

## SEEN and HEARD around the National Capital

By CARTER FIELD

Washington.—With nature moving in to help extinguish the cotton surplus, as she had already on hogs, cattle and to a lesser extent wheat, probabilities for trouble in the future for cotton growers in this country are not diminished, but increased.

The point is that the dust storms in the big cotton producing areas of Texas and Oklahoma—more than half of the cotton raised in the United States is grown west of the Mississippi despite the prevailing opinion to the contrary—have already boosted the price of cotton. Pressure on AAA is expected to continue loans at around 12 cents, despite the desire to drop them gradually. All of which means that the price of cotton will be maintained at this high level next year.

So far, so good, but unfortunately it is impossible for the United States to keep such a situation secret. If this country could only do what Russia did a few years back with wheat, it could make a killing on cotton—perhaps next year.

The Russians, it may be recalled, circulated stories that their wheat crop had failed, back in the days of Secretary of Agriculture Hyde and the farm board. The farm board began buying wheat, and the Russians began selling. Hyde thought they were selling short, and actually denounced them in public speeches for such a nefarious practice. But the Russians delivered the wheat. Whereupon the price collapsed, the Russians having been the only wheat farmers to get a real price for their product, and the money for that coming out of the United States treasury.

But the whole world knows about crops in the United States. Down in Brazil they know about the dust storms that are wrecking cotton crop prospects west of the Mississippi. They know about the agitation to continue the 12-cent loans—which means an artificially maintained 12-cent price next year. And they know that in Brazil they can produce cotton at a profit at 6 cents a pound!

### Big Brazilian Crop

So naturally Brazil will increase her cotton acreage next season by every square yard possible. This "possible" amount is far from trivial. Tremendous overnight expansion is impossible, of course, but Brazil's agricultural experts figure that only about one-tenth of the land capable of producing cotton—always with the 6 cents, including profit, in mind—is now under cultivation. So that the real problem is labor. But there is enough labor for much more expansion. So it can safely be assumed that there will be a big increase in the next Brazilian crop.

Over in England the cotton spinning people know about these dust storms, and about the prospect of the United States maintaining the 12-cent price. Some of their big mills have made the change in their looms so as to spin the Brazilian cotton. More of them are now expected to do so. They will naturally figure they can buy Brazilian cotton cheaper than United States cotton.

Over in the Japanese puppet state there are now 30,000,000 acres in cotton. Very small so far as world figures go, but there also the facts about the situation in the United States are known, and may be expected to have results. Similarly in Egypt and India.

All of which point unerringly to the probability that throughout the world there will be a mad rush to take advantage of the situation. This prompts eventually to leave the United States treasury holding the bag, owning millions of bales of cotton for which it paid 12 cents a pound, when the world market will be around 7 or 8 cents at the most, and 6 cents in all probability.

But this is only part of the trouble. Johnson and Johnson have already announced their plans for setting up cotton mills in Brazil, the idea being not only to get cheaper cotton, but to get away from the processing tax. Products of this mill would be used in place of goods formerly exported from the American mills of this big firm.

### Army Is Stirred

Army and navy officers are terribly concerned over the bill just passed by the house, and soon to be considered in the senate, for taking the profit out of war. They assure everyone who will listen to them, in private, that it will also take national defense out of war, which might be very serious indeed to the nation in the event of a conflict.

The pacifists hail the bill as: "A bill to keep the United States out of war by providing in advance that there will be (1) profits for none, and (2) confiscatory taxes for all, so that it will be to every American's interest to keep the United States at peace."

Army and navy experts say that it should be called:

"A bill (4) to transfer the war munitions industry now in the United States, and which might be started here, to foreign soil, (2) to provide for a murderous delay in preparation in case a war is forced on this country, (3) to conscript soldiers and employers but not workmen, and (4) to repeal the oldest law of military strategy: that the best offense is a vigorous offensive."

Goaded by a \$2,000,000 bonus to Eugene G. Grace, by screams of the pacifists, by complaints of soldier bonus lobbyists that "these boys fought and risked their lives while profiteers were making millions," the house voted down every qualifying amendment,

passed the bill, and privately hopes the senate will write some sense into it.

### Tax on Profits

More serious, from a preparedness standpoint, is the tax provision on profits. Half of all profits up to 6 per cent and then 100 per cent is the house provision. Suppose, say army and navy officers, the du Ponts had been faced with such a situation at the entry of the United States into the World War. Would they have dared expand their plants? Suppose, instead, of a preliminary period of nearly three years during which the allies were buying all the munitions they could get, and which naturally caused tremendous expansion of the du Pont, Bethlehem and other munition plants, the United States had been involved from the first, with such restrictions on earnings as are now proposed.

The point made by the army and navy men is primarily that no manufacturer would dare expand his plant to take care of a war need. He would not be able to make enough to scrap the plant after the war, and he would have to take his chances with government auditors on depreciation charges. Altogether he would be much safer if his plant were located on foreign soil, where it would be welcomed as an element of military strength.

So that the natural development would be for foreign countries to benefit—even in time of peace—by the training of their workmen in the making of munitions, and in time of war by the possibility of big profits, which these foreign governments could tax to their heart's content and still leave something for the manufacturers.

Nearly everyone agrees that the proposed law would be repealed as the first act of congress after the next declaration of war. Critics are not much worried about that. What really worries them is the prospect of American business enterprise moving abroad wholesale to escape such conditions, thus not only depriving the United States of this element of strength, but actually providing it for potential enemies.

The bill would have no chance of enactment if the votes were by secret ballot. But it is far simpler politically to vote for such a measure than to vote against it, and then try to explain why to one's constituents. Groups lobbying for the measure are militant. And, almost to the last man and woman, they would remember at the polls!

### See Long Session

Congress is not going to be rushed to an early adjournment. It will be with us for a long time yet. Almost surely until August. Probably until September. Possibly longer than that.

This is true despite all the flat predictions by leaders that the "must" items will be rushed through, and everything else will be abandoned. Many things may be "abandoned." But they will not be abandoned because of the time element. They will be abandoned, if at all, because actually they are not wanted. Careful examination of the leftovers at the time of adjournment will reveal the truth of this statement.

Utility heads got all pepped up a few days ago at this list of "must" measures. It did not include the public utility holding company bill. Now, despite all the statements, the probability of the moment is that a holding company bill affecting the utilities will be passed. It will not be passed in the form desired by President Roosevelt. It will be much more moderate. It will actually be what some of the utility chiefs favored as much as ten years ago.

But its omission from the "must" list given out by house leaders is very amusing. It was a bit of intra-party strategy. The house leaders in particular are getting very tired of the President's treating them the way he goes. Hence their public statement of a "program" which would be put through and then followed by speedy adjournment. The legislative veterans were laughing in their sleeves at the time, but their statements made good newspaper copy. What they want is for the President to take them more into his confidence, and stop treating the house of representatives like a stepchild.

### Soldier Bonus

Naturally, the soldier bonus was not on the "must" list. The President does not want that. But if anyone thinks that it is not going to take a lot of the senate's time, he just does not know very much about the senate. Especially, as the best predictions now are that the bonus legislation, after passing both houses, and being vetoed, will be passed over the veto by the house and then fall of passage in the senate.

This unofficial program calls for two separate considerations of the measure by the senate!

That is not all. Very few administration leaders are optimistic enough to believe this congress will adjourn without giving the soldiers something. Which means that time must intervene—after a sufficient demonstration of strength to frighten the White House, and after a sufficient demonstration of weakness to frighten the American Legion—for a compromise to be worked out.

The President has let it be known to a few friends on Capitol Hill that he is willing to go to a compromise of about \$1,200,000,000. The bonus leaders know that, and will move heaven and earth to obtain it if they find that they are going to lose out on the main fight.

Incidentally, there is nothing on the "must" program about the AAA amendments, nor about the growing movement to rescind the cotton processing tax. Nor the corn and hog processing tax. Flat prediction is hereby made that there will be a lot of oratory in the senate on both before the final gavel taps.

## "IN DIJON—"



By JACK DE WITT  
McClure Newspaper Syndicate,  
WNU Service.

MIKE DELANEY of the plain clothes detail flicked at his immaculate civilian suit with a whisk brush.

"Going out deep tonight, Mike?" the question was tossed at him in friendly carelessness by Lieutenant Reese.

"Takin' Ann to dinner," replied the plain clothes man, "and no gags from you."

Lieutenant Reese looked up from the films, reports and "Wanted" circulars he had been perusing, and his large face beamed.

"Ann's a swell kid, and no foolin'. But—ever been in Dijon, Mike?"

"Dijon?" queried the plain clothes officer. His lean, clean-shaven face came alive with a happy memory. "You mean Dijon in France? Sure, I was there. Right after the war. Why?"

"Ever meet the Bluebeard of Dijon?" asked the lieutenant, without humor.

Mike Delaney eyed the officer suspiciously.

"What you getting at?" he wanted to know before committing himself.

"Just this," the lieutenant thrust a paper towards him. "First pickup order we ever got from a foreign country. And then frogs go for rewards, too. See the figure? Fifteen hundred American dollars reward for the Bluebeard of Dijon."

Mike Delaney read hurriedly.

"They seem to think this mug's in this town," he said to the lieutenant.

"Yeah," agreed the desk officer without enthusiasm, "but they have been trying to trail him for five years. No chance pickin' him now. Killed a lotta women, didn't he? I didn't read it careful."

Mike Delaney was reading aloud—"Wanted for Murder. Nicholas Lamaire. The Bluebeard of Dijon. Killed six women and fled before collecting insurance for last victim. The trail of this man has been followed in Spain, Italy, Australia, Hawaii, and Trinidad—where it was lost five years ago. Recently a letter was received by a Dijon acquaintance, mailed in your city by the subject of this circular. No photograph of Lamaire is available. When last known in Dijon—where he spent the greater part of his life in the restaurant business, he was 5 feet 9 inches tall. Weight 100 pounds. Dark hair and eyes. His appearance has undoubtedly changed considerably but he may be readily identified by a triangular scar, result of a knife wound, two inches below the point of his right shoulder blade. He may be employed in a restaurant in your city and he may be the proprietor of a restaurant of the better type."

Delaney paused in his reading. The lieutenant observed: "How you going to identify him from that description after these years? Got fat by now, if he works in restaurants."

Delaney was still thinking of Dijon when he reached the sidewalk. Suddenly he laughed aloud.

It was 7:30 when Mike Delaney presented his broad shoulders in the doorway of a neat suburban cottage.

Ann Morgan met him at the door. "Late, Mr. Delaney. Fifteen minutes late. Give an account."

Mike Delaney said nothing. He usually went tongue-tied for the first few minutes in Ann Morgan's company anyway. When his little coupe was nosing through downtown traffic again, and when Ann had cuddled comfortably close to him, he said half musingly:

"If we had fifteen hundred dollars we could get that bungalow in the Sunset addition and make a good, big down payment to the real estate people—"

"Mike Delaney," the girl interrupted him, "quit worrying about that bungalow."

The subject ended there. Ann was dreaming her dreams; Mike was dreaming his. Both dreams were very similar when he piloted her through the garishly lighted doorway of a downtown restaurant. Gilded letters on the restaurant window announced that the place specialized in French cooking.

When the waiter brought soup and turned with a dexterous flip of his napkin to leave the booth, a sharp ejaculation from Mike Delaney brought him about swiftly.

Mike Delaney was holding by the tall—suspended above his plate—the soup-drenched body of a dead mouse.

"I'll show it to every customer in the place," he spluttered.

"M'seur, M'seur—" stammered the waiter, but before the servant could control his quivering vocal chords he was brushed roughly aside by the head waiter.

"Please—please," he begged, "I will see the management. Please. Fifteen dollars, twenty dollars—please no noise, mister."

Eventually Mike Delaney allowed himself to be placated by none other than the proprietor.

As they walked toward another restaurant, Ann said: "But you shouldn't have taken his money, Mike. You should—"

"Teach him a lesson," her companion assured her. "Forty dollars is a lot of money to a mug like that. I'll let him suffer until tomorrow then take it back."

In the next restaurant Mike Delaney again chose a booth. The waiter went through the preliminaries with expertness and dispatch. After the soup was

brought, he, too, whirled in sudden alarm.

Waiters, headwaiters and cafe proprietors that night seemed to have rehearsed a little act. Signs of money ranging from ten dollars up to the original forty, went into Mike Delaney's pocket and the curtain fell on the seriocomic with Ann and her escort on the sidewalk seeking another eating house.

It was as they were approaching the sixth restaurant that Ann Morgan turned an amazed and hurt expression upon Mike Delaney.

"If that's your way to get that fifteen hundred dollars you say we need, I can assure you, Mr. Delaney, we no longer need it."

She stepped into a taxicab parked at the curb and was gone.

Saddened, alone, Mike Delaney entered still another restaurant.

The act proceeded. The head waiter came and went. And then there was a hitch in the play. An irate, pig-eyed gentleman came crowding to the booth.

"Ah," said this one, "the old mouse trick." He filled the booth with his bulk. Mike Delaney rose and seemed to be estimating his chance for a fast getaway.

But the proprietor had another idea. "Call the police, Oscar," he said over his shoulder to the hovering, alarmed waiter. "And you, wise guy, sit down." He pushed Mike Delaney back into his seat.

"It's the old, what you call, shake-down trick," resumed the cafe proprietor viciously, "and you go to jail for it."

A uniformed policeman was elbowing his way through a knot of curious restaurant patrons near the booth.

"What's wrong?" the officer asked, and then he saw Mike Delaney. The policeman's wondering gaze traveled from Delaney's face to the now almost purple one of the cafe owner.

"You've seen that trick before," Delaney was saying slowly and with a menace in his voice that the cafe man did not miss. "You've seen it in Dijon. A gang of carefree American soldiers used to pull it there to get a little cash."

At the word Dijon the eyes of the fat man suddenly glinted.

"It's a lie, Dijon—I do not know what it means. Arrest that man, officer—arr—" but his voice trailed off. It was his turn now to look furtively for an avenue of escape.

"... and hurry off his shirt," instructed Mike Delaney, at the police headquarters a few minutes later. "I want to see that scar before I go take Ann to dinner, return some dough I collected—and do some heavy explaining."

### Traditional Life Span

of 70 Passed by Many

Revolutionary conclusions about why people live longer than they did a generation ago and may be expected to live still longer in the future are suggested by new studies of death-rate statistics in Great Britain by three Scottish mathematicians, Col. A. G. McKendrick, Dr. W. O. Kermack and Dr. P. L. McKintay, all of Edinburgh, says the Providence Journal.

One conclusion is that the chief cause of how long an individual lives is what kind of constitution is acquired during the first 10 to 15 years of life. Another is that living to be ninety or one hundred promises not to be improbable instead of the traditional limit of three score and ten.

Sanitation and medical science have greatly decreased deaths among children and young people, so that the percentage of middle-aged people has been increasing. There has been no direct evidence, however, that the old people are living any longer or that the maximum span of human life is lengthening.

Many experts have suspected, indeed, that this life span might decrease, as one result of keeping alive many children who are naturally weak and cannot be expected to live long anyway.

The new Scottish investigation is the first evidence that this pessimistic conclusion may be wrong. British children born in each decade since 1845 are found to live a little longer than children born in the previous decade.

Nothing seems to influence this except the year of birth, which implies that what happens to children under fifteen seems to be the chief factor in living long or dying early. Extensions of the same computations to future decades imply that substantially increased percentages of the people now being born may expect to live beyond ninety.

### Derby Races

The Derby races were inaugurated by the Earl of Derby in England in 1780 and they are still annual affairs at Epsom, Surrey, England, in which none but three-year-olds race for a generous purse. The most important race at any track is sometimes called the Derby but the Kentucky and other specified American races are patterned after that of England. British pronunciation—Dar-by—is derived from the old spelling of Lord Derby's territory, Deorabir. Of late there has been a tendency in America to adopt the English pronunciation.

### Sables' Luxury Life

Sables, destined to provide fur coats, lead a life of luxury at the nursery established in the forest at Barguzin, eastern Siberia. Here is their menu: Breakfast (7 a. m.): biscuits, oatmeal, or rice with milk; luncheon (1 p. m.): minced meat with vegetables and cedar nuts. Once a month the sables are weighed. Those which are not up to the mark receive extra food—eggs and cream.

## "Dust Storms" Figure on All Pages of History

No one who has not been in one of the dust storms which have swept the western plains for more than a year can appreciate their devastation and the apprehensions of the people in the region extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Slave lake.

Science knows full well the potentialities of this terrible phenomenon. It has innumerable records of other soil transformations brought about by the wind. Much of the richer soil over vast areas in the United States was carried there by dust storms. An analysis of dust falling in Missouri a year ago revealed the characteristics of soil in the Dakotas. All soils are easily identified by their mineral content. The Dakotas had been exposed to drought for a number of years. The soil was deprived of its protective vegetation. Thus, when the wind blew, the soil was carried away to be deposited in other states.

To most of us who live where moisture is sufficient for human needs, it is difficult to realize that the dust storms have been raging all winter. Neither snow nor rain has been sufficient to keep the dust down even in mountainous states like Colorado. Heavy rains have flooded the lower Mississippi valley, but the shortage of moisture has gone right on in the plains. Whether in Texas or Saskatchewan, the wind has only to rise and the dust is blown. If anything, the dust storms have been worse than ever in the last two months. They have actually buried fences, piled dust high around houses and barns, covered up crops. They are destructive alike to man and beast. No form of life can withstand them day after day very long.

Needless to say, the dust phenomenon has greatly altered the food situation in the United States. It affects meats and grains. It is in part responsible for the increased cost of living. The AAA plan to limit the production of spring wheat has been abandoned. How can there be too much wheat when the wheat states are the chief victims of the dust? The drought reduced corn last year

to a minimum. If it persists this year, there will be no reserves of corn left. From surplus induced by excess production in our own and other countries, we are in danger of passing to scarcity due to drought and dust.

Records of drought are readily traced in the rings of trees. There are records of other droughts in the plains as bad as or worse than the present drought. This is not, however, an assurance to science that we may now be witnessing the beginnings of one of those deserts in which nature delights. It was when the Southwest became a desert that the Indians moved into Mexico. Life follows the moisture-bearing air currents. When they passed from the region south of the Mediterranean to the region north of the Mediterranean, life followed them. The Asiatics have long been accustomed to packing up and following the moisture-bearing winds.

Science would not care to assert its entire apprehensions of the dust storms in the western plains. They may be the consequences of just another drought. Or they may be the beginning of the end for all that region where the buffalo grazed. Science knows what has happened. What is to happen is on the knees of the gods.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

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