

AMONG OURSELVES

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TAXES COLLECTED BY FIRE AND AXE

Newspaper publishers along with the rest of the people, are paying a rapidly mounting tax—a tax collected by fire and axe. This is the way of it:

Every year 7,000,000 acres of timber land in the United States are burned over.

Every year 3,500,000 acres of timber land in the United States are cut over; yielding more than four times the timber being produced by growth.

The fires could be almost wholly prevented, and the cut could be offset by reforestation and the proper management of remaining forest lands.

Of the original stand of virgin timber in the United States, only 30 per cent is still uncut, and 75 per cent of that is west of the great plains.

The tax collected by fire and axe is in the form of swiftly climbing prices for practically everything into which the use of wood enters—including houses, print paper, furniture, and scores upon scores of other things.

Very simple, isn't it?

And yet a stop could be put to it by forest-fire prevention and adequate systems of reforestation.

That would cost money—taxes—for the support of the fire-fighters and their equipment and for reforestation.

Yes, but infinitely less than is being paid in the increased cost of timber and timber products.

All the People Affected

The ramifications of the soaring prices of lumber are many. They touch everyone in a score of ways. They add to the high cost of living. This fact was brought home to a group of men at the University of Minnesota not long ago by Dr. Hugh P. Baker, executive secretary of the American Paper and Pulp association, formerly dean of the School of Forestry of Syracuse university, and a forest missionary extraordinary to the people of the United States.

Dr. Baker took occasion to point out to the university group that the University of Minnesota, with the federal government's new Lake States Forest Experiment station on its agricultural college campus, was in a position of leadership among the forestry forces of the United States, and that it could do much to guide the country in the solution of what has become a great economic problem.

Real Taxes Increased

The striking thing coming out of the conference from the average citizen's point of view, however, was the manner in which losses by fire and by cutting without replacement had put a tax—or a

score of taxes—on the people.

For example, Dr. Baker said that the burning of the timber was often the least serious part of a forest fire. The fires sometimes ate into the soil, destroying the natural fertility which comes from decayed vegetation. This left the mineral soil to be washed away by the next freshet. Fires of this kind helped to fill up the rivers and harbors, and were among the causes of the great annual expenditures for keeping rivers and harbors open to commerce. Such expenditures are taken from indirect taxes which the people pay.

Burned-over and cut-over forest lands, left waste, as idle lands, it was declared again, were just as uneconomic as idle men. Their support put a tax on producing lands and their owners—real taxes, paid as such. A case in point is cited from Michigan. The state tax levied in 1919-20 on nine Michigan counties, all of which are cut-over and largely denuded, was \$256,793. Some of the counties failed to pay a considerable part

Roosevelt's View of the Forestry Problem

The fundamental idea of forestry is the perpetuation of forests by use. Forest protection is not an end of itself; it is a means to increase and sustain the resources of our country and the industries which depend upon them—Theodore Roosevelt.

of their quota, but the nine counties drew from the state school fund alone \$295,020, or \$38,227 more than the entire levy against them for state expenditures. This merely meant that these counties with their idle lands had to be supported in part by more productive counties.

Taxes in Form of Freight

Taxes, again, were paid in the form of freight. It was pointed out that Minnesota now imports at least half of its lumber and wood supplies, and that the day is near when it will be importing from 60 to 70 per cent. But even on its importations of lumber and the products made from wood it is paying in freight annually about \$20,000,000. Think of that, you who remember back to the days—not so long ago, either—when Minnesota was right up in front as a great lumber state. Then let this sink in: Minnesota in 1914 was down to eleventh place among the lumber producing states, and in 1921 down to twentieth place. But that \$20,000,000 freight

FARMERS TELL WHAT THEY LIKE TO READ

Farmers in Wisconsin have been telling inquirers what kind of material they like to find in their newspapers. The inquirers have been, in part, county agents acting on the suggestion of A. W. Hopkins of the Wisconsin College of Agriculture, in an effort by Mr. Hopkins to find out how his college may best serve the rural press. Mr. Hopkins has placed a letter from one of the county agents in the hands of the editor of *Among Ourselves*. Because it is believed to be highly suggestive, this letter is reproduced here:

I asked this question of a great many during the last two weeks: "What do you like to find in your paper besides neighborhood news?" Most of them were surprised at being asked such a question, but when I showed them copies of several of the county papers and explained that the men who wrote some of the articles really wanted to know what the subscribers liked to find in their papers, they were very much interested.

The majority stopped for a discussion. Here are some of the replies exactly quoted.

One man said: "We farmers need facts about some of our big national problems. Why doesn't some one tell us whether prohibition is a good thing for the dairy business; whether it is a good thing for the laboring man; a good thing for our towns and others; a good thing for our churches and schools."

Another said: "Couldn't we have facts published in our county papers on the railway problem? I have read a lot of discussion in one of my farm papers about the government's guaranteeing the railroads an income. Is it actually doing that?" This man asked me if it would be possible for some one from the state university to write a series of articles discussing the Esch-Cummins law, bringing out its good and bad features. He gave it as his opinion that economic legislation is left altogether too much to politicians.

Another farmer asked: "Why not have one who knows tell us whether the gasoline tax is a good thing from a business standpoint." Another spoke of the coal situation. "Why doesn't some one put down in black and white what all this rumpus between the miners and mine owners is about? If the public only knew what they were scrapping about, then there would be some basis for forming an opinion, which would lead to settlement."

Another said: "Why doesn't some one step in and try to make peace between farm organizations, and prevent a handful of designing fellows from setting one group of farmers against another."

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AMONG OURSELVES

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THE COUNTRY NEWSPAPER.

We have been holding a copy of "The Country Newspaper," by M. V. Atwood, assistant professor of extension teaching, New York State College of Agriculture, and editor of a New York country weekly, on our desk for weeks, expecting to give it a thorough reading and then to write something about it for *Among Ourselves*. But work crowds, and the time for the reading and writing have not been available. So now we are going to say something about the book without the careful reading we had planned. We have, however, dipped into Mr. Atwood's little volume, and find it good—excellent, even if we do not quite agree with Mr. Atwood in everything.

In a nutshell, this may be said: The book is one which every country weekly publisher who wishes to develop his enterprise should read. It will give him a view of certain features of the country weekly, which too many publishers neglect, thinking them hardly worth while to spend much time on. It will give him a larger view of his job as the maker of a positive community influence. It will make plainer to him, possibly, some of his own shortcomings, but it will, also, help him to see how to remedy these. Again, it will open up to him new possibilities; serve as a guide to new adventures in the field of country weekly publication, and add to the joy of the job.

Two things stick out of one page—two things which seem to us of special significance: That the average personal column "fairly bristles with possibilities for extended feature stories," and that "the country newspaper must become more rurally minded."

Personal columns do contain germs for many an excellent feature story. The trouble is that the average busy editor doesn't find the time to dig up the material out of which to frame his features, though he may see the "germ" and its possibilities. But the thing that will make a newspaper and establish it in a community is to make it interesting, from column 1, page 1, to column 7, page —, and the way to make it interesting is to dig up and put into form the stuff with which to develop the aforesaid germs.

By saying that the country weekly must become more rurally minded, Mr. Atwood means that it must recognize that the interests of its readers are not confined to its town. They reach out through the whole countryside, and, therefore, the news of the surrounding villages and of the farms must have a larger place. Minnesota publishers have in a large measure recognized this fact, and are giving increasing attention to the rural interests of their readers. Still

some of the things Mr. Atwood has to say on this point will prove worthy of their perusal.

Mr. Atwood has evidently put his heart into the study of his subject and has written with the conviction of one devoted to a high calling.

SHORT AND SNAPPY ADS

The Advertising Club of Minneapolis invited to a recent meeting three Minneapolis women, to tell the members of the club "what kind of advertising really tempts a woman from her home with her pocketbook in her hand.

"Short, snappy advertisements always appeal to me most," said one of the women.

"An advertisement should tell the quality first and the price afterward," all three agreed.

Reading rather than illustration was preferred, unless the goods are actually pictured, was another declaration to which all agreed.

Women with families read men's advertisements," said one of the three, adding, "then I send my husband to buy what he needs."

The foregoing is handed on to weekly publishers to pass along to their advertisers. What applies in the big towns should apply in the smaller towns as well.

COUNTRY NEWSPAPERS

Have you seen the official bulletin of Country Newspapers? If you have not, you have missed something. It is a live sheet, and it ought "to sell" Country Newspapers in a large way.

LEVANG'S SPECIAL

Levang's Weekly silver jubilee edition, *Among Ourselves* knows, has been thoroughly read by the people of Lanesboro—present and past, by the people of Fillmore county, and by many others. What is more, having been read, it has not been thrown away. It is the kind of an issue that finds itself put away in the library for future reference. It was a real contribution to the history of its town and its county.

THE INLAND PRINTER

The editor of *Among Ourselves* grows enthusiastic every time he receives a new issue of the *Inland Printer*. It creates enthusiasm, or stirs enthusiasm already existent, for good printing. If that may be said of the average edition, one is rather stumped to find something adequate to the fortieth anniversary number—that for October. An apostle of good printing, of printing as a fine art, the *Inland Printer* discloses artistic printing with the turning of every page, and in the October number it outdoes itself.

Ford has demonstrated that dealers and outlets will carry the local advertising burden for a commodity, provided they are fairly protected and allowed a fair margin of profit.—Jason Rogers, in *Editor & Publisher*.

ADVERTISING TIPS
FOR NOVEMBER DAYS

Here are suggestions for a few special lines of advertising to be worked during November:

Materials for installing ventilating systems in farm buildings; lumber, galvanized iron, ready made aerators or cupolas.

Anti-freeze solutions for automobiles. Batteries for autos should be put in shape for winter.

Farm tool repairs—soldering equipment, etc.

Pork-curing equipment and supplies.

Lumber for icehouses.

Purebred boars for sale.

THE LOCAL EDITOR

No one has ever spoken in sufficiently forcible terms of the importance of the local editor. It is doubtful if it be possible to do so. Mayors and local administrations come and go; leading citizens bring their abilities and force of character to bear on this or that question; ministers exert a certain influence over their several congregations on Sundays. But the power of the well developed paper is steady and perpetual. To the man behind the paper, the man to whom we have delegated the task of providing our serial story of local life, we have at the same time necessarily given the opportunity to select the material of that story, to invest it with his own spirit and to give it his own interpretation.—The Community Newspaper, Harris.

Church Advertising Again

In the last issue of *Among Ourselves*, a good deal of space was devoted to the subject of church advertising. Editor & Publisher for October 20 prints the gist of an interview with the Rev. Earl Hoon, pastor of the First Methodist church of Sioux City, Iowa, which bears out the position taken by *Among Ourselves*.

The Sioux City pastor reports that he increased the membership of his church from 359 to 1,120, and his morning congregations from 122 to 1,500 plus, largely through advertising. He says:

"There is no greater channel of service than the press. More people are touched by it than by any other agency. It is vitally interested in its community and eagerly wants everything the clergyman has for the upbuilding of the community. We give the press everything we have—without limit."

Stands for Higher Rates

John Ring, Jr., representing a St. Louis advertising company, speaking before the Missouri Press association at its annual meeting three weeks ago, urged uniform rates, based on circulation, as a means of drawing new business to the country weekly.

Mr. Ring's idea is that which has been advocated in Minnesota for very, very many moons. Still, there are some who do not accept it.

S. E. Farnham has begun his fortieth year as editor of the *Madison Independent Press*.

COUNTRY NEWSPAPERS IS TO INCORPORATE

Country Newspapers, the national co-operative association which represents weekly papers in the national advertising field, will be incorporated in the state of Illinois as a result of action taken by the executive committee at a meeting held in Chicago October 9.

The corporation will be a non-stock, non-profit association. Provision will be made in the by-laws for dues to finance the association until the volume of business handled is sufficiently large to provide adequate funds through the commission allowed.

Aaron Sapiro, the nationally known expert on co-operative marketing of farm products, at present acting counsel to several co-operative associations, has charge of the legal phases of incorporating Country Newspapers. "I am particularly delighted to help work out the splendid plans for the development of a co-operative association of country newspapers," declares Mr. Sapiro. "This is absolutely in line with best modern developments."

The resignation of Irl H. Marshall as a member of the executive committee and state director for Illinois was accepted at the Chicago meeting, and Harry B. Potter of the Marshall, Ill., Herald was elected to succeed him. Mr. Marshall has associated himself with the Gundlach advertising agency of Chicago.

Gratifying progress for the first year of the association's existence was reported. A new rate book, listing between 2,500 and 3,000 papers, will be issued soon. Nine states—Iowa, Minnesota, Texas, Missouri, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Illinois, Michigan, and South Dakota—furnish over half of the papers represented.

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bill has to be paid, and it is paid by the people who buy the imported products. They, in turn, use it to build houses, to manufacture furniture, to construct farm implements, or make silo forms; and thus, in the end, that freight bill becomes a tax on all the people.

But that wasn't all—the fact that Minnesota paid a large freight bill because it had to import a large amount of lumber and of the products of lumber. The freight rates per ton were also higher of necessity, because the increasing costs of lumber made it cost more to maintain a railroad. In the matter of railroad ties alone, the railroads of the United States were paying something like \$27,000,000 a year more than 15 years ago—just for maintenance. Every new mile of railroad built today costs \$1,300 more for ties than it would have cost 15 years ago. Naturally this added cost of construction and upkeep must be charged up in fixing railroad rates. So that, once more, the burned-over, cut-over, and unrestored forests are putting a tax on the people.

To go on pointing out similar examples would be tiresome. It may be said, however, that there is hardly a thing in common use, into the manufacture or transportation of which wood does not enter and to the cost of which something is not added because of the rising prices of lumber. Every ton of steel

made, every ton of coal mined, every ton of cement manufactured, every ton of copper produced, every ounce of food eaten, every pair of shoes worn, every suit of clothes put on, costs at least a fraction more because of forests burned or cut away and not replaced.

What Is to Be Done?

Well, what is to be done about it all?

Here is the answer:

Prevent forest fires.

Reforest denuded areas, not usable for agriculture.

Adopt wiser methods of management of remaining forests.

Adopt saner methods of taxation on forests—methods which will not compel destruction but will encourage the cropping of forest lands to trees.

This kind of thing would cost money!

To be sure it would. But it would not cost a fraction of the amount burned up every year, to say nothing of the amount that could be saved in taxes now imposed by waste, by large freight bills, by increased freight rates, and by the increased cost of about everything that man makes use of—including wood pulp and pulp paper, to bring the thing right back to the editor's sanctum.

The problem is one for the newspaper men to consider, along with the men of the university, who are considering ways and means of guarding America's forest resources for the prevention of the further increase of taxes through rounting prices.

At the university conference, consulting with Dr. Baker, were W. C. Coffey, dean of the University Department of Agriculture; E. M. Freeman, dean of the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics; O. M. Leland, dean of the College of Engineering; J. B. Johnston, dean of the College of Science, Literature, and the Arts; Guy Stanton Ford, dean of the Graduate School; Raphael Zon, newly appointed head of the Lake States Forest Experiment Station; J. A. Mitchell, a member of Mr. Zon's staff; E. G. Cheyney and J. B. Wentling, forestry division; R. A. Gortner, agricultural biochemistry division, and W. P. Kirkwood, publications division, University Department of Agriculture.

N. E. A. ANNOUNCES A TRIPLE CONTEST

A triple contest is announced by the National Editorial association. Three silver cups will be the prizes, for the best first-page make-up, for the best editorial page, and for the best piece of community service.

The judge for the best first-page make-up will be John Claude Oswald, American Printer, 241 West 30th street, New York; for the best editorial page, quality and make-up to count, John C. Brimblecom, Newton, Mass.; best community service, James Wright Brown, Editor and Publisher, New York.

The contest begins November 1 and closes February 1.

Papers submitted should be sent directly to the judges named.

LARGE PRIZES FOR BETTER ADVERTISING

Edward Bok, former editor of the Ladies Home Journal, has announced liberal prizes to encourage good advertising. The awards are to be a gold medal for the most distinguished personal service for advertising; three prizes of \$1,500 each for planning and research of advertising campaigns which have been directed through newspapers and periodicals, one a national campaign, one a local campaign, and one for scientific research in the advertising field, and four prizes of \$1,000 each for excellence of technique or content of particular advertisements appearing in established American or Canadian newspapers or periodicals. The contest for the year will close October 1, 1924, and announcement of the winners will be given in January, 1925.

These prizes are likely to go to publications of the larger cities, but they will serve an excellent purpose in stimulating a study of good advertising—advertising at its best—and will set before publishers all over the country models worthy of imitation. They ought to lift the ideals and serve as means of education to the whole editorial or newspaper fraternity.

HELPFUL HINTS

From your files select the names and the addresses of a few of your older subscribers. Then write little interesting notes about each one of these old subscribers. Obtain quotations from these old subscribers in regard to why they have been such loyal supporters of your paper, and publish them at the foot of these notes. This stunt should make interesting news for the readers of your paper and do a little honest advertising for the paper besides—B. F. Clark, Hutchinson, Kan., in Editor & Publisher.

Would it not be worth while to look up nationally advertised goods on sale in stores in your town and then write the manufacturers, telling them about what you find, suggesting the use of your columns for advertising their wares?

The man who has something he wishes to trade is a good prospect for a classified ad. Why not encourage the "traders" to come to you by telling them about the possibility of finding another trader through your columns?

The man who has used business equipment to dispose of is another good prospect for the want ad column.

Men who make good first get a good look at their goal, and then they start for it.

Men who fail pay more attention to the path than to the destination.

They spend their lives picking the thorny flowers on those attractive roads that run in circles and end in swamps.—Meredith's Merchandising Advertising.

COMMUNITY PAPER DISCUSSED IN BOOK

A local newspaper renders service in a three-fold way—through its news columns, through its editorials, and through its advertising. This is the theme of "The Community Newspaper," by Emerson P. Harris and his daughter, Florence Harris Hooke, which has just been published by Appleton. While the book takes up all phases of local newspaper making, a special effort is made throughout to show how news and editorials and advertising should work together.

The authors see in good will and institutional advertising a great future. Not until the local institutions such as the church and the school and the library and the local government have taken advantage of the advertising columns can they feel that they have let the local newspaper render all the service that it is capable of rendering. Examples of news stories, editorials, and paid advertisements which might be used by these institutions are included in the discussion.

The authors believe that the advertising columns should supplement the news columns, and discount any danger of domination by advertisers of news and editorials by the high ideals for advertising upon which they insist.

The book draws most of its examples from the suburban weekly field with which Mr. Harris is most familiar, but the principles apply to any newspaper which is primarily local in its appeal. The book in general is more theoretical than is Bing's "The Country Weekly," up to the present time the only text book on the small weekly newspaper; the two admirably supplement each other. Appleton also is the publisher of Mr. Bing's book.

"The Community Newspaper" is sound in principle throughout. The authors are describing what would undoubtedly be an ideal community paper. Whether the time has arrived when such a paper really can be published except in rare and exceptional cases is perhaps open to question. The book, however, is so packed with practical suggestions that can be applied while on the road toward making the ideal paper that every publisher can derive benefit from it. It is quite the most thoughtful and fundamental book on the local newspaper which has yet appeared.—Service Sheet, New York State College of Agriculture.

Boosting Better Sires

The Alexandria Citizen-News has made many editors sit up and take notice by announcing that it will give two purebred registered bull calves, three purebred registered boars, four purebred turkey cocks, and 11 purebred registered cockerels to 20 boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 16. The News makes this splendid offer in order to help the better sires campaign in Douglas county and, in addition to the foregoing, will make cash awards to the boys and girls who care for their stock the best and get the best results over a 12 months' period.

\$200 A MONTH FOR COUNTRY EDITORS

Dropping delinquent subscribers, raising advertising rates, placing greater emphasis on news editorials, and devoting more attention to informing readers than to trying to "put things over," are some of the things advocated for the country editor of North Dakota in a survey just made of sixty country newspapers in that state. The survey was made in the interest of Sigma Delta Chi, the national journalistic fraternity, by Otis F. Bryant, of the Napoleon (N. D.) Homestead, a former student at the University of North Dakota, and a member of Sigma Delta Chi.

"I find some editors putting aside only \$100 a month as salary for themselves in computing the cost of running their plants," says Mr. Bryant. "No editor should allow less than double that amount for his salary, as he is just as much entitled to special rate of pay as other professional men."

The use of editorial and news columns in the interest of the community he urges as the logical means of being of service to readers. At present the editorial columns of the country paper are of little account and the editors rarely write editorials except at the time of political battles, the survey shows. The usefulness and importance of the country paper can be increased greatly by regular use of the editorial columns in the interest of things affecting the community, it further indicates.

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Another said: "Why don't we have published the history of the farm organizations in a very brief and reasonable form by some authority, pointing out the mistakes, so that we won't go ahead and make them over again?" Another said: "There is altogether too much bunk appearing in our papers today. Even our agricultural papers are not free from it. Too many glowing accounts of instances that can't be applied elsewhere. Too many things are exaggerated. Too many important things are squelched and given no attention."

Practically all of the expressions of opinion from the farmers as to what the press should contain were along this same line; so it is needless to add any more. In my opinion, judging from these interviews and general observation, a large percentage of our farmers feel very much in the dark on most of our present economic questions, and they would eagerly read plain straightforward articles, setting forth facts, by men from our different college departments, who are not only in position to know, but have no reason for distorting facts.

College Story Localized

Instead of running the recent state college release on egg-marketing as sent out from this office, the Webster Reporter and Farmer evidently got in touch with its local produce house and wrote up the story in the form of a local interview. Localization of the material sent out by the agricultural editor's office adds greatly to its value, in our estimation at least.—Rural Press Service Sheet, South Dakota State College, Brookings, S. D.

PI A LA MODE

American and Canadian publishers recently inspected the development work of the Backus-Brooks new newsprint plant at and near Kenora, Ont. It is reported that the company expects to make the plant the largest in the world.

The St. Cloud Times on October 6 issued a 56-page edition boosting the city and county.

Dolores May, born October 1, has joined the family staff of Homer B. Hanson, publisher of the Morton Enterprise.

John Grieff, formerly editor of the St. Paul Svenska Amerikanska Posten, died recently at his home in Superior, Wis.

The Rushford Star-Republican has been purchased by George H. Miles of the Tri-County Record.

The Hinckley News is now the property of the Hinckley Publishing Company, of which W. H. Noble is president. George S. Graham, vice president, remains as editor.

Fred Hadley is still at the Mounds Park Sanitarium, St. Paul, but expects to be told soon that he can go home. He expects to spend the winter in California, leaving shortly after Thanksgiving.

"Lud" Roe of the Montevideo News, commander of the American Legion, accompanied by Mrs. Roe, arrived home from San Francisco Thursday morning, October 25. He is highly elated over the fact that the next national encampment will be held in St. Paul.

The executive committee of the Minnesota Editorial association met Saturday, Oct. 20, in Minneapolis to outline a program for the 1924 meeting. Another attempt is being made to secure United States Senator Medill McCormick of Chicago as the star speaker. An invitation has also been extended to Wallace Odell of Tarrytown, New York, to attend the meeting. Mr. Odell is the new president of the National Editorial association. The annual banquet will be given by the Minneapolis Journal.

The "Free Publicity" label designed by the National Editorial association is attracting wide attention and a number of members in Minnesota are already using it, among them H. Z. Mitchell of the Bemidji Sentinel.

A. O. Moreaux has enlarged his office at Luverne and is going to carry a line of office furniture and supplies.

W. L. Sery, editor of the Montgomery Messenger, was accidentally shot while hunting recently with Thomas Pavel, a boy of 11. According to the last reports received by Among Ourselves, the physicians believed Mr. Sery would recover.

"Once a printer, always a printer," says The Clarkfield Advocate in giving information that William Rudd has started The News at Granite Falls less than a year after he suspended publication of The Journal in the same place. Mr. Rudd will have the active assistance of his daughter, Aileen, in making the new venture a success. She will be city editor while Mr. Rudd will look after the business and mechanical end of the new paper.