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RESTLESS AMERICANS

1. *Why are incomes low in the South?*
2. *Where can a worker expect to find jobs?*
3. *Should the government encourage migration?*

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Restless Americans*

WHEN a strong man comes to the realization that he cannot wrest happiness or contentment from his immediate environment, his eyes wander to the horizon. If in the distance he sees the promise of better health, a more satisfactory education, new freedom of thought and speech or a higher standard of living, he is likely to gather up his belongings and set forth. The colonization of New England, New Amsterdam, Virginia, and the Carolinas, the land speculation of the Ohio Company, the parceling out of the Northwest Territory, the breaking of the Oregon Trail, the Gold Rush of 1849, the more recent tumultuous occupation of Oklahoma—all are part of the panorama of migration. In our own time, during and after the World War, the flood of Negroes entering Northern industrial centers from their homes in the Old South formed one of the great migratory movements of the 20th century. Were one today to make a world-wide comparison, he would probably find Americans far more ready than most other peoples to leave their homes in search of better ones.

We think of these population movements of the past as being entirely spontaneous; but a little study shows them to have been pulled and guided by all manner of influences. Disposal of public lands was a leading issue in Congress for much of its first 75 years, and such measures as the Homestead Act and the railroad land grants represented a definite effort to hasten the occupation of the West. In more recent years, federal irrigation and drainage projects have resulted in the settlement of some 140,000 people. And throughout our entire past the migrating individual has been subject to

* This pamphlet was prepared by Clifton T. Little on the basis of the report of the Study of Population Redistribution. For a more detailed consideration of this subject see "Migration and Economic Opportunity," University of Pennsylvania Press, 1936.

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the influence of promoters engaged in unwise and unrestrained land speculation.

Purpose and Results of Migration

Migration, except when forced by racial and religious persecution, is largely motivated by a repulsion from poor areas and an attraction to areas which offer a promise of greater opportunity. How well, then, has the migration of the past served the American people, and to what extent can it be relied upon to relocate them satisfactorily in the future? It seems clear that the early migration westward and southward did definitely improve the lot of those who ventured forth; and the recent migration of the prosperous twenties served to bring people from the poorer agricultural regions to the more thriving industrial communities. It is estimated that during the 1920's ten states of the Southeast lost some 1,700,000 people to more favored regions. In general, it appears that the ability to move has served the people well.

TODAY'S NEED FOR MIGRATION

But migration must constantly change in volume and direction in response to changing conditions. We dare not assume that an imperfect population distribution of the past flowed without exception into the best regions. Were such the case, there would be no outstanding areas of low living standards; and we actually have at least four in our own country.

The Southern Appalachian Coal Plateaus

The Southern Appalachian coal plateaus stand out as an area of miserably low standards of living. Standards in some counties of this region are the lowest in the United States; in fact, in most of the agricultural counties of the plateaus the gross income per farm inhabitant for the entire

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year 1929 was less than $150, and it was less than $300 in all of them. In about 40 per cent of these counties the average man, woman and child on the farm received less than $100 during the whole of that year of prosperity. These figures include the value of farm products consumed in the home. It is not surprising that during the depression almost a quarter of the population of this area was forced onto relief. Some of those on relief had actually suffered no substantial reduction of customary income; even before the depression many of them lived so close to the margin of physical existence as to be entitled to help on any reasonably humane standard.

Conditions in the Homes

Such low income implies a widespread shortage of the ordinary facilities of life. A recent study of Knott County, Kentucky, portrayed conditions which are conceded to be representative of the more mountainous and poorer sections. Only two of the 228 homes included in the survey had running water in the kitchen; half of them were without toilet facilities of any kind, and only one home had an inside flush toilet. In 84 homes there was drainage from the outside toilets to the water supply, and in 42 there was drainage from the barnyard to the water supply. Electricity was available in only two homes.

It is common for large families to be crowded into extremely small dwellings. One house of three rooms sheltered eleven persons, comprising three generations, and another two-room cabin contained a family of eight. Another family of eight, living in a two-room house, had only one bed—most of the family slept on the floor. Clothing, though adequate for some, is wretched in many instances.

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Medical Care

The high percentage of deaths from such preventable diseases as tuberculosis, diarrhea among infants, pneumonia, and typhoid fever reflects a lack of medical service throughout the entire Southern Appalachian region. The hill people have about two-thirds as many physicians per unit of population as the average throughout the United States. In Leslie County, Kentucky, for example, probably less than 10 per cent of the families availed themselves of the services of registered physicians in 1930 or 1931. This is not surprising when it is realized that the distance from the home of the patient to the nearest doctor is from 4 to 36 "horseback" miles, and that the doctor's average charge for 60 visits was $12.73—a very high proportion of the annual per capita cash income of the people.

Because of their poverty, the mountain families raise a large portion of their food at home; and their diet consists very largely of corn meal, fat pork, and molasses, which are deficient in high quality protein, calcium, and vitamins. This doubtless accounts for the fact that many observers in this area have been impressed by the lack of energy and initiative of the mountaineers. It must not be overlooked, however, that these people are the direct descendants of fine pioneer stock and have preserved a heritage of high ethical and spiritual standards. They are hardy, self-reliant, hospitable, honest, and courageous. Why should they, with such characteristics, live so meagerly? Can it be that there is not enough work, even in good times, to provide the ordinary decencies of life? In attempting an answer, let us first see what the opportunities have been in the past for maintaining this population, and then try to determine what opportunity there may be for the future.

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Resources—Agriculture

The region we are considering has only three important resources: agricultural, forest, and mineral. How well the present and future people in this region can support themselves depends almost entirely upon these three resources and their use. The agricultural settlement of the Kentucky mountains began in 1789, but as late as 1880 the population of most of the mountain counties was less than 2 per square mile. Since that time the people have moved from the western margin of the mountains slowly up the main river valleys, and from the rivers up the creeks and hillsides.

In twenty non-mining counties the typical farm consists of only 77 acres, just half as large as an average Iowa farm. In 1929 the average farmer in these counties had barely one-fifth of this 77-acre farm in crops, whereas on the typical Iowa farm crops occupy, approximately one-third of the farm land. The average size of a Kentucky farm family is 5.5 persons, whereas in Iowa it is 4.5. Thus, the individual living on a farm in Iowa derives his support from almost eight times as much land as the farm dweller in the Kentucky mountains.

Were the Kentucky farms richly fertile, the problem would not be so pressing. But this land never has been ideally suited to crops, and soil erosion threatens to destroy much of its present limited value. In Laurel County, Kentucky, for example, more than one-third of the land in a typical group of farms was badly eroded in 1928. A sample study in Knott County showed that in 1930 only 23 per cent of the land was level enough to be plowed without serious soil wastage. Since the farm people cannot live without cultivating these sloping fields, a progressive lowering of living standards resulting from soil erosion seems inevitable—unless the population pressure can be relieved.

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How Many Can the Land Support?

Just how many people can this land be expected to support? In 1930 the farm population of the region numbered 825,481. Since that time there has undoubtedly been an increase of at least 10 per cent. Hence the agricultural resource has to provide a living for some 80,000 to 100,000 more persons than in 1930; and at least this number may be expected to seek occupation elsewhere as soon as opportunities become available. But there are still other thousands who should move if the population on the farms is to improve its condition.

The United States Forest Service, in cooperation with the National Resources Board, recently estimated that if the land in farms in 33 of the 34 counties of Eastern Kentucky were devoted to its best permanent use, the acreage in crops and pastures would be reduced by 42.4 per cent. This would mean that at least one-third of the 1930 farm population of Eastern Kentucky, or almost 128,000 people, should leave the farm. Were an ideal plan of land use put into effect generally, the Forest Service estimates that the farm land not in timber in 1930 should be reduced by about 23 per cent; and if the farm population were reduced in the same proportion, at least 200,000 people would be displaced. To go still further and reorganize the farm land so that the number of harvested crop acres per farm might equal the national average, which is 57 acres, would displace 550,000 persons. Since these figures are based upon the population of 1930, we must add the increase during the depression, and our total excess population becomes two-thirds of a million.

The Forest Resource

The exploitation of the abundant hardwood forest resources followed agricultural settlement. Oak, chestnut, and yellow poplar were the most abundant woods, and birch, maple, beech, hickory, ash, basswood, cherry, and black wal-

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nut were common. The original wealth of timber is now seriously depleted, and little of the virgin stand remains. Throughout the Southern Appalachians, about 7 per cent of the present commercial forest area consists of mature saw timber. In 1929 the cut was barely half as great as at its highest period, and the consequent decline in employment has been even greater than the drop in the volume of lumber output. Entire communities of workers have been left unemployed. In 1929 there were 19,459 people gainfully occupied in the commercial forest industry. Of these, approximately 18,700 were employed in logging camps, sawmills, and furniture factories, and probably 700 worked in the care and maintenance of the forest itself.

The potential value of the forests is high. Rainfall and the lie of the land unite to make growth fairly rapid, and the hope for additional employment lies in evolving a systematic type of forest management. The Forest Survey's recommendations for the management of the plateau lands, other than farmers' woodlots, would require some 17,000 men over and above the 700 who were engaged in forestry in 1929. Including dependents, this would provide for about 70,000 people. But 17,000 employment openings do not go far toward absorbing the surplus of population now in agriculture.

Mineral Resources

Though the agricultural endowment of the area is meager and the forests are badly depleted, the mineral heritage is magnificent. Deposits of mineral fuel in the Southern Appalachians are among the richest in the world. In terms of employment, oil and gas are not important. In 1929 some 6,600 men were employed in the drilling and operation of wells, and perhaps 2,000 or 3,000 others in pipeline transport or refining; and it is doubtful that these numbers will ever be exceeded.

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Coal Mining

The economic wealth of the Southern Appalachians lies largely in bituminous coal. The income to the local inhabitant is not derived, however, from royalties or rentals but from wages. In point of actual numbers employed, coal mining is exceeded only by agriculture, and the mines supply far more cash income than the farms. In 1929 a quarter of all the gainful workers in the area, including women, were on the payrolls of the coal companies, and each worker received, on an average, $1,188 during the year—a total of $183,000,000 in wages for the coal miners of the region.

While the mines were active, the region experienced a prosperity it had never previously known, but when employment began to ebb, thousands were left stranded with no means of livelihood. Beginning with 1924, there was no further increase in employment, and after 1927 conditions became rapidly worse. From a peak of 181,000 men in 1923, the number on the payrolls had dropped to 130,000 in 1932, but recovered to 158,000 in 1934. It is probable that there are today 30,000 unemployed men who formerly worked in the mines.

Prospects for Future Employment

What are the chances that the coal mines can ever absorb this labor surplus? Two contradictory elements in coal mining must be considered in attempting an answer. Mechanization will in the immediate future tend to displace man-power. A few years of prosperity, coupled with rising wages, will introduce a large addition of labor-saving machinery, and such mechanization might easily displace 15 to 25 per cent of the labor force within the next ten years. On the other hand, the coal which has been mined thus far has been easily obtained, 90 per cent of it having been taken through horizontal drifts or gentle slopes, without the sinking of a shaft. But a

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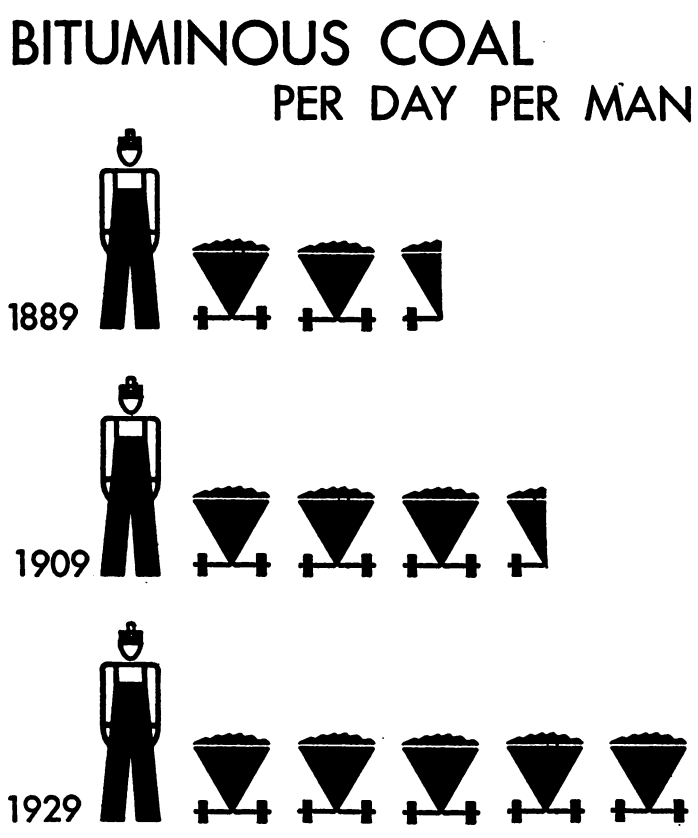
large portion of the easily mined coal has been removed. This means that in the future the less rich veins must be worked, and in working them greater employment may be required. For the immediate future, however, perhaps half or two-



thirds of the 30,000 unemployed miners must be provided for in other occupations. There are, then, at least 15,000 men and their families—some 60,000 persons—who should be placed elsewhere.

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Cottage Handicrafts

We have seen that there is little chance that these unemployed miners can be used in agriculture. It has been hoped by some that an extension of home handicrafts and rural industry might offer some relief. In 1933 probably 10,500 persons derived some cash income from this type of work. A study by the Women's Bureau, however, disclosed that the earnings per hour from home handicrafts were 10 or 12 cents for women and 20 or 25 cents for men. It is difficult to see how such home work can ever provide substantial relief.

It is also doubtful whether any great extension in large-scale manufacturing will take place within the limits of the coal plateaus. In 1929 there were 56,757 wage earners—or only 8.4 per cent of all the gainfully employed—on the rolls of manufacturing companies reporting to the Census Bureau. It is improbable that this number can be greatly increased.

How, then, can the farm, forest, mine, and factory be expected in the near future to provide any improvement in living conditions for these people? It seems that without a decrease in numbers, the Southern Appalachians will remain a region of severe pressure of population upon resources. On the basis of the foregoing estimates of the number of workers likely to be required in each of the region's industries, a minimum estimate of what might legitimately be called "surplus" population is, counting workers and their dependents, approximately 340,000.

Population Increase

This brings us to the basic problem of the mountains: excessive pressure of population on available resources. The combined resources of this area are insufficient under present conditions to provide a decent living for the people dependent upon them. Assuming that there were to be no great volume of emigration, we must visualize the situation going from bad to worse because of an extraordinarily high

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rate of natural increase. For the coal plateaus and the Blue Ridge, the surplus of births over deaths has recently been from one and a half to more than twice the national average.

The Depression and Migration

It might be assumed that as times become increasingly hard in the area, more and more people will move to other locations. But this will be true only if there is opportunity elsewhere. The depression has brought about a movement in the opposite direction, and the situation today in some instances is even more difficult than we have indicated. During the past six years, outward migration from the agricultural counties, which had reached substantial proportions during the twenties, ceased, and thousands who had previously left the farms returned when they lost their non-farm employment. As a result, the population of the plateaus increased from 2,198,000 in 1930 to over 2,361,000 in 1934. The relief loads in some of these counties are among the heaviest in the country.

Were all the rest of the country seeking labor, this surplus in the Appalachian regions would disappear soon enough; but no widespread shortage of labor exists, and there are other outstanding areas in which population pressure upon the available resources is also extremely severe. One of these regions is the Old Cotton Belt.

The Old Cotton Belt

The Old South, in contrast to the Appalachians, is a veritable storehouse of agricultural wealth. The soil is fertile, the growing season long, rainfall plentiful, transportation facilities good, and land values are low. It has been said that anything can be grown here. Why should such a region be one of poverty and distress? The answer is complex, but is closely tied up with the character of the chief crop—cotton.

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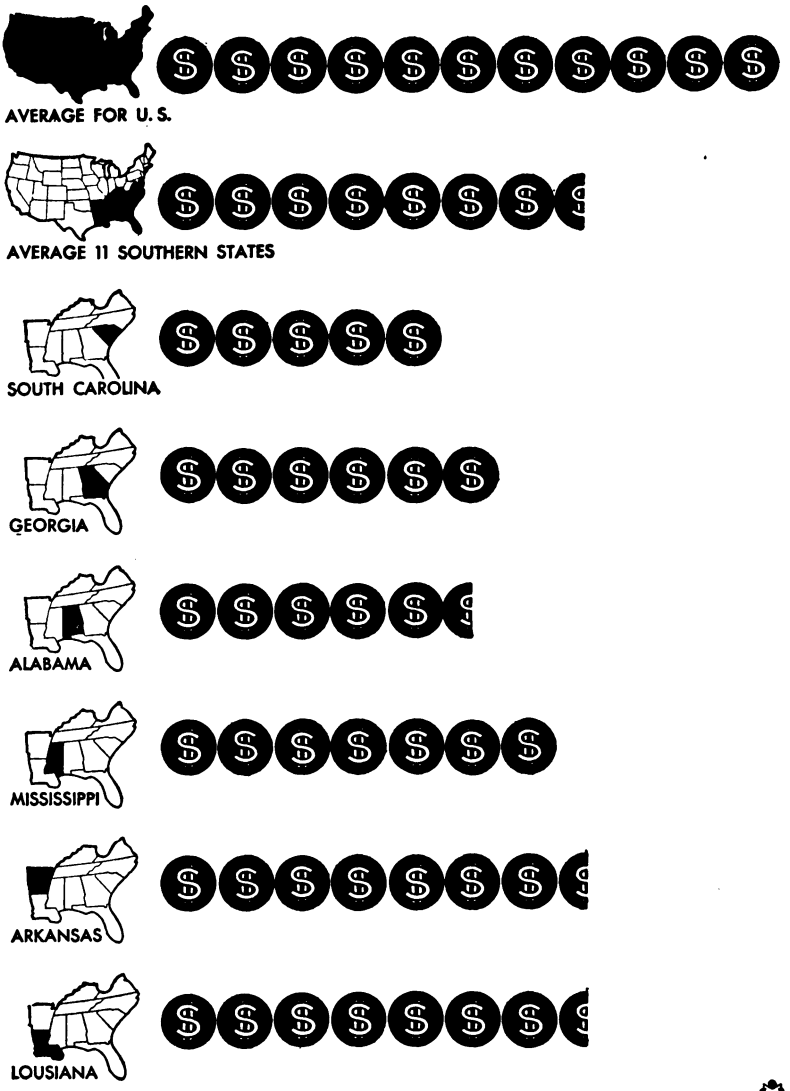
PER CAPITA PERSONAL INCOMES IN 1929
(FARM POPULATION)



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This plant makes necessary a culture of the soil which leaves the surface open to washing during summer and winter. This washing has contributed largely to the fact that land values have been reduced to below $15 an acre in 200 counties.

The One-crop Hazard

Reliance on one crop has made the region particularly vulnerable to changes in yield and price. The difficulties have been greatest since the World War, because damage from the boll-weevil has coincided with extremely low prices. The financial plight of the cotton growers has become so serious in recent years that the tenant and the small owner rarely receive enough money from one year's crop to carry over to the next. Frequently, the entire income from a crop is required to pay debts which have been incurred to produce that crop. Even large landholders have been forced into financing their crops by credit. Since 1899 the returns to the farm operators in the Southeast have been about half those for the rest of the nation. The operator produces an average of approximately five bales of cotton, which normally bring him between $250 and $400, and the other crops on his farm, at 1929 prices, bring him possibly $175 more. Here again we find a region of established poverty and rapid population growth. The Old Cotton Belt is second only to the Appalachians in its high rate of natural increase.

The problem is a double one: (1) to accomplish some recovery from the institutional and economic shocks of the boll-weevil invasion of the past generation; and (2) to regain, if possible, the export market, which in the past has absorbed 50 per cent of American cotton. It is doubtful, however, whether such a high ratio of export can ever be regained. Without a restoration of this foreign market, only one-half of the present agricultural population of the Cotton Belt can possibly maintain even the accustomed standard of living, much less improve it.

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The Prospect for Industrial Development

Is there any way to lessen the need for migration from the region? Cannot the South perhaps develop its industry sufficiently to absorb the surplus? The South has gained many new industries by reason of low labor costs; but it is doubtful whether the margin is large enough to permit much further development. To be sure, the lowered cost of hydroelectric power made possible by the T.V.A. will probably attract certain light industries. Many experts feel that the most obvious means of raising the economic level of the region will be found in the development of the electrochemical, electro-metallurgical, ceramic, and cement industries, which rely heavily on low-cost electric power. There is also hope that eventually a new industry may be based on the use of slash pine for newsprint paper. Perhaps no other section offers promise of such varied returns from scientific forestry. The sun and the rainfall of the region make native yellow pine the fastest growing tree in the United States, and sustained-yield forestry could conceivably employ many.

But these prospects are not nearly enough. Despite expansion in employment which can reasonably be visualized for the immediate future, the Old Cotton Belt must plan for emigration. If the world market for cotton is permanently lost, it may become necessary for six or seven million persons to leave and seek employment in other parts of the country.

The Cutover Region of the Great Lakes

The Cutover Region of the Great Lakes states, comprising roughly the 76 counties in Northern Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan, like the Southern Appalachians, is dependent upon three resources: forests, farms, and mines. As the name of the region implies, the timber resources have been largely depleted. Here, in contrast to the Southern Appalachians or the Old Cotton Belt, population density is low. But this very sparseness of population has led to serious

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difficulty. Individual farms are so isolated that they have little access to markets; and the provision of common social necessities such as schools and highways entail an expense too great for the scattered population to bear. Deserted farms are a common sight. In 1927 no taxes were paid on nearly one quarter of the entire cutover portion of Wisconsin, and much land throughout the entire region has reverted to the states for non-payment of taxes. Wisconsin counties alone have taken title to more than a million acres of tax-delinquent land.

In the iron and copper mines of this region unemployment has been enormous since 1929, and it is probable that at least 5,000 miners will never be re-employed at their old jobs. Successful agriculture in much of the Cutover Region is practically impossible because of the condition of the land; the soil is sandy, excessively stony, thin, poorly drained, and rough. The growing season is short. And added to the physical handicaps imposed by the land and climate, slowly rotting pine stumps are scattered over the surface of the land. The cost of removing them would be greater than the probable return from the land.

A Forestry Program

In this area public opinion is rapidly crystallizing in support of a long-range forestry program; and township, county, state, and federal governments have already taken definite action in this direction. More than one quarter of the 35 million acres recommended by the National Resources Board for permanent forest improvement is now either under public ownership or in the process of being acquired.

Here in the Cutover Region of the Great Lakes, much less emigration is needed than in the Southern Appalachians or the Old Cotton Belt. Rather, the problem is largely one of preventing unwise settlement and of effecting a better distribution of the population already within the region.

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The Great Plains

Still another large section of the country has fallen victim to unwise depletion of resources—the Great Plains. This area includes much of what in the geographies of a century ago was called the Great American Desert and lies immediately east of the Rocky Mountains. Climatic conditions—high wind velocity and the unpredictable, yet certain, recurrence of drought—are unfavorable to agriculture. The Plains formerly possessed a close-knit sod, but as farmers began to displace cattlemen and cultivate the soil, the sod cover was destroyed. The recent dust storms, in which whole areas were denuded of topsoil, are only the more dramatic manifestations of almost continuous wind erosion.

Wheat

In localities suited to the use of power machinery, the cost of planting and harvesting wheat is amazingly low; but yields are likewise low, and it is doubtful whether or not they are sufficient to permit permanent agricultural development. Although there was a yield per acre in 1920 of more than 21 bushels at $1.77 a bushel, that year represented the highest level of farm net income ever obtained, $31.99 per acre. Since 1912 there have been 12 years in which an actual net loss was sustained. The accumulated income per acre for the entire period 1912 to 1934 was $33.08—a yearly average of only $1.57.

As in the Old South, the farmer has borrowed until his credit is exhausted. It is argued that he could at least save his soil by listing; but he has been unable to do this for sheer lack of gasoline and oil for his tractor. Without government aid he can do little else but plant more wheat if and when rain comes. The ultimate solution of the problem of the Great Plains is a return to grazing. Pasturing on the range should be supplemented by the raising of feed and other crops in areas which can be irrigated, or on soils which are

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resistant to erosion. This implies an increase in the size of farms to a point where cultivation and grazing can both be controlled.

Transforming the Great Plains into a grazing region cannot be accomplished by individual farmers. The most rapid solution, of course, would be a gigantic land program in which private land would be returned to public ownership, and tentative steps in this direction have recently been taken. It seems probable that a wise use of the land would involve a reduction in population of more than 390,000.

THE PROSPECT FOR EMPLOYMENT

We have found an enormous surplus population in the great depressed regions which we have considered. To those who have studied these areas not only during the depression but prior to it, no expansion in agriculture, forestry, or industry which can be expected in the near future seems adequate to absorb any appreciable portion of this surplus. Where are the individuals thus stranded in a condition of permanent poverty most likely to find a reasonable chance of earning a satisfactory livelihood?

Prospective Opportunity in Agriculture

The proportion of the population engaged in farming has progressively declined ever since records have been kept. The whole experience of modern economic life has been marked by a steady flow of workers from agriculture into those activities which are concentrated in urban locations. During the depression the tendency was reversed, but it seems probable that the long-time trend of the pre-depression days will be resumed.

The history of agriculture in this country has amply illustrated the increasing productivity of the individual farm worker equipped with power machinery. Agriculture ap-

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pears to be at a point where technical advance will enable a much smaller personnel to produce a much larger output. The only alternative to reduced personnel lies in the hope of increased consumption of farm products; and there is little promise that great changes will occur in the per capita volume of the nation's food consumption.

There is some hope, however, that there will be a continuous increase in the demand for non-food products of the farm. Already a number of farm products are finding their way into manufactured articles. It has been suggested that cornstalks, straw, and other fibrous materials be made into paper and allied products. As a matter of practical consideration, however, it must be remembered that the quantity of cornstalks and straw annually produced in this country is several times that which would be required to make all the paper and board now manufactured here, and that there is more than enough to meet any probable demand for cellulose and cellulose products for many years to come. Furthermore, the Southern states are growing at least 200,000,000 cords of pine every year, which is far more economical as a source of cellulose.

Another suggestion is that the government require a percentage of grain alcohol in all motor fuel. But public opinion toward this use of alcohol is not likely to be favorable as long as low-cost gasoline is available. It is difficult to see how agriculture, at least during the next 25 years, can open the way for a migration from the city to the farms. It is equally difficult to see how agriculture can make room for more than one-fifth of the excess of farm births over deaths—even if the output per farmer does not increase.

The Chances for Employment in Forestry

Forestry could, as we have already observed, give permanent employment to large numbers. The National Resources Board has indicated that an ideal forestry pro-

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gram would involve, among other projects, the development of 75,000,000 acres of submarginal farm land for uses other than farming. On such a project an average of about 1,500,000 men working six months a year would be needed for development, protection, and maintenance. It is doubtful, however, whether forestry and conservation work, either under ideal or probable programs, will absorb any appreciable numbers of industrial unemployed in addition to the CCC workers and rural residents.

Mining

Although mining will eventually be faced with increased labor requirements as leaner deposits and thinner beds at greater depth are worked, a return to 1929 business levels could hardly more than bring the total number of workers to within 7 or 12 per cent of the 1929 numbers.

Manufacturing

Factory output will undoubtedly expand greatly in the near future; but this does not mean that employment will undergo a proportionate expansion. Prior to 1920, increased output meant increased employment; but during the twenties the amount which an industrial worker could produce increased much faster than the total amount produced. During the depression the output per man-hour continued to rise. Short of governmental regulation, this trend is likely to continue.

In utilities and transportation as a whole it is hard to see how any more men could be employed, and it is possible that even less manpower will be required as automatic controls and general rationalization become more effective.

Professional and Public Service

Our hope, then, for greater employment opportunity narrows down to the fields of professional and public service. Here the demand is limited only to the effective purchasing

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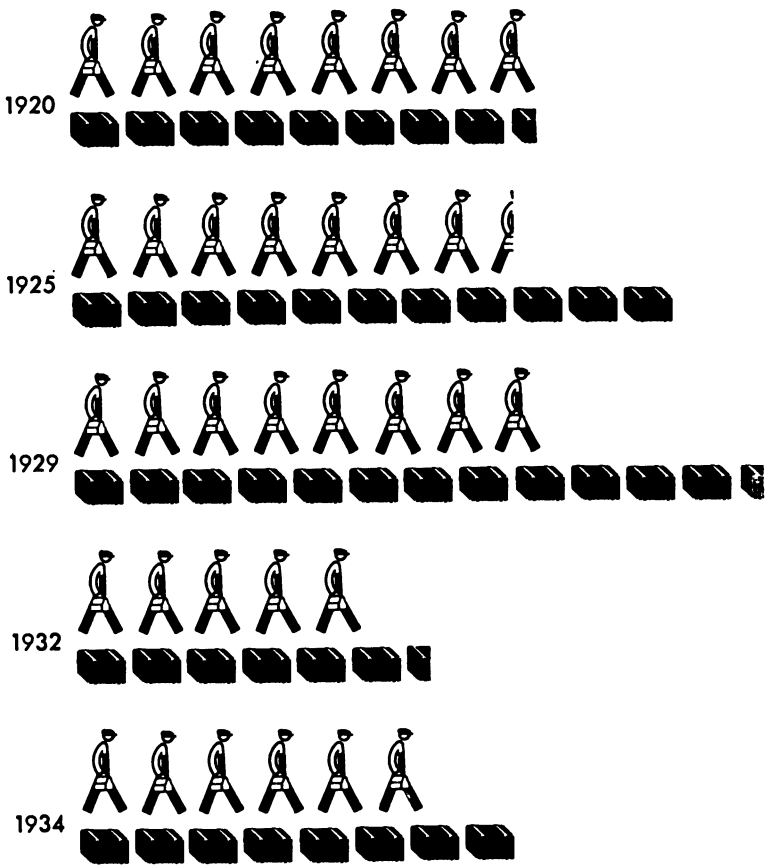
EMPLOYMENT AND PRODUCTION
OF MANUFACTURES



Each laborer represents 25 per cent of 1899 employment
Each crate represents 25 per cent of 1899 production

PICTORIAL STATISTICS INC

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power of the recipients. It is impossible to measure accurately the true need for clergymen, physicians, dentists, lawyers, or teachers. But we can attempt some measure of present unsatisfied need by means of more or less arbitrary standards. For example, in 1929 there was one physician for every 1,431 persons in South Carolina, compared with one per 571 persons in California. There were 19 dentists per 100,000 population in Mississippi and 101 in Oregon in 1928. It does not necessarily follow, of course, that we need many more physicians or dentists, providing their work could be organized so that each might make efficient use of his time and energy.

More teachers are definitely needed. In 1930 there was a ratio of one teacher to more than 30 students in public elementary and secondary schools. In contrast to this ratio, an ideal standard is said to call for about 15 students per teacher. In addition, there is a demand for an increase in school facilities for children of kindergarten age and for adults. Taking all types of teaching and auxiliary personnel into consideration, an additional force of about 3.7 million could well be used. This does not, however, indicate an effective shortage in personnel, for we find there were 177,900 unemployed teachers in 1932. Under existing conditions the chances for employment are poor.

In the professional field of today we find not only doctors, lawyers, clergymen, and teachers, but an amazing array of geologists, engineers, chemists, and a whole host of specialized workers, shading off imperceptibly into a vast army of men and women with some degree of professional skill—clerks, nurses, stenographers, designers, and so on. With the growth of our social and economic structure there has come a greater need for the services of the white-collar worker. Even though certain clerical and routine administrative chores are being systematized and mechanized, we may expect the white-collar worker to become increasingly important as life becomes more complex.

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Where Work Is Likely to Be Found

Almost everywhere, it seems, there are too many people to do the work which is likely to be done. The question we ask is still unanswered. Where are the people likely to be needed, and where can they expect to find a good livelihood? Unfortunately, no answer today can be more than tentative and incomplete. We cannot say how soon they will be needed, nor can we give any assurance that all of them will ever be needed. On the basis of regional demand, however, there is little doubt that the chances are generally better in the North and West than in the South, and better in the urban areas and their surrounding communities than in the more remote rural areas.

It is probable that any expansion of industrial production will release a flood of migration from the less favored rural areas into the urban centers. Although in general the migrants improve their position by moving, great wastage and personal distress resulting from unwise choice of destination must be anticipated. Even if the individual who migrates betters his own condition, spontaneous migration still has at least two basic defects. To begin with, not enough people leave the depressed area to confer any appreciable benefit upon those who remain. Then, too, the new home frequently offers an opportunity which is only temporary. This situation suggests a need for some type of guidance, so that the volume and direction of migration will be adapted to existing and future needs.

THE CONTROL OF MIGRATION

Is there any satisfactory way by which people might be moved from regions of poverty to places of greater promise? In the United States we have no history of planned migration; but the experience of Great Britain may give some

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indication of what can and what cannot be done in this direction.

Great Britain

British problems are so much like our own that their experience contains many valuable hints for us. In Great Britain the chief measures for reducing the labor surplus in areas of widespread unemployment have been the inauguration of public works within depressed districts, limitation of the recruiting of workers, and removal to other sections.

By the beginning of 1928 the industrial depression had become so deep in certain areas that an Industrial Transference Board was appointed "for the purpose of facilitating the transfer of workers, and in particular of miners, for whom opportunities of employment in their own district or occupation are no longer available." * This board served only in an advisory capacity and had neither funds nor authority to take vigorous action. Its report, however, was so favorably considered that much subsequent action has been based upon its recommendations. It felt that raising the school-leaving age or creating artificial employment projects would be impracticable. But it was deemed advisable to attempt to open new industries in the depressed areas whenever the manufacturers regarded the locations as being economically advantageous. A number of satisfactory locations were discovered and the board turned its attention toward the problem of making the transfers.

Labor Exchanges

Part of the labor surplus has been placed in agriculture locally and a small part has been sent to the Dominions. Men have been transferred to industry and women largely into domestic service. But most of these transfers would have been impossible without the system of labor exchanges. Since 1910,

* *Industrial Transference Board Report,* Cmd. 3156, 1928, p. 2.

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Great Britain has built up a complete network of public employment offices, including 420 exchanges and about 750 branches.

When an employer requires help which cannot be supplied by the exchange nearest him, this office telephones immediately to neighboring exchanges. If the required worker cannot be found in the vicinity, the call is printed in a sheet which is circulated next morning to all offices in the division. If even then a qualified worker is not found, the call will appear in a list which is circulated throughout the entire system. When the man whose experience and training fit him for the vacancy cannot afford transportation to the job, the fare may be loaned to him by the government. This system has, over a considerable period of time, quietly and effectively acted to remove the labor surplus from regions of poverty and place it where opportunity for employment is greater.

Transfer to the Land

Both in Great Britain and in the Dominions workers have been established on plots of land comprising up to 50 acres or even more. These plots are either owned or rented by the occupant and provide either full-time or part-time work. By 1932 it was estimated that 450,000 acres had been occupied by 27,000 tenants and that 6,000 acres more had been occupied by 760 owners. It was found, however, that many of these newly made farmers lacked either the requisite experience, good land, or ready markets for success. The most recent and authoritative report on this program arrives at the conclusion "that a large-scale policy of Land Settlement in this country cannot be justified on economic grounds, and can have little influence in solving the problem of unemployment." *

* A. W. Menzies-Kitchin, *Land Settlement*, a report prepared for the Carnegie United Kingdom Trustees, Edinburgh, 1935, p. xii.

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Domestic Employment for Women

Transferring women into domestic work was much simpler than the transfer of men, because the demand for labor in the homes continued to outrun the supply. It was found that many of the women required training; and by 1934 30 domestic training centers had been established in which 4,400 women were accommodated at one time. The majority of the women placed were successful in their new occupation.

Industrial Training for Men

As early as 1925, Government Training Centers were established to give industrial training for the semi-skilled, and the success of this venture led to the opening in 1929 of five instruction centers in unskilled work. These numbered 16 by the end of 1934 and provided accommodations for some 3,300 men. From 1929 through 1934, 54,500 men were admitted, and 20,500 were placed in jobs.

British experience has shown that organized migration does not solve the problem of a general depression. Its success has been chiefly in relieving the congestion of unemployment in the more depressed areas. The employment exchanges have been indispensable in making whatever transfers were deemed advisable.

GUIDED MIGRATION IN THE UNITED STATES

PERHAPS the most significant step that has yet been taken in the United States in the direction of relieving a future congestion of unemployment is the recent passage of the Wagner-Peyser Act of June 6, 1933, in which Congress provided for the establishment of a permanent nationwide system of federal and federal-state employment agencies. Thus far, because of the widespread surplus of labor, this

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system has tended to discourage rather than to promote mobility. A large proportion of the demand for labor has been filled locally, and there has been no occasion for distant transfer. Eventually, however, this service may become an important means of moving workers to the points where they are most needed.

Relief and Migration

Organized relief has been a potent factor in influencing population movement, but it also has tended to prevent rather than to promote migration. A certain amount of migration has taken place in search for relief; but migration would have been much more common in certain areas had direct aid not provided many families with the basic necessities of life. Even loans of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, in helping to maintain industrial employment, kept some workers from going in search of new jobs. Subsistence gardens have also had some effect. There is little doubt that the great majority of the efforts of the present administration in the direction of relief have tended to inhibit rather than to promote migration.

Public Works—T.V.A.

Many large public projects, such as those at Bonneville, Grand Coulee, Boulder Dam, and the Tennessee Valley, have necessitated the movement of large numbers of workers. The Tennessee Valley project deserves special attention because of the magnitude of the undertaking and the manner in which migration problems are being worked out. Flooding of Norris Reservoir required the removal of some 4,000 families, most of whom had previously had no contact with the outside world. Guided somewhat by the unfavorable experience of a group of families that had been obliged some years before to leave Smoky Mountain National Park, the Tennessee Valley Authority determined to prevent the Valley

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inhabitants from moving into undesirable locations. In cooperation with the Extension Service of the University of Tennessee, a careful list of farms available for purchase in various parts of the Valley has been prepared. Those who are moving from the site of the Norris Reservoir are given an opportunity to visit their prospective homes before they commit themselves to purchase.

At the site of the T.V.A. operations, workmen who have been brought together from the neighboring farms and villages have been given education in a wide variety of subjects. They have attended classes enthusiastically and have acquired scientific training in farming and machine trades which will enable them better to fit into the life of the Valley itself or into a new life outside.

Rural Zoning

Rural zoning, intended to discourage the misuse of land, was first authorized by law in Wisconsin. Under the authority of a 1929 legislative act, 23 of the state's 71 counties, including all of the cutover counties, are now zoned for agriculture, forestry, and recreation. The intention of this type of control is not to encourage or sponsor migration, but to prevent unwise migration. In 1935 Michigan adopted an enabling act which provides for even greater state control than the Wisconsin law, and in that same year Indiana enacted similar legislation.

Public Purchase

In New York State the policy has been one of state purchase rather than rural zoning. A constitutional amendment was adopted in 1931 which granted authority for the purchase and reforestation of a million acres of land, and by the end of 1934 the state had purchased or contracted to purchase more than 250,000 acres.

A federal purchase program, inaugurated early in 1934,

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has taken option on approximately ten million acres of land scattered throughout most of the 48 states. It is hoped that from this program will come some indication of how successfully the federal government can carry out a planned land-use program for specified areas. Approximately 22,000 families live on the land that has been optioned, nearly 12,000 of whom will require financial aid for relocation. Thus far probably not more than 200 families have been moved. Unfortunately, the sites to which it is proposed to move these people are concentrated in areas of low economic opportunity. Several, for example, are in the "Dust Bowl." To be sure, the new farms provide soil superior to that which the migrants are leaving, but if any extensive relocation is to be successful, migration must find its destination in better regions.

Decentralization of Industry

Long ago it was suggested that many problems might be solved by moving industry into rural regions. The Presidential message urging the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority emphasized the distribution of industry as being one of the major objectives to be attained. To this end, an Agricultural-Industrial Division has been endeavoring under the Tennessee Valley Authority to develop products and processes for small rural industries.

But by far the boldest embodiments of this idea are the subsistence homesteads initiated by the Department of the Interior and the rural industrial communities established by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. Proponents of decentralization argue that people of all ages, and children in particular, live more wholesome and happier lives in a rural or semi-rural environment. They feel that the possession of a small portion of "good American soil" gives one a sense of security and independence.

At present, however, our interest lies in the economic opportunity that might be gained through establishing manu-

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facturing enterprise in the country. Those who urge decentralization of industry either assume that the city workers will be given greater security by moving to the country, or that the residents of the countryside, impoverished through dependence upon farming, will be saved by the cash income which may be derived from wages. A case may be made for either point of view. The presence of manufacturing plants in rural communities does make it possible for workers to supplement wage earning by part-time farming. But from the standpoint of the urban wage earners, it has been pretty well proven that few are willing or able to practice spare-time farming. It has been shown also that part-time farming provides only meager security against industrial unemployment.

Government Communities

Up to the middle of 1935, plans had been formulated for the creation of 106 government-constructed communities intended to house well over 12,000 families. By September 1, 1935, 41 projects were actively in process, and 1,040 homes had been occupied by 7,291 persons. These communities were to be placed in locations where the need for present employment and the prospect of future employment seemed most favorable. Some of them were established in industrial and mining counties in the hope that the residents would be able to supplement their wages by part-time farming. A number of the projects, however, were established in strictly rural localities in the belief that manufacturers would find it profitable to establish their plants in these communities. Too, it was felt that the people of the community might ultimately of their own initiative start small factory enterprises that might, in time, grow into successful ventures.

Unfortunately, a large portion of the counties selected for community sites have comparatively few industries on which to build assurance of future employment. If more of the communities had been placed in important industrial

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counties, there would have been less risk that the residents would be left stranded without access to manufacturing employment. Nor is the outlook for farm income favorable in many of these locations in which farming is not usually successful. No less than eight of the F.E.R.A. locations are in counties of great poverty. On the whole, it appears that the communities have been located more on the basis of need than on that of opportunity. There is little reason for believing that manufacturing will move into these areas to provide employment for the homesteaders, or that the homesteaders will prosper through agriculture.

This does not mean that the projects are wholly without merit. They have at least furnished a form of relief that has raised the morale of stranded and helpless groups. The homesteaders on the whole have undertaken their work with vigor and high hopes. Thus far wages paid by the government for the work of preparing the sites and erecting the homes and public buildings have provided a cash income, but the time must be anticipated when the homesteaders will be forced to look to some other source of income, and the difficulties likely to be faced are serious enough to suggest that certain basic issues should be re-examined before more communities are organized.

TOWARD A MIGRATION POLICY

We have seen that unguided migration in this country has, on the whole, improved the economic standing of the majority of the migrants. Migration, of itself, almost invariably has flowed from localities where opportunity was limited to localities of greater promise. In this way was the country peopled. Abundant natural resources of soil, lumber, and minerals were exploited without thought of the future. With the passing of these resources, permanent poverty de-

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scended upon large portions of our population in the Southern Appalachian coal fields, the Old Cotton Belt, the Cutover Region of the Great Lakes, and the more arid portion of the Great Plains. While opportunity for employment decreased, population increased, and its rate of increase has been greatest where poverty was greatest.

Our past experience points to an inevitable emigration, especially of young people, from areas of low opportunity as soon as employment becomes more plentiful in the industrial centers. Our problem is twofold: (1) to prevent the migrants from entering places where employment is likely to be scarce or only temporary and (2) to assist those who remain in depressed areas, either through providing increased opportunity at home or by encouraging them to go elsewhere. The problem is more difficult to solve because we do not have at hand the basic information which would enable us intelligently to guide the migration of large groups. Our first need is the prosaic one of research and analysis. As an aid in this direction it is proposed that in the next census the question be asked: "Where were you living on April 1, 1930?"

Control of Migration

Experience here and abroad indicates that the most successful control of migration is a negative one: to prevent or discourage clearly undesirable movement. Rural zoning and land retirement constitute a worthy forward step. Such negative control, however, cannot mean much. Many unfortunates who are virtually forced to seek new homes will need—and wish—some guidance.

In directing the movements of those who are seeking new homes, one must not lose sight of the interests of the communities that are to receive them. It is not hard, for example, to believe that the Corn Belt farmers would resent a subsidized invasion of threadbare refugees from some other part of the country. Furthermore, such a movement is not

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helpful in a country where there is already an apparent overproduction of agricultural products. Although it appears that the large urban centers offer greater means of livelihood than the rural areas, the sudden advent of large numbers of prospective wage earners would tend to lower the average level of wages and living standards. The immediate effect would be to weaken the bargaining position of the men already on the job. Organized workers have bitter memories of strikes broken by green labor from the country, and the non-union worker is no more anxious than his organized brother to welcome either the young farm lad from the West or the Negro from the cotton fields.

All that has been said thus far assumes that migration is necessary in adjusting the labor market to employment need. The suggested alternative to migration, a decentralization of industry into rural areas, cannot now be regarded as satisfactory. It seems anything but wise to attempt a distortion of rate structures or any other form of subsidy for industry in order to place it in a locality which is basically uneconomic. On the other hand, the diffusion, or spreading-out, of industry from established centers may wisely be encouraged. Thus, the industry can retain its competitive position, while its employees are given the advantage of low-cost housing and part-time farming or gardening.

Above all, in seeking to alleviate the distress caused by the mistakes of the past and by the shifting of resources and centers of industry, we must not lose sight of the basic necessity for preserving the mobility of the population. In a world of changing opportunities, the ability to move at will offers greater security to many persons than the most favored location. Our purpose, then, must be not to crystallize any population pattern but to offer wise guidance to a constantly moving stream of workers.

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