



THE



PROGRESSIVE



FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

Vol. 2.

RALEIGH, N. C., NOVEMBER 3, 1887.

No. 37.

OUR FARMERS' CLUBS.

What our Farmers are Doing and How the Work of Organizing is Progressing.

GRANVILLE COUNTY ALLIANCE.

Granville County Alliance was organized on the 8th of October. President—M. L. Winston. Vice-President—L. A. Wilkins. Secretary—W. P. White, Wilton, N. C. Treasurer—D. B. Lawrence, Jr.

Red River County Alliance has bought a half block of ground in Clarksville, and will erect a platform for weighing cotton at once. Resident cotton buyers are favorable to the Alliance platform. Citizens of the town advanced one-third of the cash to buy the ground, and offered to make it as a donation, but the Alliance did not wish this to be done, as they preferred to have the entire control of the platform. Cotton is coming in freely.—*Waco Star and Crescent.*

At the farmers' club meeting here the 1st Monday in November next, the question will be publicly debated as to whether or not tobacco or cotton is the more profitable crop for warren. The farmers generally should come and hear it, for there are not many men who know it all and cannot learn. Come out farmers and listen and learn. You hear politics, law, religion, prohibition and other topics discussed. Why not listen to something about your own business. Come.—*Gazette.*

[FOR THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.]

AUBURN, N. C., Oct. 25, '87. Auburn Alliance No. 41 met Oct. 15th (last meeting.) Some very important business transacted. Several applications presented and several initiated. This Alliance is now composed of 55 members and applications still coming in. It will not be long before every man in this community who is eligible to membership will belong to this order. The lumber for the erection of our lodge is expected to arrive in a few days. Will some reader of THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER tell me the best method of ventilating our lodge? Will not some one give me a good answer to this question? At the organization of the State Alliance this paper (THE FARMER) was adopted as its organ. Why then do not more of the Alliances in the State let us hear from them through this organ? Let there be more communication between the brother farmers of the State.

Hoping to read numbers of reports from other Alliances in the next issue of THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER, I am, Fraternaly yours, SELLIE M. SMITH, Sec'y.

[FOR THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER]

TYRO SHOPS, N. C., Oct. 26, '87. Davidson County, Gravel Mill, Farmers' Club met on April 9th, 1887, and organized by electing— President—John H. Koonts; Yadin College. Vice-President—D. C. Craver; Michael. Secretary—Alex. Swicegood; Tyro Shops.

Treasurer—John H. Gobble; Yadin College. Executive Committee: L. P. Craver, H. C. Fritts, I. H. Walser, G. W. Snider and H. A. Clement.

Our Club numbers 28 and is in good working order. Meets every fourth Saturday at 2 p. m. A good portion of the members take an active part in the discussions, which has been very interesting. The question discussed at the last meeting was, "The best plan for sowing wheat, and quantity per acre," &c.

The next meeting will be at 7 o'clock p. m. on the fourth Saturday in November. Questions for discussion, "The raising of hogs and the best breeds adapted to this country." Speakers, John H. Koonts, G. W. Snider and H. C. Fritts. Also "The best plan for raising cattle, and the

best breeds for this section of country." Speakers, Alex. Swicegood, H. Helmesteller and R. B. Myero. * Respectfully, ALEX. SWICEGOOD, Sec'y.

GREEN MANURING.

NUMBER 10.

The statement that the South is not a hay country has been made so often, and so confidently, that it has been accepted by nearly every one as being a well established fact. The sea coast towns of the entire South and many of the inland cities have been buying hay from the New England States during the past century.

The farmers find that grass grows so fast that it prevents their having time to cultivate a vegetable garden and nearly all cotton farmers for this season failed to produce a full supply of vegetables for their own use. It has been lately discovered that the South is the great hay-producing portion of the country, and that forage can be produced more abundantly and more cheaply here than in any other portion of the Union. The truck farmers have found that a profitable and large crop of hay can be grown on their truck land, after the spring crops of peas, beans and potatoes, by turning under the green vines and harrowing the field. The writer has a field of carp grass about thirty inches high, which was produced by turning under a crop of bean vines in June. This crop was grown for manure and will be turned under in December or January.

There is a splendid field of two hundred acres, belonging to J. L. Rhem, adjoining Newbern that was planted in February with peas and potatoes, which were taken off in June. These crops was followed by carp grass, (the best hay-producing grass for the South), and the hay was cut with a two-horse mower in September. This land produced from two thousand to twenty-five hundred pounds of cured hay per acre. This crop will be worth at least twenty-five hundred dollars; the stubble will be plowed under and will return to the land several tons of green manure per acre for the next crop.

The hay crop, which is the second crop this year, will pay more net profit than the majority of the acres in cotton, and will leave the land in better condition for the crops of next year. Each acre produced seven times as much forage, as is usually obtained from an acre of corn fodder, and forage almost as good, at less than one-fourth the expense of pulling fodder.

THE FARMERS' ALLIANCE AND CO-OPERATIVE UNION OF AMERICA.

It has Come to North Carolina to Stay—A Southern Institution Adapted to the Wants and Needs of Southern Agriculture—An Official Statement of Its Scope, Character and Purposes.

Mr. N. H. C. Elliott, of Brownwood, Texas, arrived in this city a few days ago. Being regularly commissioned as National Lecturer and Organizer by the National Alliance, and coming with the highest testimonials as to his character and position, we sought an interview with him with the view of presenting some of the chief features of this young but powerful and rapidly growing institution, to the readers of THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER. We found Mr. Elliott an intelligent, straightforward man, frank and unreserved in his manner and thoroughly confident of the ultimate and grand success of the order. We give our questions and his answers:

Q. "When and where did the Alliance originate?"

A. "It originated in 1872, in Lampasas county, Texas, among farmers and stockmen for protection against depredations of horse and cattle thieves and land swindlers?"

Q. "When did it begin to enlarge the scope of its purposes?"

A. "In 1875 it appeared in Parker county, and was then cultivating social and charitable relations among its

members and also inaugurating in a small way a crude system of selling and buying together. It has grown and spread and developed until now we have 134 organized counties in our State, with a membership of 251,000, and a State Alliance, officered and fully equipped to manage the business and look after the interests of this large body of members."

Q. "To what do you ascribe the rapid growth of your order in Texas?"

A. "It is due to several causes, but it may be briefly stated, that the great depression in agricultural interests—the utter helplessness of the farmers to control the products of their labor—the general system of servile dependence which was gradually but surely fastening itself upon us. These crushing evils were growing upon us and excited deep concern, if not alarm among our thinking farmers, and they were anxiously looking for relief; so, they were not only ready, but anxious, to adopt such measures of relief as are offered by the Alliance; hence they went into it by hundreds and thousands."

Q. "Is your order, in any sense, a political organization?"

A. "In a partisan sense. No. There are important reasons why it cannot be. The Alliance is of necessity a secret order, and we know that party politics introduced into a secret business organization would kill it, then we could not belong to any order that would require us to keep our political principles or action a secret. Of course we not only tolerate, but we encourage and require our members to study the science of economic government. It is a business and not a political organization."

Q. "You say it is of necessity a secret order; will you please explain why?"

A. "Simply to secure success. We are learning some lessons from other interests and other classes. One of the most important lessons is, that to succeed in any business, the plans and methods to be employed in its prosecutions are not to be made public. Merchants, banks, railroads, corporations of any kind do not throw open their plans and purposes to the world, if they did they would never succeed. We the farmers of the South, must adopt the same wise precautions. We are a secret order simply because the recognized successful systems of our age admonish us that it is the road to success in all business enterprise. The only secrets, I am free to say, that we have, are our business plans and some machinery by which we protect ourselves against imposition."

Q. "Who are eligible to membership in your order?"

A. "I will quote the language of our Constitution on this subject," and he read as follows: "Farmers, farm laborers, mechanics, country physicians, (not engaged in the drug business) and ministers of the gospel. All persons becoming members must be of good moral character, believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, be of industrious habits—must be a white person and over the age of 16 years."

Q. "Does your order in any way conflict with the Grange, the Agricultural Wheel, or the Farmers' Clubs?"

A. "It does not, but is in thorough accord with the general purposes of all these organizations. Indeed, the Wheel in Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky and Missouri, have adopted our work, and now affiliate fully with us. The Farmers' Union of Louisiana and The Farmer Relief in Mississippi, have adopted our work."

Q. "What is your aggregate membership, and chiefly in what territory?"

A. "About 1,200,000, chiefly in eight Southern States."

Q. "Are you not affiliated with the Alliance of the Northwest?"

A. "We are not. That was originated in Chicago, by Milton George, a brother of the noted Henry George. There is an open political organization, and there is not, nor can there be, any affiliation between us."

Q. "How was your order received by the press and the business men of your

State, and how do they regard it now?"

A. "At first the business men treated the matter very lightly, and predicted its early and utter failure, and the press sympathized with that view, and assumed and declared that we were a secret political order, but now there is not a paper in the whole State that is not our steadfast friend, and the leading dailies are giving us their active and earnest support. The business men as a rule are most kindly disposed toward us and our order, and its success has their confidence and encouragement. Indeed we have over 100 Alliance cotton yards established in the State, and most of these were built for us with money and contributions of the business men in the towns in which they are located. As an inducement to establish our State Headquarters in that city, Dallas made a contribution to us in lots, lands, money, buildings, etc., amounting to not less than \$100,000. This shows what the business men of Texas think of us."

Q. "Well, have you had any trouble with political parties or politicians?"

A. "With the parties as such, no. Chronic office seekers, political tricksters and disappointed sore-heads have given us some trouble, but we are now in a position to paddle our own canoe."

Q. "You say you have cotton yards of your own—will you give me the methods by which you run these yards, and something of the benefits you claim for them?"

A. "A detailed statement of the whole system would perhaps be longer than you would like to have in your paper at this time, and as it is the duty of myself and all organizers to explain fully and in detail this system to your people, I will give you only an outline. Each of these cotton yards is in charge of a bonded officer (by the way, all our officers are bonded, salaried men. We have no men paid in any way by commissions.) We have every facility that any cotton exchange or mercantile association has for obtaining the exact state of the market at any point in the world and at any hour, and our machinery is such that within one hour from the time our dispatches are received at State headquarters, every agent in the State knows the price of cotton for that day, and every farmer belonging to the Alliance can know what his cotton is worth if he will ask. So, a farmer bringing his cotton to our yards can take his sample and go on the local market (and we always encourage them to do so) and know whether or not to sell, then we can send sample to State headquarters, where we are thoroughly prepared to get him the prices in the best markets. It costs him from ten to twenty-five cents per bale to have his cotton weighed and for storage—no matter how long he may want it stored. He pays, of course, the insurance, which is very little. We are prepared, under the same system, to handle our other products and our stock. Under this system, also, we have arrangements perfected by which we can do make purchases for our members, and so perfect is the system that we confidently expect to make a net saving of over one million dollars to our members during next year."

Q. "Well, you strike heavy at the 'middle man' by your plan, do you not?"

A. "No, we do not propose to do away with the middle men—they are an important factor in our great social fabric and we could not well do without them. We make no war on any one. We encourage all men engaged in a legitimate business and want to see them prosper and succeed, but there are checks and balances which are essential to the well-being of society, and we propose to see that middle men nor any other class shall absorb what justly belongs to us. The Alliance is founded on Truth and Justice, and justice is all we ask at the hands of the business world. This granted and we will take care of ourselves."

Q. "Does the Alliance own and

operate co-operative stores?"

A. "Yes, a few, but under our system, known as the 'Macune Trade System,' we, as a rule, find that we are able to make very satisfactory terms with our own merchants and for the present we recommend this system. It is very perfect and gives satisfaction to all merchants who deal with us. This will be explained fully to your people as we proceed in the work of organization."

Q. "Well, are the financial advantages of your order confined to buying and selling?"

A. "Why, bless your life, these are only the beginning of a vast system of financial design, which we hope will penetrate every department of our industries. We have already perfected a system for establishing manufacturing enterprises, and under which we have now in operation twelve fine Roller Flouring mills and five others in process of construction and several cotton factories projected, two of which we hope soon to have in operation. The South must become what nature designed—a great manufacturing district.—we must work up our vast store of raw material if we would become the prosperous and powerful people that we ought to be. We, of Texas, cling with filial love to the dear old South, and we want to quicken her into new life, by grasping and utilizing new opportunities. We have the most abiding faith in the nerve and pluck of our people and in the scheme, which for eight long years we have worked earnestly to perfect, and it is with pride that we all recognize the truth that to the foresight, wisdom and indomitable pluck and loyal devotion of Dr. C. W. Macune, the President of our National Alliance, we are indebted for our success and the high plane we occupy in the business world. We not only wish to see the material development of the South, but we have other grand objects to accomplish. We want and must work for the moral, social and intellectual development of our people, and this is a part of our declared purpose."

Q. "What means do you use for bringing your order before the people, and for informing them as to your objects and purposes?"

A. "We use organizers, whose lectures are always public, but the great propelling power of the movement is our Alliance organ, the *Southern Mercury*, which is largely patronized and extensively read by our order. It is the property of the Alliance and we could not do without it, neither can the Alliance prosper in any State unless it has an organ, patronized and read by the members. It is a silent but powerful and eloquent advocate of our noble principles, and the father and his whole family are receiving "line upon line and precept upon precept" every week, and thus we educate our people to cherish and love the principles they have espoused. No alliance can live and grow and prosper that does not read its paper—this we have found by experience, to be strictly true. I am therefore gratified to see that THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER has been adopted thus far by the Alliances in your State and hope they will use it freely and liberally for the upbuilding of the order."

Mr. Elliott then went on to say that he was commissioned and sent to our State to organize a State Alliance and to push the matter of organizing subordinate and County Alliances until our whole State is brought into the order. He will attend the meeting of the National Alliance at Shreveport, in Louisiana on the 12th inst., and return to our State and address himself vigorously to the work of organizing. He requests that counties and communities wishing an early organization will address him at Raleigh.—Care of THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

The Agricultural Club will meet here the 1st Saturday in November. Interesting questions will be publicly discussed and every progressive farmer in the county is invited to attend.—*Gazette.*