



It Is Time To Reap

The America of today is placed in a position where it cannot support its farmers. This being so, it may be that I, the now venerable T-Bone Slim and lumberjack, will have a few words of encouragement to yawn for the benefit of these unfortunate "critters," and it may be that a lesson therefrom will crop out, if nothing else. . . .

Despite the fact that the mortgage read: "The mare had three white hind legs" the farmer was invited into the bank, escorted into the death cell, and there the proposition was sprung—it would not do for the banker to ruin his standing by a violent foreclosure, a smoother way had to be found. So the banker gave the farmer a sip from the bank's jug to brace him up, and then proceeded to unfold the plan. "John," says he, "Now you owe me so and so, and so and so," and so it is agreed between them (after the third drink) that the farmer would hold a sale. . . .

That ends this part of the story. "Sale" on a farm means the same as "finis" at the end of this story.

Now that John has had "sale" and is pulling the saw with me, we will lean on the other root a while.

Oleomargarine is served lumberjacks; not because the company desires to give the boys an inferior product; not because oleo is cheaper, (for butter from the farmers could be had for the same price). No, the company has a very good reason for putting oleo on the table—it would not have butter, even as a gift. Why? I will try to explain.

About one-third of the lumberjacks are, in reality, farmers; consequently, dairymen and good workers. If the lumber companies bought their butter it would have a tendency to raise the price and soon the farmers would be able to make a living on their farms. As it is, the company doesn't want butter even as a gift. It doesn't want to create a market for these dairymen-loggers. It doesn't want to lose one-third of its skilled loggers—and I don't blame "it".

Of course the dairy-loggers do not touch the oleomargarine—but that is beside the point, for failure to eat oleo is but failure to eat butter; it is but abstaining from butter "by proxy". Through red tape ceremony, it being considered the height of diplomatic blunders to abstain from the use of butter, as BUTTER; whereas failure to eat butter under the EXCUSE that "I don't touch oleo" is considered respectable, and such men are considered praiseworthy.

Men reason that they are refusing oleo. They are not. They are refusing butter every bit as much as if the genuine Blue Valley was in front of them, and when a dairy logger fails to fight for butter in the lumber camps of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan, he is following the same line of action that took him from the farm and put him in the woods. If he fails to organize with the loggers to maintain a high standard of wages in the woods he is doing that which he has always failed to do on the farm, failed to organize with his class—and he will drag the logger down with him as he dragged himself and neighbors, to work hard long hours in the woods, in winter, and harder, longer hours on the farm in summer. Is this LIFE? Must a man work 365 days per year in order to live? No, he does not! He can organize with his fellows, the loggers—if he is not an employer—and he can use his stock ranch as a summer resort. Anyway, one thing is sure: He must organize one way or another. The I. W. W. way is the best.

Onions sell to the big wholesale places at 50 cents per hundred pounds. The same onions are sold back to the farmers in small quantities at 8 cents per pound—\$8 per hundred. Yet it is said a farmer carries a lead pencil. It is said a farmer runs around with a lead pencil in one pocket and an alarm clock in another. Why not throw the alarm clock away and use the pencil—better still, use the HEAD.

It doesn't pay to drive the lizzie 14 miles to sell a gallon of cream—sell the lizzie and walk back with the cream. If the wife says anything, tell her "Slim" told you to do it. Mistake me not. I'm telling you you can't have both lizzie and cream until you are organized. Unorganized farmers shouldn't have anything, and would not if it wasn't for the inability of the grafters to do a thorough job.

A farmer's "problem" cannot be solved by hitching side-shows to his circus. If the main tent isn't paying, the show will fail. Cooperative creameries, cooperative elevators, cooperative flour mills, cooperative sugar (beet) refineries, cooperative corn distilleries, etc., are distinctly not agriculture—and, if agriculture, the main tent is not a paying proposition, how in the world are these cooperative Bearded Ladies, Cooperative Jo-Jo's, Cooperative Snake Charmers, (ah, if these charmers only could put a durable charm on the reptilian capital), Cooperative Armless Wonders, going to be a paying prop?

Just like a logger ignoring the sale of labor power to embark upon a business venture, that of "hiding an ace in the hole" to add a few lousy sheckels to the modest stipend the organized workers are able to wring from the lumber companies. Wrung with time—and sacrifice? Ye Gods, what a lot! I say organize! Don't be a drag. We're not going to plant! It is time to reap. Organize!—(T-Bone Slim).