large proportion of whom lead a migratory life, with only casual and uncertain employment. This group, as well as the tenants, should be considered in our land policy.

Farm Imports

As a result of htis year's drought we may have to import some feed. This is the logical procedure, good for both producers and consumers. Agriculutre's problem is not how to stop a moderate flow of competitive imports following a crop failure but how to plan for its normal conditions, which are those of a surplus country. Normally, American agriculture encounters its major foreign compeittion abroad. It produces for export; and temporary shortages induced by drought should not hide the fact that an import-exclusion policy would react adversely on the export trade. Besides hurting the farmers, who must purchase feed in short-crop years, such a policy would permanently injure those who grow cotton, tobacco, wheat, hogs, and

(continued on page six)



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