

## RAILROADS WILL HELP THE FARMER

Common Carriers Will Co-operate in Marketing Farm Products—Middle Men Charge Higher Rates for Handling Farm Than Factory Products.

By Peter Radford.  
Lecturer National Farmers' Union.

The leading railroad systems of the nation will establish market bureaus to assist the farmers along their lines in marketing their products. Many roads have acceded to the request of the Farmers' Union and announced their willingness to enter into active co-operation with the farmers in marketing their products.

The express companies have surveyed the field and the Federal Government, through the parcel post, has demonstrated the possibilities of the common carrier as a useful agency in marketing farm commodities.

I consider the action of these giant business concerns in determining to co-operate with the farmers in marketing their crops, to be the greatest product of human thought on the Western hemisphere during the past year, and it demonstrates that the educational work of the Farmers' Union has brought the nation to a clearer understanding of the real problem of the farmer.

To give information on marketing is far more valuable than to give advice on production. There is a mutual interest between the railroads and the farmer which cannot exist between any other lines of industry. The railroads are the teamsters of agriculture, and they are employed only when there is something to haul. Good prices will do more to increase tonnage than any other factor, and railroads want tonnage.

Agriculture has many inherent disadvantages which require combined effort to overcome in marketing. There are millions of producing units working independently and selling without knowledge of market conditions. The harvest is once a year, while consumption is pretty evenly distributed throughout the entire year, and most of the farmers, through custom and necessity, dump their entire crop on the market as soon as it is gathered. The problem of organizing and systematizing the markets is one in which the farmers invite assistance of all lines of industry friendly to their interests.

### Farmers Bear the Burden.

The business of the manufacturer lends itself more readily to organization and the facilities for studying the markets are more easily available. The result is that the merchants are compelled to handle more staple manufactured articles at very little profit, and as a consequence the merchant must look to products which he buys direct from the farm for his profits.

The reports of the Federal Department of Agriculture show some very interesting information and enable a comparison between the cost of marketing products of the farm and those of the factory. A few items will serve to illustrate the general run. The cost of getting sugar from the refinery to the consumer is 9 cents on the dollar; the cost of getting tobacco from factory to consumer is 14 cents on the dollar. In selling a dollar's worth of eggs the middleman gets a profit of 50 cents on the dollar. In selling a dollar's worth of potatoes, the middleman makes 70 cents on the dollar; in selling a dollar's worth of fruit, the middleman gets 84 cents on the dollar, and on cantaloupes 82 cents.

Farmers' Bulletin No. 576, published by the United States Department of Agriculture, in discussing this subject, said:

"The high price paid by consumers ranging from 5 to 500 per cent, in some cases, more than the farmer receives, indicates that there is plenty of room for lowering the cost of farm products to consumers and at the same time largely increasing the cash income per farm, without increasing farm production. This condition is undoubtedly a marketing problem which will have to be solved by better organization of farmers and improved methods of marketing."

### Large Shippers Influence Rates.

In railroad rates the inequalities are equally as glaring. Rate making in its primitive stages was largely influenced by demands and arguments of large shippers, but the farmers were unorganized and seldom appeared before rate-making bodies, and the burden of expense in transportation lies largely against the raw products of the farm.

In banking, our securities are discriminated against, as compared with the products of the factories and mines. The farmer is entitled to a square deal. The farmer is more interested in good prices and efficient service than he is in rates.

During the rehearsal of a photo play at Tiffin recently three lions broke loose and attacked a mule harnessed to a cart. They killed and devoured the animal, then two were captured, while the third escaped into the country.

It is reported in the London Times that the government of Tunis is about to establish a reserve to give refuge to the rapidly disappearing fauna of that country. It will include about 4,000 acres of wild mountainous country and an adjoining marsh of 5,000 acres.

## Two Sides of Matrimony

By F. A. MITCHEL.

"Seems to me nowadays all de gals, instead o' wukin', are sittin' roun' waitin' fo' to git married. I don't hab no 'casion fo' to git married. I got two strong arms fo' to rub on a wash-board an' fo' to do ironin'." What I want to get married fo'?"

"Oh, pshaw, Aunt Chloe! You'd like to get married well enough if you had somebody to marry you. How about Nat Taylor, who was courting you, that Pinky Jones took from you?"

"Yo' nebber was mo' mistaken in yo' life 'bout dat. Nat he cum to me one day, an' he say, says he, 'Chloe, yo' don't know any gal dat would like to take care ob my house, do yo'?"

"I was fryin' bacon when he said dat, an' I jest stood with a fo'k in one hand an' looked up at de cellin', thoughtful-like."

"Why, Aunt Chloe, didn't you understand that was a proposal?"

"Proposal to me! 'Twan't so sech thing. Nat knew well 'tuff I kin mak' my own libin', an' he wouldn't insult me by askin' me to come in an' mak' de bed an' cook de vittles an' set roun' an' look purty de rest ob de time. He wanted a lazy gal fo' dat."

"Well, go on with your story."

"Bimeby I think ob Pinky Jones as de mos' wo'thless gal I knowed, consekently de mos' likely gal fo' to get married. So I tole Nat 'bout her, an' he asked a lot ob questions. I wa'n't goin' to mak' myself 'sponsible fo' her, so I jest said she war a fine lookin' gal when she war dressed up. I knowed dat would please him better'n if I said she war a good cook an' washer an' ironer, an' it did. He asked me where she war, an' I tole him, an' he went right off an' begun de cou'tin'."

"Aunt Chloe, you're very smart. You know you are. You know well enough he wanted you, but you didn't want the job yourself, and you turned him aside on purpose."

"Yah, yah!" laughed Chloe knowingly. "Reckon I didn't want de job myself. Nat war very good man too. But what I want to git married fo', anyway? My husband 'ud pay fo' de marryin', but who gwine to pay fo' de divo'ce, I like to know? Do yo' s'pose I can affo'd to travel way out to some o' dem west'n towns an' lib dar a year or mo' fo' to git separated from some wo'thless niggar dat couldn't white-wash a stone wall?"

"Well, how did Nat come out with his suit?"

"How Nat come out? Why, he come out wid a flatiron followin' him. It hit him sqa' on de back ob de head. Mighty lucky dat. Ef it hit him in de back it might 'a' broke it. Ef it hit him in de side it might 'a' stopp'd de heart-a-beatin'. De safes' place fo' Nat to git hit war in de skull. You couldn't break it wid no triffin' thing like a flatiron, an' dere hain't no brains in it to joggle."

"I thought you said Nat was a good man."

"So he is; so he is good man, but I didn't say he war a sma't man. Ef he'd been a sma't man he wouldn't 'a' married Pinky Jones."

"But didn't you recommend her?"

"Dat's jist what Nat said. He come to me wid his head all bandaged up, an' he say, 'Chloe, wha' yo' recommend dat dibbil to me fo'?"

"I didn't recommend her, I said, 'I tole yo' she war a fine lookin' gal when she war dressed up.'"

"What was the trouble between Nat and Pinky?"

"Nat tole me 'bout dat. He said he went home to supper an' dere wa'n't no supper—de butcher didn't send home de po'k chops. Nat asked Pinky why she didn't go get de po'k chops. Pinky said she didn't git married fo' to carry home provisions. Nat said dat ef he worked all day cuttin' people's grass an' beatin' rugs he didn't know why his wife couldn't be sho to hab de supper ready. Pinky said she couldn't cook de supper when de supper wasn't sent home in de delibery wagon."

"Den Nat asked Pinky ef when she war a Georgia nigger de delibery wagon stopp'd at de do' ob her residence wid de provisions. Dat made Pinky mad, an' she war reachin' fo' de flatiron. Nat saw blood in her eye, an' he started out to git his supper somewhere else, but de flatiron tuk him in de back ob de head an' putty nigh knock'd him down. He turned to Pinky an' tole her ef she did dat ag'in he'd hab her arrested."

"Dat war de end ob de misunderstanding. Nat he bo'a'd'in' at a low down bo'a'd'in' house, an' Pinky she libin' in Nat's rooms mighty comf'um."

"Twas all your fault, Aunt Chloe. Nat came to you to ask you to be his wife, and you turned him over to the most wo'thless woman you knew."

"Wo'thless! Yah, yah! Don't yo' be-Hebe it. Pinky's considerin' wedder she gwine to study fo' to be a teacher or to write fo' de magazines. She hain't got no eddication, an' she can't do teachin', so she's gwine into de literary business, I reckon."

"If you had married him he would have been all right."

"Reckon he would 'a' been all right, but whar 'ud I 'a' been? I been gibbin' you de man's side ob de question. Ef I'd 'a' married Nat I'd 'a' been gibbin' you de woman's side. De woman, when she gits a wo'thless husband or don't agree with him, gits a lot of trouble with the plamonian an' all dat. I ruther fry bacon an' do washin'."

## AGRICULTURAL LEGISLATION NEEDED

The Farm the Place to Study All Legislative Problems.

By Peter Radford.  
Lecturer National Farmers' Union.

The principal function performed by government today is to collect taxes, keep records and prevent and punish crime; but that is not sufficient. Government should tip its hat to the Goddess of Opportunity as courageously as it draws a six-shooter on a train robber. We ought to encourage thrift as well as restrain greed. We have been basing legislation upon the extremes of human life—the classes high and low, the deprived and the talented—let us now reach the masses and the extremes will more nearly disappear. Our statutes are filled to overflowing with pity and revenge; let us add opportunity.

The slogan of the Farmers' Union is co-operation. Not only among individual farmers, but between all legitimate and useful occupations. We want to sit around the hearthstone of industry and talk over problems of mutual interest with our neighbors.

We want to invite those who are earnestly searching for information on public questions to get back to the soil with their investigations where, in the stillness of nature, they can climb the mountain-top of wisdom, explore the deep canyons of knowledge and stroll through the quiet valleys of understanding.

There is no problem in civilization that cannot be found in its native state on the farm. The labor, educational, financial, transportation, home-building and all other problems are there. We will discuss a few of them.

### The Labor Problem.

How to the dignity of labor. No one would be willing to do more to lighten the burdens, increase the safety, comforts and profits of those who labor in commerce and industry than their fellow toilers in agriculture. But how about the farmer who bows his back to feed and clothe the world, and who works from sun until sun? Is he not also entitled to an increase in pay and a shortening of hours? Much has been said about the women in the factory and behind the counter, but how about the woman in the field, drenched in perspiration, gathering the harvest, the little children, their lips wet with mother's milk, tolling by her side? Are they not also entitled to consideration? Is not the man who digs in the ground entitled to the same consideration as he who toils at the forge, weaves at the loom and works behind the counter?

The farmer has been bearing his burdens as patiently as the beast he plows, but is patience a bar from justice? The labor problem of Virginia today is on the farm, and the first attention should be given those who labor in the field.

### The Need of Cheap Money.

Agriculture has never been properly financed. The farmer pays a much higher rate of interest as a rule than any other class of borrower and his property, especially that of farm products, is not so readily accepted as a basis of credit as the property of other lines of industry of equal market value.

A rural or land credit system is needed that will enable a farmer to buy a home on long time at a cheap rate of interest.

A statute based on sound business principles that will enable the landless to buy and encourage the large land owner to sell, is much needed, and one that merits the most serious consideration of our law makers.

The financial problem of the state and nation is on the farm, and first attention should be given those who create the nation's wealth.

It is an admitted economic fact that there can be no permanent prosperity without a permanent agriculture.

An up-to-date farmer must have an accurate knowledge of today and a clear vision of tomorrow.

In this age of advancement in agricultural science there is no excuse for soil depletion to further menace the nation's prosperity.

Soil is not a dead, inert substance, as many suppose. It is an active, virile force, full of energy and power and the farmer should know his soil if he would maintain its productiveness.

Agriculture is recognized as the greatest of all industries and a prosperous, progressive and enlightened agricultural population is the surest safeguard of civilization.

### Reflection.

"Not everything in this world is appropriate."

"What makes you think of that?"

"The fact is that navy widows do not wear sea weeds.—Baltimore American."

### A Snapshot.

"Here's a case where the police caught a photographer they wanted in his dark room."

"Ha! A genuine case of arrested development!"—Baltimore American."

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