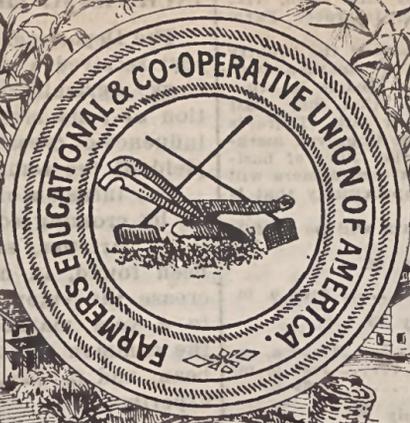


The CAROLINA

Union FARMER



Vol. VI.—No. 29.

RALEIGH, N. C., JULY 25, 1912

One Dollar a Year.

The Solution of the South's Cotton Problem.

(Extract from the last Undelivered Speech of Charles B. Ayccock.)



HAVE read during the past fall and winter the appeals of Southern Governors, the Chambers of Commerce, of agricultural societies and Farmers Unions, of bankers and business men, urging farmers of the South to lessen the production of cotton; and side by side with these appeals I have read in the papers of the terrible suffering of men throughout the world for the want of adequate clothing. I have known and all of us have known, despite our increased production of cotton, that the world is not yet adequately clad. Thousands of people die annually for want of the very raiment to be made out of cotton, the production of which we are seeking to lessen. I have realized that we must indeed lessen our production of cotton or impoverish ourselves in cultivation under existing conditions, and this has brought me to the knowledge that these conditions are wrong, for God has given to each of us the instinct to make two bales of cotton grow where one grew before, and we are educating our farmer boys with this aim in view, that they shall produce more and more each year than their fathers produced before them. But how can they work out this God-given instinct and how shall our teaching be other than a failure if we shut our cotton within the borders of the United States by building up a tariff wall against the products of other countries? Foreign trade is but an exchange of products and is not, and cannot be, paid for in gold. The cotton crop alone would take for its purchase all the gold in the world in a very few years. No, my countrymen, let us cease this folly. Let us break down these high walls of protection built around us for the sake of monopoly; let us turn in the foreign goods of which our Republican brethren are so much afraid. Then we will see a demand for high prices and for more cotton than you can possibly produce, and the God-planted instinct of every man to create more and more will find its full play, and our agricultural education will cease to be a humbug and a farce. Why shall we teach how to grow more and then combine to prevent the growth of more? I admit our present need along this line. I admit the absolute wisdom at this moment of lessening the cotton production, but I deny the sense, the morality, of continuing the conditions which have forced this necessity upon us.