

A GIGANTIC BUSINESS COMBINATION.

An Outline of the Method by Which American Farmers May Become Permanently Prosperous and Independent.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART I.

Editors Progressive Farmer:

For a number of years past much has been said and written by persons of large experience and capacity to give wise counsel to show the necessity of proper organization among American farmers for their safety and improvement. The Patrons of Husbandry and the Farmers' Alliance are the outgrowth of this idea. The principles and purposes of each of these orders are prudential and meritorious. Their failure to accomplish all that was intended is due to the fact that there is too much of theory and sentiment and too little of sound, practical business methods in their course of procedure.

WHAT WHEAT GROWERS HAVE ACCOMPLISHED

The wheat growers in many of the most populous and productive of the Western States have got rid of some of the theories which characterized these two orders, and large numbers of the most thoughtful and progressive farmers of that section, being convinced of the soundness of the proposition that proper organization is indispensable to their safety and prosperity, and that to attain satisfactory results, such organization should be formed and conducted upon practical business lines, have consolidated their strength in a number of the States, and originated and given vitality and impetus to the great movement made by the wheat growers of the Western States to form a large stock company, taking the "Rockwell system" as a basis, with a capitalization of fifty million dollars, whereby the wheat growers are able to have their own warehouses, grain elevators and manufacturing plants operated and managed by their own company, and thus handle and dispose of their product at prices established by themselves. Wheat is 80 per cent higher now than it was before the wheat growers co-operative movement upon practical business lines began. This advance in price is not due exclusively to shortage of the wheat crop, despite the arguments put forth by speculative influence to show that such is the case.

A TOBACCO GROWERS' TRUST.

The tobacco and cotton growers of the South can bring about just such results as they may determine as to standard prices for these commodities by thorough organization upon practical business lines among the growers of these crops. The tobacco growers can make themselves completely independent of the American Tobacco Company, and of the Imperial Tobacco Company, as well as every other company manufacturing tobacco, all of whom are compelled to rely upon the producers for the material to keep their factories going. The tobacco growers can secure this independence, protect their in-

terests and make their business permanently prosperous, by consolidating their strength in the tobacco growing communities, and forming a large stock company, with a capitalization equal to the aggregate strength of the American Tobacco Company and of the Imperial Tobacco Company, for the purpose of growing, buying, selling and manufacturing tobacco of American production.

The tobacco growers, by forming such a company, and subscribing for its stock, proportionately to each individual's means, and paying up their stock in tobacco, will have the ability to launch an enterprise which will make them masters of the situation. year after year, and assure them a remunerative price for their product before putting out a plant. United, the tobacco growers are strong enough to do this; acting separately, each individual is helpless.

THE OPPORTUNITY OF COTTON FARMERS.

The Southern cotton growers are in a more commanding position to prescribe prices for their product than the Western wheat growers, or the tobacco growers, as the Southern cotton growers raise about four-fifths of all the cotton used in the world, and the spinners and manufacturers of cotton throughout the world are largely dependent upon the Southern States of America for their supply of cotton.

The best informed among the cotton growers are fully cognizant of their power to establish and preserve a standard price for cotton the year round, in spite of all coalitions formed by speculators, traders and manipulators of prices in the cotton markets, and perceive that this desideratum can only be brought about by proper organization among the cotton growers throughout the entire Cotton Belt, whose objects and interests are co-operative and identical. Already there are not less than four distinctive plans, or propositions put forth, for organizing these vast interests. The "Southern Cotton Growers' Protective Association" of Georgia is one, the "Texas Cotton Growers' Protective Association" is another, the "Southern Cotton Corporation," which was incorporated in New Jersey in July last, with a capitalization of twenty million dollars, is another, and the "American Cotton Growers' Union," which was incorporated in Washington, D. C., the past winter, pursuant to Acts of the Congress of the United States, with the immense capitalization of one hundred million dollars, which may be increased to one thousand million dollars, is another.

Ostensibly, the objects of these associations and organizations are homogeneous, if not the very same, but the plans and methods of procedure are variant and divergent. Unless the interests of the cotton growers shall be consolidated into one powerful organization, it is probable that we shall see as many different plans and propositions put forth as there are States and Ter-

ritories in which cotton is raised. As a consequence, there will be a number of weak concerns, none of which can bring about the ends intended. No local organization can reasonably hope to succeed. No one State, by itself, can accomplish the desired results. The combined strength of the cotton growers in all the States and Territories is essential to success. "In Union there is strength, in division there is weakness."

As a rule, farmers are a cautious, conservative class of people, and are proverbially slow to take hold of enterprises not strictly within their habits of thought, and about which they have no experience. This is one reason why proper organization is so difficult to bring about and keep up among them. Every movement for the betterment of the agricultural classes should be based upon safe, sound, plain, sincere, meritorious and straight-forward propositions, with an infusion of practical business methods in the management of the enterprise.

Farm Notes from Durham County.

Editors Progressive Farmer:

Crops are fairly good. Corn is not as good as last year. Tobacco is curing up nicely but is light. As to cotton, there is considerable complaint of too much weed and heavy shedding. But according to the writer's judgment, cotton will turn out better than is expected now. It is natural for observers to be deceived in their estimate of cotton in July and September. The crop in this section was over-estimated up to August 10th; since that time it has been underestimated. If seasons are favorable in July, cotton always takes on more than it can bear, and no difference what the season are, it will shed. The shedding has been very heavy this year. The amount of forms started was largely in excess of usual. There will be a fairly good crop.

PLEAS. H. MASSEY.

P. S.—This was written on the morning of the 14th. During the day a severe storm has visited this section doing considerable damage to the cotton and corn crop.

P. H. M.

Last Week's North Carolina Crop Bulletin.

Fodder pulling has made great headway in all sections of the State; in the eastern it is over, while in the western it is just under good start. The fodder is excellent and is being saved in good condition. Corn, as a rule, is good, but the crop will not be as large as was expected several weeks ago. Cotton picking is general in the eastern half of the State, but is slightly retarded on account of scarcity of labor; in the western counties the bolls are beginning to open, and picking will become general in about ten days. Complaints of shedding come from all sections, and the present indications are that the crop will be considerably below average. Tobacco curing and cutting

is in full state of progression in the north-central counties. There is a shortage in the crop, but the quality of the cures is highly satisfactory. Peanuts were greatly benefited by the rain on the 5th, and continue to do well in most places. Much pea vine hay has been cut and saved in good condition. Sweet potatoes are turning out well. Fall potatoes and turnips are growing satisfactorily. In the extreme western counties the buckwheat crop looks promising and that of wheat and oats has turned out well, threshing being in the state of completion. Minor crops are generally good.

COTTON REPORT OF CENSUS BUREAU.

Total Cotton Ginned in North Carolina to September 1, 1904 Bales.

Washington, Sept. 16.—The cotton report of the Census Bureau issued to-day shows a total of 390,414 commercial bales pressed at the ginneries, ginned from the growth of 1904, prior to September 1st, against a total of 17,587 commercial bales in the corresponding period of last year. The report shows 7,567 ginneries operated this season prior to September 1st, while the number operated to the corresponding date in 1903 was 2,176. The report points out that in comparing the statistics of the two years due allowance must be made for the different conditions of the two seasons. The total commercial bales, which would number but 374,821, if the round bales were counted as half bales, comprise 358,796 square bales, 31,187 round bales and 431 Sea Island crop bales.

The total cotton ginned in North Carolina prior to September 1, 1904, is 134 bales, as compared with 112 bales ginned prior to September 1, 1903.

This report will be followed by five others, showing the quantity of cotton ginned from the growth of 1904 to October 18, to November 14, to December 13, to January 16, and to the end of the season. The final report will give the quantity of cotton ginned during the entire season and will also include the quantity of linters obtained by the cotton seed oil mills from reginning cotton seed of this year's growth.

Winnipeg Wheat a Failure.

St. Paul, Sept. 17.—The wheat crop in Manitoba and the entire Winnipeg district will probably be almost a complete failure, according to reports received here. The wheat fields are still green and the farmers have given up all hope of even a small harvest. It is declared the grain cannot possibly mature, and the first killing frost will blight all prospect of a harvest throughout the wheat raising area of western Canada.

We carried a few weeks ago the advertisement of Webster's International Dictionary. The publishers keep this work fully abreast of the times and it is the recognized standard in The Progressive Farmer office.