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The Press and Banner

ABBEVILLE, S. C.

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TO OUR ADVERTISERS.

This issue of the paper marks the entry of the Press and Banner into the tri-weekly field. This step was taken to give our subscribers and our advertisers better service—our subscribers more news and our advertisers a more instant medium for advertising. In other words we are filling a need which we feel exists.

To issue the paper three times a week puts added work on our force and equipment. In order to meet present demands we are forced to set a time after which no display advertising will be received, which time will be 10 o'clock on the morning of press days, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. We feel sure that our advertisers will meet us half way in this step, which is taken for the benefit of all our patrons.

THE BAPTISTS AT SUPPER.

This evening in the recreation rooms of the Baptist Church the ladies of the church will serve a supper to the men of the church. The supper is given at this time for the reason that the Baptists have just paid the last installment on the note which they gave for the building of the new church, and which is such an ornament to the city. Uncle Jim and Daley thought it would be a good thing to eat before undertaking to pay up the seventy-five millions which the Baptists have now undertaken to pay in the next five years, and the others being willing it was so ordered.

Besides the men of the Baptist church a few of the prominent members in other churches have been invited to attend the dinner. In order not to give offense in the matter, the Baptists invited only such members of other churches as were out of debt, as they did not desire to have people present at the supper who owed money. We are invited.

"THINK ON THESE THINGS."

The University of South Carolina Weekly News of the past week devotes practically the whole of its sheet to the illiteracy question in this state. Some statistics given are vital, interesting and shameful.

Recently The New York Times carried the following caption over an article on illiteracy among recruits in the army:

"Illiteracy Amazes Army Authorities. South Carolina Worst. Percentage There 49.5 Against 16.6 in New York With Its Large Foreign Element."

The information upon which this amazing statement was based came through the Department of the Interior from the Surgeon General's office of the U. S. army. The Surgeon General's figures were compiled on account of the need for giving examinations for normal intelligence and the necessity for the soldier to read simple questions. This fact necessarily makes the standard higher than the census standard, and in fact the percentage for South Carolina was so high as to cause a doubt concerning the accuracy of the data. But after a check was made, the records of all South Carolina men in one company were analyzed and of the 177 men in the company, 109 or 61% were found to be illiterate.

The census of 1910 gave the total population of this state to be one and one-half million and the total of illiterates over nine years old to be 276,900. The percentage of white illiterates was 19.3% and of negroes, 38.7%.

What is to be the exposure soon to be made by the 1920 census? Have we, at this season of the year, when the hearts of all of us respond most readily to the call of others, have we been our brother's keeper? The percentage of illiterates in Abbeville county as shown by the last report is 23.4% of the population or 5,883 persons over nine years of age who cannot sign their names. Over five per cent of these are whites.

It would take more than two days marching day and night for a double column, files forty inches apart, at the regulation step, to pass a reviewing stand if all the illiterates of the state were in the line.

The report of the State Superintendent of Education shows that in 1916, twenty thousand voters signed the Democratic rolls with a mark.

It is conservatively estimated that the ability to read and write is worth fifty cents a day in the increased efficiency of a workman. If that be true, to eradicate illiteracy in South Carolina would increase the wealth of the state \$138,450 each day.

It would be worth \$3000 per day to Abbeville county alone to eradicate illiteracy and one day's revenue would pay the entire cost of teaching ev-

ery single white illiterate to read and write intelligently. Can you think of any better investment?

The State provides a Supervisor of Adult Schools, who works under the supervision of the state department of education. You members of the county board of education, what are you doing to help eliminate illiteracy in Abbeville county? Have you any organization? Do you know that the state provides a fund out of which to pay teachers of adults in Abbeville county? Is your county getting back in teachers' salaries the proportionate part of this fund she pays in taxes?

Men and women are illiterates not on account of any desire on their part, but because of circumstances over which they had no control. Illiteracy is a family trait—the older members failed to get an education; therefore the children and grandchildren are suffering.

These neglected people have lost faith in themselves; failing to get an education when children, they have built a wall around their lives which can only be penetrated by a capable, sympathetic, understanding friend and teacher.

Let's make Abbeville first in literacy as well as first in every other worth-while thing.

WHO IS GETTING THE BENEFIT OF HIGH PRICES FOR COTTON?

(Manufacturers Record, Baltimore, Md.)

Mr. Daniel Willard, president of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, apparently has in his office some one who is supposed to interpret and comment upon editorials, we presume for Mr. Willard's enlightenment, for we have received from him or his office two copies of a memorandum of this kind in which Mr. M. B. Wild, in his report to Mr. Willard, informs him that the Manufacturers Record seems to be very well balanced on all things except cotton. In the course of this memorandum he says:

"The insinuation that the Federal Reserve Board brought about the recent virtual panic in New York, from which few rich men suffered and few professionals, is just the kind of ammunition the Bolsheviks use in their endeavors to overthrow social order."

The trouble with Mr. Wild, and apparently with Mr. Willard, since in sending this to the Manufacturers Record without comment he seems virtually to have accepted that view, is that they shut their eyes to facts. No one has to be very familiar with the conditions in New York to know that the stock market is the football of many Wall Street gamblers who use one thing and another to advance or depress the price of stocks according to whether they are buyers or sellers of stocks. These speculators "milk the public" or "shear the lambs," as you may care to put it. Money is loaned freely until stocks are boosted and the insiders sell out; then some plan is devised to tighten the money market or to advance call loans, and the public rushes to sell. The speculators buy in at a low price the stocks they sold at a high figure. Then money again becomes easy, stocks are boosted, the public rushes to buy and the insiders unload. Soon the money market becomes tight, stocks tumble and the public sells at a low price to the insiders, and so ad infinitum. We have never found it wise to suppress information, and Mr. Wild's suggestion that the publication of such statements is Bolshevistic in its tendency is indicative of the narrowness of his vision. In a further discussion of the views of the Manufacturers Record he said:

"The views of this paper on cotton and cotton prices and the action of the Federal Reserve Board in relation to them would be much sounder if it could show that the genuine cotton growers both need and are getting prices for their product that are from 200 to 300 per cent higher than pre-war prices. The fact is, however, that the genuine cotton grower is securing but a small share of these gigantic price increases and the recent action of the Federal Reserve Board both as to cotton and all other commodities had no other purpose than to check the speculators who are reaping the main benefit from the increased prices."

In this statement Mr. Wild displays a depth of ignorance which cannot be reached by any plumb line. We hope Mr. Willard knows a little more. The cotton growers are getting the present high prices, and they do need them. The bear speculators who have gambled for years and leached the life-blood of the Southern growers have now been caught in their own trap, and they are trying to move Heaven—no, not Heaven, but earth and hell—to wriggle out of the steel trap which is finally closing around them. They are in a vise, which daily closes in on them, and that vise is the economic law of supply and demand which, despite the effort of the cotton bears to break down, is fixing the price of cotton.

The cotton growers for 50 years virtually starved, especially the small growers and the tenant farmers, white and black. The average yield of cotton on Southern farms was about six bales per farm. At 10 cents a pound, this meant \$300 a year as the gross income of a farmer and his wife and children because he was only able to raise cotton at these prices by having his wife and children work in the cotton field. The wife should have been at home, the children should have been in school. The curse of illiteracy has been upon the South because of the curse of cotton fastened upon this section by the economic slavery which chained it to low-priced cotton after the war. With a grower's income of \$300 a year plus a small amount received from seed, one-third to one-half of this amount had to be paid for rent of the land, and out of the pittance left these tenant farmers by the hundreds of thousands had to support their families.

The "curse of God" might well rest upon every

man who, in view of such a situation, has sought to hold down the price of cotton for every effort made to keep down the price of cotton has been an effort made to keep the women and children in the cotton fields, to develop illiteracy, and to bring upon this section and upon the nation all of the curses which follow desperate enforced poverty, due to the power of those who controlled the situation as against the helplessness of the growers.

At the present time all of the influences which can possibly be brought to bear by the gamblers who have finally been caught in their own trap are being put forth to seek to break down the cotton prices of the present that they may be saved from tremendous losses, if not from complete bankruptcy. The financial destruction of this bear element to the last dollar of its power would be an un-mixed blessing to the world and to the South.

We trust that Mr. Willard is wise enough and broad enough to recognize that the people who for 50 years have been held in economic slavery, and who have seen their product made the basis of the enormous profits which the cotton manufacturers of the world have of recent years been reaping, will recognize that justice is on the side of the growers.

We published last week a dispatch from London showing that even a cotton manufacturer took the ground that the profits of English mills are entirely too great, even "sinfully great," and certainly there is no indication that the mills in this country have not been earning amazingly big profits, far beyond profits which the growers have been able to secure for themselves. Here and there a large landowner has always been able, except in a few years of extreme depression, to make some profit out of renting his land to tenants. Even at a low price for cotton, he could still get a fair return out of his investment in land, and occasionally some large planters have made good profits over a long period of years, but these are exceptional cases. They do not represent the actual cotton-growing interests as a whole. They do not represent the hundreds of thousands of tenant and small farmers who raise a very large proportion of the cotton crop.

In closing his memorandum to Mr. Willard Mr. Wild said:

"Does the Manufacturers Record wish to include and make a part of its moral code the old aphorism—'consistency is the virtue of fools.'"

We are lacking in that degree of intelligence which would permit us to understand the meaning of Mr. Wild's sentence or its relation to the work of the Manufacturers Record. But since he seems to be informed as to the matter of fools, we suggest that for his own benefit, and as relating to himself, he turn to the 27th chapter and to the 22d verse of Proverbs, which reads as follows:

"Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him."

WHO WON THE WAR? WHY DECKER!

Those who still seek the real winner of the war are wasting their efforts. Rear Admiral Benson W. Decker assures us there is no use looking further. He confesses that he won it, with his little tomahawk swinging about the big heads in Madrid and keeping Alfonso with his Habsburg-loving crew too terrified to join the Huns and Turks.

The Admiral was at the time our naval attache at the Spanish capital, and, in spite of the contrary work of our ambassador, he kept Spain from throwing the power of her Invincible Armadas and the armies of her Cids and Gonsalvos de Cordoba into the scales of war against the Allies.

We do not understand entirely just how our ambassador was working in a manner contrary to the great endeavors of the naval attache. But a congress investigation will, perhaps, clear that up.

It may seem worthy of some curiosity or as justifying a little skepticism that Admiral Decker makes so modest a claim, while declining an award of merit which he declares is entirely inadequate to his services. In making this grand refusal, the former naval attache at Madrid says: that his work kept Spain from entering the war in 1918, seeming to imply that the weight of her reinforcement would have squelched the Allies, and adds:

If my estimate is correct my services and the services of those who worked with me in spite of the opposition of the ambassador, is certainly greater than the work done by any single battleship in the war, or by any official stationed on shore duty in an administrative capacity.

Somehow, it doesn't look that way to us. Spain kept out of the war for very obvious reasons. The Habsburg element, including the King, was, at least at one time, in favor of the Teutonic powers, but always feared the hazard, and slunk from any participation. The entire course of Spain was to her discredit. She permitted the German U-boats to use her coasts and harbors, and she sat by and profited at the expense of peoples and nations with whom she should have been sharing the sacrifices and glories of the field. She rests under the suspicion that she did not fight against the cause of civilization because she feared civilization stood to win, and would then punish her disloyalty; and that she didn't join her natural allies in the field because she could not get her price—as Italy more sorely needed, got hers.

But the services now rendered by Rear Admiral Decker are at least clear and important. The problem, who won the war? was getting to be almost as vexing as the old one of who killed cockrobin? We are under tremendous obligations to the Admiral for lifting the burden from our minds. We at last know who won the war, and can again sleep o' nights.—The State.

MULES and HORSES

I have a stable full of good
Tennessee Mules For Sale. Also
a few good horses and mares.

Come In and Look Them Over

T. G. WHITE