

MERCANTILISM AND SOUTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURE,
1700-1763

By C. ROBERT HAYWOOD
Southwestern College, Kansas

There is a much greater affinity between the agrarian economic theories of the eighteenth century colonists and the present "liberal" concepts than is usually conceded. It is generally assumed that the American agrarian heritage is that of the self-reliant frontiersman who was restive under governmental restraint and abhorred governmental paternalism. It is customary to consider the doctrines of rugged-individualism and laissez-faire as more consistent with the farm tradition than the political theories of the New Deal or the economic concepts of John Maynard Keynes. Our American agrarian tradition, however, was formed in the colonial period when the prevailing economic theory in England and Europe was mercantilism, a theory that accepts as a fundamental precept the necessity of governmental control.

It seems hardly possible that the colonists who found their religious, social and cultural patterns in Europe should have rejected completely the universally accepted doctrines of mercantilism. And, in fact, when the colonists did express their economic ideas, they tended to follow the established mercantilistic axioms. Their frame of reference was undoubtedly the same as their English contemporaries.

In detail the colonists were concerned with bounties, enumerated articles, usury laws, forestalling and engrossing, which seem, because of their antiquated terminology, to be uniquely eighteenth century issues. When they are converted to modern terms, however, they have much the same pertinence in the twentieth century as they did in 1700. "Price supports" have replaced "bounties"; Chamber of Commerce brochures have succeeded the promotional tracts; and "industrial levies," favorable zoning laws, and concessions in utility rates have been substituted for tax remissions, monopolies, and land grants, in attracting new investments. The question of whether interest rates on "G.I. Loans" guaranteed by the government should be raised or lowered, however modern this may seem, is discussed today in terms that would seem familiar to a resurrected mercantile tract-writer. Government-established wheat quotas as a means of reducing overproduction, would certainly have a familiar ring to the colonial planter who puzzled over the problem of a glutted tobacco market. Underlying the considerations of these details was the

broader question of what should be the role of the various governmental units in the lives of the people. This is just as vital an issue today as it was two hundred years ago, and the colonial decisions concerning the role of the government are remarkably similar to those of today.

Mercantilism, as it existed in England during the eighteenth century, was modified by changed circumstances in the southern colonies, but its fundamental principles were readily accepted. In very few areas were the southern colonists content to suffer the economic consequences of an unregulated economy. There was practically no criticism of English regulation and encouragement of the colonial economy, partly because England was generous in giving aid to improve colonial agriculture, but more important, because her restrictions on colonial manufacturing had little effect on an area with a surplus of fertile land and a scarcity of skilled labor. It was inconceivable that an independent, unprotected colony could survive in the cut-throat competition for empire which marked the history of Europe during the eighteenth century, so was it unthinkable that any trade could prosper in the straight-jacket of regimented and restricted international trade, without the guiding hand of a powerful protecting government.¹

In all the southern colonies continued prosperity depended upon the production of a staple crop. South Carolina was no exception, finding rice a profitable staple. But, like the other staples of other colonies, rice suffered from the natural hazards of climate and from the fluctuation of the world market. Consequently both the local government and the British government were called upon by the planters to regulate production and marketing. Although some salutary effects were achieved, the planters felt that their economy could be improved. In spite of a great deal of debate on the subject, the South Carolinians could never quite agree as to what measures were needed to solve their "farm problem." In general there was agreement upon only one thing: too much rice was being planted in the colony. As one planter expressed it, there was a need "to come off . . . the Darling Rice."² Such an assumption was bound to lead to various suggestions for diversification which were in keeping with the mercantile desire to grow as many products as possible within the empire in order to achieve self-sufficiency and to bolster a favorable balance of trade.

¹ For an elaboration on this theme in North Carolina, see the author's article "The Mind of the North Carolina Advocates of Mercantilism," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, XXXIII (April, 1956), 139-166.

² *South Carolina Gazette*, March 2, 1747.

Early efforts to get individual planters to restrict rice production and to venture into new areas had proven futile. By 1700 most of the persons proposing new schemes for improving the economy assumed that some governmental agency would be needed to implement the program. Some felt that the technique of limiting production through a colonial agency, similar to that used by the tobacco colonies, could be adapted to limit rice production.³ Others suggested the manipulation of local bounties in such a way as to reduce the amount of rice under cultivation by stimulating the planting of other crops. "Patricola" in the *South Carolina Gazette*, for instance, felt that only by granting large bounties could sufficient "rewards" be given to induce even "the industrious adventurers" to turn to new commodities.⁴

The most frequently mentioned device for improving the economy, however, was that the planters should be forced by governmental action to diversify their production. Representative of the more vigorous proposals was that demanding that the planting of rice be restricted by law to two acres per hand and that the rest of the Negroes' time be devoted to preparing beef and pork for the Sugar Islands.⁵ A number of other crops and productions were suggested as possible substitutes for rice.⁶

The development of South Carolina's second great staple, indigo, came as a direct result of the drive for diversification. English climatic conditions prevented its growth at home and the early experimentation in the colonies had been unsuccessful. England was, consequently, dependent upon France and Spain for this important dye so necessary to her growing textile industry. The extent of this dependency was estimated by one colonist to be £500,000 per annum which was doubly embarrassing because England was forced to purchase indigo from her bitterest rivals.⁷ Naturally, England was interested in any project that

³ See "Agricola," *South Carolina Gazette*, February 3, 1732.

⁴ *Ibid.*, March 2, 1747.

⁵ *South Carolina Gazette*, February 3, 1732.

⁶ For typical examples see *ibid.*, October 8, 1744; January 19, 26, 1747; February 16, 1747; March 2, 1747; January 11, 1748; Records in the British Public Record Office Relating to South Carolina, 36 volumes. Historical Commission of South Carolina, Columbia, XIV, 29. Hereinafter cited Public Records of South Carolina. Cecil Hedlum, J. W. Fortescue and E. Noel Sainsbury, eds., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies* (42 vols., London, 1860-1954), Volume 1730-1731, 58, 325. Hereinafter cited *Calendar of State Papers*.

⁷ James Crockatt to the Board of Trade, January, 1747, Public Records of South Carolina, XXIII, 43.

would relieve her of this unfavorable trade and dependency on France and Spain.

In South Carolina, as in the other southern colonies, indigo had been the subject of much speculation and some experimentation before 1740.⁸ But it was not until Eliza Lucas Pinckney's successful experiments in the early 1740's that it was seriously considered as a possible substitute for rice. To her is usually given the credit for founding one of colonial South Carolina's most profitable industries. However, a more realistic assessment of causes, if less romantic, would consider as equally important the "melancholy Situation of the Province" which led to demands for diversification.

In 1744 the Assembly offered a bounty for the growth of a number of new products including indigo. Under this direct stimulation indigo became a profitable crop and its production increased rapidly.⁹ Two years later the bounty was repealed, largely because the increased production and the consequent requests for the bounty threatened to deplete the colonial treasury. Immediately a flurry of activity developed within the colony attempting to get the bounty renewed either by Great Britain or the Assembly. The stream of letters to the *South Carolina Gazette* that had previously urged diversification were continued with the added appeal for a renewal of the bounty on indigo.¹⁰

The leader in the movement to get British aid was James Crockatt, a former merchant of Charles Town, who had established the headquarters of his business in London.¹¹ Crockatt wrote two short pamphlets in 1746 and 1747 urging the South Carolinians to diversify their agriculture and emphasizing the value of indigo to both America and Great Britain. He assured the colonists that if an acceptable dye could be produced in some quantity, the "Government would be ready to give it all proper encouragement, which might be done either by a Duty on

⁸ A long article in the *South Carolina Gazette*, April 1, 1745, mentioned that "40 years ago" good indigo had been made in Carolina. See also the tract by James Crockatt, *Observations concerning Indigo and Cochineal . . . by a Friend to Carolina*. (London, 1746), which mentioned early development and cited letters of the 1720's from South Carolina concerning indigo. See also Public Records of South Carolina, VI, 287.

⁹ *Acts Passed by the General Assembly of South Carolina, 1733-1762*. Various titles and printed by Peter Timothy (Charles Town, 1736-1762), Act of May 29, 1744. Hereinafter cited Timothy, *Acts of South Carolina*.

¹⁰ *South Carolina Gazette*, January 19, January 26, February 16, 1747, August 27, 1748.

¹¹ Roy W. Smith, *South Carolina as a Royal Province, 1719-1776* (New York, 1903), 168.

foreign Indigo, or a Bounty.”¹² His second pamphlet, written after he had seen some of the Carolina indigo, was intended to further stimulate its production and to give needed advice on how to improve its quality. He also included in this latter pamphlet an outline of a strategy to be used in gaining the desired English aid. His proposal was to instruct the agents of the Assembly to work for the bounty, using the records of shipments sent from Carolina to underscore the potentiality of future production.¹³ Crokatt then turned his attention to the Board of Trade. In a lengthy report to the Board, Crokatt attempted to show, in clear mercantile terms, the value to England of aiding the colonists in her new venture. After estimating the cost of the existing trade in indigo, he then demonstrated how colonial production would not only correct an unfavorable trade balance but would eventually “help to distress the French . . . by beating” them out of the entire European trade in indigo.¹⁴ To insure colonial success, he proposed that England place a duty on indigo imported from Europe and grant a bounty for indigo imported from the colonies. He justified this latter expenditure on the grounds that “if by giving a Bounty to our own colonies of £10,000 for a few years we can save £150,000 per annum from being paid to the French for ever after there can be no objection made by any who has a National advantage in View. . . .”¹⁵ He viewed the industry as one that needed only an initial stimulus to get it started but once established, or as soon as the plantations could “Supply the Home consumption,” the bounty could be withdrawn. To Crokatt it was axiomatic that infant industries should be protected, for, as he expressed it, “All new Manufacturers Should like weak Children be carefully Nursed at first, they may afterwards increase without assistance.”¹⁶

It is difficult to determine whether or not it was Crokatt’s mercantilistic persuasion that led to the adoption of the English bounty act. But the members of the Commons House of the Assembly felt that it was, and they made him their agent shortly after the bounty had been

¹² Crokatt, *Observations Concerning Indigo and Cochineal*, 23.

¹³ James Crokatt, *Further Observations Intended for Improving the Culture and Curing of Indigo, Etc., in South Carolina* (London, 1747), 9.

¹⁴ Crokatt to the Board of Trade, January, 1747, Public Records of South Carolina, XXIII, 44. This is typical of mercantilistic logic. The belief in a limited amount of trade in the world led the mercantilists to feel that one nation’s gain inevitably led to another nation’s loss. Thus any new market was considered to be double the actual value involved because in capturing it some other nation lost in the relative balance of power.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 52.

adopted and granted him £215:9:2 for his efforts.¹⁷ If he was responsible for the action of Parliament, then it was the mercantilistic pressure coming from the colonies that moved the British government to adopt one of the most acceptable and beneficial actions taken to develop imperial self-sufficiency. Under the influence of the English bounty, indigo immediately prospered, and with it the total economy of South Carolina, and England was relieved of much of her embarrassing French trade in this article.

The colonists believed, and justly so, that the county and the preferential treatment in Great Britain were responsible for their prosperity.¹⁸ Whenever there was any move on the part of the mother country to end the bounty, or to reduce it as she did in 1764, the agents of South Carolina and interested individuals on both sides of the Atlantic immediately set to work to get the subsidy continued.¹⁹ Far from objecting to the government's paternal interest, the colonists assiduously courted it and were willing to see the powers of the home government extended considerably. They depended upon the power of the mother country to preserve their prosperity and when Virginia threatened to cut into their monopoly they called upon Great Britain to intervene.²⁰

Government aid in the form of a bounty was just barely sufficient to make indigo profitable. From a beginning of five thousand pounds exported in 1746 the production mounted until well over two hundred thousand pounds were exported in 1754 and nearly one and a half million pounds at the outbreak of the Revolution.²¹ The war brought an im-

¹⁷ Committee of Correspondence to James Crockatt, June 17, 1749, *ibid.*, XXIV, 241; Journals of the Commons House of Assembly in South Carolina. Historical Commission of South Carolina, Columbia, XXIV, 132.

¹⁸ For example see Governor James Glen's report to the Board of Trade describing the prosperity of the colony (which in itself makes the report something of a rarity in colonial literature): "I presume tis Indigo that puts us all in such high spirits, which in a little time will be a very great affair, the few years more of the bounty is absolutely necessary for us." *Ibid.*, XXVI, 112. See also an ode written by a "Resident of South Carolina" in the *South Carolina Gazette*, August 25, 1757.

¹⁹ Public Records of South Carolina, XXIII, 11, 36; XXVI, 112; XXIX, 26, 273.

²⁰ Governor Robert Dinwiddie to James Abercromby, January 4, 1755, R. A. Brock, ed., *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1751-1758*, 2 volumes, being volumes I and II of *Collections of the Virginia Historical Society*, New Series, (Richmond, 1883-1885), II, 580. See much the same to the Board of Trade, *ibid.*, 591.

²¹ Robert Lee Meriwether, *The Expansion of South Carolina, 1729-1765* (Kingsport, Tenn., 1940), 83-85, 94-95; Roy V. Coleman, *Liberty and Property* (New York, 1951), 397; Oliver M. Dickerson, *The Navigation Acts and the American Revolution* (Philadelphia, 1951), 42.

mediate reversal to the industry with the loss of both bounty and market. American production declined and all but disappeared by the opening of the nineteenth century.²² Once the bounty was removed the industry failed to meet expenses on its own. South Carolina had reached the peak of her colonial prosperity under the direct influence of the mercantile policy of Great Britain which her citizens had helped formulate. Not only was there a ready acceptance of an obviously beneficial policy but there was an equal willingness to continue and help perfect the system.²³

In the effort to diversify the agriculture of South Carolina, indigo was by far the most successful of the crops but it was by no means the only suggested substitute. Capitalizing on Great Britain's passion for a favorable balance of trade, the colonists also made appeals for aid from the mother country in developing luxury items which England was buying in an unfavorable exchange. One of the most costly of these exchanges was the Italian silk trade.

In 1719 England attempted to establish her own processing plant, only to have Sardinia place an embargo on the exportation of raw silk. Consequently the only chance England had of escaping an unfavorable trade was to develop her own raw silk.²⁴ The prospects of silk culture in the colonies where wild mulberry trees abounded, stirred the imagination of most of the early writers.²⁵ As a result, silk became the most talked of and the least successful of all diversificational schemes. As in the other attempts at diversification, the South Carolinians first tried to get the British government to subsidize production by granting a bounty, justifying the expenditure by pointing out that England would be relieved of her costly trade with Italy, Spain and Sicily and would event-

²² *Ibid.*

²³ See the Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, XXIV, 181, for a report of the committee treating of the bill to prevent frauds in making and exporting indigo.

²⁴ Marguerite B. Hamer, "The Foundation and Failure of the Silk Industry in Provincial Georgia," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, XII (April, 1935), 125.

²⁵ John Archdale, *A New Description of the Fertile and Pleasant Province of Carolina* (London, 1707), 30; John Brickell, *The Natural History of North-Carolina* (Dublin, 1737), 253; Mark Catesby, *The Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands* (2 vols., London, 1754), I, xxi; Daniel Coxe, *A Description of the English Province of Carolina, By the Spaniards Florida, And by the French La Louisiane* (London, 1722), 72; John Oldmixon, *The British Empire in America* (2 vols., London, 1741), I, 371; John Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina; Containing the Exact Description and Natural History of that Country: Together with the Present State thereof* (London, 1718), 85.

ually develop a profitable export commodity.²⁶ But there never was a sufficient amount of raw silk actually produced in the colonies to tempt England to give the desired assistance until late in the colonial period; consequently, the colonists were left to their own devices.

Operating through their colonial legislatures a number of mercantilistic projects were adopted by the colonists in a futile attempt to stimulate more planters to produce silk. The usual techniques of bounties (in this case for both raw silk and mulberry trees), educational aids and publicity were supplemented by such refinements as granting premiums for inventing "useful machines."²⁷ The most original effort, however, and the most expensive, was the establishment of a public silk plantation. After careful study of a proposal made by John Lewis Poyas, a native of Piedmont, the Assembly gave him control of a plantation, six Negroes and an expense account. This plantation was to serve as a kind of experiment station where settlers, especially those of the Welch Tract, could learn the art of silk culture.²⁸ After four years' trial, the plantation was abandoned.²⁹ Failing here, the Commons House tried to get a compulsory silk production law passed that would have required all planters to make some effort to develop silk. When the upper house refused to cooperate, a substitute measure was adopted which granted a bounty for the growth of mulberry trees.³⁰

South Carolina had left few stones unturned in her search for means of stimulating silk culture. Even the most radical paternalism, i.e., forced cultivation, had received considerable support. Only slightly less radical was the government sponsored plantation which used the people's tax money to foster an enterprise that private capital had not been able to develop. But even these desperate measures failed in the face of the realities of colonial economic life. Both Governor Glen and Lieutenant Governor William Bull diagnosed the cause of this failure as the high cost of labor and the higher standard of living in South Carolina. Glen

²⁶ Jean Pierre Purry, *Memorial presented to His Grace My Lord the Duke of Newcastle, Chamberlain of his Majesty King George, &c., and Secretary of State: upon the present condition of Carolina, and the Means of its Amelioration* (London, 1724), 19; James Harold Easterby, ed., *The Colonial Records of South Carolina, The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, November 10, 1736-July 10, 1743* (3 vols., Columbia, 1951-1952), Volume 1739-1741, 317; Volume 1741-1742, 51, 440. Hereinafter cited *Journal of the Commons House*.

²⁷ Timothy, *Acts of South Carolina*, 1736, 40; 1738, 29; 1747, 19, 23.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1738, 29; Easterby, ed., *Journal of the Commons House*, Volume 1736-1739, 336, 349; Volume 1739-1741, 107, 480, 551.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 517, 531, 551.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 560, 462.

observed that the people of South France, Italy and Turkey "live low and consequently can afford to work for little" while in America a man could "support himself in Idleness a whole week by the work of one day."³¹ What the colonists sought was a payment from the government that would offset this wage difference, in short, a kind of "parity payment" based on the higher cost of production when compared with that of their competitors. The colonists realized that without government aid, silk culture would remain only a dream, "a Silk Hope," but could never become a reality. Professor David D. Wallace has summed up the futility of silk culture under colonial conditions by remarking that Gabriel Manigault, who purchased Governor Robert Johnson's plantation, "Silk Hope," and continued experimentation in silk production, "merely illustrates interest in a novelty or the patriotic desire to create a new industry."³²

English consumption of wine from the Azores and Southern Europe resulted in a trade, in what was considered an "essential luxury," that was even more unfavorable than that in silk. Since the Southern colonies were judged to have approximately the same climate as Southern Europe, colonists and Englishmen alike held out great hopes of developing a wine comparable to that of France or Maderia. Roughly the same sort of mercantile policies, only to a lesser degree, were adopted to encourage wine production as had been used to encourage silk.³³ And roughly the same sort of reasoning was used in requesting governmental assistance. Other luxury items that were suggested as possible profitable substitutes, if proper governmental assistance were granted, were almonds, sesame seeds, figs, lemons, limes, myrtle, olives, oranges, pomegranates and tea.³⁴

³¹ Glen to the Board of Trade, February, 1752, Public Records of South Carolina, XXV, 34. See also Governor Bull to the Earl of Hillsborough, January 9, 1771, *ibid.*

³² Wallace, *The History of South Carolina*, I, 386-387.

³³ The mercantile appeals spoke of increasing consumption of English manufactured goods, improving the imperial balance of trade, attracting more settlers which would increase the productive population, and developing the navy through the increased number of seamen. Public Records of South Carolina, XIV, 29; Oldmixon, *The British Empire in America*, 540; William Gerard De Brahm, "Philosophico-Hydrogeography of South Carolina, Georgia, and East Florida." Reprinted in Plowden Charles Jennett Weston, *Documents connected with the History of South Carolina* (London, 1856), 167; *Calendar of State Papers*, Volume 1734-1735, 290.

³⁴ *South Carolina Gazette*, February 10, 1732; December 2, 1732; April 13, 1747; Public Records of South Carolina, VI, 152, 288; VII, 246; VIII, 64; IX, 80; XIII, 290; XXIII, 12; [Thomas Nairne], *A Letter from South Carolina; Giving an*

The rare and exotic tropical products were not the only imports that England tried to avoid. Great Britain's power was built on more prosaic stuff. It was founded upon her fleet, which was very much at the mercy of foreign nations for many of its necessities, a particularly vulnerable spot being her shortage of hemp. England was so anxious to command her own supply of hemp, and flax as well, that she placed bounties on all flax and hemp imported into England and even tolerated their development in Ireland. Many of the southern colonists attempted to use England's precarious dependency on foreign countries to secure additional aid.

In South Carolina, Richard Hall, a Charles Town merchant, made the most persistent effort to secure aid for developing flax and hemp. In a rather lengthy treatise entitled, "The Leinn and Hemen Manufactures of Great Britain," addressed to the Board of Trade, Hall attempted to answer Secretary William Popple's request for information on how to increase South Carolina's industries.³⁵ Following the usual pattern of colonial requests for aid, Hall outlined the possible success of the new adventure, estimated the value to England of encouragement and ended with a specific request for assistance. As to the potential value of raising flax and hemp in Carolina, Hall was convinced that not only could England's needs be filled but that of "foreign markets as well." The value to Great Britain was obvious, but to give concrete assurance of this Hall cited Joshua Gee and presented a complicated formula that demonstrated, on paper at least, an annual profit of £76,600. The aid he sought was a supplementary bounty to be administered by a superintendent and, "to nurse" the new industry in its beginning, "Itinerant Hemp and Flax men" to give instructions to the planters. These "demonstration agents" were to have available public lands on which to carry out experiments.³⁶

Hall's proposals were not accepted in England but the Assembly did try to put them into operation. Hall was commissioned to go to Holland to collect seeds which were to be distributed free to the planters who would accept his supervision of the crop. His efforts were plagued with accidents, hardships and difficulties so that, although he

Account of the Soils, Air, Product, Trade, Government, Laws, Religion, People, Military Strength, &c. . . . Written by a Swiss gentleman, to his friend at Bern (London, 1710), 8-9; Catesby, *The Natural History of Carolina*, XXI; Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, XXIV, 209; *Calendar of State Papers*, Volume 1716-1717, 132, 158; Volume 1730-1731, 246.

³⁵ Public Records of South Carolina, XVII, 174.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 160-173.

did survey land and stimulate some cultivation of flax and hemp, it was largely a failure.³⁷ In 1736 the Assembly came to his assistance by doubling the bounties offered. From time to time the bounty act was renewed and amended, and eventually, an inspector was appointed to see to its administration.³⁸

South Carolina was rewarded for her efforts with the development of considerable production for local use but nothing that gave a real benefit to English maritime needs.³⁹ This was certainly not the original intention of the local government. One of the clearest endorsements of the mercantilistic doctrine of intra-empire dependency is given in the preamble of the act of 1742 for encouraging hemp:

Whereas the Natural Soil of this Province is Capable of producing Hemp, which may prove to the advantage of Great Britain; and as nothing can Contribute so much to the Interest of his Majesty's Colonies abroad as Encouraging variety of Valuable Commodities for exportation, since thereby they Encrease the Importation from their Mother Country and pay for the Same with their own produce; and Whereas the Parliament of Great Brittain have in their great Wisdom thought fitt to give a bounty for all Naval Stores Imported from their Collonies, and Plantations; That the Province may as much as in them lies Show their Gratitude for the same.⁴⁰

Much the same sentiments were expressed by Peter Purry, who also emphasized the danger of depending on Russia and Poland for supplies that could be easily cut off during war.⁴¹

The same recognition of England's dependency on foreign dye-stuffs and her obvious enthusiasm over the success of indigo, led to recommendations for encouraging a variety of dyeing materials, including "sufflower," "Brasilletta," logwood, woad and cochineal.⁴² Of these

³⁷ *South Carolina Gazette*, May 18 and 25, 1734; Public Records of South Carolina, XVII, 174.

³⁸ Timothy, *Acts of South Carolina*, 1736, 40; 1759, 410; 1716, 32; 1766, 29-30.

³⁹ *South Carolina Gazette*, July 5, 1740; January 11, 1748; Public Records of South Carolina, XXIII, 362-363; Gilbert P. Voight, "Swiss Notes on South Carolina," *this Magazine*, XXI (July 1920), 93.

⁴⁰ South Carolina Acts, MSS., November 6, 1722. For similar sentiments see the act of May 4, 1733.

⁴¹ Peter Purry, *Proposals by Mr. Peter Purry of Neufchatel for Encouragement of such Swiss Protestants as Should Agree to Accompany Him to Carolina, to Settle a New Colony. And, also, a description of the Province of South Carolina* (Charleston, 1731). Reprinted in B.R. Carroll, *Historical Collection of Carolina* (2 vols., New York, 1826), II, 134.

⁴² *South Carolina Gazette*, February 16, 1747; Public Records of South Carolina, VI, 152; VIII, 65.

the most frequently mentioned was cochineal, largely because the fly, which was crushed to make a scarlet dye, and its food plant grew wild in South Carolina, and because it fitted so well into the mercantile demand for self-sufficiency. In 1716 Stephen Godin, agent of the South Carolina Council, produced for the Board of Trade samples of Carolina cochineal which was judged to be of an equal quality with that of Spain.⁴³ However, no encouragement was given by the home government and its growth was continued under very limited cultivation for several years. To stimulate further growth in South Carolina, James Crockatt included in his pamphlets on indigo considerable information on and praise of cochineal. He was confident that only the hindrance of a colonial patent had prevented its perfection. This patent had been issued in 1722 and expired in 1736, leaving the field open for exploitation. Crockatt saw many advantages in its cultivation, most of them sound mercantile benefits. For instance, the use of child labor, freedom from dependency on Spain for such a vital commodity and the reduction of cargo space so necessary in war time, were some of the advantages that he saw in the development of the dye stuff.⁴⁴

The same hazards beset cochineal that had plagued the exotic commodities. Lack of information and skilled workmen plus high wages and more immediately profitable crops prevented the product from being developed to the point of whetting English enthusiasm. But in spite of almost continuous setbacks in producing new commodities, the colonists never quite gave up the idea that they would one day hit on an agricultural gold mine. The eventual development of indigo was proof that their faith was not altogether ill-founded.

Geography, climate and frontier conditions determined the nature of the economy of South Carolina during the colonial period. Under any reasonable economic system South Carolina was destined, in her formative years, to be an agricultural area. The English mercantile theorists simply accepted the dictates of nature and drew her and the other southern colonies into an elaborate scheme devised to make the empire as nearly self-sufficient as possible. Under mercantilism, England gave direction to the natural tendencies of South Carolina. Actually she did little to curb her economically. On the other hand, she offered a great deal of positive encouragement to the planters. In the long run, the colonists profited by the direction and encouragement given by the English policy of mercantilism, and they knew it. In in-

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 287, 289.

⁴⁴ Crockatt, *Observations Concerning Indigo and Cochineal*, 52-56; Crockatt, *Further Observations*, 46-51.

stance after instance the colonists themselves assumed the initiative in urging England to expand her supervision. For every example of colonial condemnation of English restrictions (and colonial historians have usually emphasized these) there can be found dozens of colonial appeals for extension of the English system. The colonists in South Carolina were willing to mold their economy to meet the needs of the empire whenever possible. It was only when empire considerations ran counter to the climatic and geographical dictates of the area that the empire considerations were ignored.

The most dramatic proof of colonial acceptance of the general principles of the prevailing English system, however, are found in the many instances of application of mercantilism on a local scale. England, after an initial period of gullibility, became increasingly chary of colonial promises to produce tropical and semi-tropical goods. Her attitude became one of rewarding only the successful enterprises. Consequently, the colonists, on their own, were forced to adopt mercantile techniques of stimulating diversification in order to secure English aid. In so doing, the colonists may have been placidly imitating the only system with which they were intimately acquainted. But considering the extent of the public debate that preceded some of the policies, it can hardly be construed that the colonists were blindly copying a traditional policy. In nearly all cases, an assessment of the motives of colonial action reveal considerable thought and a real appreciation of the objectives of mercantilism. Eventually the colonists became aware of their ability to use their own governmental institutions to stimulate their own economy. Consequently, although they welcomed English aid, they discovered that mercantilism could operate on a local level without reference to the empire. The effect of this discovery upon their minds was ultimately to alter drastically empire relations. It did not, however, alter their faith in the fundamental premise of mercantilism, *i. e.*, the necessity of government supervision of important economic activities. It merely meant a shift of emphasis from empire to local or colonial considerations. Few South Carolinians in 1763 could have conceived of a completely free economy in which there was no governmental control. It seemed hardly possible, for instance, that diversification of their agriculture, which seemed to be one of the answers to their "farm problem," could be developed successfully without aid and supervision from some governmental institution.

In short, the planter in South Carolina came to depend on governmental action to preserve his existing prosperity and foster his future improvement. In this particular, as in many others, the American farmer of today clearly resembles his colonial counterpart.

EXTRACTS FROM HARRIOTT HORRY'S RECEIPT BOOK

Harriott Pinckney Horry, daughter of Chief Justice Charles Pinckney and his wife Eliza Lucas and sister of Charles Cotesworth Pinckney and Thomas Pinckney of Revolutionary fame, was born August 7, 1748, and died December 19, 1830. Harriott Horry Ravenel in her biography *Eliza Pinckney* presents a clear picture of the young Harriott, her charm, education, and accomplishments. Letters of the young woman quoted therein frequently refer to Mr. [Daniel] Horry, and finally she confesses to a friend that she has been so teased about him that she feels restraint in his presence: "I believe I look so simple when he is in Company, that he thinks me half an Idiot." The handsome young widower evidently did not so regard her, for their marriage took place on February 15, 1768, at St. Philip's, Charleston, and the young bride departed for her husband's home, Hampton Plantation, on the Santee, about forty miles away. Just a few weeks after her daughter's marriage Eliza Lucas Pinckney wrote to her son-in-law: "I am glad your little wife looks well to the ways of her household, I daresay she will not eat the bread of Idleness, while she is able to do otherwise." Harriott Horry's receipt book gives ample proof that she ate no "bread of Idleness," for it attests to her industry in all phases of her domestic duties.

The little book, bound in reddish-brown leather, was presented to the South Carolina Historical Society by Mrs. Francis B. Stewart in 1952. The first page bears the centered inscription "Harriott Horry 1770." From the front onward are 59 pages of receipts for cookery; from the rear forward are medical remedies and household hints. A number of loose pages contain receipts given her by friends. Most of these are copied into the book.

In the following extracts the only changes from the original manuscript consist in the insertion of a few marks of punctuation for clarity and the writing out of *and* and *the*.

To make Solid Syllabub, a nice dessert

1 pint of cream, 1/2 pint of wine. The juice of one lemon sweetened to your taste. Put it in a wide mouthed bottle—a quart bottle will answer. Shake it for ten minutes. Pour it into your glasses. It must be made the evening before it is to be used.

[Crystallized Orange Peel]

Let the Oranges hang on the Tree untill the frost has thicken'd the rind. When you are going to preserve them, cut them in half, take out all the inside and weigh Your Peel against the Sugar. There must be an equal quantity of each. Then boil the peel untill the bitterness is