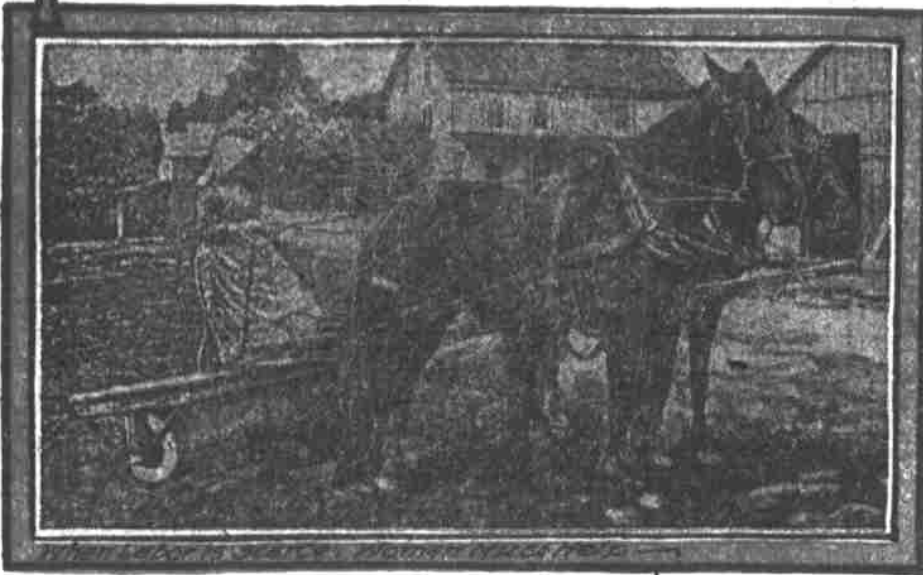


PORTLAND, OREGON, SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 19, 1908

# THAT MODERN ATLAS, *the* AMERICAN FARMER



## We Must Help Him Bear His Burden, Declares Secretary Wilson

*Is the best fed, best housed, best dressed nation of the world deliberately planning to lower itself to European conditions of existence, where, with wages in their pockets that would mean Lucullan feasts to foreign laborers, American mechanics will not be able to afford meat on their tables any oftener than the poor of Europe's capitals?*

*One type of worker alone stands between the United States and its near disaster.*

*He is an army in himself, the living keystone of the arch of comfort, the Atlas on whose shoulders weighs the burden of American prosperity.*

*He is the American farmer.*

*Men in that army of peaceful triumphs—not the women, or the 578,740 boys and girls under 16 years of age, who give such efficient aid—numbered 8,771,181 at last counting of heads, more than twice the total of 4,244,538 men the census showed as being engaged in manufactures.*

*Is he the hope of our country's future? Let us see.*

**I**N the years gone by the farmer had his allies—other men who came to his aid, hardly supporting him when the burden grew too vast. But everywhere—in mine and railroad, in factory and forest—the teeming millions of his neighbors had robbed him of them.

Today he stands alone, striving with titanic courage to endure the strain; yet seemingly doomed, in spite of his vast numbers, to sink under his toil, unless the help he needs be given.

If he yield, if his enormous strength give way at last under his still more enormous toil, no section of the mighty society borne up by his single strength can escape the universal ruin.

And James Wilson, secretary of agriculture, declaring that the farmer cannot much



steps must be taken to help the farmers secure a portion of the immigration pouring in upon our shores."

Briefly, but not so forcibly as the secretary stated the features of the greatest industrial problem a nation has ever faced, those few sentences can serve to bring home to all our eighty millions some hint of what we must do to be saved.

Their elaboration, in the graphic terms the secretary employed in order that the nation might realize the full significance of his warning, shows the wide ramifications of the difficulties in which all must be called upon to share. The full statement of Secretary Wilson declares:

"The productiveness of the United States along agricultural lines is not keeping pace with the growth of our population. Meats are dear because meat-bearing animals are falling behind the population in relative numbers.

"Labor is scarce on the farm, and labor is dear on the farm, because the factory, the forest, the mine and the railroad are taking away the farmer's workers through wages fixed at

this year. There are said to be hundreds of thousands of idle men in the United States. All of them could secure employment on the farms—employment affording food, shelter and living wages.

"There are consequences awaiting us. The result of all this will be the bringing about of European conditions. Many of our working people today cannot pay the prices current for meats.

"If we do not desire to have, this condition of affairs go to greater extremes, steps should

cannot employ the help that is requisite for the growth of grains and the production of meats. And that is the case now with the farmers in a great many states of the Union.

"The United States has made remarkable growth as a manufacturing nation because material is cheaper and better here than in any other country of the world.

"Our farmers are making the most energetic efforts to produce. They have the best machinery the world of agriculture knows. They themselves work and their families work. But the demand is greater than they can supply.

"It would seem like needless emphasis of the obvious to aver that the industries of the country depend upon the farmer. The wealth he makes from the farm is what brings to us the gold from the Old World. It is what brings that gold today, as it was the agency which brought the gold to help the people in New York when the panic was in evidence.

What do those "European conditions" mean, to which the secretary refers as the inevitable results in which we are to be plunged because the American farmer is being left to bear his burden, which is the national burden, alone?

Students of the living levels of nations have agreed upon acceptance of the per capita consumption of meat as a fair test of the relative richness of dietaries; for the world over, and however fondly the advocates of fish, fruit and vegetables may cling to their chosen sustenance, the mass of any population indulges generously in meat when it can pay the price.

Given meat in plenty all other foods are usually available in a rich and varied supply; and the table of a people enjoying an ample meat diet is as safe to prove generous as the table stinted of meat is safe to prove poor.

### WHAT POOR FOOD MEANS

Italy, with her pitiful forty-six and a half pounds of meat per head annually, is today showing, by the low vitality of her people, fatal as many diseases are among them which are mild illnesses elsewhere, how poorly nourished the whole kingdom must be.

Compare the home of the vine, with its sunny skies and its growing hunger, losing in 1904 its millions of workers to the United States, with this land of broad acres which absorbed them.

Their allowance of forty-six and a half pounds of meat at home was scarcely more than one-fifth the average annual consumption of the American working man. An exhaustive study of the living expenses of the American mechanic, North and East, South and West, showed that he kept a table laden with the most varied foods—and included in that diet, not for the working class alone, but for all the people of the whole nation, was an average yearly supply of meat amounting to 220½ pounds.

Meat-loving Britain could afford less than half that allowance; 105 pounds was the best the traditional lovers of roast beef could attain.

Germany, with her agriculture intensified to the last lost corner of her fields and her manufactures perfected by the most systematic technical education the world contains, averages no more than 105½ pounds, while France, with her microscopic economies from the nursery to the kitchen, eats only seventy-eight and nine-tenths pounds and has so little warm red blood that she sees her citizenry vanishing like leaves in autumn.

These are the European conditions, of whose preliminary years of lean line the United States is having now its first hungry foretaste.

Popular butchers—not merely independent of their trust, but pledged to compete with it for their very existence—corroborate the secretary of agriculture. The utterly unexpected leap of wholesale prices for dressed beef on the Chicago markets this summer startled the dealers even more than the retail prices astonished the general consumers. They could only admit that the trust was not then responsible.

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Where Many Men are Needed—a Western Harvest Scene

longer endure the strain, presents the most imminent of national problems:

"Meats are dear because meat-bearing animals are falling behind the population in relative numbers.

"Factory, forest, mine and railroad are taking away the farmer's workers.

"Our immigrants do not reach our farms, and out of the thousands of men idle this spring none have sought employment at farm labor.

"The result of all this will be the bringing about of European conditions.

"If we do not desire to have the existing condition of affairs go to greater extremes,

rates which the farmer cannot afford to pay.

"The population of the United States is growing both by reason of the natural increase of the families domiciled in America and by accretions through immigration from abroad.

"But the immigrants do not reach to the farm. The farmers who do come to us from foreign countries do not find their way to the farms of this country; and the immigration laws prevent American farmers from going to foreign countries and selecting there the prospective immigrants whose services could aid them.

"At no period of our history has the American farmer needed help so much as he needs it