

I'LL TAKE MY STAND

Mississippi, Tom Watson in Georgia, and Bob Taylor in Tennessee, and farmer candidates everywhere.

But he had listened too long. He himself began to think more and more of money, and his inability to take much of it from the industrial scheme produced a feeling of moral defeat. His ambitious sons, instead of becoming the leaders of the farm communities, went North and West and to the growing Southern cities to make their fortunes, and as they left he did not protest. Those who remained, caught by the furnishing system, could not rise to lead. They were bound hand and foot—so firmly bound that the high price of cotton during the World War led them deeper into the money economy instead of freeing them.

As a result, up to the entrance of the United States into this war the farmer was trying unconsciously to live by two antithetical economies. In spite of his dual existence he managed to secure many good things from the soil, for his life was still largely ordered after his agrarian inheritance. The next, the fatal step, is to become a progressive farmer, for then he must reverse this dualism and think first of a money economy, last of a farmer's life. The new emphasis puts him in a critical condition; the precedence of the money economy means the end of farming as a way of life.

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On a certain Saturday, a group of countrymen squatted and lay about the Rutherford County court-house yard, three-quarters of a century after Abner L. extended his invitation to Van Buren. One remarked to the others that

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"as soon as a farmer begins to keep books, he'll go broke shore as hell."

Let us take him as a type and consider the life of his household before and after he made an effort to industrialize it. Let us set his holdings at two hundred acres, more or less—a hundred in cultivation, sixty in woods and pasture, and forty in waste land, too rocky for cultivation but offering some pasturage. A smaller acreage would scarcely justify a tractor. And that is a very grave consideration for a man who lives on thirty or fifty acres. If the pressure becomes too great, he will be forced to sell out and leave, or remain as a tenant or hand on the large farm made up of units such as his. This example is taken, of course, with the knowledge that the problem on any two hundred acres is never the same: the richness of the soil, its qualities, the neighborhood, the distance from market, the climate, water, and a thousand such things make the life on every farm distinctly individual.

The house is a dog-run with an ell running to the rear, the kitchen and dining-room being in the ell, if the family does not eat in the kitchen; and the sleeping-rooms in the main part of the house. The dog-run is a two- or four-crib construction with an open space between, the whole covered by one roof. The run or trot gets its name from the hounds passing through from the front to the rear. It may or may not have a floor, according to the taste or pride of the occupant. This farmer will have it floored, because his grandfather, as he prospered, closed in the dog-run with doors, making it into a hall; added porches front and rear, weather-boarded the logs, and ceiled the two half-story

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rooms. His grandfather belonged to that large number of sturdy freemen who owned from three to five hundred acres of land and perhaps a slave or two in better days. But owning a few slaves did not make him a planter. He and his sons worked alongside them in the fields. Of farmers so situated in the South there was one to every twelve and one-tenth of free population.

There is a brick walk running from the porch to a horse block, lined on either side with hardy buttercups. From the block a road marked off by tall cedars goes out to the pike gate, two hundred yards away. The yard is kept grazed down by sheep, and occasionally the stock is turned in, when the pastures are burned in a drought. The house needs paint, but the trees are whitewashed around the base of the trunks to keep insects off and to give a neat appearance to the yard.

Over the front doorway is a horseshoe, turned the right way to bring luck to all who may pass beneath its lintel. The hall is almost bare, but scrubbed clean. At the back is a small stairway leading to the half-story. This is where the boys sleep, in their bachelorhood definitely removed from the girls. To the left is the principal room of the house. The farmer and his wife sleep there in a four-poster, badly in need of doing over; and here the youngest chillurn sleep on pallets made up on the floor.

The large rock fireplace is the center of the room. The home-made hickory chairs are gathered in a semicircle about it, while on the extreme left of the arc is a rough hand-made rocker with a sheep-skin bottom, shiny from use, and its arms smooth from the polishing of flesh, re-

served always for "mammy," the tough leather-skinned mother of the farmer. Here she sets and rocks and smokes near enough for the draught to draw the smoke up the chimney. On the mantel, at one end, is dry leaf tobacco, filling the room with its sharp, pungent odor. A pair of dog-irons rests on the hearth, pushed against the back log and holding up the ends of the sticks which have burnt in two and fallen among the hot ashes. The fire is kept burning through the month of May to insure good crops, no matter how mild and warm its days turn out to be. The top rock slab is smoked in the middle where for generations the wind has blown suddenly down the chimney, driving heavy gusts to flatten against the mantel and spread out into the room. A quilting-frame is drawn into the ceiling, ready to be lowered into the laps of the women-folks when the occasion demands, although it is gradually falling into disuse. Beneath it, spreading out from the center of the floor, a rag rug covers the wide pine boards which, in turn, cover the rough-hewn puncheons that sufficed during the pioneer days. From this room, or rather, from the hearth of this room, the life of the dwelling moves.

If this is the heart of the house, the kitchen is its busiest part. The old, open fireplace has been closed in since the war, and an iron range has taken its place. This much machinery has added to the order of the establishment's life without disrupting it. Here all the food is prepared, and the canning and preserving necessary to sustain the family during the winter is done.

The cooking is a complicated art, requiring mastery over all its parts to burden the table with victuals that can be

relished. Each meal is a victory over nature, a suitable union between the general principles of cookery and the accident of preparation. The fire must be kept at the right temperature (without a thermometer), or the bread won't rise; too much lard, or too little, will spoil the pastry; and since the test of all cooking is the seasoning, which can never be reduced to exact rules but is partly intuitive, too many pinches of salt may ruin the dish. The farmer's wife learns to satisfy the tastes of her particular family, but she can never set two meals on the table exactly alike. She never overcomes nature; her victories are partial, but very satisfying, for she knows her limitations.

The kitchen leads out to the back ell-shaped porch. Upon its banister, or, if there is no banister, upon the wash-table, a bucket of water and its gourd, a tin pan, soap, and towel wait to serve the morning toilet. The towel will hang on a folding rack fixed to the wall. This rack may also serve long strings of red peppers drying in the air. A bell-post rises up near the kitchen to ring the boys in from the fields at dinner-time. In the back, behind the kitchen, is the smokehouse and several outhouses. Iron kettles for washing tilt to one side in the ashes of an old fire, some distance away. An ash-hopper made from a hollow log, no longer in use, lies up against the buggy-house, having gone the way of the kitchen fireplace. The lye for soap- and hominy-making is now bought in town.

Convenient to the kitchen is the woodpile, made of different-sized sticks, some for the stove, split and cut to the right length, and some for the fireplaces, back logs and front sticks. The wood has been cut in the early fall, just

as the sap begins to go down, not too early and not too late, but just at the right time, so that the outer surface will be dry and will catch quick, while the inside remains sappy and hard, burning slowly. It takes a great deal of study and intelligence to keep the fires going steadily.

Before dawn the roosters and the farmer feel the tremendous silence, chilling and filling the gap between night and day. He gets up, makes the fires, and rings the rising bell. He could arouse the family with his voice, but it has been the custom to ring the bell; so every morning it sounds out, taking its place among the other bells in the neighborhood. Each, according to his nature, gets up and prepares for the day: the wife has long been in the kitchen when the boys go to the barn; some of the girls help her, while the farmer plans the morning work and calls out directions.

One or two of the girls set out with their milk-pails to the barn, where the cows have been kept overnight. There is a very elaborate process to go through with in milking. First, the cow must be fed to occupy her attention; next, the milker kneels or sits on a bucket and washes the bag which will have gotten manure on it during the night (she kneels to the right, as this is the strategic side; the cow's foot is somehow freer on the left). After the bag is clean, the milking begins. There is always a variation to this ritual. When the calf is young, the cow holds back her milk for it; so the calf is allowed to suck a little at first, some from each teat, loosening the milk with uniformity, and then is pulled off and put in a stall until his time comes. There is one way to pull a calf off, and only one. He must be held by the ears and the tail at the same time, for only

in this manner is he easily controlled. The ears alone, or the tail alone, is not enough.

This done, the milking begins. The left hand holds the pail, while the right does the work, or it may be the reverse. The hand hits the bag tenderly, grabs the teat, and closes the fingers about it, not altogether, but in echelon. The calf is then let out for his share. If he is young and there are several cows, it will be all that is left, for careful milkers do not strip the cow until the calf is weaned. The strippings are those short little squirts which announce the end, and they are all cream.

The milk is next brought back to the house, strained, and put in the well to cool. This requires a very careful hand, because if it happens to spill, the well is ruined. The next step is to pour up the old milk and let it turn—that is, sour—for churning. Some will be set aside to clabber for the mammy whose teeth are no longer equal to tougher nourishment. What she does not eat is given to the young chickens or to the pigs.

After breakfast the farmer's wife, or one of the girls, does the churning. This process takes a variable length of time. If the milk is kept a long time before it is poured up, the butter is long in coming. Sometimes witches get in the churn and throw a spell over it. In that case a nickel is dropped in to break the charm. The butter, when it does come, collects in small, yellow clods on top. These clods are separated from the butter-milk and put in a bowl where the rest of the water is worked out. It is then salted, molded, and stamped with some pretty little design. After this is done, it is set in the well or the spring to cool for the table.

The process has been long, to some extent tedious, but profitable, because insomuch as it has taken time and care and intelligence, by that much does it have a meaning.

Industrialism gives an electric refrigerator, bottled milk, and dairy butter. It takes a few minutes to remove it from the ice to the table, while the agrarian process has taken several hours and is spread out over two or three days. Industrialism saves time, but what is to be done with this time? The milkmaid can't go to the movies, read the signboards, and go play bridge all the time. In the moderate circumstances of this family, deprived of her place in the home economy, she will be exiled to the town to clerk all day. If the income of the family can afford it, she remains idle, and therefore miserable.

The whole process has been given in detail as an example of what goes on in every part of an agrarian life. The boys, coming in to breakfast, have performed in the same way. Every morning the stock must be fed, but there is always variety. They never shuck the same ears of corn, nor do they find the mules in the small part of the stall, nor the hogs in the same attitudes, waiting to be slopped. The buckets of milk did not move regularly from cow to consumer as raw material moves through a factory. The routine was broken by other phenomena. Breakfast intervened. One morning the cow might kick the pail over, or the milkmaid might stumble over a dog, or the cow come up with a torn udder. It is not the only task she performs, just as feeding the stock is not the only task done by the boys. The day of each member of the family is filled with a mighty variety.

After the morning work is over, the family gathers about the breakfast table. Thanks are returned and the meal is served, one of the daughters or the mother waiting on the table; and then, without undue haste, the men go to the fields and the women about their dishes. If it is spring, the women can be of great help in the garden. Very likely the cut-worms will be after the young corn. The cut-worm does not like heat. If some one gets into the garden before the sun gets hot, the worm can be found under a clod near the top of the ground and mashed. In another hour he will have gone far below the surface. It is imperative to go at the right time, for of all the thousands of insects and varmints on the land, he has the distinction of his own habits. By learning these habits, and not those of some other pest, can he be overcome.

Before going to the fields the farmer consults the signs. If the smoke from the chimney is blown to the ground, there will be rain. Lightning in the north early in the night means rain before morning. If there is enough blue in the sky to make the Dutchman a pair of breeches, the weather will turn fair. Lightning in the south is a sign of drought. If the moon lies on its back, it is holding water; if it is tilted so that the water can run out, the season will be dry. Charms, signs, and omens are folk attempts to understand and predict natural phenomena. They are just as useful and necessary to an agrarian economy as the same attempts which come from the chemist's laboratory in an industrial society, and far wiser, because they understand their inadequacy, while the hypotheses of science do not.

According to these signs the work is hard or leisurely.

If the fish are biting, the boys might knock off a day and go fishing, or hunting. Their father has not begun to keep books, so their time is their own.

At eleven o'clock the dinner bell rings. The ploughmen take out and come to the house. So regular is this ritual that a mule on the farm of Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's quartermaster used to square his feet in the furrow and answer the bell with a long, loud bray. Nor was anybody ever able to make him, by beating or pleading, plough a step farther. The teams are watered and put into their stalls, where so many ears of corn are shucked into the troughs, and a section of hay is thrown into the racks.

If the corn is low in the crib, the boys are likely to shuck carefully, keeping their eyes open for the king snake. This snake is worth ten cats as a ratter, and careful, economical farmers always throw one in their cribs if one is to be found. But not only as a ratter is he valuable. He makes war on all poisonous snakes and drives them from his presence. His invincibility is believed to be due to his knowledge of snake grass, an antidote for poison; for after bouts in which he has been bitten by venomous snakes, he has been seen to wiggle toward this grass and chew it. There is only one time of the year when he is to be avoided. He goes blind in August; and, feeling his defenseless condition, he will leg you—that is, charge and wrap his strong body about your leg, squeezing and bruising it.

The midday meal, like all the meals in the country, has a great deal of form. It is, in the first place, unhurried. Diners accustomed to the mad, bolting pace of cafeterias will grow nervous at the slow performance of a country

table. To be late is a very grave matter, since it is not served until everybody is present. But only some accident, or unusual occurrence, will detain any member of the family, for dinner is a social event of the first importance. The family are together with their experiences of the morning to relate; and merriment rises up from the hot, steaming vegetables, all set about the table, small hills around the mountains of meat at the ends, a heaping plate of fried chicken, a turkey, a plate of guineas, or a one-year ham, spiced, and if company is there, baked in wine. A plate of bread is at each end of the table; a bowl of chitterlings has been set at the father's elbow; and pigs' feet for those that like them.

And they eat with eighteenth-century appetites. There is no puny piddling with the victuals, and fancy tin-can salads do not litter the table. The only salad to be seen on a country table is sallet, or turnip greens, or if further explanation is necessary, the tops of turnips cut off and cooked with a luscious piece of fat meat. It has the appearance of spinach; but, unlike this insipid slime, sallet has character, like the life of the farmer at the head of the table. The most important part of this dish is its juice, the pot-licker, a rich green liquid, indescribable except as a pot-licker green. Mixed with corn bread, it has no equal. Particularly is it fine for teething babies. If the baby is weaned in the dark of the moon and fed a little pot-licker, he will pass through the second summer without great trouble. This will not relieve the pain of cutting. To do that a young rabbit must be killed, its head skinned, and the raw flesh rubbed on the gums. If this

fails, tie a spray of alderberries around its neck, or hang a mole's foot. But sallet will do everything but cut the pain.

His table, if the seasons allow, is always bountiful. The abundance of nature, its heaping dishes, its bulging-breasted fowls, deep-yellow butter and creamy milk, fat beans and juicy corn, and its potatoes flavored like pecans, fill his dining-room with the satisfaction of well-being, because he has not yet come to look upon his produce at so many cents a pound, or his corn at so much a dozen. If nature gives bountifully to his labor, he may enjoy largely.

The dishes of food are peculiarly relished. Each dish has particular meaning to the consumer, for everybody has had something to do with the long and intricate procession from the ground to the table. Somebody planted the beans and worked them. Somebody else staked them and watched them grow, felt anxious during the early spring drought, gave silent thanksgiving when a deep-beating rain soaked into the crusty soil, for the leaves would no longer take the yellow shrivel. A townsman can never understand the significance of rain, nor why an agrarian will study the signs with so much care and often with so much pain, for to him it has no immediate connection. The worst it can do him is to interrupt a picnic, and the best to beat from the asphalt of its streets and its tall buildings for a few moments the enervating heat peculiar to such places. The fullness of meaning that rain and the elements extend to the farmer is all contained in a mess of beans, a plate of potatoes, or a dish of sallet. When the garden first comes in, this meaning is explicit. If the yield has been large and rich, it will be openly and pridefully commented upon; if the garden has

burned and it has lost its succulence to the sun, some will remark that sorrier beans have been seen, while others, more resentful of nature's invincible and inscrutable ways, will answer that better, also, have been seen. But aside from some such conservative expression, in its formal tone masking a violent passion, no other comment will be made. And as the enjoyment of the garden's produce becomes more regular, this particular meaning which the dishes at a country table has for its diners settles into the subconscious and becomes implicit in the conduct of the household.

The description of this particular board is by no means general. Just as no two farms are managed alike, so no two tables will be set alike. It is better than most, and slightly changed from ante-bellum days. It is more stable, as it has had a century in which to harden its form. But this form, troubled by the dualism, is less strict than it would have been if nothing had happened to disturb the direction of its growth. This farmer, being a Tennessean, perhaps has some advantage over other Southwesterners except Kentuckians of a tradition less shaken during the hard years. Tennessee has never been given over to any one money crop. It has looked upon its land to sustain its culture, and from the beginning has diversified according to its needs. Serving as a furnishing state to the cotton regions, when these regions were overturned, it naturally stood the shock better than they. In consequence the table will be more formal, its meals better, than in those places where the small upland farmer moved down upon the segments of the broken plantations. He can never have the same respect for the sow-belly and

corn-meal furnished him by the merchant, and actually a large body of these farmers in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina, and West Tennessee did not vary a great deal this diet, as he could for the vegetables and meat brought to the table by his own hand.

After the midday meal is over the family takes a rest; then the men go back to the fields and the women to those things yet to be done, mending clothes, darning, knitting, canning, preserving, washing or ironing or sewing. By sundown they are gathered about the supper table, and afterward set before the fire if it is winter, or upon the porch in warmer weather. One of the boys will get out his guitar and play "ballets" handed down from father to son, some which have originated in the new country, some which have been brought over from the Old World and changed to fit the new locale. Boys from the neighborhood drop in to court, and they will jine in, or drive away with the gals in hug-back buggies. If they are from another neighborhood, they are sure to be rocked or shot at on the way over or on the way home.

If the gathering is large enough, as it is likely to be when crops are laid by, it will turn into a play-party.¹ Most of these games practiced by the plain people have maintained the traditions brought from England and Scotland, while the townsmen lost their knowledge of them in a generation. For example, "The Hog Drovers" is a version of the English folk-game, "The Three Sailors." The Southern country, being largely inland, could only speculate upon the

¹ The play-parties were to be found in operation much later in Mississippi and Arkansas than in Tennessee.

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habits of sailors, but they knew all about the hog drovers. Every year droves of razorbacks, with their eyelids sewed together to hinder them from wandering off into the woods, were driven ten or eleven miles a day toward the Eastern markets. They would be stopped at private farms along the route, where pens had been put up to receive them, to feed. The drovers, nomadic and as careless as sailors, could not be made to keep promises. Parents, therefore, were careful of their daughters.

The game comes from, and is a copy of, the life of the people. A boy seats himself upon a chair in the middle of the room with a gal in his lap. He is the head of the house, and she is his daughter. The other gals are seated around the walls, waiting their turns; while the boys, representing the hog drovers, enter two abreast in a sort of a jig, singing the first stanza:

"Hog drovers, hog drovers, hog drovers we air,
A-courtin' yore darter so sweet and so fair,
Can we git lodgin' here, oh, here,
Can we git er-lodgin' here?"

They stop in front of the old man, and he answers:

"Oh, this is my darter that sets by my lap,
And none o' you pig-stealers can git her from pap,
And you can't git lodgin' here, oh, here,
And you can't git er-lodgin' here."

The boys then jig about the chair, singing:

"A good-lookin' darter, but ugly yoreself—
We'll travel on further and sit on the shelf,
And we don't want lodgin' here, oh, here,
And we don't want er-lodgin' here."

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They jig around the room, then return. The old man relents. Possibly it has as its genesis a struggle between greed and the safety of his daughter's virtue:

"Oh, this is my darter that sets by my lap,
And Mr. *So-and-so* can git her from pap
If he'll put another one here, oh, here,
If he'll put another one here."

The boy who is named jigs to one of the gals, brings her to the old man, takes his darter to the rear of the line, and the game starts over. After every couple has been paired off, they promenade all and seek buggies or any quiet place suitable for courting.¹

This and other games, "Fly in the Buttermilk," "Shoot the Buffalo," "Under the Juniper Tree," will fill an evening and break the order of their lives often enough to dispel monotony, making holidays a pleasure; and not so frequent nor so organized that they become a business, which means that games have become self-conscious, thus defeating the purpose of all playing. As they play they do not constantly remind one another that they are having a good time. They have it.

Besides these play-parties people pleased themselves in other ways. There were ice-cream socials, old-time singings, like the Sacred Harp gatherings, political picnics and barbecues, and barn dances. All of these gatherings which bring the neighborhood together in a social way are unlike the "society" of industrialism. Behind it some ulterior purpose always lurks. It becomes another province of Big Business and is invaded by hordes of people who, unable

¹A complete version and account of the Hog-Drovers game song will be found in A. P. Hudson's *Specimens of Mississippi Folklore*.

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to sell themselves in the sterner marts, hope to catch their prey in his relaxed moments and over the tea tables make connections which properly belong to the office. This practice prostitutes society, for individuals can mingle socially from no motive except to enjoy one another's company.

The songs of the Sacred Harp, like negro spirituals, are without accompaniment. The tune is pitched by the leader in the neighborhood schoolhouse under the shadows of oil-lamps. There is a grand meeting at the county seat once a year, and here the neighborhoods sing against each other and in unison under one general leader, who always remembers to turn the meeting over to each district leader for one song. This is a privilege jealously looked after; and if anyone is by chance overlooked, he will rise and make himself known. These songs of the Sacred Harp are songs of an agrarian people, and they will bind the folk-ways which will everywhere else go down before canned music and canned pleasure.

At the square dances, unlike round dancing, the stage is set for each individual to show the particularity of his art. Each couple is "out" in turn, swinging every other couple separately, ending up at "home" when the whole line swings "partners," then "corners." In this way a very fine balance is reached between group and individual action. Everybody is a part of the dance all the time, but a very particular part some of the time. There are no wall-flowers, no duty dances, no agonizing over popularity, and the scores of such things which detract from free enjoyment at the round dancings. "First lady out" means that she

must step, cheat, and swing and show her superiority over the ladies who will follow; and likewise with the gentlemen. And the prompter, the one who calls the "figgers" (which happens still to be the proper English pronunciation of figure), is an artist and wit whose disappearance will leave the world much the poorer. Such calls as

"Swing the gal you love best;
Now cheat and swing."

"Partners to yore places
Like mules to the traces."

and from Mississippi,

"Women swing hard, men swing harder,
Swing that gal with the buckskin garter."

are metaphors and imperatives with full connotation for the dancers, and in an agrarian society will be as applicable a hundred years hence. But so will the fiddlers' tunes, "Leather Breeches," "Rats in the Meal Barrel," "Frog Mouth," "Guinea in the Pea Patch," "Arkansas Traveler," "Cotton-eyed Joe," "No Supper Tonight," "Hell Amongst the Yearlings," "Got a Chaw of Tobaccy from a Nigger," "All My Candy's Gone," and "Katy, Bar the Door." With a list of such dances as a skeleton, if all other records were lost, some future scholar could reconstruct with a common historical accuracy the culture of this people.

Before the farmer decided to keep books, the structure of his neighborhood culture had not been moved, and his sons and daughters, and he and the old woman, were a part of these things. Even mammy, if the rheumaticks had not frozen her joints, would put on her hickory-staved bonnet,

a fresh-starched apron, and mount the waggin with the rest and drive to the singing and lift her cracked voice as the leader "h'isted" the tune, or at the barbecue pat her feet in time with the whining fiddle and think of better days when she and her old man balanced to "Cairo ladies, show yoreself," or "Jenny, the Flower of Kildare," until the sweat poured from her strong back, gluing the gray linen dress to her shoulders and ballooning it in places with air caught in the swing.

III

The Agrarian South, therefore, whose culture was impoverished but not destroyed by the war and its aftermath, should dread industrialism like a pizen snake. For the South long since finished its pioneering. It can only do violence to its provincial life when it allows itself to be forced into the aggressive state of mind of an earlier period. To such an end does bookkeeping lead. It is the numbering of a farm's resources—its stacks of fodder, bushels of corn, bales of cotton, its stock and implements, and the hundreds of things which make up its economy. And as the only reason to number them is to turn them into cash—that is, into weapons for warfare—the agrarian South is bound to go when the first page is turned and the first mark crosses the ledger.

The good-road programs drive like a flying wedge and split the heart of this provincialism—which prefers religion to science, handicrafts to technology, the inertia of the fields to the acceleration of industry, and leisure to nervous prostration. Like most demagoguery, it has been advertised as

a great benefit to the farmer. Let us see just what the roads have done and who they benefit? They certainly can be of no use to the farmer who cannot afford to buy a truck. He finds them a decided drawback. The heavy automobile traffic makes it hazardous for him even to appear on the main highways. But if he has the temerity to try them, they prove most unsatisfactory. Besides being a shock to his mules' feet, it is difficult for the team to stand up on the road's hard, slick surface.

The large farmers and planting corporations who can afford to buy trucks are able to carry their produce to market with less wear and tear than if they drove over rougher dirt pikes. But this is a dubious benefit, for the question is not between trucks on good or bad roads, but between teams on passable roads and trucks on arterial highways.

But in any case the farmer receives few direct profits. Asphalt companies, motor-car companies, oil and cement companies, engineers, contractors, bus lines, truck lines, and politicians—not the farmer—receive the great benefits and the profits from good roads. But the farmer pays the bills. The states and counties float bonds and attend to the upkeep on the highways and byways, and when these states are predominantly agricultural, it is the people living on the land who mortgage their labor and the security of their property so that these super-corporations may increase incomes which are now so large that they must organize foundations to give them away.

But the great drain comes after the roads are built. Automobile salesmen, radio salesmen, and every other kind of