

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NOTES

Proposed Agricultural and Industrial Fair.

The article that appeared in yesterday's Item and the Watchman and Southron in regard to the organization of an Agricultural and Industrial Fair is worthy of the careful consideration of every resident of this county. There can not be the slightest doubt that this county, this State and the entire South can not diversify its crops too soon. This is an acknowledged fact. There can be no dispute on this question. Article after article has been written upon the cotton question and every imaginable remedy has been suggested. "Hold your cotton" says one. "Borrow money and hold" is the remedy of another. "Plant less acreage" says another. Unquestionably we are sick and need a remedy. We are blessed with many doctors and many different remedies.

When a man finds himself in a hole, he bends every effort to get himself out in the least possible time. This effort is most likely the greatest effort of his life. Diversification is a big word and actual diversification is a great big task for a people who for centuries have been raising almost one crop. It can not be accomplished in one year or two or half a dozen years. It will take time and hard strenuous efforts. But it would be foolish to say that because this is the fact that we can do nothing but talk. It is decidedly cheap. We must act now and this action is going to cost effort and money. If then you are convinced that any proposal is an effort in the right direction and it is going to cost you something to aid in the work, are you just going to talk or are you going to dig and keep digging until you are out of the hole?

Education is all right so far as it goes but there must be an incentive. Little has ever been done without it. We need today two things to start the diversification of crops. Experience and a market. To accomplish the first we must establish a fair association and every man in this county who can possibly do so should subscribe to the stock of this association. The sum required need not be large. A working capital of \$15,000 will be sufficient to start on. The stock can be divided into 225 shares and payable in five installments. It is not necessary to build any expensive buildings or to buy any land at first. What we need right now is a working organization. Remember that the fair is but the smallest part of the work of the association. In fact it is but the exhibition of what has been accomplished by the county during each year. Immediately upon organization a qualified secretary should be engaged. The organization should

then at once offer the very best cash prizes possible for every conceivable agricultural product that can be or that it is possible to raise in the county. Prizes for the best live stock and poultry raised in the county. The best kept country schools, farms, etc. The secretary should then visit every nook and corner in the county. Organize girls' tomato clubs and boys' corn clubs. Hold meetings and individually and collectively encourage a spirit of friendly rivalry for the purpose of competing for the prizes offered by the Fair Association. By this means the work is going on the entire year and the prizes are large enough to make it worth while.

The fair itself is then but the culmination of this work. It will be the exhibition of the products that have been raised, the cost of raising them and the profits from the same. It can be made an educational institution for the county not only at the fair itself but throughout the county during the entire year. Every garden patch can be made into an experimental station. Every farm can thus be encouraged to raise live stock and poultry. The raising of fruit for which large parts of the county are especially adaptable can be encouraged. The same is true of course for the stable farm products

of corn and cotton and vegetables. Such an effort must necessarily take the entire time of one man for the year. It will demand not only his time for the above work but for the actual arrangement of the fair itself. Securing special features, machinery exhibits and general programme. The fair can be made to pay without a doubt in addition to the benefits that will accrue by the general work. Orangeburg this year with a paid in capital of \$7,500, cleared over \$4,000. The effort is worth while and steps should be taken at once to organize such an association. The Chamber of Commerce stands ready to aid in every possible way. The farmers of the county are vitally interested and their co-operation is absolutely necessary. The rural relations committee of the Chamber of Commerce of which Mr. L. I. Parrott is chairman and of which a number of farmers are members, will meet in a few days to take up this question.

Along with this movement to encourage diversification must necessarily follow the proper marketing of these new crops. Dr. Baker at the Chamber of Commerce meeting pointed out the fact that there is already a market in Sumter for a large part of this produce. At the same time the Chamber of Commerce is endeavoring to establish a canning factory and to secure other factories that will aid in using the products of the farm. More live stock must be raised in the county. With an increase in the production of these crops will follow buyers and proper facilities, such as elevators, to care for same. What other sections have done in the past, Sumter can and will do. After all it is the same old story of "pull together" and every man doing his part and his very best.

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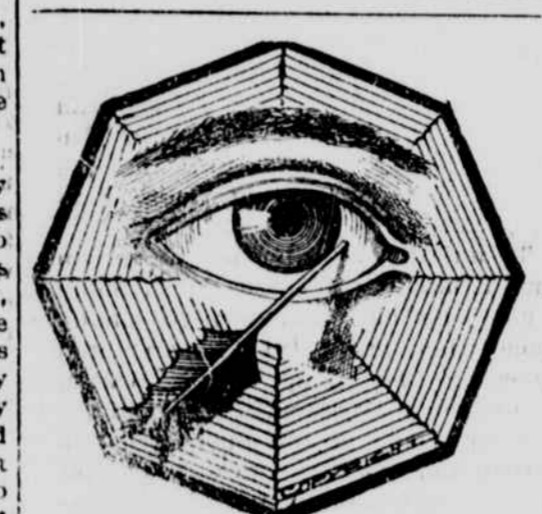
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