The Late James R. Coleman and Wife

FARM LABOR.

ARTICLE IV.

The subject of farm labor looms up with such vast importance that a continuation of its discussion is excusable. In the employment of his labor as in all other transactions, the farmer has gone on the independent scale. There has never been any mutual agreement among farmers as to the prices they would and could afford to pay for day, month or year hands. Each one has settled that matter to suit his own individual case. It is in the power of any one man in a community to raise the price of farm work to a scale which becomes burdensome. When once raised it is almost impossible to lower them again. The margin for profit is such a narrow one, that a slight rise in the price of labor, a small fluctuation in market, a disastrous season or a visitation of some epidemic among his stock, spells all the difference between success and failure in his business. The labor question then becomes a matter of vital importance.

Labor *must* be employed, let the price be what it may. No man is capable of running the ordinary farm without help. If he has it in his own family he is fortunate, otherwise he has to go on the public market for it. Many hands and feet (besides his own) must be employed. It is his province so to guide those hands and feet that he may make them as profitable as possible. If they happen to be willing hands and feet, guiding them is an easy matter, but if they happen to be otherwise than willing, then he is up against a difficult proposition.

The business man who can rely upon a stable force to execute his plans is able to look far ahead and make them to a certain end. The average farmer is not able to do this, he is at the mercy of a fickle, unreliable employee, who is easily swayed and led to fly his bargain if some one has offered him a slight advance in wages. He is liable to leave at the most critical period. His favorite time is corn cutting, when wages go up.

It is this very uncertainity that prevents many farmers from launching out more extensively than they do. They fear to pitch the crop they are inclined to or to engage in the kind of farming they would otherwise take up, because they cannot depend upon the labor to properly cultivate that crop and handle it when made. Machinery has done much not only to lighten the work on the farm, but to do it much better than it was done a generation ago. Machinery, however, will not work without human aid. It has to be guided by human intelligence and kept in running order by skilled hands. Besides, there are many things on a farm which cannot be done by machinery. Hands and feet find plenty to do. The human machine is an indispensable one, but this machine has a will power of its own. Often there is a screw loose in its mentality. There is a sad need of adjustment, before it can be made to work to our entire satisfaction.

The impression has gone widely abroad that the man in his shirt sleeves is the only worker in the land. Hence, the man who lives by the exercise of his muscle, by his skilled hands and by "the sweat of his brow," has become envious of the man who stands behind the counter, at the accountant's desk, in the office of the lawyer, or even in the study of the preacher. These latter men are not looked upon as workers among their fellows. They are workers, but in a different sense, they use their brains instead of their *muscles*. Theirs, is the finest kind of work, they blaze the way for the others, they map out the railroad lines, they figure out the cost of things, they invent they machinery, they sound the depths of the earth and sea, they navigate the air and they bring the ends of the world together. In other words, but for the mind worker, the world would be at a standstill and there would be no need for muscular power. The mind worker undergoes a heavier strain than does the physical worker. It is from this class of workers that the larger number of suicides come. They go to pieces in a nervous way. The man who works out in the open, whose appetite is strong enough to call for wholesome, but not too highly seasoned food, and whose mind is so easy he can enjoy refreshing sleep, has decidedly the advantage in life. There have been times in the life of many a mental worker (who was worn out in mind and body) when he envied the other man his good health and easy mind. Be it known to us that every lot in life has its advantages and disadvantages.

In the past decade the cost of farm labor has wonderfully advanced. The cost of running a farm has almost doubled in 15 years. Not that wages have doubled in that time. They have advanced materially, and yet from the laborer's standpoint they have perhaps not advanced as much as they should have done. The farmers think they are approaching the straining point. The farmer is the only employe in the world who, outside of domestic servants, feeds his laborer. The feed bill is a tremendous one, and an awful tax in dollars and cents. It is also a tremendous strain upon the farmer's wife.

Fifteen years ago we could board the farm hand for about four dollars and a half a month, now seven and a half will scarcely cover the bill per month. The writer began farming in 1897. Six hundred dollars then paid for all farm labor with no increase in acreage. It now takes one thousand dollars to run the same farm. The hours have shortened, the board bill has increased, and other expenses have run up proportionately. The farm is not a gold mine. It is more like a funnel into the large end of which you are pouring a liquid and trying to fill it, but it runs out the small end so fast you cannot accomplish your purpose. If you do by chance gain on the leakage before you can fill up again, it is empty.

I think the mode of hiring may be greatly improved. Surely, there is some way by which the interest of the laborer in his work may be quickened. Money alone does not arouse interest. There are good men and true among the common workers. These should be encouraged and be made to know they are appreciated. The man who by honest and diligent work, has enabled me to improve my farm and fill my garners, is entitled to reap some benefit from this increase. Why not in addition to a fixed wage, give him some increase to look forward to, make him (to a certain extent) a partner of the concern. If he has any ambition in him it will arouse his interest. An interested worker is worth two who are not interested. The writer has the courage of his convictions; he has launched out this year in the line of a percentage, and already thinks he can see good results. Two men are to get a fixed wage, somewhat less than last year, with a percentage to be added. If the farm comes up to a ten-year average their wages will be materially increased. If it goes beyond the average they will be benefitted by a greater increase. I fully explained the principle. There is a wide difference between *meum and tuum*. That which is mine or even partly mine, is much more valuable to me than that which is entirely yours. Perhaps, in a year's time I may realize I have made a mistake. The croaker says, you need not wait for a year to tell you that. Maybe I have more confidence in human nature than many farmers. The cases have been extremely rare when I found my confidence misplaced.

There is great lacking in skilled labor on our farms. Few farm hands use their heads. They rarely know when a horse is properly harnessed and so attached to the weight he has to draw as to apply to it all his strength; few know how to set a plow to do its best work, and few have any mechanical skill. The all-around man who knows what to do and how to do it is awfully hard to find. Why so?

One strong reason is to be found in the fact that the indifferent hand who will loiter on you and abuse your team, besides breaking up your implements and requiring you to have your eye constantly on him, commands just as high wages as the best man does. The good man has no encouragement to be good beyond his own sense of self-respect. Hands should be graded if possible. One man is worth more than another, and rightly should get more. The quality of the man is vastly important. The quiet, punctual, industrious and careful man, who is always on the job and takes care of your property, is worth infinitely more than the other man who is just the reverse. There are laborers who make you feel like committing murder. Such men are not worth much. They are high at any price; their carelessness burns your buildings and kills your teams.

Would that some wise man would arise and put in motion some plan by which farm labor could be graded, then we could afford to pay the good man his real worth and thus encourage the now poor one to become better.

In concluding this article, let me say that the future crop for farm labor is not so promising as we would like it to be. The young negro is not promising to fill the bill as well as his father has filled it. Foreign labor is not coming here on any terms where it has to come in competition with the African. Nor is foreign labor all that it is represented as being. There are no charms in it for this writer. He had rather "endure the ills he has than flee to those he knows not of." Boycotting and strikes followed by destruction of property because you will not yield to unreasonable demands, are worse than carelessness, inefficiency or even impudence.

AUTO LINE STARTED.

Easton and Chestertown State Road Passanger and Express Company Organized

A CAR WILL LEAVE EACH TERMINAL AT THE SAME TIME EVERY DAY AND A REGULAR SCHEDULE OBSERVED.

Beginning at some date early in the spring, it will be possible for passengers to go by a regularly conducted automobile line from Easton to Chestertown, via State road, in exactly three hours. The Easton-Chestertown State Road Passenger and Express Company is now being organized and proposes to commence operations within the next two or three months. The paid-in capital stock will be $10,000, and a large proportion has already been subscribed for by interested parties in all three towns of Easton, Centreville, and Chestertown.

The company will run two large automobiles for passengers and these cars will draw "trailers," in which the freight will be carried, behind them. At exactly the same time each day one car will start from Easton for Chestertown and the other car from Chestertown for Easton. Both cars will stop at every village and town on the State road between the two terminal points and the motormen will act as conductors and freightmen. Headquarters will be in Easton.

Under the existing transportation arrangement it takes two days for a shipment of freight to go from Easton to Chestertown, and one day is required for a passenger to make the same trip. But three hours will be required by the State Road Express when it commences operations. It is thought that the automobile line will be invaluable to traveling salesmen and will connect Centreville with both Easton and Chestertown.

N. E. Clark is one of those who originated the plan, and other men of Easton, Chestertown, and Centerville have interested themselves in favor of the proposition. This matter was mentioned exclusively by the TRANSCRIPT two weeks ago.

Ten Fish in Cake of Ice.

Mr. Dorio last week in the rapids of the Susquehanna river cut a cake of ice 10 inches thick, containing nine black bass and one salmon. The bass weighed 14½ pounds. The largest weighed 4½ pounds, the smallest ½ pound. The Salmon weighed 5 pounds.

The fish were hibernating in a shallow pool and were impounded by the anchor ice until the pool became congealed. The salmon when thawed out resumed its summer habits.

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WONDERFUL WOOD.

There Is Practically No Limit to the Life of Greenheart.

A most wonderful wood is that of the tropical tree called greenheart. The tree belongs to the laurel family and is exported mainly from the island of Trinidad and British Guiana. The wood is so nearly indestructible that no limit to its life is known. It is used chiefly in ship and dock building. The wood is proof against the white ant on land and the teredo in salt water. A United States government report says:

Greenheart has been known to stand in wharves for over thirty years, and logs that have remained under water for a hundred years are in perfectly sound condition.

Greenheart's extraordinary resistance to decay is probably owing to the presence of an alkaloid known as bibirine and also to certain resinous substances known as tyloses. The latter are reddish brown masses of living cells that grow in solid masses within little cavities that they often fill completely. As they grow with the tree they turn black and make the wood of the older trees black.

As in all tropical trees, whose growth is continuous through the year, there are no annual growth rings. The trees probably do not reach maturity under 250 years. A greenheart tree is from sixty to a hundred feet in height. It is an evergreen without knots and has a broad, open crown. The wood weighs about seventy-five pounds to the cubic foot and resists a crushing force of 12,000 pounds to the square inch.—Youth's Companion.

CANOPIES ON THEIR HEADS.

People of Korea Wear the Largest Hats In the World.

What would you think of a hat that was so large it would safely shelter your father, mother, sisters and yourself under it should a sudden rainstorm come up? The men of Korea like these enormous hats and would not feel properly dressed without them. These hats look like great flower pots set on a round table six feet across. The crowns are nine feet in height and three inches wide, much like a chimney on a one story house. How do you suppose these large, round head coverings are kept on? Under the brim is a small, closely fitting cap, held on by a padded string which ties under the ears. The material of these hats is bamboo, so finely split that it is like thread, and lastly they are varnished to keep out the sun and rain and the wind.

You know that the Korean people always wear cotton clothing, so these big hats protect them far more than our hats possibly could. In the rainy season cones of oiled paper are attached to the big bamboo head coverings in the shape of funnels, so, I suppose, that the rain pours off of them just as water does off a duck's back. A Korean keeps his hat on when we should take it off. Soldiers wear black or brown felt hats decorated with red horse hair or peacock feathers, and hanging from the sides, over the ears and around their necks are oval balls of porcelain, amber and a queer kind of gum.—Sunbeam.

The Ungrateful Cuckoo.

To hear the cuckoo's cheery note you might think he had the clearest conscience in the world. He can have neither memory nor moral sense or he would not carry it off so gayly. The most disreputable of birds, as a rule, are guilty of nothing worse than peccadillos. The jackdaw will steal for the mere fun of the thing, for he can make no possible use of plate or jewelry. Sparrows are, of course, notorious thieves, but they rank no higher in crime than the sneaking pickpockets. But the cuckoo, so to speak, is a murderer from his cradle. He violates the sanctity of a hospitable hearth. His first victims are his own foster brothers, and before he tries his wings on the first flight he is imbrued in fraternal blood, like any Amurath or Bajazet.—London Saturday Review.

She Couldn't Hear Them.

"I was surprised to learn that that man is married."

"How did you learn it? You may be mistaken."

"No chance for a mistake. He says he is in favor of going back to the old shin plasters and having small bills for 5, 10, 25 and 50 cents."

"But I don't see"—

"Bills don't rattle together."—Houston Post.

Returning a Favor.

"It's going to be war to the knife," declared the suburban man, who was feeding his chickens.

"What now?" asked the friend.

"Why, Blink's sent me a box of axle grease and advised me to use it on my lawn mower."

"Well?"

"Well, I sent it back and told him to use it on his daughter's voice."—Lippincott's.

Wrong Both Ways.

"What is that tune you were playing on the bugle last night?"

"That was not a bugle," replied the cornet virtuoso rather stiffly.

"Oh, well, if you're so particular as all that it didn't sound like a tune either."—Exchange.

Perseverance.

Few things are impossible in themselves. It is not so much means as perseverance that is wanting to bring them to a successful issue.—Rochefoucauld.

Life without liberty is joyless, but life without joy may be great. The greatness of life is sacrifice.—Ouida.

RHEUMATISM

This nerve-racking disease is caused from impure blood and uric acid poison. External applications sometimes give temporary relief but won't cure; the sure way to secure permanent results is to thoroughly eradicate from the blood all the impurities. Nothing on earth will drive out the poisons from your system, keep the bowels, kidneys and liver in good condition as SEVEN BARKS, the wonderful remedy that has proved its great merits the past 42 years.

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