

# PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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

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## DIRECTORY OF FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS.

### NORTH CAROLINA FARMERS' STATE ALLIANCE.

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### THE BUSINESS AGENCY FUND.

MR. EDITOR:—Among the many grievances that beset us farmers there are none more oppressive, and none requiring more immediate action on our part to counteract than that which proceeds from the intolerable exactions of these trusts and combines. There is one radical remedy by which we can become disenthrall'd, relieved of the insatiable greed which is devouring us on all sides in case we unite with an indomitable determination to cast aside the insufferable yoke that enslaves us. It is by conducting and controlling our business, in all of its ramifications, through business agencies and exchanges in the disposal of our produce and the purchase of supplies.

Have the brethren endeavored to realize the vital importance of this method to circumvent our enemies? I style them enemies, for they are nothing more nor less, and it is the height of hypocrisy to pretend that we entertain any other feeling than loathsome hatred towards a class whom it would be a sacrilege to admit we felt otherwise. As we all know, our needs force us to sell our products as soon as they are ready for market. We thus glut the market and reduce the price below the normal value of the staple. The subsequent rise is the source of profit to those who avail themselves of it; and to save this profit to ourselves is the *ne plus ultra* of our material prosperity and temporal salvation. One thing certain, our loss is somebody's gain, and this gain we must and shall put in our own pockets.

The establishment of exchanges is the hub of the wheel that will roll us on to the goal we are striving after. Nor should we stop after each State has perfected a thorough system of exchange, but, in order that free trade for our products should flow freely from State to State, a National Exchange should be eventually established, by which means we can effect direct inter-state exchange of our produce. Such control will dispense with all intermediate manipulation, thus doing away with the hosts of jobbers, brokers, wholesalers, factors, middlemen of every description, whose commissions or profits we can pocket ourselves by interchange and direct intercourse with first hands, all round, and fixing our own values. A striking instance of our inconsequence and nonentity in fixing values is afforded by our every-day minor transactions with store-keepers. Does it not look rather one-sided when the farmer, in buying a merchant's goods, must ask, what is your price? and when he desires to sell his goods to that same merchant he asks, what will you give? In fixing prices the farmer's time never comes, and this great disparity under which we labor in the mart is what constitutes a most ruinous de-

pendence upon the option of those who fail not to take every advantage of such a state of things. Having no option in buying or selling is burning the candle at both ends. We thus, especially, play in the hands of the speculative class. The laws are stringent against usury, but where can you find a money lender whose extortions (even if the law permitted) compare with these Shylocks fostered and shielded by the government to filch illicitly and with impunity, regardless of legal restrictions to satisfy their insatiate greed without being called to a reckoning? They are banditti whose prerogatives to rifle and plunder, *ad libitum*, are rights which, like Robinson Crusoe on his island, it seems, "there are none to dispute."

We must have our own commission agents, factories, mercantile establishments, importing and exporting commissions—all the machinery that enters into the ultimate disposal of our products we must put in operation if we expect to reap the maximum (aye, the whole hog or none) worth of our toil. We must dispose of and control our produce in every shape into which it is converted through all the channels of commerce—follow it up, like sleuth-hounds upon a trail, and not give up the scent until the very ultimate use is brought to bay and made to stand and deliver for our benefit and just deserts. From wheat to flour; cotton and wool to their different fabrics; tobacco to its manufactured state of every sort; in short, all our products we must follow up, reaping the profits thereof in every shape they may assume. Thus handled and manipulated, what will become of the army of speculative land-sharks who have so long fattened at the sacrifice of our utter impoverishment? Othello's occupation will be gone. Your Armours and Hutchinsons, and the like, will be relegated to the limbo of the past only to be resurrected as some incubus of a horrible by-gone dream. As it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, thus will these villainous combinations result in some good if they only teach us what we can accomplish by a counter co-operation that will save, for our own benefit, the millions fraudulently obtained by these insatiate monopolists, and finally see the way out of our debt-ridden thralldom (that desolation of abominations) into the broad highway of agricultural prosperity and individual independence. Thus, through *lex talionis*, will we enter upon a renaissance that will make life worth living, and if ever a people had just cause to retaliate we certainly have, and unless we free ourselves of these insufferable shackles we will, Prometheus-like, have to endure the torture of these ravenous vultures forever gnawing at and gorging themselves on our vitals.

It is the same thing year after year—no profits whatever accruing—but an everlasting looking forward to the subsequent years to make up for the deficiencies of the previous. With no balance of clear income at the end of each year as it expires, it is always the same old disheartening refrain of ultimate lack in the future to make up for former deficiencies until the outlook has resolved itself into a chronic dependence upon "better times" (that myth of myths when we pursue not the proper course to bring it about) to come when all hopes of betterment have assumed a prospective forecast, although with no reliance upon a certainty of coming out at the end of the year free of incumbrance. In fact, we lean upon a sort of hopeless hope to tide us over the present pecuniary stress in the face of a doubtful and deceptive futurity—a fatuous delusion indeed! But such is the relation between sale of products and cost of production that there is no respite from the inevitable pecuniary depression—the liabilities of one year amounting to more than the succeeding can liquidate. And this failure to tide over the previous year's obligations entails a perpetual insolvency out of which there seems to be no escape so long as the products of the soil bear the ruinous relation, in price, with the cost of producing them.

But ours is a wilful decrepitude, out of which we can merge with a self-sustained remedy by casting aside these thumping, hobbling crutches, and instead of using them as superfluous supports to uphold inaction, shoulder them as formidable weapons with which to knock out the brains of our plutocratic taskmasters. So, let's hurry along our business agency fund; without it we can accomplish nothing to further our material interests, and we will well deserve the reproach of being reprehensible laggards if we further delay the consummation of

this all important work. No better investment can be made of our money, which thus placed, will yield us double compound interest, and even from a selfish point of view, outside of other considerations, we are instigated to raise the fund, and we should use every exertion forthwith to contribute to it. The goose will continue to lay us golden eggs so long as we maintain this fund; but if, through a narrow-minded policy, we fail to establish it through want of confidence or close-fisted penuriousness, we will be guilty of the folly of the husbandman in the fable by a wanton decapitation of the goose, thereby making geese of ourselves indeed and in truth.

Are the brethren aware that North Carolina is rather sluggish, if not decidedly so, in this great movement? Aye, in comparison with other States that have taken it up, we are veritable laggards and need stirring up. Not to speak of Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama and other States which are booming along triumphantly and have already knocked in the head and buried for good and all the infamous jute trust without the least hope of resurrection, I will simply refer to little Florida. She began operation about the same time we did, and just see how far she has got ahead of us, and hear what she has accomplished with 20,000 members in 24 counties and 372 Alliances. Her Farmers' Alliance Exchange was organized only a little over a year ago, the authorized capital stock being \$150,000, and, although the yellow fever seriously interfered, the report of the business manager makes a very satisfactory showing. There were 753 orders for supplies filled. This includes every thing from a paper of pins to a steam engine. It received and shipped 13,732 packages of fruits and vegetables, 187 consignments of other produce, inclusive of cotton and every thing raised on the farm. The financial statement shows a net gain over all expenses of more than \$450, and the farmers get their supplies at wholesale with only interest added.

Suppose we had done likewise in proportion to the numerical strength of our membership, what would have been our condition now? Our business agency fund would have been established and we would have, ere this, saved enough through the benefits accruing therefrom to more than pay us back what we contributed. We must get out of this nebulous state and emerge into a more substantial medium, and look with jealous eye upon the example set us by our sister States. A burnt child they say dreads the fire, but the assertion don't seem to hold good with us, for we are such salamanders that we seem to withstand any degree of incandescence with a callous indifference born of inveterate habit. In fact, some farmers bring to mind the story of the man who died and went to the torrid regions. There he saw them with pitchforks throwing the new-comers into furnace glowing with heat. Walking along the passageway he saw rows of men with their feet tied together and hung upon hooks. He asked, "who are these?" The answer was, "these are farmers who are too green to burn." Indeed, we seem to have arrived at a chronic state of satisfaction and indifference as to our lot, to which we are so enured that we actually seem destitute of free-will, which seems better exercised in squatting down in a corner twiddling away at tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee instead of arousing ourselves out of such a shameful state of helpless inaction which, indeed, our minds seem incapable of soaring above the daily theatre of life, or of going beyond the narrow sphere traced by the limits of the action of the 5 senses.

We seem to be fixtures of conservatism par excellence, so immovable that the wonder is we have not already died of dry-rot. Old fogymism seems to be ingrained, dyed in the wool, stereotyped into our corporeal structure with such an indelible grip that a streak of the greatest lightning turned loose to run down the slickest toboggan slide upon us would fail to awaken us out of our Rip van Winkle takerootedness. We seem to have become transmuted into a set of poverty-stricken Sybarites luxuriating in listless inaction and taking the world as it goes with a vengeance. Indeed and in truth, if we don't want our noses kept forever in contact with the grindstone, we must awaken out of this Rip van Winkle slumber with a stretch and a yawn that will arouse us to the refreshment of renewed energies and wide-awake impulses and incentives to fight our way through the intolerable evils which beset us on all sides. It's hard, they say, to teach an

old dog new tricks, but, one thing certain, we've either got to learn new tricks or be tricked to death by the most infernal set of tricksters that ever tricked humanity. Before we yield to such an ignoble, apathetic state of things let us be enthused with the dying exclamation of a Marmion: "Charge, Chester, charge on, Stanly, on!" and not stop until we have carried the breastworks of the enemy and planted our banner on the citadel. We must make this great end the ultimate of every hope, the inspiration of every ambition, the main spring and driving-wheel of ceaseless, never-tiring action. And remember that we are all in the same boat together making for the same harbor, and surely this kindred of a common destiny we should consider as a closer tie than that of birth, and be inspired by it to make for ourselves a brighter, happier, and more manly future. UPTON B. GWYNN.

### NOTES FROM HARNETT.

MR. EDITOR:—I write to let you know that we are alive and doing good work. Our Alliance (Cokesburg, No. 134) is increasing in members and good work. We now number 45 male and 21 female members and eight or nine to initiate at next meeting. We are raising a handsome sum for our business agency. Interest in the Alliance work is on the increase throughout Harnett county. I have visited some points in the county recently and find the people more in earnest than ever. They have taken a decided stand against the bagging trust and they admire the decision with which THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER handles these trusts.

The Alliance is making good arrangements for trade through our Agent, Bro. J. A. Green, who is an earnest worker. One thing the members of the Alliance must do and that is to inform themselves better in the Alliance work. I want to see every member take and read THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER, for it is absolutely necessary that we should read more. You may look for a long list of subscribers from me soon.

Yours fraternally,  
J. H. MIMMS,  
Deputy Organizer of Harnett Co.

### FROM MARTIN COUNTY.

BEAVER DAM ALLIANCE, No. 1,010,  
Oct. 8, 1889.

MR. EDITOR:—It has been some time since I have seen anything in your valuable paper concerning old Beaver Dam, but I will now say to you brethren that we have a large membership and several more petitions, whom we think is among the best men of old Martin, and I pray God may speed them on and let them join in with us and help us fight this noble cause of ours, that we may see our wives and blessed little ones, more enjoy the great comforts that God has so provided for them, and I trust that every man who is eligible may at once come and unite with us and share a part of this important privilege that we intend to have in the end. And, my brethren, I think the time is just approaching when we can stand upon the American soil and safely say that this is a people's country, and that we do not propose to have the monied man to double the dollar so unfair and cheat our honest men out of their rights any longer.

Ho for Carolina! It is a land to be—  
A land of love and sweet liberty.

Brethren, I have been reading THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER for some time, but at last I have seen the great insurance plan suggested that I have wanted to see for so many long years, by B. T. Hicks, which I will sincerely say in my opinion it is one of the best suggestions yet made for the laboring class of people. We have seen so many widows and fatherless children, almost destitute of house and home, who had to follow the plow and pull the hoe from sun to sun to get their little earnings, and at last they are figured out of almost one-half in the end to pay the man who carries the large trunks and visits in every land. The costs of the insurance, brethren, is comparatively a very small item to what we hope to gain in the end. Who would utter a word or hesitate a moment to pay \$2 or \$3 per year for an insurance of this kind? No one, I believe, in this great, broad universe. So I hope the brethren will come together at once and suggest their plans. If any of the brethren have not seen the plan suggested, you will look in the issue of October 1st, 1889, page 4, and there you will find the article that takes the cake. Brethren and friends, if you would

take THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER you would find a good many things that would be a great benefit to the good people of our country.

Respectfully,  
JOHN R. MOBLEY, Sec'y.

### POOR RICHARD'S SAYINGS.

Benjamin Franklin published an almanac in 1757 from which I cull the following:

**TAXES.**  
The taxes are indeed very heavy, and if those laid on by the government were the only ones we had to pay we might the more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us.

We are taxed twice as much by our idleness, three times as much by our pride and four times as much by our folly; and from these taxes the commissioners cannot deliver us.

It would be thought a hard government that should tax its people one-tenth part of their time to be employed in its service, but idleness taxes many of us much more, if we reckon all that is spent in absolute sloth, or doing of nothing; with that which is spent in idle employments or amusements that amount to nothing. Sloth, by bringing on disease, absolutely shortens life. Sloth, like rust, consumes faster than labor wears. Dost thou love life? then do not squander time, for that's the stuff life is made of.

Sloth makes all things difficult, but industry all things easy.

Laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon overtakes him.

What signifies wishing and hoping for better times? We make times better if we bestir ourselves.

**LEISURE.**  
Methinks I hear some of you say "Must a man afford himself no leisure?" I will tell thee: Employ thy time well, if thou meanest to gain leisure; and since thou art not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour.

Leisure is the time for doing something useful. This leisure the diligent man will obtain, but the lazy man never. A life of leisure and a life of idleness are two things. Do you imagine that sloth will afford you more comfort than labor? Trouble springs from idleness and grievous toil from needless ease. Many, without labor, would live by their wits only, but they'll break for want of stock. Industry gives comfort and plenty and respect.

### ATTENTION TO BUSINESS.

We must oversee our own affairs. The eye of the master will do more work than both his hands. Want of care does us more damage than want of knowledge.

Not to oversee workmen is to leave them your purse open.

Trusting too much to others' care is the ruin of many.

Add frugality to industry. Think of saving, as well as getting.

The Indies have not made Spain rich, because her outgoes were greater than her incomes.

By extravagances, the gentle are reduced to poverty and forced to obtain credit of those whom they formerly despised, but who, through industry and frugality have maintained their standing. Pride is as loud a beggar as want, and a great deal more saucy.

### DEBT.

Think what you do when you run in debt. You give to another power over your liberty. If you cannot pay at the time, you will be ashamed to see your creditor, you will make poor sneaking excuses and by degrees come to lose your veracity and sink into base downright lying.

The second vice is lying, the first is running into debt. Lying rides upon debt's back. A free-born American ought not to be ashamed or afraid to see or speak to any man living. The borrower is a slave to the lender, and the debtor to the creditor, disdain the chain, preserve your freedom and maintain your independence.

For age and want, save while you may; No morning sun lasts a whole day.  
Gain may be temporary and uncertain, but while you live, expense is constant and certain. We may give advice, but cannot give conduct.

Mr. Julian S. Carr, of Durham, who is known as one of the biggest hearted men in the world, has addressed a circular letter to the clerks of the court in every county in the State, requesting them to forward him a list of ex-Confederate soldiers in the poor house.—Charlotte News.

### IS THIS A GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE FOR THEIR MUTUAL AND COMMON BENEFIT?

On page 4 of THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER of September 17th, the following paragraph occurs under the heading Railroad and Railroad Commissioners: "Get together, my countrymen, assemble ye men of the people, and diligently enquire into and discuss this matter, for I assure you that if one-tenth of these things are true this government of the people, for which our fathers made so many and such glorious sacrifices of blood and money, is on the eve of becoming a government not of the people for their mutual and common happiness and prosperity, but a government of capitalists for the benefit of the rich and powerful; and whenever this may come to pass, may God have mercy on the poor and weak."

I thought that it was well known to every man of intelligence that for many years this has not been a government of the people for their mutual and common happiness and prosperity, but a government of capitalists for the benefit of the rich and powerful without the least regard for the happiness and prosperity of all other people; and I thought it was known to intelligent men that capitalists had succeeded in having laws enacted that gave the rich and powerful complete control of the earnings of farmers and laborers who, as a general rule, have thus been deprived of all hope of anything like prosperity. The public good has not been thought of in connection with government for many years. Our legislators, I mean a majority of them, are actuated solely by selfishness. The question with each of them is, "How shall I proceed in order to secure my own pecuniary interest?" The course that they pursue is the answer to that question: They do the bidding of the rich, not because they care anything for the interest, per se, of the rich, but because they know that their own pecuniary interest lies in that direction, and they will continue to do this until a majority of our people learn that the interest of every man requires the government to be conducted so as to insure the public good. When that happy time comes our law makers will work as hard to promote the public good as they now do in order to make a sacrifice of it for the pecuniary benefit of the rich and powerful. Government is now completely under the control of capitalists and has been for many years, and they have accumulated hundreds of millions of dollars through the operation of unjust and unconstitutional laws, which they will use liberally to prevent the people from taking it under their control, but the people are now being educated at a rapid rate, and I have no doubt that the time will soon come when the government will be conducted with an eye single to the public good, and prosperity and happiness will prevail among the poor as well as the rich and powerful who have been robbing them of their just dues for many years. Every good man should faithfully make use of every opportunity to accomplish this desirable result. Those who are subscribers to good papers should do all they can to induce others to do likewise. Education is the remedy for the shameful evils by which we are afflicted. I have no doubt every reader of THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER could get at least one more to subscribe, and many could get a half dozen subscribers. Just consider how much good might thus be done in behalf of good government, which means good people. Bad government, such as we have had for a long time, cannot be excelled in corrupting mankind. It is a first-class hot bed for producing criminals of every kind. Let every reader of THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER go to work at getting subscribers and in every other way that he can consistently to enlighten his fellowman.

Lochthree, St. Clair Co., Ala.  
M. H. ZELNER.

I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me, and causes me to tremble for the safety of our country. As a result of the war, corporations have been enthroned, and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed. I feel at this moment more anxiety for the safety of my country than ever before even in the midst of the war. God grant that my suspicions may prove groundless.—Rural Home.