

ATTENTION, FARMERS.

The Cotton Crop and the Supply of Bagging

An Address to the Order at Large by C. W. Macune, President of the National Farmers' Alliance and Co-operative Union of America.

There is great necessity just at this time for a thorough understanding on the part of every cotton-grower of the exact plans and methods of the Alliance for wrapping, handling, and selling the crop now about to be placed on the market. Every member of the Alliance and Union in the cotton-growing States is pledged by the action taken at the last session of the National body to co-operate in selling the crop, and they are expected to carry out such obligation by holding themselves in readiness to obey the instructions of the National cotton committee at a moment's notice. This shows the necessity of a perfect understanding and the importance of complete harmony of action.

It is no secret in commercial circles that the markets of the world have not for several years been so poorly stocked with manufactured cotton goods at this season of the year, and it is also known that the mills are in possession of very little cotton from which to manufacture. The stock of cotton on the markets at the various ports is generally of the less desirable grades and styles. New York, for example, is said to have ten to fifteen thousand bales of cotton of such inferior quality that no person desires it and it is kept there as a menace to the future dealer who would attempt to exact delivery on a purchase of futures. The visible supply of last year's crop is reported about 300,000 bales short of two years ago, but when the character of the supply and the certainty of a greater demand by the mills is taken into consideration, the deficiency it is fair to conclude, is at least double that amount, or 600,000 bales. The crop is not as large as has been reported. Besides the worms in some sections, they have had too much rain in many places east of the Mississippi. In Texas the crop, reported at 2,000,000, will scarcely reach 1,500,000 bales, on account of excessive rains damaging cotton in the bottoms in places, followed by drought in sections. Altogether the outlook for total crop is no better than at this time in 1887.

The farmers of this country will soon have in their possession about six millions of bales of cotton, which if they received pay for the labor expended in proportion to that received by teachers, doctors, lawyers, merchants, insurance men and brokers, will have cost them about 50 cents per pound; but if they only receive pay for their labor at the same rates paid such skilled labor as carpenters and other tradesmen their cotton would probably cost them 20 cents per pound or \$100 per bale, making the six million bales worth \$600,000,000. Of course no such price can be realized. It is simply cited as no more than just, if it could be obtained. But the world demands this six million bales of cotton for immediate consumption, and must have it. That is to say, the mills must, at the lowest estimate, have five hundred thousand bales of cotton per month for the next twelve months. There are two ways in which the cotton-growers may turn it over to the consumer.

First, make all the haste possible to dump the whole pile into the hands of the speculators before it goes up (as it always does later in the season), and thereby enable such speculators to dribble it out to the mills at the rate of five hundred thousand bales per month, at an advance of from \$7 to \$15 per bale, or say a probable average of \$8 per bale, or \$4,800,000 on the lot.

Second, having developed a short interest, keep it short throughout the year by only selling each month what the mills will actually need, and by that course secure to the farmer that \$48,000,000, even if no higher prices ensued than the speculators would have made. Surely the latter plan must commend itself to the planter.

It was estimated by a high authority several years ago (in 1882) that the demand of the world actually required 7,000,000 bales of cotton every year. Now, if the increased demand be only 10 per cent., the demand would be 7,700,000 bales, while this crop is only 6,800,000, leaving a deficiency of 900,000 bales.

In view of all this it is evidently greatly to the interest of the cotton-grower to be in no hurry to sell his cotton. This is a year in which all can well afford to wait for and govern themselves by the instructions from the cotton committee, which has the matter in charge. Why this undue haste to get the first cotton wrapped and sold as early as possible? Such a course is evidently to the interest of some one, but not to that of the planter. Some men seem to deem it very important that they get bagging at once and sell their cotton. There are two classes of men who are delighted to see this sentiment, and who are interested in encouraging it, and these are, first, the jute men, who desire anything to beat cotton bagging, and use this as a prize to induce some men to use burlaps or Dundee cloth; and second, the cotton men who have

sold the cotton short and must have cotton to fill their contracts. These two classes are deeply interested in anything that will induce the planter to sell at once. The cotton man who has sold short wants to fill before the rise, and the jute man wants to crowd the farmer to sell before he can get cotton bagging. There is another class of men who are terribly frightened lest the farmer will not sell his cotton in time to pay his merchant early enough for the merchant to meet his maturing obligations on time, and as a consequence they claim that any delay in selling on the part of the farmer will bankrupt all the merchants in the country. They forget that the farmer has for several years been accommodating the merchant by turning his cotton loose as soon as gathered, regardless of price, until now the stomach argument is compelling him to look after his own financial interests, and for once to be just before he is so generous. Be just to himself, his wife, and his children before being generous to the poor merchant. The merchant who is a friend to him will be glad to assist him to hold until such time as he can get the best price, and will not join in with his enemies and try to make him surrender to the jute man and the gambler in futures.

It would probably be best for the cotton-grower if he were irrevocably pledged to use cotton bagging and the mills made it so slowly that it would require till August, 1890, to make enough to cover the crops. But such is not the case. The mills have the capacity to make enough to cover the crop by February, and it is not likely that members of the order will market near all the crop by that time. Brethren should get together in the subordinate organizations and compare notes, and such as have obligations that must be met before the cotton can be sold should be assisted by those who are able, so that each Sub-Alliance or Wheel act as a unit to hold every bale of its cotton to the proper time. Merchants to whom indefinite obligations and crop mortgages will fall due should be notified early of the purposes of the order in the premises, so that they may prepare and assist in the effort.

The question of tare is beyond the reach of Liverpool and American cotton exchanges, and must be solved finally by justice. The mills want to buy cotton and not bagging and ties, and whenever they learn that the white bales contain ten pounds more cotton than the brown bales, they will certainly pay about one dollar per bale more for them, and when a buyer can always sell a white bale for about a dollar more than a brown bale he will soon be compelled to make that difference in his purchases. This is plain, because two bales each, weighing 500 pounds, if one be wrapped in jute and the other in cotton, will not contain the same amount of cotton. The cotton-wrapped bale will contain about ten pounds the most.

In conclusion, it is suggested that every member who has not placed his order for cotton bagging do so as soon as possible, and then make his arrangements to meet his obligations without selling his cotton, so that he may have plenty of time to wait, not only for the cotton bagging, but after that comes, to wait for instructions from the National cotton committee. Demand on every sale the eight pounds premium over the actual weight of the bale, unless the price is based on cotton as the standard and jute is docked eight pounds. In that case the premium could not be claimed, but when jute is the standard and the gross weight of a bale wrapped in cotton is 500 pounds, it should be settled for as 508 pounds.

Stick to cotton bagging. There is plenty of time for it before the spinners come after your cotton.

C. W. MACUNE.

AN ALLIANCE PICNIC.

CEAR FORK ALLIANCE, No. 358, Nelson, Durham County.

MR. EDITOR:—You will please allow me space in your valuable paper for a few lines concerning our organization at Cedar Fork. We are now increasing rapidly in number. We are determined to do our utmost for the progress and good of the order.

Our body, believing in sociality and the example we might set for other Alliances of the State, and the good that might result therefrom, gave a picnic at Cedar Fork, Aug. 17, 1889, which resulted in a grand jollification. The spread was copious; several hundred ate and were filled. The ladies who were interested in their husbands and sweethearts tastes, certainly accomplished their purpose.

Notwithstanding crops being very gloomy in this section of the State, we enjoyed the present, and trusted to Providence for the future.

After which we listened to the excellent speakers who were invited for the occasion. The first, Hon. John T. Nichols, who forcibly spoke of the importance of organization of the agricultural world, that all other classes of people were organized; that disorganization tended to ignorance and slavery. His intentions were to teach truth, manliness and fidelity. And how to meet the combinations and trust companies of our country. The portion of his speech upon the "cash system," which the Farmers' Alliance

all approve, was very impressive. He showed the importance of farmers trading on the cash system, and the disadvantage in trading on time, paying from 40 per cent. to 160 per cent. on the produce bought.

Next speaker, Rev. P. H. Massey, whose eloquence held the audience spell-bound for about fifteen or twenty minutes. His leading thought was the education of the farmer, physically, mentally and morally, in a sense to know his duty, and knowing do it.

We are living in a fast age, and our success as farmers depends, to a great extent, upon our Alliances. We are the leading elements of the world. When we look at the growing city, the aspiring halls, the etherial-piercing steeples, and view the merchant-ship which ploughs the oceans and seas of the world, we can exclaim with one united voice, "Well done, good and faithful farmer!"

Let us take hope; without it man is without energy. If we would know all about the Farmers' Alliance, let us sink our shafts deep and strike the very corner-stone. Many will not join our order, knowing not its purpose. If they examine themselves, they are, in their hearts, thorough Alliancemen. Now let us unite; "in union there is strength." Some few join our order and betray us, and yet we do not despair, knowing that when Christ himself was in the world, one out of twelve betrayed Him. I tell your readers we are advancing, cutting a little here and there. Many of us are not afraid to venture in anything except in wrong acts. May God show us the right and help us to do it.

Fraternally,

A. J. WEATHERSPOON, Sec'y.

AN APPEAL TO EVERY COTTON FARMER IN THE ALLIANCE.

The National Cotton Committee of the National Farmers' Alliance held a meeting in the city of Atlanta, Ga., on the 28th ult., and unanimously adopted the following resolutions:

Resolved, That the National Cotton Committee recommend that the farmers of the South shall sell no cotton during the month of September, except what may be absolutely necessary to meet the obligations which are past due.

Resolved, That the National Cotton Committee instruct the President of each primary Alliance, Wheel or Union, or some person appointed by him, to meet the President or Secretary of his County Alliance, Wheel or Union, on Saturday, the 28th of September, at the county site, for the purpose of receiving further instructions from the National Cotton Committee.

Resolved, That each State Secretary of every State be charged with the duty of placing these resolutions immediately before the respective County Presidents in every county in his State, and charge all expenses of printing and postage to the National Alliance.

Resolved, That every farmer be urged to exercise special care and caution in sheltering and protecting his cotton in bales from damaging weather and also from lying on the ground.

Resolved, That every newspaper in the South in sympathy with the interests of the farmers is requested to publish these resolutions.

R. J. Sledge, Chairman, Kyle, Texas.

A. T. Hatcher, Grand Cane, La.
W. R. Lacy, Winona, Miss.
S. B. Alexander, Charlotte, N. C.
L. P. Featherston, Forest City, Ark.

M. L. Donaldson, Greenville, S. C.
W. J. Northern, Sparta, Ga.
R. F. Kold, Montgomery, Ala.
B. M. Hord, Nashville, Tenn.

As will be seen by the second resolution, each President of the Subordinate Alliances is requested to meet (or appoint some one to meet) the President and Secretary of his County Alliance at the county site on the 28th inst., for the purpose of receiving further instructions. This Committee is well informed as to the situation, and it will have highly important information to impart to the Order on that day. Let each Sub-Alliance and County Alliance give the Committee their cordial and ready co-operation. In this great matter LET US BE A UNIT.

L. L. POLK,
Secretary N. C. F. S. Alliance.

THE BUSINESS AGENCY.

HAWLEY'S STORE, Sampson Co., N. C., Aug. 24, '89.

MR. EDITOR:—It has been some time since I attempted to write a word for publication in your valuable and much esteemed paper. I have been content to read the communications of wiser heads and abler pens, but as some of the brethren are grumbling, if you will be so kind as to give space, I will attempt to give you a few dots that the brethren may know that South River Alliance still lives. We do not pass many resolutions, but we are a unit with the Alliance brotherhood on all the great questions that are now agitating and claiming the united action of the agricultural classes of our people. We have contributed \$55 to the State agency fund. We number 37 male members, and I am sure that according to our ability we have done as much as any Alliance in my knowledge. But the question is,

why is the fund not raised, who is it that belongs to this great order who could not spare one dollar to this grand and noble purpose? And with one dollar from each male member the agency would be placed on a solid basis. Brethren, O brethren, let us make up and if you have not already done so, cast in your mite at once that the agent's hands may be loosed, that the great work may move on and not be hindered and hampered for want of funds.

Several of our members take and read THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER and they are becoming educated in the principles of our noble order, and there are no weak-kneed members among those who read the State and National organs, but they are to be found among the ignorant and uninformed; and now, in conclusion, I would say to the brethren be not too hasty in looking for results, but let us be true to our principles, ever contending for the right and we may yet hope to see the time when bribery, fraud and corruption shall cease in the land, and when the honest sentiment of the people dictated by the Holy Spirit of God shall be the ruling power in this beloved land. Then and not till then may we expect to see men sent to our legislative halls who will do all in their power to make just and wholesome laws to govern our people. Then may we hope to see trusts and combines cease and honesty and good government prevail throughout the land. I close by saying hurrah for THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER and National Economist.

Fraternally,
S. B. PAGE, Sec.

LETTER FROM MITCHELL COUNTY.

ALLIANCE No. 1,698,
Brummett's Creek, N. C.,
Aug. 19, '89.

MR. EDITOR:—As a co-worker in the Alliance cause, I write to say that it has done and is doing a vast amount of good in this county. It has brought goods lower than was ever known before. The Sub-Alliances have united and are buying their goods from two merchants in this county. When we made the trade arrangement with the merchants referred to there was a man who affirmed that he would burst the Alliance or himself, and he tried it, but he couldn't get there. He is keeping store in his shirt sleeves now to keep cool. Some of them have been standing on their heels about the Alliance but they have got so now that they can stand flat-footed. The Alliance is the best organization that was ever gotten up and our fellow farmers who still stand aloof admit the fact that we have accomplished some good, and that if we continue in the future as in the past, a great change will be effected. Now, brethren, let us see that we are not disappointed in our expectations. Let us press on with vigor and a determination to effect the noble purpose of our order, at the same time being guarded and circumspect. It is better to do little and be certain we are right than to do much and have it to change. Mind, it has been predicted by many that our organization will be a failure; that it will be an impossibility for the farmers to agree and have concert of action. Many of our merchants feel and believe that the reduction in prices of supplies is only temporary, that it is only a panic and will be of short duration. Some have gone so far as to say that they will either break or burst the Alliance. Brethren, let us show the public that we have not grown so selfish and distrustful of our fellow men that we fail to agree and co-operate for our mutual benefit and for the general good of our common country; even if we had lost all fellowfeeling for each other, the times and existing circumstances would force us to cultivate brotherly love and to act for mutual protection. Let us show these merchants, who are so outspoken and arrogant in their expressions, that they are kicking before they are spurred; that we wish them and all our fellow-men well; that we are not arrayed against any class or profession, but that we are organized for the protection of ourselves as a class. Our aim is, and ever will be, to raise and elevate the farmer from the slough of despond into which he has fallen by reason of the oppression to which he has so long been subjected.

Fraternally yours,
GASTON HUGHES.

PITT COUNTY BRETHREN IN SESSION.

MILL HILL ALLIANCE, No. 1,195,
Aug. 26, 1889.

MR. EDITOR:—At a regular meeting of Mill Hill Alliance, on the 3d Saturday in August, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted and we ask for space to publish the same in THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER:

It being necessary for all farmers throughout the South to promote the Birmingham resolution, therefore be it

Resolved, That we, the members of Mill Hill Alliance, will not patronize any merchant, corporation or organization of men who persist in dealing in jute bagging for baling cotton or any other purpose.

Resolved, That if any member of

this Alliance violate this pledge he shall be subject to any penalty that the Alliance deems necessary.

Resolved, That we request all Sub-Alliances of the county to adopt this or similar resolutions.

Resolved, That a copy of this be forwarded to THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

We also appeal to the farmers who are not members of the Farmers' Alliance to uphold these resolutions.

At a meeting of the representatives of the twelve Southern States at Birmingham, Ala., it was unanimously resolved to use bagging made of cotton. The object of this meeting was to cross the unjust movements of the jute bagging trust, who have set their means, skill and ability to take away from the poor farmer millions of dollars.

The New Orleans, New York and Liverpool cotton exchanges have agreed to deduct tare so as to make cotton equal to jute. This enables the farmer to compete with the trust companies in every respect, and with little more vigor and push the jute bagging trust will drop their heads and ask to be pardoned for bringing such reproach upon our American citizens.

We, the members of the Farmers' Alliance, uphold the Birmingham resolution, and the trust has found it out.

Now, in order to break us down, the trust proposes to sell its bagging cheaper than ever, hoping that we are under no obligation to use cotton covering. Brother farmers, use the cotton bagging and let the exorbitant high-price jute trust go.

Now a word to the merchant: If you wish to sell your goods at a living price, you had better let the trust companies alone, for we are determined to purchase goods only from those who will stand by and work in behalf of the farmer.

My brethren, let us be up and doing, for if we fail now, the future outlook will be more rigid than ever before.

J. C. W., Sec'y.

RAILROADS AND RAILROAD COMMISSIONS.

No. III.
(From Scotland Neck Democrat.)

In describing the great evils which existed in the management of railroads at the time of the passage of the interstate commerce bill by Congress the interstate commerce commission in their report say, amongst other things, that personal discrimination in rates was sometimes made under the plausible pretense of encouraging manufactures or other industries. It was perhaps made a bargain in the establishment of some new business or in its removal from one place to another that its proprietors should have rates more favorable than were given to the public at large; and this, though really a public wrong, because tending to destroy existing industries in proportion as it unfairly built up others, was generally defended by the parties to it on the ground of public benefit.

Local discriminations, though not at first blush so unjust and offensive, have nevertheless been exceedingly mischievous, and if some towns have grown, others have withered away under their influence. In some sections of the country if rates were maintained as they were at the time the interstate commerce law took effect, it would have been practically impossible for a new town, however great its natural advantages, to acquire the prosperity and the strength which would make it a rival of the towns which were especially favored in rates; for the rates themselves would establish for it indefinitely a condition of subordination and dependence to "trade centers." The tendency of railroad competition has been to press the rates down and still further down at these trade centers, while the depression at intermediate points has been rather upon business than upon rates. In very many cases it has resulted in the charging of more for a short than for a long haul on the same line in the same direction; and though this has been justified by railroad managers as resulting from the necessities of the situation, it is not to be denied that the necessity has in many cases been artificially created and without sufficient reason.

The inevitable result was that this management of the business had a direct and very decided tendency to strengthen unjustly the strong among the customers and to depress the weak. These were very great evils, and the indirect consequences were even greater and more pernicious than the direct, for they tended to fix in the public mind a belief that injustice and inequality in the employment of public agencies were not condemned by the law, and that success in business was to be sought for in favoritism rather than in legitimate competition and enterprise.

The evils of free transportation of persons were not less conspicuous than those which have been mentioned. This, where it extended beyond the persons engaged in railroad service, was commonly favoritism in a most unjust and offensive form. Free transportation was given not only to secure business but to conciliate the favor of localities and of public bodies; and, while it was often demanded by persons who had, or claimed to have, influence which was capable of being made use of to the prejudice of the railroad, it was also accepted by public officers of all grades and of all varieties of service. In these last cases the pass system was particularly obnoxious and baneful, for if any return was to be made or was expected of public officers, it was of something which was not theirs to give, but which belonged to the public or to constituents.

A ticket entitling one to free passage by rail was often more effective in enlisting the assistance and support of the holder than its value in money would have been, and in great many cases it would be received and availed of when the offer of money, made to accomplish the same end, would have been spurned as a bribe. Much suspicion of public men resulted, which was sometimes just, but also sometimes unjust and cruel; and some deterioration of the moral sense of the community, traceable to this cause, was unavoidable while the abuse continued. The parties most frequently and most largely favored were those possessing large means and having large business interests.

The general fact came to be that in proportion to the distance they were carried those able to pay the most paid the least. One without means had seldom any ground on which to demand free transportation, while with wealth he was likely to have many grounds on which he could make it for the interest of the railroad company to favor him, and he was sometimes favored with free transportation not only for himself and his family, but for business agents also, and even sometimes for his customers. The demand for free transportation was often in the nature of blackmail, and was yielded to unwillingly and through fear of damaging consequences from a refusal. But the evils were present as much when it was extorted as when it was freely given.

Stop, reader! Go back to the beginning of this article, and read it over again and then again, for almost every sentence deserves to be underscored and particularly impressed upon your memory. Remember that the interstate commerce commission is composed of learned, patriotic and able men of national reputation; that these gentlemen: Thomas M. Cooley, William R. Morrison, Augustus Schoonmaker, Aldace F. Walker and Walter L. Bragg, all men of integrity and ability and so regarded by all men, have thoroughly investigated this subject and know whereof they speak. See what they say of the free pass system: "Particularly obnoxious and baneful," "a ticket entitling one to free passage by rail was often more effective in enlisting the assistance and support of the holder than its value in money would have been, and in a great many cases it would be received and availed of when the offer of money, made to accomplish the same end, would have been spurned as a bribe." For what purpose do the railroad managers issue free passes to our Congressmen, our Legislators, our Judges, our Solicitors and our State officers? Is it because these persons are any more entitled to free transportation than the humblest and poorest citizen who helps to pay taxes to support the convicts that build and repair these railroads? Don't you know, my reader, that these passes are given to these public officers for the purpose of obtaining their assistance in the performance of their official duties? Do you suppose, or are you so blind as to believe that these passes are given because of any personal regard? Just ask yourself the question, every day for a week, and ask every man you meet during that time, and if at the end of the week you still believe these passes are given for no sinister purpose, then, poor simple creature, I am sorry for you. I ask every person who reads this article, every evening after supper, as he sits on the porch enjoying himself with his family and his good neighbors, who have dropped in for a social chat to discuss this question: Why is it that our State officers, our Judges, our Solicitors, our Congressmen, and our Legislators and the editors of newspapers, who ought to stand as beacon lights to give warning of the shoals and breakers, or as sentinels upon the watch tower to proclaim the approach of danger, all have free passes on the railroads of the State? Let this be a subject of debate every where for the next week and then tell me, if you can, one single honest motive which prompts the giving of these free passes.

J. C. W., Sec'y.

In tearing down an old building at Macon, Fayette county, one day this week, a copy of the Philadelphia Gazette of April 24, 1827, was found. Among other advertisements Franklin & Armfield want 500 negroes of both sexes and will pay a higher price in cash than anybody else. In the court proceedings the judge sentenced a man to the State prison for six months, and the prisoner asked: "Could not your Excellency alter it to three months in one of the State vessels?"

Charles A. Dana, editor of the New York Sun, who first conceived the idea of holding a World's Fair in America in 1852, has been chosen president of the New York's World's Fair Committee.