

# PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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

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## THE NATIONAL FARMERS' ALLIANCE AND INDUSTRIAL UNION.

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE NORTH CAROLINA FARMERS' STATE ALLIANCE.

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Chairman; J. M. Mewborne, Kinston, N. C.; J. S. Johnston, Ruffin, N. C.

## RESOLUTIONS.

PERNELL, Wake Co., N. C.,  
January 11, 1890.

*Resolved*, That we, the members of Little Rock Alliance, No. 177, do obligate ourselves to patronize, for the next twelve months, W. B. Dunn, plow manufacturer at, Wake Forest, and that we request all Alliance men who can conveniently do so, to use Dunn's castings, for we believe that said Dunn is a friend to the Alliance, and that his castings are superior to some others on the market.

*Resolved*, That this resolution be sent to THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER for publication.

W. J. SIMPSON, Sec'y.

## THE FARMERS' ST. LOUIS CONVENTION.

*Their Declaration of Cardinal Principles, Embracing Restoration of Silver to the Standard of Values—Government Control and Ownership of Telegraph and Railroad Lines—The Sub Treasury Plan.*

BY OLD FOGY.

MR. PRESIDENT:—I know of no event in the last quarter of a century, so pregnant with meaning as the union of the different "farmers' orders," embracing the Alliances of the North and South, the Wheel and Mutual Benefit Association, and their confederation on lines common to all with the Knights of Labor.

I have never seen, Congress not excepted, an abler body of men assembled, and since the Declaration of Independence was given to the world, no body of men has been inspired with a purer and loftier patriotism. Their declaration of principles is so pre-eminently just that no man who loves his country more than party, or its spoils, can long hesitate to join the forces now being rapidly marshalled for the right.

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER'S "Old Fogy" wants here and now to go on record in relation to the cardinal doctrines enunciated at St. Louis.

## THE SILVER QUESTION.

The Republican and Democratic parties both oppose the views we entertain. Both the old parties go hand in hand in doing all they can to keep "the silver dollar of our fathers" in abeyance. The leaders of both parties are millionaires, and are interested in banks and stocks much more than they are in the honest yeomanry of their country.

The banks (hence the leaders of both parties) are interested in reducing the circulation of silver and for the following reasons:

The government has by legislation given the banks a monopoly of money privilege (thus showing clearly that neither party is in sympathy with the doctrines of the founders of our Republic) and on each million of dollars in circulation (paper) the loss by fire, etc., amounts to 2 1/2 per cent. per decade; so that it is a clear gain to the banks of \$25,000 every ten years by reason

of losses on each million in circulation. With fires like Chicago's, and floods like Johnstown's, with thousands of smaller disasters overtaking the people, the National banks have gained since they began to issue currency over twenty five millions of dollars by the causes just assigned.

Is it not time for the people to abolish a system that grows rich, and vulture-like, fattens on the losses of the poor.

It should be the policy of our government to restore silver to the place it occupied prior to 1860. It was then the unit of values, of exchange. To-day, all the Republics of the New World desire silver as the unit of exchange.

## PARTISANSHIP DESTROYED.

I am glad that Yankee and Confederate colonels and privates have had the courage, the manliness and the patriotism to bid their "old parties get behind them," and thus cement the brotherhood and destroy partisanship in our common country.

Their wise action at St. Louis destroyed prejudice and sectionalism in the minds of all, save professional place hunters.

The united orders gave to the country National issues, and all the people can unite and fight as in 1776, the kingly prerogatives and vested rights that now form the burden of their every wish and prayer that monopolists have or utter.

The banks and combines have set up an anti-Christ, a God Mammon, and all the people are commanded to follow and obey. But they, like the prophet of old, will be more than astonished to find how many have not bowed the knee to Baal.

I thank God, patriotism is not a thing of the past with the yeomanry of our country, and in their hearts the love of liberty is far greater than the love of gold.

## GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF RAILROAD AND TELEGRAPH LINES.

In England, telegraphic messages are sent on government lines at a trifle compared with the cost on the Western Union. If the cost of sending messages and maintenance of lines in England is very much less than in this country, we ought to reduce the present cost one-half. All the people are interested in commerce and trade and a cheap rapid communication is to the best interests of all. The weather bureau would be much more effective than now, as each operator could also be an observer, and the display of signals would be as much more general as the data would be more complete. No false reports as to crops could then be sent out, for each operator could know the exact amount of crops shipped or warehoused each day.

## RAILROADS.

In India, on the government railroad, fares on the lowest class are only one-half cent per mile, a higher class one cent per mile, and so on up to two cents per mile.

I hold that passenger traffic ought to be graded according to speed, comfort and convenience, so that the poor who could not afford to travel in state could go either on business or pleasure at a low rate.

It is not just or right for any railroad to charge as much per mile when hauled on freight trains as when flying over the country on a limited express; and yet in defiance of right the poor are now charged more per mile than the rich. If you doubt this see the difference between local and through rates of travel.

This seems to be the policy of the government to make the rich richer and the poor poorer.

All freight trains ought to be compelled by law to run passenger cars attached at lowest rates.

Government control would abolish ruinous competition in favor of a town where the directors of the railroad have their interests centered, as against country villages and points not terminal.

Competing roads now arrange their schedule to injure competing lines, and this is to the injury and detriment of all who travel. All this would be changed under control of the government.

## CAN RAILROAD RATES BE REDUCED AND YET BE PROFITABLE?

For an answer let me cite you facts. The Central Railroad, of New York, is limited by law to two (2) cents per mile (passenger traffic) and while the stock has been watered and watered until the road could be duplicated at less than half its stock value, yet the stock of the railroad in question sells from 108 to 115.

The government railroads of India have not nearly the advantages we have, and yet they are profitable.

Right here a question of vital importance arises. It is this: Should roads used for the transportation of the people's produce or to further commerce be used for profit? I hold, sirs, they should not. The Erie Central has done more to make New York city the metropolis of our country than any other line that can be named. Tolls sufficient to pay expenses should only be charged on railroad lines. They should, like our public roads, like our rivers, be kept in good condition for transportation by the people, for all the people, for their advantage and benefit.

Transportation, either of persons or freight on railroads, should be as transportation of mail matter, it should be done at cost for the people's good. The same objects are in view having railroads that are in view in having a public road. Public good and their conveniences. Then let them be built, operated and used in the same way, only with this modification, let the tax be in proportion to use, and let the tax be direct.

## RAILROAD METHODS.

There are hundreds of short lines, from 25 to 250 miles in length, that have a full set of officers and for their names and supposed services they are paid extravagantly. These short lines are combined into systems over which other sets of officers act with kingly authority, and draw from the earnings of the roads a princely revenue, and not infrequently one wealthy man is president of a half dozen or more of railroads and drawing pay from all for services that could not be rendered.

They are those who have special trains, and your passenger fare for 80 miles of travel is expended every time a champagne cork goes skyward. Favours in the form of passes and rebates hold to their service a horde of men without firm principles of right. Towns are built up, others are discriminated against to enrich the favored few, and without a shadow of right.

Railroads are not to-day what they claimed they would be when as humble supplicants they prayed the legislatures to grant their charters. When they were chartered it was for the public good; they were to be the servants of the people. To-day they are for private greed and are masters of us all.

## ATTORNEYS.

In the employ of the railroad there are over 7,000 lawyers, paid yearly, and other thousands retained, and in cases of great importance, fees extra are paid, from 10,000 to 100,000 dollars.

All this amounts to over twenty-five millions of dollars yearly, and besides this the court charges. All this vast amount of treasure comes out of the people. Had you ever asked why railroads seem to be so fond of litigation? If not just think it over and you will see that you not only pay your attorneys but that the people also pay their attorneys as well as their own. By charter many of the railroads are limited to 6 or 8 per cent., and while they either water stock openly or issue stock scrip, yet they prefer to hire lawyers and lobbyists for their influence and to work for them than to lower their rates of freight so as to give the people relief.

Nor is this all. Many railroads were built or newly railed and equipped when steel rails and engines cost three times what they do now, and though the inner circle made fortunes by their contracts, the railroads thus costing in the aggregate about three times what they could be duplicated for now, yet we are made to pay rates to cover cost to the stockholders. They rob the people and enrich themselves in another way.

Take a railroad stocked at 40,000 per mile, bonded for 15 to 20,000 dollars per mile. This new road has rates made in favor of, and with the main line with which it connects, so that the new railroad is soon nearly bankrupted, a foreclosure is had, the railroad is bought for a trifle, and then re-capitalized at a still greater value, but now annexed to a system and then pays 6 per cent. on the stock, at many times the cost at foreclosure. Millionaires and paupers follow this method just as naturally as day succeeds night.

With newspapers subsidized they continue to increase their power until they have grown to be giants and dictate lines of policy to both Democratic and Republican parties and railroads and are now seeking to control the judiciary of our country.

Our Supreme Court is burdened with their cases and our only hope is to change the present law so as to make it as it was prior to 1860. Our

State Supreme Court final in jurisdiction. Under government control all this would be changed.

First-class passenger rates need not exceed one cent per mile and freight a fourth its present tariff rates. I hold that railroad managers admit this to be true. They say in defence of their absorption policy that the more railroad connecting, under one management, the cheaper the tariff rates and the better the service. This only proves my position to be true. Place them all under one management and the service would be infinitely better and cheaper, and the only way to prevent extortion is for the government to own and control the railroads.

## CAN WE GET CONTROL OF THE RAILROADS?

This inquiry has been frequently made since the St. Louis Convention. It is said they build and own the roads; that they are chartered companies; that they have vested rights; that they own under forms of law, etc.

In reply I answer, so talked the Tories from 1760 to 1790 they said the colonies were chartered by the King, and so they were. They said the crown had vested rights; that all their acts were under forms of law, and it was true.

But a handful of patriots that were so obtuse as not to see that one generation could barter away the rights of the succeeding one, destroyed kingly charters and vested rights and forms of law at one Herculean blow.

The people of our country are in no good temper to see Pinkerton's spies or policemen thrust back at the point of the bayonet, men who are pleading with plutocrats for wages, that will be sufficient to keep their families from starvation.

You may call this revolutionary if you will, and so it is, but the people who are the real rulers will see to it that like our sister republic of Brazil that it shall be a bloodless one.

## LEGAL RIGHTS.

How did the railroads get their forms of law, their vested rights, their chartered privileges, the lands they own? Was not the people's land confiscated for their good? Did not the farmers whose lands were taken have their charters, under forms of law, that ante dated the rights the railroads were vested with? Did not the people have a patent, a charter from the State itself? We call these charters title deeds.

The railroad companies called our attention to the fact that the police powers of the State had always been reserved, and that as it was for the "public good" to have railroads, and so the State revoked the charters it had given us and gave the land to others with chartered rights attached.

The railroad told us that we would be compensated for the land for the number of years the railroad was chartered for, and by contract the railroads were to be given these powers for the public good and not for private gain.

The Constitution of the United States recognized the right to hold slaves, and yet there came a time when it was said that the public good demanded their freedom, and the slave holder had his chartered rights and vested privileges and all the forms of law taken away. The Hon. Hannibal Hamlin said in the U. S. Senate March 10th, 1858: "Forms of law! God knows there is nothing but form in it. Forms of law! Long years ago the mother country undertook to oppress these colonies by forms of law; the noble patriot John Hampden was persecuted under forms of law, and for his love of liberty under forms of law despotism is created. Under forms of law all the wrongs of which the mind of man can conceive have been perpetrated. Under forms of law liberty itself has been stricken down. Under forms of law the Son of Man was arraigned and stretched upon the cross."

So say I. Under forms of law the United States could build competing lines alongside of every mile of profitable railroad in the United States and then, under forms of law the present owners would receive nothing. What a fine system of Coube track railroad we would have then.

Under forms of law we propose to take the railroads just as they in defiance of our vested rights, in defiance of our charters that antedate theirs by a century or more, we the people will take back to ourselves the enlisted powers and domain which has been so badly mismanaged.

## A STRONG GOVERNMENT.

It is said that this would make a strong government. That an admin-

istration would be hard to displace with all this patronage in its hands. Who proposes to place all this patronage in the hands of the General Government? We do not. We propose to put it in the hands of the people. This government ought to be the people's. It ought to be by and for the people. If the people employ any part of their number to look after their collective interests, is there anything contrary to the genius of our government in the plan?

There need be no more employees than now, and at least 20,000 officers, lawyers and lobbyists less than now. To-day the combined billions of dollars invested in railroads is controlled by less than 5,000 principal officers. We propose for 60 millions to have a say in the management. The present managers have but little interest in the government, but seek by bribery and corruption the control of the legislature, the executive and judicial departments.

## OUR PLAN.

We favor a Cabinet officer whose sole duty would be to attend to transportation. This Secretary of Transportation would take the place of a score of kingly railroad presidents and a horde of corporation presidents. Each State would have a superintendent of transportation and the State superintendents be elected by the people of the several States. Thus we would have no administration patronage and the mail and telegraph and express superintendents would also be elected by the people instead of being appointed by the head of the administration, and our plan would actually lessen by more than one hundred thousand the number of appointees by the administration. Each party, anxious to succeed, would place in nomination their best men suited for the places, as they now do for Superintendents of Schools or Judges of our courts. In many cases a practical civil service could be inaugurated if thought advisable.

## ADVANTAGES.

The transferring of this vast power from the plutocrats to the people would be a great reform. Reduction of passenger and freight rates would save the people yearly untold millions of dollars. Such monopolies as the Standard Oil Co. could no longer exist. The smallest shipper would have the same opportunities the largest enjoyed. The country merchant and the farmer would stand on a level in shipments with Armour or Huth.

Billions of dollars now locked up in railroad and telegraph lines would then go into factories and mines, into farms and improvements. The wage-earner and bread-winner would be in demand and the thousands that now go to bed supperless would find profitable employment. These advantages alone entitle our demands to be placed alongside the Declaration of Independence.

## THE OXFORD MEETING.

Official Proceedings of the Farmers' Alliance, as Furnished by Publication Committee—Bright Tobacco Farmers Form a Special Permanent Organization.

Oxford, N. C., Jan. 11.—The convention of the Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union of the bright tobacco belt of North Carolina and Virginia met in the Opera House here at 11 o'clock a. m., January 9th, and was called to order by Bro. W. T. Adams, President of the Granville County Alliance. Rev. Dr. R. H. Marsh offered a prayer.

An address of welcome was delivered by Hon. R. W. Winston on behalf of the mayor and citizens of Oxford, and was responded to by Bro. J. B. Smith, of Caswell, on behalf of the convention. Mr. Winston's speech was very acceptable to the Alliance, and showed him to be a man of broad and liberal culture and well informed in regard to the great evils of monopoly in the days of the past as well as the future. Bro. Smith's response was well conceived and to the point. Adjourned until 1:30 p. m.

## AFTERNOON SESSION.

An organization was effected by electing Col. George Williamson of Caswell, N. C., President; T. Y. Allen, of Mecklenburg, Va., Secretary, and T. B. Lindsay, of Rockingham, N. C., Assistant Secretary.

The convention then went into a committee of the whole to admit of a free discussion of the tobacco trust. Adjourned at 5 p. m.

## NIGHT SESSION.

The convention re-assembled at 6:30 p. m. The following by-laws and declarations were adopted for permanent organization:

Profoundly impressed with the importance of protecting the tobacco interests, we, the members of the Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union of the Bright Tobacco Belt of North Carolina and Virginia, in convention assembled, resolve,

1st, To labor together for the mutual benefit of the tobacco grower.

2nd, Realizing the importance of unity, we pledge ourselves to stand together.

3rd, That we will use every means in our power to defeat the purpose of any combination that operates to depreciate the price of leaf tobacco.

4th, This organization shall be known as the Bright Tobacco Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union of the United States.

5th, That the Union shall be composed of three delegates from each county composing the Union.

The committee on resolutions offered the following:

Resolved 1st, That we do call upon every citizen of our common country to unite with us in our efforts to hurl from their seats in the halls of our State and National Legislatures all traitors to our liberties and industrial interest impermissibly guaranteed to us by the founders of our government, and to fill their places with servants who will respect the laws of our country and the rights and liberties of its people.

2nd, That we fully approve of and endorse all bills introduced in Congress for the repeal of the tobacco tax, and demand of our representatives from North Carolina and Virginia, regardless of party interest, to press the same to an early passage.

3rd, That we do most heartily endorse the action of the St. Louis Convention in regard to the sub-treasury system [Here follows that system, which it is unnecessary to repeat.]

## FRIDAY MORNING SESSION.

The Friday morning session opened at 9 o'clock. After reading minutes of previous day, the election of officers for permanent organization occurred, with the following result:

President—W. C. Johnston, of Boydton, Mecklenburg county, Va.

Vice President—C. R. Scott, of Chatham, N. C.

Secretary—T. Y. Allen, of Skipwith, Mecklenburg county, Va.

Chaplain—Rev. Dr. R. H. Marsh, of Oxford, N. C.

This resolution, offered by the delegates from Stokes, Rowan and Vance counties, was adopted:

Resolved, That it is the sense of this body that it is for the good of the order and the advancement of our cause that all Alliance men patronize the Alliance cooperative warehouses and factories as established or may be established in the different tobacco markets.

The convention adjourned at 1 p. m., subject to call of the President. The delegates returned to their homes fully satisfied that the work of the convention will result in much good to the Alliance and all industrial classes. They appreciated the cordial hospitality of the citizens of Oxford, who vied with each other in generous attention to them, and left with the kindest feelings towards the town and its citizens individually, who donated over \$4,000 to the Alliance of Granville county to assist in building an Alliance warehouse here. This aid was accepted in the spirit in which it was tendered, and work will begin at once. An Alliance warehouse was established in Oxford over a year ago, and has proved a complete success. The order has also located in this city a tobacco factory, manufacturing both plug and smoking goods, and which has been awarded a diploma by the North Carolina State Agricultural Society for the best package of smoking tobacco made in North Carolina.

Yes, we may all congratulate ourselves that this cruel war is nearing a close. It has cost a vast amount of treasure and blood. The best blood of the flower of American youth has been freely offered upon our country's altar. It has indeed been a trying hour for the republic; but I see in the near future a crisis arising that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my 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 time more anxiety for the safety of my country than ever before, even in the midst of the war. God grant that my fears may prove groundless.—Lincoln.