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I had the pleasure of meeting a great many prominent dentists, and while I was giving information along certain lines, I was absorbing new ideas from THEM. Invitations to dine and to their offices were numerous, where I was shown their methods of serving the public.

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"BACK

HE high cost of living, or the 'cost of high living," as James J. Hill puts it, is a subject which just now is engrossing the attention of the entire nation. The cost of the necessaries of life has been steadily increasing since 1896. The symptoms have been viewed with increasing alarm by nearly all classes. Within the last year the matter has reached an acute stage. The average increase in the cost of necessities from Jan. 1, 1909, to Jan. 1, 1910, was 11.7 per cent. The increase over July 1. 1896, was 61 per cent.

The wage and salary earners in the cities have seen the "bread line" gradually drawing closer. The margin between income and expenses, narrow at best, has shrunk to the vanishing point. All this while newspapers have been shouting prosperity, forgetful of the old maxim that "the real prosperity of a nation is the citizen's margin

Whatever the cause of this increase in the cost of necessities and comforts, there are but two ways in which the citizen as an individual can meet it. The first is to increase his income,



USING CORN FOR PUEL IN 1896.

and the second is to lower his standard of living The wage earner, banded together with his fellows in a union, has been able to increase his scale of wages to some extent, though not nearly enough to fill the gap between income and expenses. The wage | cent. earner who does not belong to a un-

The salaried man has borne the hardincreased pay have brought little re-

All classes that are compelled to less degree. They have been forced to lower their standard of living. The first item to be attacked is the food supply. Russell Sage once said, "As the cost of living increases the use of ment decreases, the proportion of dark producing it. The consumer's dollar rooms increases and child labor becomes plentiful." Less ment means poorer nourishment, less resistance to disease and a higher death rate. Other foods of cheaper quality are used. Oleomargarine takes the place of butter. Cold storage eggs are a luxury and fresh eggs unknown, and cheaper brands of canned goods are used.

Aside from food, the big item of expense in the city is rent. In order to keep up with the increased cost of % as property owners have been forc-. to raise rents. The frenzied crowding of the people to the cities has enabled landlords to make these increased rents effective. The result is that a house with a porch and a bit of lawn has become a luxury, and more and more the middle classes, the classes on whom prosperity should react most favorably, have been forced into flats and apartment houses. The poorer classes have moved into tenements. The high cost of room has made crowding inevitable. Human beings have been forced to herd together like cattle or worse. The modern dairy barn is a palace beside some of the tenements that pass muster as human hab-

Many causes have been advanced by economists and others to account for the rise in prices. Many blame the tariff, but that will not explain why prices are rising nearly as rapidly in England as in the United States. The economist's favorite reason is in the increase in the supply of gold. Money is becoming cheaper, he says, and therefore it takes more of it to buy a given amount of any commodity. This explanation sounds very plausible, but it does not explain the fact that prices have at other times gone down in the face of increased gold production. The gold supply is unquestionably a factor influencing rising prices. That it is the fundamental factor may well be doubted.

Other writers try to lay the whole trouble to the growing extravagance of the American people and to the in creased standard of living. It is true that at the present time we regard as necessaries what yesterday were luxuries. This increase in the standard of

I. - The Growth of the Cities and the Increased Cost of Living.

By C. V. GREGORY.

Author of "Home Course In Live Stock Farming," "Making Money on the Farm," "Home Course In Modern Agriculture." Etc.

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living is but the product of civilization, however, and is something to be encouraged rather than discouraged. Furthermore, it is responsible in but a small degree for the increase in the cost of living. The increase in the standard of living has manifested itself most strongly in better houses, better clothing and more conveniences, Yet the great increase in cost has been not in these materials, but in food. Between July 1, 1896, and Jan. 1, 1910, breadstuffs and live stock increased in price 108 per cent. During the same period the increase in the textiles was 73 per cent, in metals 65 per cent and in building materials only 15 per cent That luxurious living has had much to do with the increased prices cannot be denied. That it is wholly responsible is far from the truth.

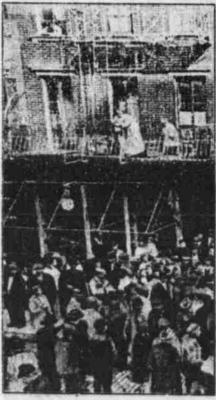
If we are to seek the real cause of this crisis that confronts our country we must go back to the old cause of supply and demand, coupled with other factors that have grown out of this. The period from 1870 to 1895 was the period of development of the middle west, the bread basket of the world. Here were lands of unparalleled fertility that had merely to be scratched to give forth their bountiful supplies. The result was that the markets of the world were flooded with foodstuffs.

By 1896 the middle west was pretty well settled. The bloom of its virgin fertility had been removed. Soon the days of using corn for fuel and wheat to feed the hogs were past. Prices of farm products began to rise. If there had been no other factor entering in they would soon have reached a normal level, and the readjustment would have come with little trouble. Unfortunately the tide of population toward the cities had become too strong to be turned in a day.

From 1880 to 1900 the percentage of farmers decreased from 44.3 to 35.6. a decrease of 8.7 per cent. During the same period the percentage of persons engaged in manufacturing increased from 21.8 to 24.3. This increase of 2.5 per cent is no more than normal and may be accounted for by the increase in the standard of living and the consequent demand for manufactured articles. The increase in professional lines during this time was eight-tenths of 1 per cent, while the number of persons engaged in domestic and personal service decreased one-tenth of 1 per

The great increase came in the numion has profited to some extent by the ber of persons engaged in trade and general rise in wages, though not so transportation, an increase of 5.5 per cent. Of the 162 per cent of the work ing people engaged in trade and transest brunt of the rising prices. He be- portation in 1900 only nine-tenths were longs to no union, and his demands for engaged in transportation proper. The others, 15.4 per cent of all the people of the United States who work, were simply middlemen. Complete figures work for a living have had to turn to since 1900 are not available, but the the other alternative in a greater or cityward trend has increased rather than diminished.

> Here is the true explanation of the high cost of living. There are more than one-third as many men engaged in distributing food as there are in is worn thin before it gets to the producer. The 10,000,000 men who farm must supply food to the 7,000,000 people who are working in the factories



GREAT CITY.

to the 12,000,000 people who are doing nonproductive work and to the 46,000,-000 people who do not work at all. And because the changed ratio of supply and demand are enabling the farmer to make a profit where before he worked at a loss there is a great outcry over the high cost of living. This outery will not change things in the least Neither will boycotts nor anti-meat so-

There is only one remedy, a reversal of the tide of population. The abnormal growth of cities must be checked Farming must be restored to its proper place in the industrial world. In the succeeding articles we shall note some of the forces that are bringing this

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