

Home and Farm Magazine Section Editorial Page

Suggestions From Our Associate Editors, Allowing For an Interchange of Views, Written by Men of Experience on Topics With Which They Are Fully Acquainted—Hints Along Lines of Progressive Farm Thought.

HOW AND WHEN TO BORROW.

FIVE rules designed to convince farmers that there is no magic about credit are set down in farmers' bulletin 593, "How to Use Farm Credit," which the department has just published. Unless the farmer who is thinking of borrowing money fully understands these rules and is willing to be guided by them, the government's advice to him is—don't.

AS IT IS, THERE ARE PROBABLY ALMOST AS MANY FARMERS IN THIS COUNTRY WHO ARE SUFFERING FROM TOO MUCH AS FROM TOO LITTLE CREDIT.

Of these rules the three most important are:

1. Make sure that the purpose for which the borrowed money is to be used will produce a return greater than needed to pay the debt.
2. The length of time the debt is to run should have a close relation to the productive life of the improvement for which the money is borrowed.
3. Provision should be made in long-time loans for the gradual reduction of the principal.

The first rule is, of course, the key to the wise use of credit. Between borrowing money to buy equipment of some sort with which to make more money there is all the difference between folly and foresight, extravagance and thrift.

IF THE MONEY IS BORROWED FOR A WISE PURPOSE IT WILL PRODUCE ENOUGH TO PAY BACK PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST AND LEAVE A FAIR MARGIN OF PROFIT FOR THE BORROWER INTO THE BARGAIN.

If it is borrowed for a foolish purpose it will produce nothing and consequently there will be nothing with which to repay the loan. From this point of view it matters comparatively little whether the interest be high or low. It is the repayment of the principal that is the chief difficulty.

Rules 2 and 3 deal with the most satisfactory ways of repayment. Underneath them both is the same principle: The loan must be repaid with the money it earns itself.

For example, if the money is used to buy a machine that will last 10 years, the machine must earn enough in that time to pay for itself or it never will. The loan, therefore, should be entirely repaid before the 10 years are up or the farmer will lose money on the transaction, paying out interest for no benefit in return.

On the other hand, if too early a date is set for repayment, the machine will not have had sufficient opportunity to make the requisite money, and the borrower may have difficulty in raising it elsewhere.

Rule 3 provides for some form of amortization, the system by which the principal is repaid in installments so that the amount of the loan is continually diminishing and in consequence the interest charges also. Such a system is quite feasible when the loan is really productive, when it returns to the borrower a definite revenue each year.

Tables showing the payments required to pay off principal and interest in varying periods of time are appended to the bulletin and are recommended to the serious consideration of every one who contemplates borrowing money.

The bulletin also advises the farmer to secure the lowest possible interest. At first sight this seems too obvious to be worth mentioning. Of course, the interest should be as small as possible. Everybody knows that—except the lender. But if the other rules are observed, if the borrower manages his financial affairs soundly, he will be surprised to find how much easier it is to obtain favorable terms.

THE RIGHT KIND OF LENDER DOES NOT WANT TO FORECLOSE MORTGAGES; HE

WANTS HIS MONEY BACK WITH A FAIR PROFIT, LIKE ANY OTHER MERCHANT. FOR MONEY THAT IS BORROWED WISELY, FOR MONEY THAT IS SURE TO BE REPAID, HE CHARGES LOW INTEREST.

This, in fact, is why the government has published these rules for borrowers. It is not so much a matter of driving a shrewd bargain as it is of observing a few fundamental principles which alone can make credit a blessing and not a curse.

SEND FOR COL. GOETHALS.

Thorough investigation by government engineers shows that there is a water supply in the semi-arid and the arid regions of the west sufficient to irrigate approximately 30,000,000 acres, or enough land to furnish homes for 5,000,000 people, which is a big item in these days of land scarcity.

The government is spending more than \$1,000,000 a month in reclamation work, and still it can not supply land fast enough to meet the demand.

The cost of a single battleship invested in an irrigation work will supply 4000 families with permanent homes on the land, and every dollar will in time be returned to the federal treasury with interest.

We have spent \$500,000,000 to construct the Panama canal.

A loan of a like sum invested in irrigation would make homes of four acres each for 250,000 families and insure the future prosperity of 1,250,000 people without taking a dollar permanently from the government treasury.

On the basis of the present annual returns from government irrigated lands, the products of this new area each year would have a value of \$250,000,000, equal to one-half the total investment.

An appropriation of \$100,000,000 should be made immediately available for this work.

Under the wise and comprehensive plans of Secretary Lane, it is certain that with such a sum available the several western states would co-operate by appropriating a like sum for the prompt construction of irrigation projects.

There are 30,000,000 acres of desert that can be reclaimed and there are 1,000,000 families that want to put this land in crop.

What are we going to do about it? In order to preserve the economic and social balance of this country, we must during the next decade, devote more attention to its agricultural development.

The pendulum of population must be swung sharply forward, and the massing of people in centers already congested must cease.

During the last 30 years the drift has been steadily cityward. In 1880 70 per cent of the population was rural; in 1910 it was only 54 per cent. In all but two states the urban population is now increasing faster than the rural.

It is up to Uncle Sam to get busy. So should western congressmen, regardless of politics.

Let a national loan of \$100,000,000 be made to develop the interior of the United States.

Colonel Goethals built the canal, and oversaw the expenditures of almost \$500,000,000.

There is no doubt that President Wilson and Secretary Lane would be given the \$100,000,000 to spend on irrigation of public lands, if they put Goethals in charge of the expenditure.

Goethals has made good. Raise this \$100,000,000 and let Goethals spend it.

VALUE OF FARM MANURE.

IF PROPERLY cared for, the manure from one cow is worth about 50 cents a week.

It doesn't pay to toss it outside the barn door and let the rain wash the valuable part of it away, does it?

WHAT DADDY WAS UP AGAINST.

LOOKING back over my boyhood days," said an Atchison man recently, "I would not exchange them for those my own boy is experiencing. I was poor as a church mouse, while my boy has an average good home, but he is missing so many good, wholesome pleasures I had but did not appreciate.

"I was raised out in the country where no person ordered me out of their way or off their premises. There were fields and woods, creeks to wade in, barns to play in, orchards with no 'keep out' sign displayed.

"My son wears sandals in summer. I couldn't afford footwear for summer and went barefoot. My boy has shoes than can be put on easy in winter and overshoes. I reveled in cowhide boots.

"My boy has overcoats, sweaters and the warmest underwear. I knew nothing about a sweater, bought my first overcoat after I was 20 years old and wore canton flannel, home-made underclothes. My boy has a coaster wagon, roller and ice skates and often rides in an automobile. But he does not have a dog, he never broke a calf to lead, never has made or repaired a wagon of any sort, doesn't know what it is to roam the country over.

"I would not give the pleasure I had with my dog, which I broke to pull, a lamb I hitched up with the dog, a calf I broke to lead and finally to work in shafts until it was a year old, the work of making carts for the dog to haul, repairing his harness, and dozens of other amusements which never cost a cent, for the coaster wagon, the roller and ice skates, the movies, the automobile and train rides which are the pastime and pleasures of my boy.

"Boys of today have their work, pleasure and pastime laid out for them. Boys of my day had to create their own. I am sure I enjoyed life more than do the boys of today."

HE EATS LIKE A KING.

FROM the Rhymes of a Retired Harvester, in the Atchison Globe:

"The days are long and heated where toils the harvest hand, and ere the job's completed, he'll swear to beat the band.

"For wheat beards try to puncture his weather-beaten skin and at another juncture, the sweat bees rub it in. And when he seeks his slumber late in the stilly night, mosquitoes in large number drive Morpheus to flight.

"When comes the first gray dawning of one more sultry day, he's out where there's no awning to keep the sun away. Out there until the finish, he juggles golden grain lest output might diminish, or get caught in the rain.

"The work is hard and dreary; the pay is not so great, for working till you're weary from early morn till late.

"But here's a consolation for those who go that way to feed a hungry nation and garner what they may:

"His appetite's a wonder and something hard to beat, and yet he'll find, by thunder, they have enough to eat."

WHEN GIRLS LEAVE HOME.

ELIZABETH S. M'ATEE, general secretary of the Young Women's Christian Association, of Cincinnati, has written a letter of advice to girls.

"My first advice to every country girl is, don't come to the city unless it is absolutely necessary," says Miss McAtee.

"At the present time there are so many ways in which a woman can earn a livelihood in the country—ways which require intelligence and brains and which are exceedingly remunerative.

"On the other hand our large cities are crowded with boys and girls working for a few dollars a week—so few indeed, that they do not supply the necessities of life.

"If, in spite of advice, a girl insists on trying life in the city, she should have money enough to defray her first month's expenses and pay her way home.

"She should know where she is going when she reaches the city.

"The Y. W. C. A. is always ready to have strangers met at the station and direct them to safe places. "Above all girls traveling alone should not make acquaintances on the train or at the station and should ask information only of officials in uniform.

"The time is not far distant when the National Travelers' Aid Society will have a representative at every railroad station, traction station and steamboat landing.

"Every girl coming to a strange city should bring with her a letter from her pastor or some other person of good standing in the community from which she comes."

The main thing is: Before leaving home, think twice or thrice.

A GOOD IDEA.

IF the school children of Portland and other points in Oregon and Washington attend the Columbia River Interstate Fair, to be held at Vancouver, Wash., September 7-12, in as great numbers as there are free tickets for them, special cars will have to be put on the run between Portland and Vancouver.

To the school children of Portland 32,000 free tickets have been distributed, and some of the children who have gardens there will enter the produce in competition at the fair this fall. To children in other places outside of Portland 18,000 tickets have been given to them, good for September 11.

This is a good idea. Any fair that interests the school children will be a success.

WHAT BIG CROPS MEAN.

CROPS are big all over the States.

This means that lots of money will be paid harvest hands.

That the thresherman will be paid.

That the farmers can pay their bills.

The banks will get their principal and interest on farmers' notes.

That the warehouses will be full.

That the railroads will have lots of cars to haul.

All along the line big crops spell prosperity.

It's about time for the pessimists to get to work.

If they were busy doing something they wouldn't have time to howl.

HEW TO THE LINE.

RURAL organizations should hew to the line.

Keep alive and doing.

Make your power felt in your community.

Pull together.

Work for better schools, better roads, better marketing.

Drop personal rivalries and jealousies, church prejudices and political differences.

If you have no farmers' clubs in your vicinity, organize one.

Work with your neighbors for the good of all.

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