

# THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

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## "What's the News?"

### PROBING THE TOBACCO TRUST.

Following months of probing of the affairs and history of the Tobacco Trust, the Government has taken steps in the courts to effect a dissolution of this stupendous monopoly. This is a big piece of interesting news to The Progressive Farmer's tobacco-growing readers. James C. McReynolds has been appointed special Assistant Attorney-General to prosecute the trust, and has filed a bill of complaint against the merger in the United States Circuit Court of New York. Following is a list of the individuals named as defendants or witnesses:

James B. Duke, president of the American Tobacco Company; John B. Cobb, president of the American Cigar Company; William K. Harris, chairman of the Board of Managers of the British-American Tobacco Company, and a director of the American Snuff Company; Percival S. Hill, vice-president of the American Tobacco Company; W. C. Reed, agent in the United States for the Imperial Tobacco Company of Great Britain; Thomas F. Ryan, Pierre Lorillard, Peter A. B. Widener, Anthony N. Brady, and practically all of the other directors of the American Tobacco Company.

### RECEIVERS TO BE ASKED FOR.

The corporations and individuals composing what is generally known as the Tobacco Trust against which the petition is directed, are named as follows: The American Tobacco Company, the Imperial Tobacco Company, the British-American Tobacco Company, the American Snuff Company, the American Cigar Company, the United Cigar Stores' Company, the American Stogie Company, the MacAndrews & Forbes Company, the Conley Foil Company, and fifty-six other corporations and twenty-nine individuals connected with the named companies.

The petition declares the purpose of the Government to dissolve the trust by breaking up the agreement under which they operate together. The action is brought under the Sherman law which provides that the court may restrain and prevent the operations of a combination in restraint of trade, and even appoint receivers if necessary to prevent such operations. The Government is not proceeding in a half-hearted or velvet-footed fashion, but asks first for an injunction and then, if necessary, that receivers be appointed by the court "to take possession of all the assets of the various companies, and, if necessary, to wind them up." Of course if the Trust were merely enjoined this might prevent the buying and selling of tobacco, but if receivers be appointed the business would be continued and no embarrassment caused to users and growers of the weed.

### SOMETHING ABOUT THE TRUST'S AFFAIRS.

The Government investigation into the Trust's affairs brought out some astonishing facts and figures. In the three years and four months from the formation of the Consolidated Tobacco Company in 1901, to the formation of the present American Tobacco Company, it earned for an inner circle of about a dozen of its manipulators \$40,000,000, or 100 per cent on its real capital. The present capitalization is \$230,000,000, or about five times the replacement value of the plants in the combine.

Its methods of destroying competition are also set forth, one of its favorite procedures being to

cause a corporation secretly controlled to advertise itself as an independent company and then offer its goods below cost. Even the retail tobacco stores in the large cities have been made to feel the death-dealing hammer. Of the 800,000,000 pounds of tobacco produced in the United States, 75 per cent is bought by the Trust at prices which the Government believes to be unlawfully influenced by the combine. "Our success," says Mr. Duke, the president of the American Tobacco Company, "is due to our having served the public better than anybody else." Upon which it may be observed that such service bears a little hard upon the public when there isn't "anybody else."

### THE RAILROADS, COURTS, AND PEOPLE.

The war precipitated by Judge Pritchard's federal restraining orders against the State of North Carolina and the Corporation Commission of Virginia in favor of the recalcitrant railroads has its decidedly interesting features. In Wake County Superior Court Judge B. F. Long charged the grand jury that it was a violation of the State law, till the courts decided otherwise, to charge passengers more than 2½ cents a mile, and that the agents who sold tickets for more were amenable to arrest and action for \$500 punitive damages. Whereupon the grand jury made investigations with the result that it has made a number of presentments against the agents and higher officials.

Another phase of the matter is presented in the device for self-protection employed a day or two ago by a passenger on the Atlantic Coast Line near Wilson, N. C. The passenger for reasons known to himself failed to get a ticket, and when the conductor came along to collect the fare the passenger refused to pay more than the 2½ cent rate. There was some parleying, but the passenger rode to his destination on the 2½ cent fare. The suits brought by individuals for \$500 damages where they have been overcharged by the railroads, the indictments by the grand juries, and the refusal of passengers either to buy tickets or pay illegal fares are likely to provide a vast deal of unwelcome business for the railroads.

### THE PRESS RESTRAINED, AND DEFIANT.

In Virginia the lengths to which Judge Pritchard has gone in issuing decrees from the Federal Court indicates a rather perilous state of things.

In his injunction against the Corporation Commission of that State forbidding it to publish its general order of April 27th promulgating the two-cent rate, he included also the Richmond papers, forbidding them to publish such order. Whether this forbids them to print an official promulgation offered and advertised by the Corporation Commission, or whether it forbids even the insertion of the subject matter of such an order taken from an official copy is not clear, but in either event it is a rare and most unwelcome resort of the high courts. This cannot prevent other newspapers from letting the people know what the order is that has been restrained by the court, nor can it prevent other papers from publishing the official order. One paper in Richmond, the Journal, has declared that it stands "ready to publish any decree that the Corporation Commission may issue, regardless of any injunction forbidding us to do so." The News-Leader of the same city, an eminently conservative paper, says:

The railroads will be whipped in Virginia and throughout the country. Refusing absolutely every suggestion or movement to reform them, they will be reformed regardless of their struggles and their wishes.

### NEXT WEEK'S PAPER.

Yes, sir! There'll be another issue next week—a good one. The Progressive Farmer has no notion of laying by yet.

Our readers will miss Mr. French's Sunny Home Talk this week, but they will be greeted by him again in next issue. An article on tile draining which came too late for use this week will find a welcome place in next week's paper. It was suggested by an inquiry in The Progressive Farmer of the 11th concerning tiling.

A poem and picture about the "Old Farm Herd" are so pretty that we shall devote the whole of the first page of next issue to "Bess" and "Spot" and "Dolly" and "Flo," and to telling how—

Over the meadow and over the lea,  
 Lowing the old herd comes to me.

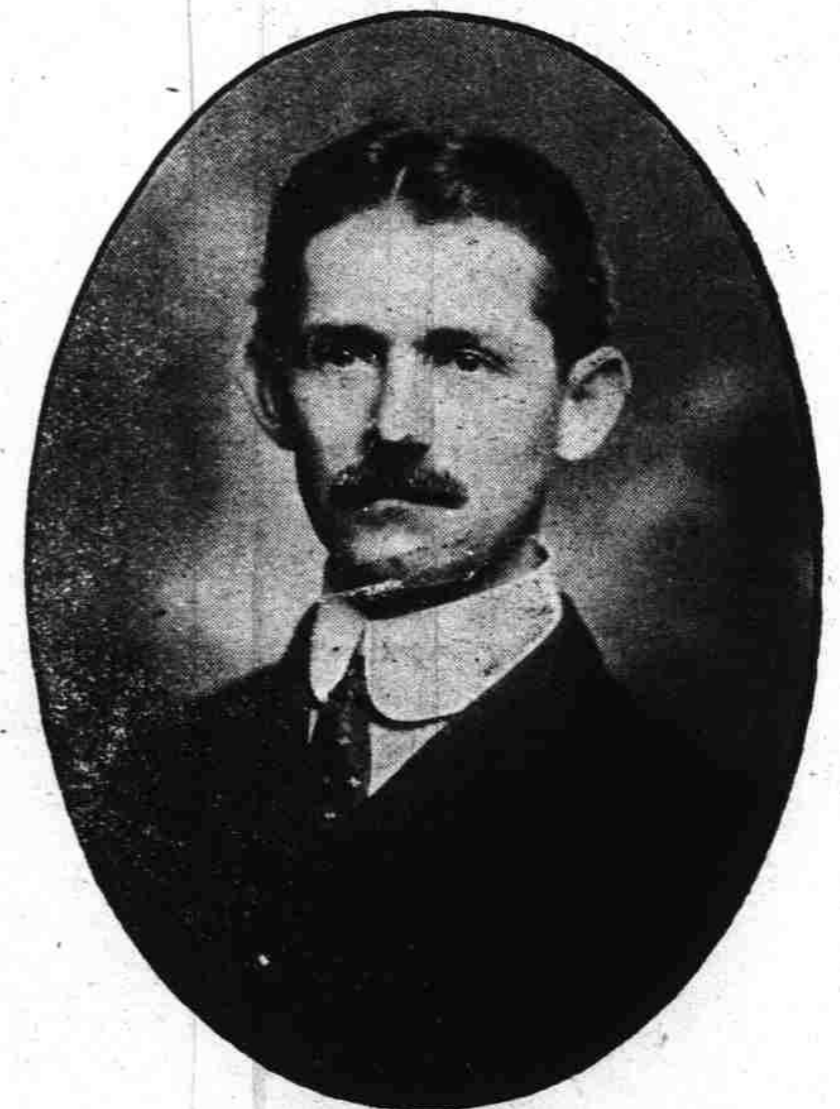
"The Farmer at School" is a splendid article already received for next week from Capt. Charles Petty, which will soon be followed by others from him.

More about fodder-saving—not fodder-pulling, mind you—will appear in next issue under the subject of the "Right Way to Harvest the Corn Crop."

And meanwhile we expect to keep our regular features up to the standard, at least, for this last issue in the month of July. Watch for it.



DR. TAIT BUTLER,  
 Director of Farmers' Institutes for North Carolina.



PROF. J. N. HARPER,  
 Director of Farmers' Institutes for South Carolina.

*In both North and South Carolina now the Farmers' Institute season is beginning. We again urge our readers to attend every Institute within reach—and not only should you go yourself, but you should advertise and push the Institute and get every farmer neighbor to attend. The germs of good farming so abound at every Institute that even your old mossback neighbor will catch the contagion, mend his ways, and your community will be richer and better. Talk up the Institute.*