

### SOUTHERN FARMERS MUST ORGANIZE.

Extract from a Speech of C. W. McCune, President of the Farmers' National Alliance, Delivered before the Inter-State Convention of Farmers in Atlanta, August, 1887.

We must either quit buying to satisfy a stage of material progress that necessitates all-cash transactions, or we must adopt a course of action that will enable us to produce according to a more advanced stage of material progress than the one in which barter is essential. Do not misunderstand this proposition. It is not intended to preach economy to the most economical people in the union, it is not intended to insult the farmers of the South by saying you must work harder and spend less. No, no! They already work harder and spend less than any class in America; and it is the most hollow mockery on earth to preach economy, frugality and industry to the class that most excel in those virtues, and who are supporting in ease and luxury many who can lay no claim to either one of those virtues, and to very few others.

We must pursue one of two courses. We must either devise some plan by which with some exchange of products we can render our farms self-supporting and raise only so much of the cash crops as may be needed to satisfy our necessary relations with the rest of the world. This will be very hard to do—much harder than it would have been a few years ago—because in taking the step we plant ourselves fairly and squarely in the track of a material progress that requires the all-cash transactions and say, wait, stop till we catch up: we are going to make our own tricks; we can make and raise our own supplies until we get out of debt. By so doing we will antagonize certain interest that will in self-defense offer our individual members such extraordinary inducements, accompanied with such seductive sophistry, that many will be deceived thereby, and the plan, in the future, as it has already been in the past, will be almost a complete failure.

I can see but one way to make it a probable success, and even that is subject to some doubt. It is organization. If we decide to raise what we will consume at home, the effort will be a stroke in the dark, unless it is the result of a wise consideration of the question and all its surroundings; and unless co-operated in by all of our class as can only be done by a closer union and by a firm bond of organization. If it is decided to reduce the acreage of any given crop, organization is a vital necessity to the end that no mistake is made and that all will co-operate, and a strong organization, so that we may have some assurance that all will stick, and that we, ourselves, as well as others, may have some confidence in the compact. In short, you cannot hope to succeed in any innovation upon the existing order of things and the tendency of the times, without concert of action, that will enable you to withstand the attack of the antagonizers that must necessarily follow, and in proportion to the magnitude of the undertaking, the compact should be made more close and binding.

The second great remedy is in an entirely different or opposite direction. Instead of calling upon material progress to wait for us to catch up on a plane of all cash or money transactions, simply step upon that plane and say we will deal with you according to the development of material progress in your section; and we have raised our products to meet the emergencies and conditions of the same stage. But how may we do that? Let us see. The cotton belt of America is a circumscribed country, and I am told that in no other place in the wide world does the same quality of cotton grow to the same degree of perfection.

At this time we are growing about seven millions of bales per annum. And I offer you as a proof of the fact that there is not an over-production, the evidence that there is no accumulation. I have no means of estimating the proportion of the area of these States, but with the present increase of population throughout the world, and the increased uses to which the staple is applied, it can be relatively but a few years, when the demands of the world will necessitate that every acre of land that will raise cotton be planted in cotton. Beyond that time the necessities of demand and the limit of supply will insure a gradual increase in the value of the product and the value of the only land upon which it, the product can be raised. And here in this connection arises a very im-

portant question, and one well worthy the most careful consideration by our wisest heads. Cannot we of the cotton belt meet these conditions of the dim future which promise to so certainly raise the price of cotton and cotton lands, with more certainty and satisfaction today, by an enlightened method of co-operation? Can we who own the cotton lands, both used and unused, by a closer union and a more enlightened understanding, organize ourselves for business purposes, strictly, and so manage the amount of cotton offered for sale each year, that it will pay fair wages for the labor expended in making it, and a just interest on the money invested? I think we most certainly can, but it will take a firm and strong organization.

Again, of the seven and one-half millions bales of cotton made yearly in this country, a little over five millions bales go to Europe, principally to England. The price of cotton in America is regulated by the English market. Consequently England buys two-thirds of our crop and fixes all our prices, and still we do not let her furnish us a yard of cotton cloth without a duty of, I believe on the average about 60 per cent., and as a consequence she would buy none of our cotton if she could supply herself elsewhere, and that being the case, it would seem that the price should not be governed by her dictum. The cotton raisers are great sufferers by a tariff that reduces the price of the staple and increases the price of the cloth; but should we tie ourselves to a tariff reduction as the remedy for our ills? I think not. Large interests would be rendered almost useless by the removal of the tariff. I think we should, in an organized capacity, call upon the cotton factories to cease calling upon the U. S. Government for protection at our expense, which we are no longer able to stand, and adopt a gradual system of tariff reduction that will reach the consummation to be desired with injustice to no interest; if they are not willing to adopt and conform to this just demand, and no unjust demand should ever be made, they should be notified that we will be compelled to build factories in our own defense, to the end that we may divide some of the government protection. If it should be decided to build factories, the necessity for organization would again be imperative in order to co-operate, in insuring a diversity of commodities as the result of our effort, and in order to pledge our cotton crop and borrow foreign money with which to build our factories, as it would be folly to use money worth 8 or 10 per cent. when by giving good security we could get it at four. Again, shall we tie on to any political effort? To this I want to say God save us from any farmers' party or a party composed of any one class. Here we are fighting class legislation, and some cry for a class party. Let every man preserve his own individual independence; freely and fully let us unite in a business sense and in that sense only. Let harmonious and united political action result from a proper conception of self-interest; from an enlightened, and liberal judgment; from an honest heart, and I had nearly said a full stomach—and, sir, it would have been appropriate, because I have just come from a farmers' meeting in Texas where one man traveled over two hundred miles to be with us; stayed five days on one meal a day so that he would have money enough to get home on. I offered to loan him money and he refused and said he would walk home before he would submit to a loan or a collection. This is the kind of devotion to principle that exists in the rural districts, and it will do to tie to, but woe be to him both in this world and the next, that would disappoint such devotion with the hope of relief in partisan politics. Relief must come by action, guided by an enlightened understanding of the principles that underlie our system of government.

Men do not learn principles in political caucuses or conventions. They imbibe principles around the hearthstone and at the mother's knee, and these our system of education must commence, and if it does it will end in victory.

In conclusion, it is desired to impress upon the attention of all, that of all the great troubles that farmers' organizations have to combat, the constant preaching of would-be leaders who take extreme views and have a panacea for all our ills, are the most to be dreaded. There are tariff reformers who offer that for every trouble in existence. The same may be said of the money reformer; the railroad reformer, and the land reformer. Now we grant that reform

is demanded in each, but that no one is adequate to produce complete relief; it will take all, and in our efforts to get all let us take pattern after capital. Capital is wise, conservative and never makes any mistakes; and capital when it wants legislation, commences to make friends with the party in power; and the first thing you know the principle for which capital contends is engrafted in the platform of the dominant party.

Mr. McCune concluded as follows: Now, Mr. President, when it was announced that we would discuss the subject of organization at three o'clock, I retired to get up this paper. I regret that I did not have time to make it more complete. The subject necessarily demands going over very much ground without going over any particular point thoroughly. It is as good as I could do in the limited time I had, and as I did not quite get through, I wish to say a word for our Texas delegation—a word of explanation.

We have strong farmers' organizations there, and the immediate necessity for this explanation was on account of what was said last night. Our organization is a strictly business organization. We eschew partisan politics. As long as the members that now belong to the organization have control of it, we never will dabble in politics. We are united for business purposes. It is a secret organization, and is called "The Farmers' Alliance." The gentleman who addressed you last night belongs to the "Farmers' Alliance of the United States," which is a non-secret organization. I make this explanation in order that there may be no confusion. The two orders are distinct. Ours is the "Farmers' National Alliance and Co-operative Union of America." The objects of the organization are directed to the ills that exist in the cotton States, and it is the intention of those who have been working the organization not to extend it beyond the cotton States. It was intended purely as a business enterprise between cotton raisers, I simply want to make the plain statement that the two orders are entirely different. I do not want to advertise it or anything of that sort. I thank you, gentlemen.

### HOGS FOR MEAT.

The hog should be regarded and treated as an animal machine for the conversion of cheap vegetable matter into more valuable pork—converting bulky and unsalable products into compact and readily marketable substances. A home market is thus secured for crops and much waste matter on the farm. Instead of desiring that these machines may consume as little raw material as possible, the more they consume the better, provided it is profitably converted into meat. By arranging a number of lots, adapted in size to the number of swine to be kept, so that they will each open a Bermuda pasture from which swine may be turned at will into any of the crops, and to which they may be withdrawn to prevent injury to the land in wet spells, a succession of crops may be grown, especially for their consumption, as follows: 1. Rye to be grazed in winter, allowed to seed, gleaned and followed by sweet potatoes. A mixture of corn, peas, sweet potatoes and decorated cotton seed fed during the latter part of winter and spring with collard leaves to add to the variety. 2. Oats to be gathered by hogs and followed by speckled peas. 3. Early planted speckled peas to be gathered by hogs and followed by fall oats or rye. 4. Early crop of sweet potatoes to be followed by rye. 5. Ground peas between corn rows, both to be gathered by hogs or the corn harvested for use later. 6. Speckled peas between rows of sorghum. 7. Chufas for late winter use—for stock hogs after finishing up those to be butchered. None of these crops are costly—the hogs do the harvesting and together with the usual small grain fields and pea fields will produce pork as cheaply as it can be grown anywhere. There is always a home market for Southern smoke-house cured bacon at prices above Western meat of the same class. It would not necessarily exclude cotton from the farm, nor indeed should it do so, but it would reduce to acre and increase the per acre production. Under proper management the pork can be sold at twice the cost of production, while cotton often brings less than it cost to produce it. Without intelligent personal supervision neither this nor any other agricultural enterprise will succeed.—Atlanta Ga., Southern Cultivator.

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### POULTRY DEPARTMENT.

(We are pleased to announce to the readers of THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER that we have been so fortunate as to secure the efficient services of Mr. E. H. Weathers as Editor of this Department. He is one of the best informed men on this subject in the South. He desires that all communications and questions designed for his Department be addressed: "Poultry Column, PROGRESSIVE FARMER, Raleigh, N. C." He will most cheerfully answer all questions relating to poultry through this column. Write him.—EDITOR PROGRESSIVE FARMER.)

#### Cross-Bred Fowls.

It is often asserted by some that cross-bred fowls are superior to pure-bred, for market purposes. The crossing of the Plymouth Rock on the Asiatic varieties, the Brown Leghorn on the Partridge Cochins, and the Houdan on the Dark Brahma is recommended, and the experiment is now going on among those who favor commercial poultry keeping and the hatching and rearing of fowls by artificial means. We cannot see the substantial advantage of using cross-bred fowls for eggs or flesh. It will not do to breed much from them, as they will soon run down and become no better than dung-hills, although the first cross may give a stronger and harder offspring on the average, they will in time come of all sorts. We can see no serious objection to judicious crossing between pure-bred fowls that are delicate, if the object is to give tone, vigor and hardiness to the offspring. This is some times practiced among Bantams which have been closely bred and brought to the highest points of excellence and beauty by artificial skill. But we are inclined to believe that the most profitable fowls for eggs and flesh are pure-bred such as Leghorns, Wyandottes, Plymouth Rocks, Brahmans, Langshans, Cochins and Houdans. Among any of these pure-breeds, there will always be found marketable fowls that will pay much better for their keeping than will mongrels or ordinary dung-hill fowls. The pure-bred hens will, in a season, lay one-third, and in some cases half as many more eggs in number, make better and heavier broilers at a much earlier age, and are far more valuable at maturity than any mongrel fowl ever raised.

If we pay a high price for fine stock and take upon ourselves the responsibility of caring for them, we cannot avoid the duty of watching them daily, feeding them well with a variety of food giving them a dry warm house for winter, and seeing to their wants.

#### LET THE FARMERS LOOK TO IT

It will be remembered that during the closing days of the last Congress, an act was passed appropriating \$15,000 annually to each State and Territory, for the purpose of maintaining agricultural experiment stations, the general function of which should be to investigate the various problems related to agriculture, such as diseases of plants and animals, methods of culture, insect pests, etc., etc., and to diffuse the results of the same among the people. Owing to the haste with which final action upon the bill was taken, a technicality was overlooked which, in the opinion of the Controller of the Treasury, rendered further action by Congress necessary before the funds appropriated could become available, and consequently the various stations have thus far been able to take only such preliminary steps of organization as required no outlay of money. Congress will meet again early in December, and the Controller and Secretary of the Treasury have promised to recommend early action upon this matter, in order that the stations may be organized, ready for work by the opening of spring. There will be many other questions pressing upon the attention of Congress, however, and there is danger that action on this matter will be delayed unless the farmers of the country take interest enough in the matter to urge upon their representatives the necessity for promptness.

The bill appropriating this fund for agricultural research passed through Congress by an almost unanimous vote, and there is no reasonable doubt that this unanimity was largely due to the fact that members of Congress realize that farmers pay more than their just share of taxes, and are therefore entitled to special consideration in the disbursement of the enormous accumulations of the treasury. In addition to this is the fact that all our industries depend for their prosperity, in the long run, upon the prosperity of agriculture. If times are "hard" upon the farm, all other industries must eventually experience depression, and anything that tends to make farming more profitable tends also to improve the condition of the masses. To those farmers whose intellectual ability enables them to over-

look the general level of their avocation, the fact has long been evident that one great cause of the depression which now pervades our agriculture might be largely or wholly remedied by a better knowledge of the minor details of the business among farmers themselves. In many branches of manufacture the saving of certain waste products which were formerly considered worthless, now constitute the chief profits of the business, and to this fact is largely due the greater cheapness of many articles as compared with their prices a few years ago. In agriculture the perfection of machinery has wonderfully lessened the cost of production within a generation past; but we cannot hope that the next generation will witness a further perfection of such machinery at all commensurate with that of the past. The time has now come, therefore, when we must look to a better understanding of the forces of nature, rather than to a further improvement of mechanical appliances for further progress in agriculture, and it is this understanding which it is the province of the agricultural experiment station to give. That the experiment station can and will give the help thus indicated, there is abundant proof, and it therefore behooves every wide-awake farmer to use his influence promptly and vigorously in the support of these stations.—Farm and Home.

#### THE TIME TO APPLY MANURE.

The proper time to apply manure is in the late fall or winter. Our grandfathers used to think there was no time to spread manure but in the spring. They were right then, but if we think so now we are wrong. Why? Things have changed since then. They had more snow in winter and more rain in summer, both of which have a great effect upon the soil. Then the winter was a very busy time of the year; besides their chores, they had husking and threshing to do, which was done with the old-fashioned flail. There was wood to chop, and countless other things to do by hand, which are now done by machinery.

Very many objections will be raised to winter application. Some say manure spread in the fall loses a great part of its strength. How can it? It is soon covered with snow, and what would evaporate does not amount to much anyway. Plant food does not evaporate. Then you say perhaps on some soils it may leach. I do not think you ever knew of a case of the kind, in land that was tilled. It may leach if left in piles, or in a barnyard, or under the eaves. Those are the places where leaching occurs. Then you say, if spread in the snow the best part of the manure will wash off in the spring. This very seldom happens. The snow melts gradually, and the ground is thawing at the same time, and it takes up the plant food as fast as it comes in contact with it. I should not advise any one to spread manure on a steep hillside in the winter, neither would I advise you to spread land that was very much sloping on top of a hard crust of snow; there are exceptions to all things. But, brother farmers, you will make money in more than one way by spreading the manure in the fall or winter. In the first place you will save leaching and other wastes in the barnyard, you will save time, which is money, and your crops will be enough better to pay for all the trouble.—E.C.

#### A MISTAKE SOME FARMERS MAKE.

Too many who start out as farmers make the mistake of going too largely in debt. One of the requisites for safe and profitable agriculture is a floating capital in addition to the fixed one invested in land and buildings. If a man has 150 acres of land clear and no money besides, as a rule it would be better for him to sell the 50 acres for cash simply to use the money so obtained in the business, for the farmer is handicapped who cannot buy enough of good tools, is not able to furnish his house with labor-saving implements, nor get the cash prices for what he must buy, such as seed, stock, etc. And he should be above the necessity of selling his crops until he is sure they are going to the best market.

This lack of capital hampers many besides poor farmers. It hinders as well the comparatively wealthy who invest all they have in land and fail to provide ready money for use in emergencies and in daily business. Better, much better, have less land and more floating capital.—E. City Carolinian.