

PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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

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THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER is the Official Organ of the North Carolina Farmers' State Alliance.

TOBACCO DEPARTMENT.

OUR TOBACCO DEPARTMENT.

At the suggestion of President Grimes, we now open our "Tobacco Column" for a full discussion of tobacco growing, the tobacco trust, and especially the Jordan plan proposed by the State Tobacco Growers' Association.

Views, criticisms and plans from all tobacco growers are earnestly requested. We also hope to have reports from all tobacco growers' meetings.

In order that every reader may get a correct idea of the plans and purposes of the State Tobacco Growers' Association, we publish this week the address of President Grimes, the Jordan plan and the plan of organization.

These plans and purposes are now open for discussion in our columns and persons who favor other plans are requested to send them for publication.

THE JORDAN PLAN

The resolution adopted by the State Tobacco Growers' Association endorsing the plan of Mr. Jordan reads as follows:

"We agree to enter into a contract with J. F. Jordan and his associates to sell to him our tobacco raised during the next five years at an advance of not less than 15 per cent over the prices of the same grade of tobacco during the last five years, the said price to be fixed by a commission, a majority of whom shall represent the seller."

"We further agree to take stock with said Jordan and his associates, a corporation which shall be formed for the purpose of manipulating and disposing of said tobacco, sold to said J. F. Jordan and his associates to the extent of not less than 15 per cent of the value of our said tobacco. The details of this agreement shall be hereafter arranged so as to carry out the true intent and meaning of this agreement. If we make default in this agreement in any particular we agree to forfeit to said corporation the said stock so taken. And we further recommend for our mutual benefit that the farmers of North Carolina reduce their crop at least 25 per cent below the past year's production. We invite the co-operation of Virginia, South Carolina and other sections which grow bright tobacco."

THE PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

Adopted by the North Carolina Tobacco Growers' Association, Jan. 17, 1900.

This organization shall be known as the North Carolina Farmers' Tobacco Association. It shall consist of a township, county and State organization.

The township organization shall consist of a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and executive committee of three and all white persons interested in the growth of tobacco.

The county organization shall consist of delegates from the township organizations, one delegate for each ten members of the township part thereof.

The officers of the county convention shall consist of a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer and executive committee of five members.

Each county convention shall have power to appoint organizers in their own county.

The State Convention shall consist of delegates from the county associations

together with the officers elected by this convention. Each county shall be entitled to five votes at the State convention. All officers in all these associations shall be elected for a term of one year. The township association shall have power to assess each member dues for 25 cents per year, ten of which shall go to the county meeting, ten cents to the State treasurer. The State association shall have power to elect an organizer to organize in any part of the State.

IS READY WHEN THE PLAN IS AGREED ON.

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer, February 13th.

I thought I would ask some questions about the Jordan plan, but will not at present. But it seems to me there ought to be a full understanding about the Jordan plan. It will be hard to organize the farmers in a tobacco association until they thoroughly understand the plan. I think it would be well to give its workings in full—give the details as much as possible from beginning to end.

I think to commence the tobacco fight we should, in the first place, reduce the acreage at least 25 per cent. Then I am inclined to think the Jordan plan would be best. I have heard some other plans suggested: Some say build factories; some say boycott. I will confess I don't know which is best, but I, for one, am ready for the fight when some good plan is settled on.

In making a fight, let's be sure we are right. Then we can ask God to be with us; and if God is with us, the victory is ours.

Respectfully,
W. F. UPHURCH
Wake Co., N. C.

PUSH THE FARMERS' TRUST.

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

Organize the farmers and every class into trusts and they will fix prices and wages that will secure the dollars to distribute all produced, and they will deal direct with each other and save the immense sum this commercial trust would fasten upon the people.

There is no more affinity between the farmers and this commercial trust than there is between Heaven and hades. Co-operate, fix maximum prices and wages and you will double consumption and increase the output twelve billion dollars a year. This talk of fighting trusts is sheer nonsense. Organize, co-operate, fix the price of your farm products so as to command your share of the dollars.

Establish a national board of equalization that will regulate the trusts and we will glide into prosperity. It is the farmers' trust that can bring prosperity to all classes.

A Tobacco Raisers' trust can be organized that can effectually control the price of tobacco. It will not take 90 per cent. to do it. Fifty men in a county raising tobacco can do it. Will send a plan for the formation of a Tobacco Raisers' trust to The Progressive Farmer. It will not take a syndicate to back it up. Just enough money for preliminary expenses.

There is no better security to borrow money on than the farmers' staple farm products. Hundreds and millions of dollars are borrowed each year on these products after they have passed into the hands of speculators. The farmers can do the same if they will organize. You can find five times the number required to make a success of the trust. Let all syndicates alone.

Organize. Deposit your staple farm products in trust, borrow money on them, hold and sell at the trust prices as there is a demand and you will need no backers. Your staple farm products is all the backing you need.

JAMES MURDOCK
Swain Co., N. C.

The Agricultural College of Missouri gives a short course for farmers in the season when they are least busy on their farms. Why should not all our agricultural colleges give special winter courses for farmers just as other colleges give summer courses for teachers? It seems to us much good might thus be accomplished, not only for agriculture, but also for the general culture of the agricultural population. Something similar to this is found in the Danish high schools for one people, which have already had an immense influence on the general culture of the country and village population of Denmark.—N. C. Journal of Education.

FARM AFFAIRS.

KEEP ACCOUNTS WITH CROPS

Sensible Advice Given by an Enterprising Craven County Farmer.

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

It is not a rule with farmers to keep an itemized account of farm expenses. Of course some do, and the number that do keep accounts of farm operations is increasing; it should increase faster. It is both a pleasure and a profit to itemize the expenses and receipts of the various farm productions. Charge a field of so many acres whether one or one hundred, with all that is done to it, or put on it; then as something is taken from it, credit the field with every item taken from it, both expenses and receipts at actual cost and market prices. Then at the end of the season balance accounts and the result will show what the farmer is doing. If he has done well, it will be encouraging and do him good to look over it; but if it was a failure, if the debit side was larger than the credit side, this, too, would do the farmer good, as he can profit by the failure no less than by the success in many cases. If a close observer, he could see some cause for the failure, and take such action for the future as would prevent a similar result.

It is the custom of some farmers to guess at expenses. Meet ten average farmers and ask each as you meet him what it costs to raise a bushel of corn, potatoes, peanuts, etc., and you will likely get as many different answers as the number you interrogate. Now of course, it costs more under some circumstances on the same quality of land to raise a certain crop; but when a farmer has noted expenses and receipts year after year on all his crops, he can surely farm with much more intelligence, more safety and more certainty. It may also be worth something to his children to know the cost of doing certain work; especially if, as is often the case, some of his boys conclude to run the old farm after the father has gone to his reward.

As fathers, we owe it to our children to let them see a record of our successes and mistakes; they will very likely hear of them, and should know their correctness.

But some farmers will say, "I have not time for any writing down accounts; in crop time I am too busy." Well, we all get busy sometimes, but keeping a record of what we are doing often saves us time. It is not by any means a tedious matter to enter up in a suitable book the operations of half a dozen or more fields or patches as the cases may be, and if it takes one or two hours each week it will be time well spent. And almost any farmer that can write can in two hours enter all the transactions connected with his farm of from five to ten different crops.

Make a trial of it, brother farmer, and you will find the mind expanding and the farm improving. D. LANE.
Craven Co., N. C.

HOW SOME OF THE FERTILITY OF SOUTHERN SOILS SLIPS AWAY.

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

There is an annual production of over 4,000,000 tons of cotton seed in the South. This seed contains 125,000 tons of nitrogen, worth, for enriching the soil, \$37,500,000. It also contains 50,800 tons of phosphoric acid, worth, for enriching the soil, \$7,112,000. It contains also 46,800 tons of potash, worth to the soil, \$3,744,000. This makes a grand total of \$48,356,000, and this vast sum for what? Not a cent, until very recent years, been considered in the light of a waste product.

Under the system of clean culture necessarily and unavoidably obtain throughout the entire cotton belt in the culture of this important crop, considerably more fertility is washed away annually down into the Gulf of Mexico, than is contained in the entire annual output of cotton seed. The amount of fertility that is annually lost by being washed away, is an utter impossibility to ever bring back; the most we can possibly do in the premises is to try our level best, by terracing, circling and hill side ditches on upland, and a more complete and systematic as well as more thorough system of drainage and under drainage on lowlands, to reduce this annual loss by washing to a minimum.

This truly enormous drain, although comparatively small and insignificant 75 or even 50 years ago, may be very conservatively and safely claimed to

have gone on until ten times above amounts are irrevocably gone, past any, even the most remote, possibility of redemption. This would amount to 1,250,000 tons of nitrogen, worth \$375,000,000; 508,000 tons of phosphoric acid, worth \$71,120,000 and 468,000 tons of potash, worth \$37,440,000; or a total of \$483,560,000.

Just how much of this 40,000,000 tons of cotton seed was sold off the farm or otherwise made away with, at least to the extent of depriving the acres upon which they were grown of any and all benefit that might have been derived from them had they been scrupulously returned to those self same acres, we have no means of deciding; but from upwards of a quarter century of close observation, we know that the amount so returned is most insignificantly and ruinously small. The fact that the output of cotton is annually increasing, at the same time that the South in its entirety is annually becoming more nearly self sustaining, while the trucking, dairy fruit and live stock industries are also increasing in a ratio commensurate with that of the fleecy staple, speaks volumes, not only for the fertility of Southern soils, but also for the truly magnificent possibilities that lie before this Heaven favored section, when restitution instead of spoliation shall be the order of the day.

Now a few words as to this restitution.

In a really good and fertile soil, nature has stored up, according to Prof. I. P. Roberts: Of nitrogen, 16,000 pounds; of phosphoric acid, 4,000 and of potash, 8,000 pounds; all this in the surface foot of a single acre. On the other hand, we find from a consultation of Prof. Hilgard's tables that a very poor and comparatively barren and sterile soil may contain of nitrogen, 1,750 pounds; of phosphoric acid, 555 pounds; of potash, 3,045 pounds; and of lime 2,275 pounds, and yet be useless for ordinary purposes of agriculture. For purposes of our own, we will place these two tables side by side so they may be more easily compared.

Sterile Soil.
Nitrogen, 1,750 pounds.
Phosphoric acid, 555 pounds.
Potash, 3,045 pounds.
and of Lime, 2,275 pounds.

Fertile Soil.
Nitrogen, 16,000 pounds.
Phosphoric acid, 4,000 pounds.
Potash, 8,000 pounds.

For sometime past, we have been engaged in writing a series of articles—some of my letters have appeared in this paper—on the necessity of first obtaining and then maintaining as perfect an equilibrium of fertility in any and all soils as possible, and in trying to show that this equilibrium was, in and always will be, actually essential in order to obtain best results, and that so essential in fact is it that best results cannot possibly be obtained in its absence. Now the question comes up, what is the matter with that sterile soil? Is its sterility due to the fact that it contains an actual excess of phosphoric acid? No! What then is the cause of sterility? It is undoubtedly owing to a deficiency of nitrogen and of potash; were these latter agents applied, to the extent of properly balancing this excess of phosphoric acid, and bringing about a judicious balance of all the elements of fertility present in the soil, even if each and all were present in excessive amounts, abundant crops would be a perfectly natural and logical sequence.

Now, one of the points we wish to make, one of the objects we had in view in writing the present article, is to call attention to the fact that an

actual excess of phosphoric acid has not even the slightest tendency toward making a sterile acre fertile. A thoroughly good and fertile soil may contain about 4,000 pounds of phosphoric acid, and yet be fertile and productive; while an acre that contains 1,555 pounds in excess of this amount, is barren and utterly useless for ordinary purposes of agriculture.

Now without wishing to give undue prominence to either potash or nitrogen, and equally without wishing to decry, or detract from the virtues of phosphoric acid, we would state that, on the major portion of the soils of the South, more especially the sandier portions and the old, well worn soils that are in a semi exhausted condition from too long cultivation in cotton and other clean hoed crops, are more deficient in nitrogen and potash than they are in phosphoric acid; while on our richest alluvials, the so-called "made land" of our creek and river bottoms, where nitrogen is oftentimes found present in excess, phosphoric acid and potash are deficient; and on such soils the more liberally these two latter agents are employed, within the bounds of reason, the more profitable the application.

A chain is no stronger than its weakest link; even so, the detritus of which our alluvials are composed can be no richer in mineral elements than their source, it is the organic matter washed down from above that makes them richer and this same extra richness is a one-sided richness, being mainly nitrogen, and this excess of nitrogen demands imperatively a judicious and liberal, yet not necessarily prodigal application of both phosphates and potash and this to the extent of bringing about as nearly as practicable a perfect equilibrium of all the elements of fertility. On all such soils, for the sake of large and consequently profitable yields, if it is really necessary that there shall be an excess at all, we decidedly prefer that excess to be of phosphoric acid and potash, and never of nitrogen.

We are cultivating soils of this character today, both corn and cotton, and believe that men will have to hustle who beats us with either crop; none of our neighbors can do it; and the fact that we practice what we preach, we are forced to believe is the secret of our success.

G. H. TURNER.

PRESIDENT GRIMES TO THE TOBACCO GROWERS.

The Address Delivered by Col. J. Bryan Grimes at the Recent Meeting of the Tobacco Growers' Association in This City.

Gentlemen of the Tobacco Growers' Association:

On October 19th, 1899, a meeting of tobacco farmers was held in this city and formed a temporary organization electing me as its President. In accordance with the wishes of that organization, I issued a call for a tobacco planters' convention to be held here December 6th. The purpose of calling that convention was to perfect a permanent organization. To this convention planters from Virginia and South Carolina were invited, and representatives of the tobacco journals, manufacturers and warehousemen of the State were asked to be present and furnish such data and information as they had which would aid us in ascertaining the true cause of the present depression in the prices of leaf tobacco. I also asked a number of gentlemen prominent in the manufacturing, industrial, agricultural and political life of the State, to be with us and to make addresses. The continually diminishing prices are so keenly felt by every planter that I hoped the convention on the sixth would be largely attended, not only by the farmers themselves, but also by those who are directly or indirectly affected by the tobacco interests. From many of those whom I invited to address you I received no reply. I was also disappointed by the indifference of many of our growers to this movement. While they recognized the fact that tobacco was too low for profitable cultivation and hoped that some remedy might be found to relieve this deplorable condition, they believed that all efforts for relief would be impotent. The meeting on the sixth, while strong in its personnel, was not sufficiently representative of all the various tobacco sections to satisfactorily perfect our organization. So it was decided that another convention be held here at this time, and that all

tobacco growing counties of Virginia, South Carolina, Tennessee and North Carolina be urged to send delegates. In response to this resolution you have now assembled. We invite at this convention the fullest and freest discussion of the tobacco business in all its phases, especially in relation to production, consumption, local co-operative factories, markets, etc. We also wish to ascertain as accurately as possible the acreage for the various counties represented, yield per acre, proportion of crop marketed, class of tobacco raised, prices, etc., and in regard to this last data I would suggest that the county delegates prepare a tabulated report for the secretary of the convention. We would also like to hear from the various delegations as to any plans that they may have to offer to this convention, remedial of present distressed conditions. I trust our deliberations will be calm, conservative and business like without prejudice or passion and be fitting in dignity and counsel the great work upon which we are about to engage. In admitting that prices are too low and continually diminishing, it is our first duty to seek the cause; that satisfactorily determined, find a remedy, or attempt to make one. We are informed that the markets are continually expanding and developing, and that the price of manufactured tobacco is rising. The government's statistics show us that since 1890 there has been a decline of about 20 per cent in production and a decline of about 43 per cent, in total value. The large crop of 1890 averaged over 8 cents per pound, while the small crop of 1896 brought only six cents per pound and I believe the average for 1899 will be considerably lower. The question naturally arises, why the price of the raw article should decrease, as the price of the manufactured product increases? The margin between the raw material and the manufactured article should not be so great as to forbid profit to the grower. The profits from the former should not be in inverse ratio to the profits of the latter. Is this unnatural condition, caused, as is so frequently asserted, by a combination of the capital, manipulating the markets in defiance of the great natural and economic law of supply and demand? There should be some equity in the sharing of profits. It is our purpose to encourage all legitimate investments of capital and we hope all interested in the tobacco business will take up this matter in a spirit of mutual interest and discuss actual conditions, aiding us in an honest investigation and in securing a thorough understanding of present depressed conditions. Let us learn the truth and fearlessly face it. Harmonious working together of all tobacco interests, mutually dependent, should secure beneficial results to both producer and manufacturer; making certain increased legitimate profits to the producer with no diminution of profit to the manufacturer. That man is an enemy to the farmer who attempts to unjustly array him against capitalists, and we would not be put in a position of being antagonistic to any legitimate corporation, as that is now the recognized mode of commercial progression, and has added billions to the industrial wealth of this country, where timid individual capital would never have ventured. We want organized capital to come into our territory and assist in developing our latent resources and manufacturing our raw material. Give capital absolute protection, but let it understand that it comes to foster, not destroy. When a corporation becomes oppressive, the people, especially the agricultural people collectively, are able to control and restrain it. Co-operation of capital is a vital force and necessary in handling all great enterprises. Co-operation of agricultural interests are vitally necessary and intelligently and aggressively combined can secure protective legislation and industrial emancipation. Co-operation can control the acreage and enable us to profitably market our crop. Co-operation can build up local factories and enable us to share in the profits of the manufacturers, giving us home markets for our tobacco as well as other farm produce. It is stated as a truism that purely agricultural products will continue to decline; and we know that the products of the farm while of enormous value in the aggregate, now yield very little profit to the tiller of the soil; the thousands of pine grown fields in North Carolina elo-