

The Barnwell People.

Largest Circulation in the County

WIL. THE FARMERS LISTEN?

From The Cotton Plant.

There is no doubt that the farmers of the South are standing just now at the parting of the ways, and upon their decision will depend to a great extent the policy and plans of a generation. Cotton has given them more money per pound than for any year in a decade, because the crop of last year was raised for less cost per pound, and hence there was more clear money realized. Besides the average farmer was in a better financial plight than he has been for ten years, because he has been practicing economy and raising his own food crops for man and beast. The money brought by his cotton crop has been more nearly a surplus than any year since the inflated prices that prevailed just after the war, when every thing was booming along that line, and the contagion of going into debt took hold of the farming class and held it in a firm grip for twenty years.

Conditions are changed for the better, and nearly every farmer will admit that the best plan is to raise supplies on the farm, make as few obligations as possible, and cultivate only enough cotton to call it a surplus crop. The large acreage in wheat would indicate that the farmers are determined to stick the potey which has in a large measure brought them out of debt and planted their feet on solid ground, but there are signs that many of them are weakening and vacillating at the present time, which would forebode a return to past conditions and restore the runious management of affairs in the South. One of these signs is that the fertilizer companies and agents are generally reporting larger sales than usual, and the inference is that the fertilizers will be used on the cotton crop. This may not be true in every instance, but the large majority of farmers are not yet adepts in the use of commercial fertilizers for any other purpose than raising cotton.

On the threshold of another year the farmers in the South should make haste slowly about putting their trust too much in cotton. What guarantee is there that prices such as are now prevailing will be realized next fall? A craze on planting cotton this spring will inevitably lower the price in September, and already the speculators are beginning to use the increased purchase of fertilizers to depress the price of cotton futures. Will we never learn that the world is combined against the Southern farmer to get his cotton for the least money, and that every factor which indicates a larger crop is used to our disadvantage? The sensible and pointed remarks of Mr. R. T. Nesbitt, of Georgia, which we print in another column, gives needed information and advice, which ought to be taken by all the farmers of the South. His counsel in regard to the farmer putting himself into a position whereby he will not be forced to sell cotton early in the season is worthy of careful study. The bonded warehouses may not be accessible to every community, but there are few towns in the South where the farmers cannot make arrangements with local banks and merchants to get advances upon cotton after it has been baled, and thereby prevent the rush of the crop to the interior markets early in the fall. There is no doubt that the advice given last fall to hold back cotton aided to a great extent in raising the price in October and November, but concert of action among the farmers through banks and merchants where bonded warehouses do not exist will have a like effect another season.

Let no one be deceived by the present prices of cotton, which would not yield near the profit this year than was realized from the crop of 1899. Not only will the farmer have to pay more for his fertilizers, but as prices have advanced all along the line, his labor will cost him more than last year, and he cannot buy a mule for anything like the price paid one year ago. His plows will cost nearly a hundred per cent. more than they did last year, and all machinery used on the farm has advanced not less than fifty per cent. Agricultural implements and all else bought from the stores will cost more this year, and it is a matter of impossibility that cotton can be grown as cheaply as last year, or in fact that any kind of farming can be done in 1900 at the same cost as in 1899. Farmers who are so unfortunate as to buy provisions this year will feel the effect keenly every time they enter a store to get their supplies.

Will the farmers listen to the warnings of their best and most reliable counsellors? Or will they ignore the facts staring them in the face, and plunge headlong into a course which cannot end in any other way than disappointment and disaster? The COTTON PLANT to the full measure of its influence wishes to avert the calamity that is lying just ahead, and recognizes with intense satisfaction that some of the farmers in South Carolina are preparing to fight the trusts by organizing

their forces in due season. Still the great masses of our people are suspiciously yielding to what they consider the decree of fate against them, when by intelligent and earnest effort they might teach a lesson to the fertilizer trust that would benefit them for many years to come.

THE OUTLOOK OF THE FARMER

AN INTERESTING REVIEW OF THE SITUATION—GOOD ADVICE FROM AN EXPERT.

The following article from the pen of Mr. R. T. Nesbitt, former commissioner of agriculture in Georgia, is well adapted to the conditions existing in South Carolina, and our readers will profit by its perusal:

The farmers have been the recipients of much gratuitous advice, and I hesitate in the face of so grave a question as whether the cotton area question is looming up again and possibly there may be those who, despite the disastrous lessons of the past, are contemplating the folly of again committing themselves to an overwhelming cotton crop. Surely we have suffered too painfully from this mistake to again plunge ourselves and all connected with us into this sea of agricultural and financial troubles.

Let each of us narrow this question down to his own farm and there let us decide it. It is immaterial what our neighbor does; it is, to a large measure, immaterial to us individually whether the cotton area be large or small; for in the agricultural results of 1900 it will be found that success has come to the man who, regardless of outside influences, has planted ample provision crops and then as much cotton as can afford to thoroughly prepare for, highly manure and rapidly cultivate.

Short or large crop, high or low price, he stands the first chance to win, and if the details of preparation, fertilization and cultivation be so managed that he gets the largest yield from the smallest area, he has mastered the secret of successful cotton production. Having done his utmost, in his individual capacity, to settle the ever-recurring cotton problem, he must seek means to combine with his brother farmers, with the merchants and with the bankers, in order that the general cotton crop may be held against the pernicious influences of speculative combinations and their power to wrest from his grasp his hard earnings ere he can realize a fair return for his investment.

The bonded warehouse bill, now a law, is perhaps the first step toward the emancipation of the Southern farmer from his bondage to Wall and Lombard streets. Here we have the inception of a plan whereby the farmer who wishes to hold his cotton may, for a nominal sum, store and insure his crop, the warehouse receipt being a letter of credit acceptable in any business transaction. By mutual agreement both farmer and merchant are secured. Should the plan become general, the glutted markets, so often witnessed in the earlier fall months, will be consigned to a dead past, never to be resurrected. The farmers will by this plan be enabled to market their cotton with more judgment and not under the whip and spur of necessity. Witness the powerful lever which the limited co-operation of the present season has proven in forcing up prices. Right now, have the bankers, the merchants and our local manufacturers held the price of cotton without the repeated and vicious attacks of manipulators, speculators and "prophets of evil."

It has been asked, if a man has the land, with sufficient supplies and stock, is he not justified, after setting aside an amply sufficient area for provision and supply crops, in crowding in every possible acre for cotton? Yes, and no. Yes, if he has good land, or such as has been gradually brought up to a good state of fertility. No, if his acres are like hundreds and thousands over the South, each year condemned to cotton culture, and which do not pay the cost of production. In this denuded acres go to swell the general crop and thus reduce the average price, they, to that extent, increase the burden which their cultivation imposes. No greater mistake was ever made, than to rush over the preparation of a large area of poor land, to be stimulated by a little commercial fertilizer, and planted indiscriminately in cotton.

At the beginning of a new year the cotton farmer is apt to overestimate the fertility of his soil as well as his ability to prepare and cultivate a full quota of broad acres. It is only after he is irrevocably committed to the "extensive" plan, and finds himself "over cropped," that he realizes his mistake, and begins to wish that a part at least of his land had been devoted to a rest, or to some renovating crop. In the final settlement, however, he does not always realize the fact that the painful disparity between the receipts and expenditures of his year's accounts might be traced directly to this big leak of injudicious cotton cultivation. It certainly does not pay to plant an indiscriminate and wide area in cotton—though a man have supplies, stock and surplus of well-worn and overtaxed acres of hard-run land.

The efforts which Gov. Merriam, director of the census, is making to induce farmers to prepare statements of their operations for the calendar year of 1899, so that they will be ready to reply definitely and accurately to the enumerators' questions next June, are bearing fruit. Some farmers have forwarded copies of statements to the census office, accompanied by inquiries as to their completeness and correctness. The first and one of the best of these statements came from a woman who operates a farm in Pennsylvania on her own account. The paper shows not only the acreage, quantity and value of each crop, but contains also a good inventory of live stock and a detailed statement of the quantity and value of miscellaneous articles produced. If every farmer would imitate this woman, the agricultural report of this twelfth census would be a marvel of completeness and would show the entire productive strength of the United States in food products.

In our own case many causes have led to this, we have only to point to Ireland, whose poverty stricken people, under the bondage to alien lords, have seen their crops removed and expended elsewhere, year after year, and nothing of this departed fertility replaced.

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ods to restore and preserve the fertility of our soils and keep up the productive power of our farms. At the close of the war, much of the land at the South was impoverished from successive years of culture and despite the fact that the war left us very poor people, in Georgia alone property values being reduced from \$600,000,000 to \$150,000,000, our farmers took up the struggle bravely, hoping to retrieve their losses in the further production of cotton, which ruled bewilderingly high.

The infatuation of high prices in every avenue of trade and commerce prevailed. Credit was easy, too easy, and everything needed on the farm was ruinously dear. Mules \$150 to \$250; flour \$10, \$15 \$20 per barrel; meal in the same proportion; meat 25 cents a pound; farm laborers \$150 to \$175 per year, and rations; besides guano \$90 per ton and farm tools were eagerly purchased at prices which we would now regard as almost prohibitory. But this high pressure policy could not continue indefinitely, neither could the methods prevailing before the war, except in rare and favored cases, be successfully brought over into the new conditions, which followed that memorable and devastating struggle.

At least 90 per cent. of the men who plunged into this desperate and speculative period became hopelessly involved, both farmers and merchants. The high price of cotton and the ease with which high priced supplies could be purchased, credit prices being predicated on big and remunerative cotton crops, tempted many men to put every available acre in cotton and not one square inch or else a totally inadequate area in provision or supply crops of any kind. When the price of cotton declined, both the farmer, who had borrowed, and the merchant, who had loaned, found themselves saddled with debts which only years of earnest and patient labor could hope to wipe out. In many instances after a vain struggle to regain the lost vantage ground, the merchants went to the wall and the old plantations passed into the hands of strangers.

This is a sad picture and pity 'tis, true. It was only those men who followed more conservative methods and who apprehended the new era just beginning to dawn on our agriculture, who were able to retain their birthright and weather the storm of financial depression, which swept with such fearful force over the entire South. But that generation has passed—new men have come upon the scene and now prevail. The strong, young business men of the South, farmers and merchants and manufacturers and bankers have been trained in very different school from the magnificent golden age of the old South. Agricultural literature has been spread broadcast over the land, experiment stations have multiplied, farmers' institutes and colleges and other methods for disseminating agricultural and up-to-date principles are in easy reach of the army of earnest workers constituting 73 per cent. of our population who are reading, studying and applying these vital truths. Already diversified farming and rotation, fruit growing, cattle raising and butter making are taking the place of the one-crop system with its attendant bondage to debt and the independent farmer, who can make his cotton and hold it is not the rags avise him once was.

"A bachelor still, Paul," said Dick, while Mrs. Avery and her pretty cousin were preparing supper. "Why, ma, you ought to have been settled down in life these ten years! You and I used to be about of age, I believe. Paul, and I'm getting along well to war! my fortune. Thirty-eight last year."

It was certainly uncalled for—Dick's mentioning ages just then; but some how Dick Avery was always a blunt kind of a fellow.

"I'm happy as a king," he resumed, taking his youngest son—a fine fellow whom he had "remembered" upon his knee. "Nelly's proved a treasure; wasn't too much of a fine lady to give up her Eastern home and accompany me out to the borders of the wilderness, and I have mapped out great careers for the young one."

Just then Gertrude Bird came into the room and summoned us to supper. Candidly, I don't remember the time that Hest Easy ever got up such a tempting meal! And then my appetite so specified with the tyrant that had held it in abeyance.

Upon the whole, it was decidedly pleasant. After supper, Dick proposed having some music. "We always have a little sing of evenings," said he, "and to-night I propose 'Auld Lang Syne.' Come, Gertie!" Miss Bird sat down to the piano and "Auld Lang Syne" was followed by a dozen other melodies, and then Dick read a chapter in the Bible and we all retired for the night.

I and my son, R. T. Nesbitt.

Marietta, Ga., January 8, 1900.

It is expected that unusually good facilities for studying phenomena connected with the interior of the earth will be afforded at the University of Michigan, at Ann Arbor, where a well is to be sunk to the depth of several thousand feet on the university grounds. The investigations on this well will be carried on by Prof. I. C. Russell of the department of geology, and Dr. Carl Gutzke of the department of physics, and the fact of a deep well being located so near the laboratories of the university will doubtless provoke much original work on this subject.

In addition to questions of a geological nature, involving the various strata pierced by the boring, there are many problems connected with the interior of the earth which have not yet been solved.

But I have not time here to recount all the events of that month in Dick Avery's home. Suffice it that such was a type of rest. And a little time the tyrant, dyspepsia, had been growing feebler in his sway, till finally he entirely abdicated the throne. And then I began to think of coming home, and then was it that my encumbrance came to me after this wise.

"Paul," said Dick, one day, coming to me with a serious face from a long talk with Gertrude Bird, "how would you like company to the East? Gertrude is thoroughly homesick and longs to see her mother again; and though we shall lose half the sunshine of our home, I cannot urge her to stay another month. Your going back offers such a capital chance for her to travel in company that Gertie's deputed me to ask you if she'll be any encumbrance to you."

So what was left for me, Paul Particular, bachelor, who had never "taken charge" of a lady on a journey in my life, but to protest to Dick Avery, his wife, and to Miss Gertrude Bird that it would afford me sincerest pleasure to act as escort from Montana to Massachusetts to the last named young lady! And this is how I came by my encumbrance!

It is one thing to meet a young lady

—and that lady as pretty and bewitching as Miss Bird at stated hours, daytime and evening, and quite another to find yourself shut up in the same railway car with her and seated on the same seat with her for a journey of three or four days and nights together.

One either gets thoroughly wearied of or in love with his companion during all this; that is, if he is unmarried and susceptible. But I, Paul Particular, who had arrived at the age of—well, Dick has revealed the matter of my age for me—might have been supposed to possess abilities to steer clear of both Scylla and Charybdis.

The first day's journey was in no wise different from that of any good-tempered, easy man who is encumbered with the charge of a young lady, with her dainty individual wants to attend to.

Sure it was that Miss Gertrude Bird's first twelve weeks were comparatively easy ones to her.

A BACHELOR'S ENCUMBRANCE.

I, Paul Particular, went West late last autumn, and when I returned I was in company with my encumbrance.

Imprimit, my paternal patronymic "particular;" I was particular from my childhood. I grew up particular, for these id's are "grown with my growth" and strengthened with my strength. I would not till the com'ntable little country estate left me because a farmer must sometimes wear overalls; so arranged Primrose cottage a nicely painted and elegant furniture could render it, hired Dorece Trim as housekeeper and Job Turfary as gardener, and went into town, entered into the commission and brokerage business, and took rooms at Easy's hotel.

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FEMALE MAIL.

That sounds more contradictory than it is, when attention is called to its being. One of the remarkable features of this correspondence is that years after a cure has been effected, grateful women continue to write to Dr. R. V. Pierce, the celebrated specialist in women's diseases, chief consulting physician to the Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute, Buffalo, N. Y.

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Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription, the great remedy for female troubles, irregularities, debilitating drains, inflammation and ulceration, is for sale by all dealers in medicine. Accept no substitute which may be recommended as "just as good" that the dealer may make a little extra profit.

Try it and you will praise it to the

sky if your druggist doesn't keep it, write to

PITT'S

Antiseptic Invigorator

Cures dyspepsia, indigestion, and

stomach or bowel troubles, convulsions

and spasms, rheumatism, toothache

and neuralgia, tooth and all sorts

of sores, rising or felon, cuts and burns

as good antiseptic, when locally applied

as good as anything on the market.