

UNION FARMERS, ATTENTION!

Now is the Time for the Farmers of North Carolina to Exert Themselves in Behalf of Progressive Legislation.

Matthews, N. C., Jan. 13, 1913.

Dear Brethren:—Our State Senate is largely dominated by corporation lawyers. They guard carefully the interests of the corporations that employ them. This is natural. No man can serve two masters. They cannot serve the corporations and at the same time truly represent the interests of the people.

The corporations seldom demand positive legislation: they simply want to be let alone. Their friends in our legislative bodies serve them by quietly ignoring the demands of the people for progressive measures. All representatives note carefully the trend of public sentiment. The corporations are never indifferent to their interests but in the past the masses of the people have given very little thought to the work of our Legislatures. Hence, we find that North Carolina has no really progressive laws in behalf of the people, or to relieve them from the discrimination and oppression of big business.

The present General Assembly is not different from those of the past. No progressive bill will become a law unless demanded in no uncertain tones by the masses of the people. There are progressive members in both Houses who will take the initiative and lead the fight, but their success will depend upon the support given them by the men who cast the ballots.

Now, then, the pertinent question is: "Have you written to your Representative and Senator?" And again: "Are you going to write every week until our demands are heeded?" This means "YOU," not your neighbor. If half the members of the Farmers' Union will do this the people of North Carolina will be liberated from the rule of the corporate interests and the domination of the political BOSS. The people will rule.

The Torrens System of Registering Land Titles.

This is a really progressive measure that will benefit everybody and hurt no class except the lawyer who makes it a business to investigate land titles. Many of the best lawyers of the State advocate the measure.

The bill will probably pass the House and Senate, but is likely to be loaded down with heavy fees and other features to make it unpopular, unless the people rally to the support of the measure. The fees for registering under the Torrens Act should be as reasonable as possible. The application of the law should be left optional with the property owner as to titles already existing; but should be made obligatory on all new titles or transfers after June 1, 1915, or some definite future date.

Six Months' Public School.

As strange as it may seem to thinking men, this measure will meet with opposition. Of course, the fight will be made on the ground that the State is not able to make the necessary increased appropriations. All other institutions will be provided for; offices and salaries may be increased; the rich will be permitted to escape with light taxation; while the school of the masses and the only means of an education within the reach of 95 per cent of our children must drag along at the "foot of the ladder" with only one round below us (New Mexico).

Compulsory School Attendance.

This measure was indorsed by the last Farmers' Union Convention with only one dissenting vote. Every man who has studied the school problem

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is fully convinced that a Compulsory Attendance Law is absolutely essential to secure the education of all the children. Ignorance is the greatest burden that rests on our State to-day. This curse will never be fully removed without a Compulsory School Attendance Law.

Amendment to the Farm Life School Law.

The Farm Life School should be put within the reach of all the counties. This can be done by adopting a modified form of the Guilford County law.

A Just and Equitable System of Taxation.

Taxes, a necessary obligation, should be imposed upon all men in proportion to their ability to pay. Taxes should not and would not be a burden to any class if the above principle was always observed.

It is known to all well informed men that the rich escape the burden of taxation, while the common people must pay to the last farthing. There will be no just and equitable reforms for the relief of the people if the friends of the corporate interests can prevent it. But the voice of the people is all-powerful and will be effective if our demands are made in no uncertain tones.

A State Legalized Primary Law for All Parties.

This law has been indorsed by the last two Farmers' Union Conventions. It is absolutely essential to the freedom of the people. In no other way can the people control their government. Under the present system the money interests and political bosses determine a sufficient number of the nominations to office to enable them to control our government. A primary law for all parties and for all officers from President down to Constable will restore the government to the people and give the poor man an equal chance with the rich.

A Corrupt Practices' Act.

This measure was indorsed by the last Farmers' Union Convention. It means a stringent law rigidly enforced against all manner of corruption and bribery in office and elections. Its purpose is to positively prevent the use of money, patronage, or anything else of financial value to

carry elections. Under present conditions the candidate with the heaviest purse has much the advantage, and a poor man can hardly afford to seek an office. He is handicapped.

The Initiative, Referendum, and Recall.

These measures have been indorsed by two Farmers' Union Conventions. The initiative and referendum are a part of the Farmers' Union Constitution. Our membership would rebel if our Convention should adopt and attempt to enforce a new law or regulation without first submitting it to the people on referendum vote. The people should have the legal right to either initiate legislation or to require an act of the Legislature to be submitted on referendum, if a certain per cent of the voting population demand it. The exercise of the Recall would make our law-makers careful to work for the interests of the people rather than the special interests.

* * *

All of the above measures will be before the General Assembly. Several bills have already been introduced. They are all in the interest of the masses of the people and will eventually become the law of the State. The people must be free to govern themselves, and they can do it only through these progressive measures.

Individually you may not indorse all of these measures. You will when you come to understand them fully, unless you have some special interest that you think should take precedence over the common good. If you believe in the greatest good to the greatest number, then you should rally to the support of every one of these progressive measures.

Fraternally,
H. Q. ALEXANDER.

Of nothing may we be more sure than this: that, if we cannot sanctify our present lot, we could sanctify no other. Our heaven and our Almighty Father are there or nowhere.—Martineau.

Many of our prayers are like letters which are insufficiently addressed. They get lost in the Dead Letter Office of Heaven. There is not sufficient direction about them.—Donald Sage Mackay.

TENNESSEE NOTES.

Dear Editor:—The Executive Committee of the Tennessee State Union met in Nashville February 14. Favorable reports from State Secretary C. W. Brooks, which showed our treasury to be in good shape and the work progressing nicely, was read and much other business transacted by the committee. Hon. J. H. Koffman, who was chairman of the Board of Directors, but had been elected to the Legislature, tendered his resignation as a member of the State Executive Committee, and it was with a feeling of sincere regret that his resignation was accepted. The state and national officers of the Farmers' Union are prohibited from holding a political office by the national constitution and this occasioned Brother Koffman's resignation. He is one of the strongest men in the organization and I as president of the state union, have a fine opportunity to know and realize his sterling worth. He is big-hearted, broad-minded, honest, efficient, faithful, patriotic, and his place will be hard to fill. The advisory council elected in his place Hon. Phil. S. Taylor. Brother Taylor is Vice-President of the East Tennessee Farmers' Institute, President of the Washington County Union, a successful farmer, a fluent speaker, and a young man of strong force of character. He is one of the strongest young men of East Tennessee and is in every way qualified to make a good official. Hon. E. H. Dowdy, President of Benton Union, and Vice-President of the West Tennessee Farmers' Institute, and one of the most progressive farmers and leading young men of West Tennessee, was elected Chairman of the committee. Both will serve with credit to themselves and honor to the organization.

The officials of the state union are in perfect harmony and are ready to make a hard, long and strong pull for the success of the Union in the volunteer State, and pulling together always counts for we are growing and must continue to grow. Let's have no lagards for life is too short to sit and wait. Nothing will satisfy me in Tennessee but a glorious victory.

Faithfully and fraternally,
L. M. RHODES,
Huntingdon, Tenn., Jan 16, 1913.