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COMBINE TO MAINTAIN PRICES.

This is the Advice of President Adams, of the Inter-State Tobacco Growers' Association.

Editors Progressive Farmer:

As requested, I will give some of my views of the tobacco question for your special edition.

1. This is an age of combinations. Senator Hanna states, in a recent interview, that organized labor and organized capital have brought about the success of our manufacturing industries at home and abroad. Organized labor demands and gets higher wages; organized manufacturers and railroad companies add the increase in wages to price of goods and freight rates. Hence all branches of industry that are so organized that they get increased pay do not feel the effects of high prices.

But what about the farmer, and especially the tobacco grower? He has to pay the price named by the organizations named and, not being organized himself, has to receive for his products the price named by others.

Human nature is just about the same, whether represented in railroad companies, manufacturers or a combination of tobacco buyers as found in the American Tobacco Company; and this human nature prompts every one to sell where he can get the most and buy where it is cheapest. It seems to me it is a waste of wind and time to denounce these organizations that are living upon and growing fat on the farmer without making a united effort to protect ourselves. This protection is the object of the Tobacco Growers' Association of Virginia and North Carolina. We concede to every combination or individual the right to a profit on his product or labor, and we claim the same right, but this claim must be backed up by organization on our part or it will do us no good.

All sensible men will endorse this idea, but many will say we can't do it, and others will ask how it is to be done. It can be done just as other industries have organized. The Burley tobacco growers have organized. The wheat men of the West have done so. The truckers of Virginia in the agricultural line, and nearly every branch in the manufacturing line, are organized. We must adopt the same plan, viz., determine to stick together and pick our best men to represent us in selling, make a price for tobacco that gives us a profit, and hold it necessary until demand forces the price to that point.

The American Tobacco Company, as well as all others engaged in manufacturing tobacco, are dependent on leaf tobacco to run their business. The farmers hold and own the raw material. Manufacturers have not reduced the price of their manufactured goods, notwithstanding there has been a reduction of the tax. Why should they reduce the price of leaf? There is no reason based on fair business principles, but combination enables them to sell and buy at their price.

We concede to them the right to name the price on what belongs to them, but not on what belongs to us.

This is the idea that every tobacco grower ought to get fixed in his mind, and then he will be willing to make a determined effort which will put him on equal footing with other men. This grand principle of justice is taking hold of the tobacco growers in many sections, as evidenced by the number of clubs that are being organized. I would be glad to correspond with all interested and as far as I can, attend county meetings in both States to aid in organizing.

Truly,
S. C. ADAMS,
President Inter-State Association.
Red Oak, Va., Feb. 6, 1904.

ORGANIZATION OF TOBACCO GROWERS.

Views of President John Graham, of the North Carolina Farmers' State Alliance.

Editors Progressive Farmer:

Nearly all classes of men have organized for the protection of their special interests except the farmer. Many of these organizations make the bulk of their profits out of the producing classes. They are entitled to a fair profit; but it is characteristic of human greed to disregard right and justice, hence the necessity on the part of farmers to organize for their own protection.

The farmers were united for a short time, until politicians divided them, and what were the beneficial results? The establishment of the Railroad Commission; the reduction of the rate of interest from eight to six per cent; the founding of the Agricultural and Mechanical College and of the State Normal and Industrial College for Women; larger appropriations for public schools and public institutions. Can any one truthfully deny that these benefits to the State were in great degree due to the Farmers' Alliance?

Have we nothing more to fear from our Masters of Transportation? Has not the great Seaboard System of railroads been swallowed by the same syndicate that owns the Southern and dominates the Coast Line? Have not our railroads, built in great part by the State and its citizens, passed into the hands of aliens, who operate them for the through traffic regardless of the interests and convenience of the people who built them?

Must we tamely submit to the oppression of the American Tobacco Company? Twenty years ago forty or more independent factories bid against each other for leaf tobacco on the markets of North Carolina and Virginia. To-day one giant monopoly, with one buyer on a market, takes at its own valuation the property of the farmers of North Carolina. It is true that the farce of a sale is gone through and the farmer pays warehouse charges, auction fees, etc., but the price is fixed by the American Tobacco Company. Competition on the part of tobacco factories outside of the trust is prevented by the trust's selling tobacco below cost, if necessary, in the vicinage of the independent factory.

A solid organization of the farmers of North Carolina, Virginia and South Carolina can successfully combat the trust. Such influence could be exerted that Federal officials would indict the American Tobacco Company under the Sherman Act. Organized and united, the farmers themselves could employ the ablest lawyers to test the right of a monopoly to appropriate to its own use the property of others at an undervaluation. Organized, and acting with the sagacity of other corporations, the farmers can control the production of tobacco and obtain a fair price for their labor. Nor are the benefits of organization and co-operation confined to any one class of farmers. Our cotton farmers should build oil mills and utilize the meal and hulls in feeding stocks and thus make a large per cent of their fertilizers at home, instead of buying such quantities of commercial fertilizers, chemically adulterated to such an extent that, while analyzing as well as they did twenty years ago, requiring double the quantity to produce the same results.

Our public school terms should be extended in every district by voluntary subscription or local taxation.

JOHN GRAHAM.
Warrenton, N. C., Feb. 5, 1904.

DIVERSIFY CROPS AND USE BETTER METHODS.

This is the True Remedy, Says Col. John S. Cunningham, Last President of the North Carolina Tobacco Growers' Association.

Editors Progressive Farmer:

"I never heard the word independence mentioned that my own county did not occur to my mind." Whilst I value as much as any, the great advantages that must result to us from intercourse with others and those who may come among us, I have always been impressed with the feeling that our industrial independence is dependent upon ourselves. It is true, and always will be, that our people will succeed with simple industry and careful exactness in the utilization of their energies.

The people of North Carolina have made a step, but perseverance is the great agent of success, and if we go on zealously, I believe that in a few years we shall arrive at a position of equal comfort, of equal happiness, and of as good independence with that of any other people.

This is a period that demands of each man that he must think. It was a period of some prosperity in 1901 and 1902 among the tobacco farmers, but now the growers of North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia have had a sudden blow struck them, by the low prices of tobacco, so the farmers must do something to protect themselves. This is the beginning of the New Year, and each man must lay down his plans and decide what he is going to do. The only remedy is in diversification of crops. The farmer who grows his supplies at home, and then who plants all of the tobacco that he can cultivate well, will succeed.

It is important for the tobacco growers, and cotton growers as well, to plant good seeds. It is always wise to select seed with care. Good preparation is half cultivation, and this rate applies to all crops. Cotton is high, and the crop of 1904 may be a large crop and much lower prices. So the farmer who grows his supplies will be happier and better off than the farmer who does not. Fertilizers suited to the soil, and crops grown, should be carefully studied and considered. A high grade of fertilizer is by far preferable to the low grades. If all of the farmers in North Carolina would take care of the manures and haul them out and use them on their crops, it would largely increase their production and yield of all crops.

The farmers should study the marketing and distributing of their products in the various channels of trade, and learn as much of the true value to their products to the manufacturer, as is known to the buyers, that they may not longer be in the dark, but fully posted regarding the business end of their affairs. We know how to produce. What we don't know is, how to sell our products so as to make the profits we are entitled to.

The farmers must put more thought and brain in their business in dealing with the commercial world. They should regard education as the highest element in reaching the goal of success.

The farmers should meet often, and discuss these matters in local and State meetings, that all the information possible may be gathered to be utilized in solving the problem of how to sell to the best advantage.

Yours truly,
JOHN S. CUNNINGHAM.
Cunningham, N. C., Feb. 1, 1904.