

COMING OF THE WEEVIL

Useful Talk From Mississippi Planter of Experience.

This article, written by John W. McGrath, one of the biggest business men

in the southern half of Mississippi, should be of the keenest interest to every business man, professional man and farmer in the south. While it deals largely with boll weevil history, yet it is so full of sound philosophy

and agricultural advice that it fits everywhere. Mr. McGrath knows what he is talking about—he has been through the fire.

"In order to make this article as brief as possible so that he who runs may read, I have decided to treat the boll weevil subject under three heads: The Anticipation, The Coming and Effect, The Remedy.

The Anticipation—The first great mistake made by our farmers and business men was their indifference to the gravity of the situation. Even when the boll weevil reached the Mississippi river which is 72 miles west of Brookhaven—and later on when it was reported on this side of the river; everyone was going along at the same old gait; planting cotton and some corn; raising big crops of cotton and sending the greater portion of the proceeds north to pay for provisions and grain.

"None of us realized the greatness of the danger. We thought it would treat us like all the other cotton pests which we had so successfully combated—reduce our yield for two or three years and then pass on to other fields. I had been in business here for thirty years. I had never seen a complete failure in all that time. Forty per cent of a cotton crop was our lowest record. Why then should we dread the boll weevil any more than its predecessors? We would fight it out on the old lines. We would just trim our sails a little and fight our way through the storm.

Alas! how many dollars would have been saved; and how much suffering spared; and what a long uphill struggle would have been avoided through the seven lean years that followed, had we only taken the precaution to visit the devastated regions beyond the river! Had we only seen with our own eyes the ravages of the weevil and then adopted the proper means of fighting the oncoming evil; but we just waited and we paid the penalty that always follows apathy.

The Coming and Effect—In the year 1908 the compress receipts at Rockhaven were 31,000 bales; in 1911 they were reduced to 3,100 bales. Just ten per cent of a full crop was all that we could harvest at the end of three years. The drop was rapid after 1909. That year we made about 17,000 bales of cotton; in the year 1910 about 6,500 bales; and then the most complete failure. The farmers did not begin to get demoralized nor the merchants alarmed, until the early part of 1910. Then fear took possession of all of us. We decided to try new crops; and selected peanuts as what we call a money crop, and made a failure. The merchants distributed eleven carloads of peanut seed and shipped away that fall only thirty carloads of peanuts. Thank God, we got our seed back! The next year we tried sorghum, sorghum principally, and some ribbon cane. We installed a canning factory and shipped our product to Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois. We gained quite a reputation there for the best grade of sorghum, but being an absolutely pure grade, a quantity of it fermented and was a total loss. The factory failed in consequence and the growing of sorghum as a money crop was a decided failure.

"In the meantime, the negroes were moving north to the delta; labor was getting scarce; and the supply merchants and bankers were getting tired. The strain on the financial strength of all was great. The farmers were trying to raise a little cotton all this time, but were devoting most of their acreage to cowpeas, potatoes, hay, the raising of cattle and hogs, and experimenting with "money crops."

"All the time, however, there was one class of demonstrators who were continuously at work—the dairy divisions of both the State Agriculture college and the U. S. government. A dairy association was formed in the year 1913. At the first meeting there were just nine persons present—the two demonstrators, seven farmers and myself. But we organized, and three years afterwards the meeting of the same association packed the city hall (capacity hall of 450) to its uttermost.

"We now have two creameries here and the combined output amounts to \$750,000 a year. Permit me to state here that the great success of the dairy business in our section was not due to my efforts. I was only a modest booster. During the year 1914, Mr. F. F. Decker, an ex-banker, took charge of the creamery. He spent most of his time the first year of his management in a buck-board going from farm to farm explaining the wonderful possibilities of the industry. He built it up. Success begets success! The second creamery was installed a short time afterwards.

"We commenced to climb the hill of prosperity in 1917, when we received about 10,000 bales of cotton; the crop of 1918 was 14,000 bales and we expect to get about an equal amount this year.

The Remedy—If I were living in a country that was about to be invaded by the boll weevil, I would promptly call a meeting of all the bankers, merchants and farmers and I would move the adoption of the following resolution:

"Whereas, this community will soon be infested by the dread boll weevil, and being fully aware of the danger with which we are threatened; of the havoc this little insect leaves in its

trail; of the demoralization it spreads among the business men; the discouragement it causes to come over the farming element; and knowing that unless the issue is bravely met and conservatively handled it may cause depression that is likely to be felt for at least seven long years.

"Be it, therefore, resolved: That economy and conservatism shall be our watchword; that bankers and merchants shall be requested to screw down the advancement of credit to the lowest possible notch; that, presuming the farmers of this section are composed of three classes—first raters, second class, and pligs—about evenly divided, one third in each class and let them root hog or die; no attention to first class, as they will be able to take care of themselves that we will cast loose from the third class and let them root hog or die; but that we will do all we can to elevate No. 2 and make them better producers.

"That we will not run after false gods, such as peanuts, sorghum, etc., but will diversify and stick to such crops as we are accustomed to cultivating; namely, corn, cowpeas, hay, velvet beans and cotton, and that we will raise as many cattle and hogs as possible and will endeavor to encourage dairying as much as we can, requesting our farmers to tackle the industry in a small way at the beginning.

"I would then adjourn the meeting, urging each one to strive with all his might and main to put into execution the spirit of these resolutions.

"Somewhere in the Old Testament—I think in Jeremiah—it is written, "My people were destroyed for want of knowledge" and the immortal bard, Shakespear, has said: "Sweet are the uses of adversity."

"In our experience both the inspired writer and the great poet were right. We came near to being destroyed for want of knowledge and lack of belief; and while our adversity has been a great educator and we are now better farmers and business men and this section is more prosperous than ever. We could have accomplished in four years what required eight had we used caution in the beginning and put the brakes on hard.

"Ex-Governor Manning, of South Carolina, who visited this section with a large delegation several years ago in search of information on the boll weevil question, remarked—after hearing several business men—"Well, Mr. McGrath, your advice is to keep our feet warm and our heads cool?" "Yes," I replied, "and your purse tight."

"The three classes into which I di-

vide the farmers is true of all other trades and professions, and the ratio about the same. I know it applies to merchants. I asked a good lawyer about his fellows and he said, "Yes," I then inquired of an eminent preacher and he replied, "Assuredly so, only I fear we have more than the one-third in the third class."

It is the custom in Berwickshire, England and other parts of Great Bri-

tain, among women workers in the field, when their backs become tired by bowing low down while singling turnips with short shanked hoes, to lie down with their faces to the ground allowing others to step across the lower part of their backs, on the lumbar region until the pain of fatigue is removed.

American troops on duty on the Mexican border districts number 28,807.

Service

The "Service" of this bank is planned to relieve you of vexatious details and to co-operate with you in the discharging of financial worries. To assist you politely and promptly. To make banking easy for the customer. To spread wide our facilities making them available to all and thus really bringing the bank to you.

Does this kind of co-operation seem desirable? Does it appeal to you? Our depositors tell us that they like it. Perhaps you will like it too.

Loan & Savings Bank

OF CAMDEN, S. C.

STRONG SAFE CONSERVATIVE

WE CAN SAVE YOU MONEY

By Making Your Old Clothing Serviceable
We are doing it for thousands of others—why not for you? We believe a trial will convince you.

FOOTER'S DYE WORKS

Cumberland, Md.

Take Your Cotton Around to F. M. Wooten and Get Top of Market.
Office back of Loan & Savings Bank

Saving Develops Manhood and Strength of Character

Money saved and banked is an evidence of your stability, thriftiness and foresight.

Without money, you cannot accomplish much. It is a handicap that invites mental and physical depression.

The First National Bank wants your savings account and will help you in your determination to forge ahead—to overcome your proneness to wastefulness.

First National Bank of Camden, S. C.

Life Insurance

Protects mortgaged real estate. A "Life" Policy pays the mortgage if the borrower dies. It gives him time to discharge the obligation if he dies. An "Endowment" Policy pays off the mortgage whether the borrower lives or dies.

Southeastern Life Insurance Co.,
L. A. McDowell, Agent

Service and Quality

We established our business on the principle of being fair with our customers, giving them full value for the money they leave with us.

We have continued that policy throughout the years we have been serving you, and we are pursuing it more persistently than ever in this era of price inflation today. But we never lower the standard of our service.

On this high plane of commerciality we solicit your patronage.

Wooten's Pure Food Store
PHONE 66

FISK TIRES

We take pleasure in announcing that we have secured the agency for Camden for the well known and popular FISK TIRES and will carry in stock at all times a full line of all popular sizes and types.

Adjustments Given in Camden

We are authorized and will be prepared to give adjustments on all Fisk Tires from our stock in Camden and if your FISK TIRE fails to give satisfaction, bring it to us and get a new one on a basis of

Fabric Tires	6,000 miles.
Cord Tires	8,000 miles

We quote below a few FISK Prices which we think bears comparison with any competition:

NEW PRICES

30 X 3 1/2 Plain Fabric	\$14.80
32 X 3 1/2 Plain Fabric	17.85
31 X 4 Plain Fabric	20.60
32 X 4 Plain Fabric	23.75
33 X 4 Plain Fabric	25.10
34 X 4 Plain Fabric	25.50

Other Prices on Application.

Carolina Motor Company
INCORPORATED
FISK GOODYEAR UNITED STATES