

PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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

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THE BORDER ALLIANCE.

Preamble and Resolutions Adopted by the Border Farmers' Alliance of Virginia and North Carolina, August 29th, 1889.

WHEREAS, We, of the Border Farmers' Alliance, recognize that our most vital interests are at stake through the machinations of audacious conspiracies in the guise of so-called trusts and combines; and whereas, our prospects are now desperate and becoming still more gloomy in consequence of these despotic task masters, who revel in their untold ill-gotten millions at our expense and impoverishment and whereas, the most potent way to meet and overthrow this hydra-headed monster is by united, indissoluble action in the use of the powers we possess, by legislation, through a representation that will truly and heartily advocate and prosecute our interests without fear or favor. Therefore be it

Resolved, That we pledge ourselves irrespective of any political party to use every exertion at our command to nominate and elect men to represent us in State and National legislatures in whose probity, genuineness, unblemished integrity, steadfastness of purpose and acknowledged ability, we have an abiding faith and confidence; who will subserve the great end we have in view by devoting themselves more willingly, as representatives, to the furtherance of our sacred cause, in its ultimate aims and cherished purposes, to reach the goal of our material salvation and resurrection—release from the unsufferable thralldom of a worse than Egyptian bondage.

(Signed) UPTON B. GWYNN.

The following was offered by the mover in support of the above:

Our future action based upon what this resolution proposes, or what some similar one may propose, is about the most potent way to obviate the crying evils which beset us that I can conceive of. We know well enough what the remedy is or ought to be, but unfortunately the application of the antidote is the great desideratum that puzzles us. But the remedy is in our own hands and we will have nobody to blame but ourselves if we fail to apply it. No set of people on earth ever had such exasperating incentives to spur them on to action as we have. Neither the provocation which brought about the old revolutionary war which inspired the patriots of '76 to resistance unto death, nor those which instigated the recent terrible civil strife, afford greater incentive to resistance than the causes which actuate us in throwing off the yoke by which our task masters couple us together. We bear witness to the oppressive exorbitance of the profits of combined capitalists, while the returns of honest, overworked, overtasked toil are greatly inadequate

to meet the common necessities of living. Yet it seems to inspire us with no burning, rebellious spirit to free ourselves from such a thralldom. We allow audacious syndicates to dictate, railroad kings and bonanza monarchs to wield their scepters and walk roughshod over us without a murmur. We positively yield in tame submission to these crowned autocrats when at the same time we possess the power to upset their thrones, pluck the crown from their brows and place it upon our own Legislation, together with other patent resources; but legislation is the principal force that will enable us to topple these thrones, seize the diadem, and encircle our heads with them. We should not only insist upon, but we should have and see to it that we do have, our share of legislation. By united action we can easily use the power we possess by concentrating it into a more partisan party, that will give us entire control of State and National legislation, and especially an end to the National legislation being packed with lawyers to the extent of 95 per cent. of the whole membership; and why should we be squeamish about using our power in the promotion of such a party? Who is it deserving of such consideration at our hands? We of this great Alliance order should ignore Democrat, Republican, Independent or what not party fealty; annihilate partyism or partisanship altogether and merge ourselves into one solid phalanx, with an appropriate consolidated name, and a great overwhelming deluge, carry everything before us. We have the power by this means to get rid of the plunderers who have so long been rifling us of our substance. As we are the masters of the situation if we wield our powers at all compatible with our strength, we can dictate our own terms. If we fail to use this power which we undoubtedly possess, a power which represents a large majority of the voting strength of the nation, we will richly deserve the fetters which have so long bound us hand and foot, to be riveted with a still firmer grip, and worse than Sinbad the Sailor, will have on our shoulders an old man of the sea never to be shaken off.

The last census report shows the strength of the different classes, as follows: Agricultural pursuit, 48 per cent. of the entire population; mining, 22 per cent.; professional and personal service, 24 per cent.; trade and transportation, 9 per cent.

If this be true it requires that all other classes would have to unite to control the agricultural vote; and, as that has never been done, it follows that the farmers are to blame if there is anything wrong in the government and it is allowed to continue. True, the farmers have not advocated any of the evils that have been legally done, but they have allowed knaves and scoundrels to play upon their prejudices and keep them divided, one-half against the other, so that their voting strength neutralized itself and left the schemers and speculators the balance of power with which to dictate results, and thus the same surrender of our powers into the hand of our foes, may be linked to the compulsory submission of the Roman when the Goths, Vandals and Huns swept down upon them with remorseless might, these Alarics and Attilas of merciless monopoly scarcely refrain from a less savage greed of rapine, to sack and plunder at will every vestige of our rights and subsistence, whether within their legalized monopolistic, prohibitory, protective tariff government, guaranteed enormity power or blinked at illegal grasp. Election after election passes and we send men to legislative halls to represent us who care not one straw about our interests. In fact we are not represented at all, a glaring instance of which was the defeat of the railroad commission bill in the last North Carolina Legislature. We have as able men in our ranks as can be found in any order or profession. Why not bring them into requisition and do away once and for all with a representation which so far as we are concerned is not worth a baubee, but which seems to pave the way for all the sharpers in creation to feast and gorge themselves at our expense and impoverishment. Yes, I repeat, we have the power possessing a potentiality that can be brought into almost immediate use. With its momentum we can cast aside the shackles which bind us and breathe the free air of an untrammelled future. So let us ignore all squeamishness or puerile sentimentality and unite in the formation of a concentrated agricultural no partisan party for the furtherance of our material ends.

have been atoms too long; we were cohesion. We must close up our ranks, present a united front, and show the world that we are prepared to hang together, march together, bearing in mind that united we stand, divided we fall.

Yes, brethren, by all that is holy, we must have proper legislation. There is a world of meaning in these two words—proper legislation—for upon and through them rest and is involved life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—all that makes life worth living. But there can be no pursuit of happiness when one class possess all the power to oppress all others with no redress whatever to shake off the intolerable burden. Under our present system the legislation is divided and framed by professional politicians, speculators, lawyers and through the corruption brought to bear by concentrated capital. We must purge, to begin with the National Legislation of its 95 per cent. of lawyers, many of whom are there solely to maintain and advance the interests of monopolizing corporations. This state of things we have got to fight to the bitter end.

Yes, in order to assure our inalienable rights we should keep up a never ceasing, inexpressible conflict. Aye, raise the black flag in such a cause, neither asking nor giving quarters as we press to the front with anti-monopoly as our war cry to echo in the ears of our representation as we triumphantly elect and seat them in State and National legislative halls.

To effect such a salvation we must begin instantly. We can't be too previous in marshaling our forces, organize thoroughly, shape our cause at the primaries so that we will be primed and cocked to clinch matters when we meet in convention. We must take time by the forelock, for our foes are ever on the alert in sleepless vigilance to pounce upon us. A most important matter in connection therewith is to fix upon the proper men to represent us as a preliminary to such a vital step. We should fix the stand and for our candidates up to the very highest notch of the scale of honesty, probity, integrity, fearless discharge of duty and unflinching adherence to our interests as the sole criterion of their eligibility to deserve our suffrages. See that they adhere to this stand, as representatives, and when they flinch from any cause or influence whatever, decapitate them without mercy. They should be men that all the gems of chicanery could not bribe, as incorruptible as a flake of virgin snow on the way from its birthplace in the sky to the earth. We have such men, and we should bring them into requisition, instead of allowing their places to be filled by useless incompetents with doubtful characters as to their inflexibility not to be bought or turned aside by any outside influence. Politics should not rule us, but we should rule politics; nor must we let parties dictate to us, but we must dictate to parties. To accomplish this we must above all have unity and remember there is insubordination to the will of the majority.

By all means let us waste no time in this work, for nothing is of more vital consequence to the advancement of our interests.

Without proper representation, we cannot by any possibility have proper legislation. So let us keep the ball rolling ceaselessly from now until the election day, and if we will only be true to ourselves thence forward, it requires no prophet to foretell that five years hence this country will be historic as the graveyard of monopoly and trusts. Calamity, it is said, is the touch-stone to try the stuff that men are made of. God knows, if any people ever had such an incentive through the robbery and ineptness of combined capital to show what stuff they are made of, we have. So let us as a solid unit of purpose and action, show to the world what gritty stuff we are made of, by throwing down the gauntlet in the face of our enemies with the bold challenge "Lay on, McDuff, and damned be he who first cries hold! enough."

BUIE ALLIANCE, No. 421, Roslin, N. C., Sept. 21, '89.

MR. EDITOR:—If you will be so kind as to allow a short space for Buie Alliance, we will feel quite favored. I am glad to see in THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER such lengthy and edifying letters from some of our able members cheering the brethren and encouraging them to press on, and I am also glad to say I believe we have some very thoughtful and energetic men in our brotherhood and this is our road to success—to think

and act. Brethren, stand by your colors. Surely we are gaining ground, so let us not be impatient; we should be careful not to aim too high or too low but first be sure we are right, then go ahead. If we are governed by this rule we shall go on from victory to victory, if in all things we demand that which is just and right, take nothing more and accept nothing less. Let us all be awake, we do not lack encouragement nor do I believe that our brethren lack energy. We must think and act for the good of our order, then we will succeed in other contests as we have in putting down the bagging trust. We have achieved much good already and if we continue to think and act right we will make far greater achievements in the future than we have done in the past. Let THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER continue to sound the signal from the watch-tower, send it along the line, warning the poor farmers of the dangers to which they are exposed, the burdens they are bearing and the final fate that will overtake them if they do not arouse themselves and shake off the shackles of bondage which their oppressors are so willing for them to carry.

Fraternally,
O. L. JOHNSON, Sec'y.

MR. EDITOR:—At a regular meeting of Middleburg Alliance, No. 492, September 21st, 1889, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, We, the members of this Alliance, together with citizens of the community generally, have heretofore sold our cotton seed to agents who pay us from 3 to 5 cents less than they get of the proprietors of the oil mills, for whom they buy, and whereas we can see no reason why we should be called on to pay agents to buy for these oil mills, therefore

Resolved, We, as members of said Alliance, do hereby refuse to sell our seed to any agent who does not pay us manufacturer's prices.

Resolved, That we use our influence among our friends to induce them to demand said prices for their seed.

Resolved, That we will not patronize any cotton gin that uses jute bagging.

We are moving on slowly, and are in favor of a co-operative tobacco warehouse in the town of Henderson, and will send up a good subscription at the next county meeting.

Poor crops of every kind in this community last year, make times very hard though most of our farmers have on hand or have sold, some good tobacco from this crop which is commanding pretty fair prices. Promising when a little more tobacco is sold which will make money more plentiful, to make an effort to send a good list of subscribers to your very excellent paper, I remain

Yours very truly,
C. R. L.

PICNIC IN ROWAN.

HATTERSHOP ALLIANCE, No. 1,382, Rowan County, N. C., Sept., '89.

MR. EDITOR:—Will you please allow me space in your noble paper, THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER, to inform your readers of a picnic held at Hattershop Alliance, August 23d, 1889, which we call a success in the way of picnics. We had seven speeches throughout the day, all on the good of the Alliance. We had the workings of all, their motives and their intended good to all, made known by the following speeches: Capt. Fisher, President of Rowan County Alliance; Alexander Trexler, Samuel Rothrock, Jun. Hodges, and S. A. Earnheart, and Rev. B. A. York and Rev. A. L. Coburn, Chaplain of the County Alliance, presented to the people, the moral and religious influence of the Alliance in a touching manner that done good to all. We think there was a good impression made on all that attended. At about one o'clock one of us nice dinners as greet the eyes of hungry mortals was ready for all, and at least five hundred persons ate and were filled. The Alliance cause is in a prosperous condition, we think, in Rowan county. We are all down on the jute trust and will use none. We expect to raise our part of the business fund, in fact we are in for anything that is for the good of the order.

I hope before the winter is gone to send you the name of every member of our Alliance as a subscriber to your paper.

This picnic was held by the united effort of Hattershop, Union, Rowan Academy, Trading Ford and Sandy Ridge Alliances.

Yours, H. C. A.

WHO OWNS THIS COUNTRY.

Let us inquire whether there is any excessive concentration of wealth going on in the United States of America. Leaving mere clamor on unsupportable assertions of consideration on either side, let us look at facts. As lately as 1847 there was but one man in this country who was reported to be worth more than \$5,000,000; and though some estimated his wealth at 20,000,000, there is no good reason for believing it to be so great. At the smallest reasonable estimate, there must now be more than 250 persons in this country whose wealth averages over \$20,000,000 each. But let us call the number only 200. Income-tax returns show that the number of incomes, when arranged in large classes, multiplies by from three to five fold for every reduction in the amount of one-half. For extreme caution, however, we estimate the increase in the number of incomes at a very much lower rate than this. At this reduced rate, the amount of wealth in the hands of persons worth over \$500,000 each in the United States would be about as follows:

200 persons at \$20,000,000	\$4,000,000,000
400 " " 10,000,000	4,000,000,000
1,000 " " 5,000,000	5,000,000,000
2,500 " " 2,500,000	6,250,000,000
7,000 " " 1,000,000	7,000,000,000
20,000 " " 500,000	10,000,000,000
	\$36,250,000,000

This estimate is very far below the actual truth. Yet, even upon this basis, we are confronted with the startling result that 31,000 persons now possess three-fifths of the whole national wealth, real and personal, according to the highest estimate (\$60,000,000,000) which any one has yet ventured to make of the aggregate amount. Nor is this conclusion at all improbable.—Thos. G. Shearman in the September Forum.

THE SUGAR TRUST.

The sugar trust is a combination to enhance prices that come home to the business and bosoms of men. It has raised the prices of every grade of sugar—that of refined sugar as much as four cents a pound. The business of refining sugar was reasonably profitable before the combination, but by arbitrarily raising prices the sugar people were able to divide a profit of \$10,000,000 in 1888, and for five months of the present year \$11,640,000. The sugar trusts profits are now estimated at \$3,500,000 a month. Their combination in restraint of trade has enabled them to lay a heavy tax on every consumer of sugar, from which the members of the trust will soon become enormously wealthy if not interfered with. It is not in the nature of things that they should not be interfered with, and the more they press their advantage the sooner it will be.—Mortimer Whitehead

COUNTRY ROADS.

It is an encouraging sign when a political paper like the Baltimore Sun, able, conservative, and greatly influential, calls on the Grangers to pledge their candidates for the Legislature to the support of a well-considered and effectual road law for the county of Baltimore, and suggests the idea that the Grangers of the State combine their influence in the next Legislature in behalf of wise general legislation in this behalf. It is not so much the thing advised as the agency to be employed to work out the materialization of the suggestion. To pledge candidates of both parties to wise, economic legislation is Alliance as well as Grange doctrine, which has been denounced as causeless agitation. What has the Sun to say to the idea of the Grangers influencing the Legislature by re-calling some of the legal gentlemen and putting good Grangers in their seats? We greatly suspect that we shall get at what we want with less "influence" than it will otherwise cost to get good road laws. We are in favor of trunk line State roads to be made and kept by the State, and paid for out of funds raised by general taxation. These trunk lines to begin at the termini and grow toward the other end as fast as they can be constructed by competent engineers, in the best, most thorough, and substantial manner known to modern science, with the means available, and no faster. Then let the counties in like manner build county trunk lines as feeders to the State lines. Then the purely local highways could be systematically brought up to the same degree of excellence, and finally the State be netted with a complete system of roads scientifically located and constructed, instead of the execrably bad pass-ways, so often

impassable, which now everywhere disgrace American civilization. The foolish waste of money under the operation of road laws prodigiously absurd, is far too melancholy in these moneyless times to be ridiculous. The doings of road overseers, some of whom have scarcely information sufficient to drive a yoke of steers, are absurd almost beyond belief, wasteful of public money and actually ruinous to the roads. This kind of road-working and road mending often does the roads more harm in one day than all the hauling and travel over them would do in ten years. If there is anything which does require scientific knowledge and experience that thing is the location and construction of a good and lasting road. It can only be done by a well-skilled civil engineer. It is not possible to make a system of good roads in any State in one year nor in ten years, perhaps in some States not in twenty-five years; but it is practicable to have in any State and in any county a scientific plan of a complete road system and to go to work at it with but little delay. In order to adopt such a plan skilled men must be consulted; in order to execute such a plan skilled men must be employed, and means must be raised to defray the expense. A large part of it ought to be raised by general taxation, for certainly the condition of the public highways is no less a matter of universal concern than public education. As at present managed no one is benefited except those to whom the funds raised are paid out for a mere pretense of something useful done by them. We have had it in contemplation for some time past to free our mind on this question, not that we have any pet scheme or any cut-and-dried bill to offer in the Legislature, but that we might do our part in directing attention to a great public waste and a great public want prevailing generally in all parts of America. As a subject of debate and action by local Alliances, clubs, and other agricultural and rural organizations and assemblies, none can be suggested more important than the country roads. In this manner the general opinion may be evoked, and a reform in the road laws effected. The aid of the press may easily be enlisted in behalf of any rational scheme of reform. The writer, on his own part, is satisfied that nothing important can ever be accomplished until the work of construction and repair of public roads is placed in charge of well-skilled civil engineers, and he suspects that every scheme of reform in this behalf which does not proceed upon that fundamental proposition will come short of the best results. That very great improvements are practicable almost everywhere by the judicious expenditure of funds already raised and foolishly squandered seems very certain. If the State would maintain a civil engineer of established repute in this service his advice in framing working plans to be submitted to the Legislature would be invaluable. Such work is technical and scientific, and only a skilled man can advise wisely as to the working details to be embodied in the law, whether local or general. In this work, moreover, convict labor could and should be fully utilized. Any clamor as to its competition with honest labor in such employment should be silenced by the consideration that the money to pay for the hiring of honest labor to perform this work has to be raised by taxation, while additional money must also be raised by general taxation to pay prisoners' expenses maintained in idleness, and that all taxation, traced to its ultimate source, is paid by honest labor. In this manner we should be free of the public charge to which all honest citizens contribute for the support of the parasitic class which fills our jails, and we should at the same time reduce that class itself to a minimum. Ought not every convict sentenced to imprisonment to be set to work on the public highways and to serve out his sentence at that work instead of being kept idle in jail at public expense? If this work were directed and planned by skilled engineers, would not the question of making and maintaining the best roads which can be constructed be solved, with the salvage of a double expense to the State? We believe so, undoubtedly. Suppose the convict force of the State were placed under the orders of a State engineer to construct and maintain a trunk line road system for the State, could any valid objection be raised to the plan? We believe that engineering skill and convict labor are two factors in any successful solution of the road problem.—National Economist.