THE THIRD POWER

FARMERS
TO THE FRONT

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TO
THE LARGEST CLASS
THE MOST DEPENDENT CLASS
THE HARDEST WORKING CLASS
THE POOREST PAID CLASS
OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD
THE FARMERS
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

1903

PREFACE

"The World as a World scarcely makes a living."
—Horace Greeley.

If there is a place or corner anywhere in the world where the producers of our food and clothing supplies (commonly called farmers) are not ready to revolt against the absolute domination of non-producing classes in pricing their products, I am not aware of it.

That the old and thoroughly bad system can speedily be changed. The producers regulate the marketing of their products and make their own prices—I am thoroughly convinced.

The farmers own the earth. We may safely claim that farming exists by Divine right. The farmers first possess all the food and clothing supplies which are indispensable for the life and comfort of humans and domestic animals; their products constitute the greater portion of traffic for railroads and ships; nearly all the factories work on raw material produced on the farms and the products of the factories are largely consumed by the farmers, or in equipments to handle farm products. It is clear, the important position of the farmer in his relation to all other industries, and how closely all other industries are interwoven with that of agriculture. It is the same way all over the world, in all civilized countries.

PREFACE

If any people, any one class, or any one industry is entitled to distinction as the preferred business, or its people "the select of the earth," that business is agriculture and the people are the farmers. If any one class should prosper more than another, this distinction should fall to the farmers. But this is not an attempt to raise one class over others, it is not even an attempt to make all equal, but to equalize conditions so all may have an equal opportunity to secure a fair share of rewards for efforts put forth.

All movements for the benefit of the masses had opposition at the start. An idea may be born and promulgated. The originator of the idea may be stoned to death or hung, but if the idea is good and has vital force, it grows and will not down. An evolution once started never recedes, but develops into the perfect flower or fruit.

This is an age of organization and cooperation. The old saying, "Competition is the life of trade", is changed to "Cooperation is the life of trade."

An individual would be strong enough if he was the only individual in the world. However, if he is one of a large class he is weak and the larger the class the weaker the individual. The farmer class is the most numerous, hence, the individual farmer is the weakest individual when he stands alone. "In union there is strength." The greater the union the greater the strength. The farmers united would be the greatest union—greater than all other unions combined. They would represent a strength and power such as the

world never knew before. The farmer power is the third power to assert itself, but will be the first power in strength and importance.

The bestirring and awakening of this last and greatest power is the most significant event of the present generation. No individual, no matter what his position—professional, industrial or political—can afford to ignore its birth and make calculations on its rise. For, while it is not a power that will contest for mastery by brute force in the fields economic or politic, it will affect all in its demands for equity and the equal rights of man.

The entrance of the American Society of Equity into the economic problems of the world, through which the Third Power will rise, marks an epoch. The awakening of the agricultural classes, the organization of them into national and international cooperative bodies, which is now being accomplished, will remove agriculture from the list of uncertain industries and place it on a basis of certainty for prices equal to that enjoyed by the best regulated manufacturing or commercial enterprises.

The undertaking is great, but since the correct plan has been evolved, the desirable ends, in the ordinary evolution of the times, will work out as surely as the fruit follows the flower. The revolution that will take place in prevailing customs and laws might appal us if it was not for the fact that, in the working out of this stupendous movement everything will be toward

betterments—physically, socially, industrially and politically.

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The hope of the author is that the soil owners and workers will be aroused to a sense of the true condition of their industry; that agriculture in America and throughout the world will soon occupy the high position to which it is entitled, when it will stand first of all in importance and power.

A fair, equitable, impartial, unprejudiced consideration of the Third Power is asked and your cooperation to quickly make it a real power is solicited.

THE AUTHOR.

1903

CONTENTS

1903

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CHAPTER I

RIGHT SHALL PREVAIL

A hundred years, and more, ago,
The farmers rose their rights to take;
They were the first to strike a blow
For freedom's and for country's sake.

Colonial sires, your path we tread,
Against oppression's tyrant hand;
Our bloodless battle shall be led,
Till justice reigns throughout the land.

We battle for the common good,
Our flag in freedom's cause unfurled,
As when "the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world."

—*Elma Iona Locke.*

There is some danger to-day lest we forget that there are three factors in production—land, labor and capital. The political economist told us this many years ago, but when we read of the operations of Morgan, Gates, Schwab, and the other great capitalists and promoters, we are sometimes almost convinced that these men are the sole creators of wealth, and that land and labor really have nothing to do

with it. Yet the old law is sound, and so it will stand. Mr. Morgan has to stand on the earth, and in this sense at least it is the land that supports him. The Chicago gamblers could not speculate in wheat unless there were such a thing as wheat in existence. Mr. W. B. Leeds's railroad could last but a little while if it were not for the crops that have to be carried to market. So it is clear that these men do not create, and can not create anything. All that they do is to change the form of wealth, or to make, not to create, new wealth by the application of capital and labor to the products of the land, in one way or the other. If they make money in any other way they do it simply by taking it from some one else. The middleman, who gets between two people who want to trade, and takes toll of them both, adds nothing to the wealth of the country. The subject then is creation, and the relation of the different factors to it.

If it be true that the prosperity and material well-being of a country is dependent on the efficiency of these three instruments, land, labor and capital, it follows that we should do all we can to increase the efficiency of these instruments and maintain them at a high standard. We often seem to act as though we did not believe this to be true. For each class, instead of trying to add to the efficiency of other classes as well as of itself, frequently strives to increase its efficiency at the expense of the other classes. Labor seeks to extract the last dollar from

capital, and capital endeavors to force labor to work for the lowest wages possible. Organized capital and organized labor combine to beat down the price of products from the land until workers on our farms are the poorest paid of any class of laborers. Instead of cooperation, we see a struggle on the part of each to get ahead of the others. Yet the intelligent laboring man knows that the more capital there is in the country, provided it be wisely and productively employed and carefully managed, the better it is for him. And the intelligent employer understands that in order for him to get the best results he must pay his men enough to enable them to live well and keep themselves in good mental and physical condition. Perhaps it is safe—at any rate it seems to be necessary—to allow each of these classes to carry on this guerrilla warfare for its own good, even though success costs the rival something, trusting that good may in the long run come out of the conflict of interests. With land, however, we all admit the necessity of keeping the farmers prosperous to insure prosperity to others.

Certain it is that the efficiency of labor and capital has vastly increased in our day, particularly in our country. The freer use of the credit system, the more intelligent management of money, the rapid turning over of capital, the wonderful increase in the use of machinery, and intelligent labor, have all cooperated to enable capital to do things which it did not even dream of a generation ago. We

build bridges in the Egyptian desert in half the time and for half the cost that the English can. The Atlas Works in Indianapolis ships engines all over the world, and sells them in freest competition with foreign makes. There is hardly a country on earth that has not heard the scream of the American locomotive, the click of the American typewriter, and enjoyed the blessings of cheap American bread. The conquests of American capital and the effect of the wonderful resources of this country have been marvelous. Turning to labor we find that here, too, there has been an increase in efficiency. Education, growing intelligence and skill, sobriety, capacity for hard work, ambition to rise out of the labor class and to become a boss, facility in the use of machinery, inventive faculty, have all combined to make our labor the most efficient in the world. But to a certain extent these influences have been at work on the farms as well as in the counting-room, the mill and the factory. And our farmers are far in advance of their fathers and grandfathers in ability to turn out results in crops. But there is one great thing which they have not yet learned, and that is the power of combination. The laborer has been much helped by his unions, and because of them he can command a wage such as his brethren of other days could not. Through his unions he has made his importance felt, and has often been able to dictate terms to his employer. That employer also has found a great help in combination. By

means of corporations and trusts he has been able to carry through large enterprises, to have something to say about wages, to decrease the cost of production while keeping no small part of the saving for himself, and to influence, if not to constitute prices. So we see combinations, cooperation and trusts in almost every branch of industry. But the farmer has yet to learn the lesson. Others have something to say about the prices at which they will sell their commodities. If they do not fix them, they at least do influence them favorably to themselves. When the market is glutted, the manufacturer or mine-owner can curtail production, or shut down entirely, until the demand catches up with or runs ahead of the supply. The laborer can and does refuse to work except on terms reasonably satisfactory to himself, and the mere fear of a strike often drives the employer to make concessions which he would not otherwise think of making. The worker has a voice in the making of his wages, and the employer passes the tax along by making his prices accordingly.

But the farmer allows others to make prices for him. All he is supposed to know under the present system is how to work sixteen hours a day and the road to market. When he gets there he finds a man who tells him how much his produce is worth, and if he wants to take something home with him he is told the price of that also. He has no organization, and no method of bringing pressure to bear on those

who buy from him. Speculators and gamblers on boards of trade tell him what he shall sell his produce for. And he sells at their figures. The board of trade gamblers juggle with the price, and, though the condition of the crops and production and consumption should govern prices, they have very little influence. The prices of the important farm crops are made in organized markets by great aggregations of corporate capital ruled by unscrupulous human agencies, or by speculators who set prices arbitrarily without any reference to supply, demand or equity. This arbitrary fixing of prices destroys the independence of the greatest class of our citizens—the farmers—and is more tyrannical than were the taxes imposed by George III. This is because the farmers are unorganized, and usually without a knowledge of the real conditions. Commercial slavery of this degree is as bad as personal slavery. Thus the greatest class in the production of wealth, on which all others depend, is at the mercy of a few. The farmers are unorganized, demoralized industrially, and without any influence on the situation at all proportionate to their importance. Comparatively speaking, they are powerless. They grow all the stuff possible and sell it for what they can get—and then wonder why the year's balance sheet does not show a better result.

The agricultural industry of the country is still the victim of the most intensive competition system ever established. Each farm is in constant war-

fare against all the others. Each is striving to produce the greatest yields possible—in face of the indisputable fact that the larger the yields the lower the prices—and then sells the products without the least regard to other producers. In this way the markets are oftentimes glutted and perfect conditions produced for organized speculators and gamblers to perform their perfect work in depressing prices. Notwithstanding that the farmer of to-day, with the wonderful machines at his command, can produce five times as much product as the farmer of a few generations ago, his net earning capacity has not increased, but rather decreased. Also his land which then was virgin soil has become in large part exhausted; which item of itself represents probably half the value of his farm, and will require good management, the outlay of much labor and a large cash sum to replace.

The American farmer of to-day is not living from his investments in farm land, but as a mere laborer, and receives less than half as much pay as the union laborer, yet works harder and longer hours. In short, the farmers of the United States can only continue in business on the present basis by using the cheapest labor on earth, i. e., wife labor, child labor, and labor of their babes. The prices set by speculators and gamblers for the fine grain, vegetables and fruit—the products of God's earth—compel the agriculturist to resort to such unbearable extremities. No hired men can be secured to take

their places at wages the farmers can pay. While the nation and states cry against female and child labor in factories, not a word of protest is raised against the toil of the farmer's wife and children.

Why is it so that the farmers, who own the earth, control the food and clothing supplies (wool and cotton), are the creators of nearly all real wealth, the foundation of all our institutions, who are the most numerous and as a class the most wealthy, have become reduced to this condition of slavery?

It is a stupendous problem which, if solved, will mean more for humanity than anything since the Christian era. The dawn of equity to the farmers and through them to the balance of humanity, means the beginning of a social and industrial millennium.

Let us see what, then, can be done to elevate the agricultural business of this country and of the world and place it on an equality with the best of other professions and industries.

The fact that capitalists and laborers are so effectively organized makes it especially important that the farmers should organize. It is becoming clearer and clearer every day that whatever advantage either the capitalistic or laboring class wins, is won not so much at the expense of the other as at the expense of the great bodies of unorganized people who can not defend themselves. When wages are forced up by a strike the farmer pays a large part of the raise by an increase of price on what he buys.

When trusts lift prices simply because they have the power to do so, this increase also is largely made out of the farmers who are the greatest consumers. It must be so. The strife between organizations is bound to hurt the unorganized. When Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Baer agree on an increased scale of wages, Mr. Baer at once shoves up the price of coal. And the closer the unions and the trusts get together the more certain it is that the unorganized mob of consumers, of which the farmers constitute by far the largest element, will have to pay for whatever gain either wins, because they are not in a position to pass it along.

From every point of view, therefore, it is imperative that the farmers should organize, not for political, but for business reasons. Surely the man who raises the crops ought to have something to say about the price he gets for them. He should also know how much wheat, for instance, is being raised, so he may know what it is, in equity, worth; and, let me say, a needful commodity is always worth, in equity, what it cost to produce it, with a fair margin for profit added. This margin should be rated the same as others have set on their goods. The cost should be found on a basis that allows the producer a wage equal to what others get, interest on investment, a sum that will repair waste or overcome depreciation of the plant, with profit added. Then we have an equitable value. If his market is in danger of being glutted it should be as easy as it

would be quite as justifiable for him to curtail his output or marketing as it is for the manufacturer. He should have it in his power, as the laborer has, to say that he will not work except for fair remuneration. As it is now he is hedged around by the scheming of the shrewdest men in the world who manipulate his markets in mysterious ways. Besides this, his business is also subject to other uncertain conditions, such as weather, insects, blight, rust, etc. He can not escape from his thraldom to the natural causes. But he ought, as a freeborn American citizen, to vow that he will break the chains of his slavery to the other masters.

The question is simply one of the application of power. The farmer has the power to get whatever he wants, and to make his life what it should be. He must learn how to use it. No power except highly organized power is of any value in these times. The individual man is industrially powerless in the United States to-day. Two things, therefore, seem to be clear. First, the farmer must use his power to the end that he may be his own master, and not the slave of others and the burden-bearer of the nation. Second, he must learn that the only way in which he can use the power which is his, is through organization, an organization of his own, controlled by himself, and in his own interest. By doing this he will benefit, not only himself, but all classes of society. It is not proposed that he should wage a war of offense but simply one of defense. He is not

to ask privileges, but to insist on his rights—rights which other classes of society now exercise without question from any one, rights which in the farmer's case are Divine. Power applied through organization is the industrial law of the day. The farmer must rule his life by it.

CHAPTER II

There's the wily speculator,
  Who forms his rings of steel.
While the honest man is toiling
  In the hot and scorching field.
He is lying awake and planning,
  You may rightfully suppose,
To cheat the honest farmer
  Out of everything he grows.

In Frank Norris's great novel, "The Pit," is this:

"They call it buying and selling, down there in La Salle Street. But it is simply betting. Betting on the condition of the market weeks, even months in advance. You bet wheat goes up. I bet it goes down. Those fellows in the pit don't own the wheat; never even see it. Wouldn't know what to do with it if they had it. They don't care in the least about the grain. But there are thousands upon thousands of farmers out here in Iowa and Kansas or Dakota who do, and hundreds of thousands of poor devils in Europe who care even more than the farmer. I mean the fellows who raise the grain, and the other fellows who eat it. It's life or death for either of them, and right between these two comes the Chicago speculator, who raises or lowers the price out of all reason, for the benefit of his

pocket. Here is what I mean, it's like this. If we send the price of wheat down too far, the farmer suffers, the fellow who raised it; if we send it up too far, the poor man in Europe suffers, the fellow who eats it. And food to the peasant on the continent is bread—not meat or potatoes, as it is with us. The only way to do so that neither the American farmer nor the European peasant suffers, is to keep wheat at an average, legitimate value. The moment you inflate, or depress that, somebody suffers right away, and that is just what these gamblers are doing all the time, booming it up, or booming it down. Think of it; the food of hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people just at the mercy of a few men down there on the board of trade. They make the price. They say just how much the peasant shall pay for his loaf of bread. If he can't pay the price, he simply starves. And as for the farmer, why it's ludicrous. If I build a house and offer it for sale, I put my own price on it, and if the price offered don't suit me I don't sell. But if I go out here in Kansas and raise a crop of wheat, I've got to sell it, whether I want to or not, at the figure named by some fellows in Chicago. And to make themselves rich, they make me sell it at a price that bankrupts me."

That is a true picture of the actual situation. Farmers sometimes talk as though they believed that this gambling in wheat was a good thing for them, but they forget that what they want is a certain definite and steadily maintained price; not a high

price that will stimulate over-production, but an equitable price that will always secure the necessaries, comfort and some of the luxuries of life. A good price for a large crop, as well as for a short crop. A steadily maintained price, made by farmers, on the farm, instead of the uncertain price made by the speculators and gamblers on the boards of trade in large cities. They may and do make money—a few of them—out of an occasional corner, but the artificially raised price stimulates holdings; the farmers do not sell until the gamblers have had their innings, the price breaks, and the farmers rush their produce to market, and more often than not the sales are made on a falling market, and at prices as much too low as the corner price was too high. Speculators know how prone farmers are to hold on a rising market, and this helps them to accomplish their ends. In other words, the farmer does not control the situation. He simply supplies the chips with which the gamblers play the game, and even when he wins he does so in violation of the principles of equity. There is no design on the part of the gamblers that he should win. The grain pits are a curse to everybody that they touch. They are barnacles that have attached themselves on the produce of the earth. The speculators and gamblers in farm products are sap-sucking, unholy, Godless things that are holding up and gorging themselves on labor's portion as it is created on the farms. Boards of trade now run in the large cities are the

Devil's own workshop, where the rewards for honest labor are forged to the profit of the non-producing class. They are the greatest blight on the body of industry—a danger that threatens the very life of the farming industry of America. They are a bold, fearless, devilish power, that defies the laws of morality, the state and nation. There is only one power that can dethrone them. It is the grand, sweeping, majestic strength of cooperative producers. If the farmers' produce were not a necessity, it would not be chosen for gambling purposes. Men do not gamble with diamonds, for people can get along without them. They do not gamble with air, for every one can get all of it that he needs. Farm products are chosen because everybody uses them, and because they can not be got without paying for them, and also because, under present conditions, the farmers do not control them.

Farmers can be a power. They represent the greatest invested capital and they are the most numerous. They own the earth, consequently they can control the food and clothing supplies. Also, it is clear, in their fundamental position and numerical and financial strength, they hold the key to our entire political and industrial system.

Unorganized, the farmers are weak and the prey of all other strong individuals and organized classes. Organized, they will become the dominant power, and their business or profession will become the preferred on earth. Organized to put prices on their

own products they can remove many of the uncertainties now attending farming, and elevate the profession until it will be the equal of manufacturing, banking, merchandising, etc. Farming is manufacturing, banking and merchandising. To farm successfully also requires a technical knowledge equaling that demanded by any other profession, and which requires more application and years to attain than most of the professions; therefore, the successful farmer must be a man of great attainment and broad business qualifications. This will particularly be true from this time forward, when more intensive farming must be practiced to meet the ever increasing demands brought about by the increasing population and the multiplying abilities to consume.

It is clear that farmers have within them undoubted, great power, but they can only exert it through organization and cooperation. There are only two questions before the farmers to-day, the one is: Do you want to become free, independent and a powerful factor—in fact the most powerful and influential class in the world? The other is: Will you embrace the one way to accomplish your freedom and independence and place you at the head in this country and others, socially, industrially, and through your power of numbers be able to force a clean, strong, equitable government? Will the farmers answer these questions in the affirmative, or will they be forever the prey of the gamblers, the transportation companies, and other powers

which make whatever rates and prices they please, and discriminate against one class and in favor of others? To hold that this condition of things must continue is to hold that the farmers, on whom all others depend for their very life, comfort and privilege to do business, must depend on those who are really dependent on them. If the farmers were able to put a value on each of their products the betting in Chicago would stop, for the gamblers would know that they could not settle except on terms made by the farmers. If the farmers would control their own products, they could refuse to ship until the railroads gave them fair and equitable rates, and so along the whole line. No man can buy until some other one is willing to sell, and if the farmers of the United States could say through their organization that they would not sell till they got their price, they would get it. They could corner the supply as easily as the Chicago gamblers can, simply by holding on to what is their own—to what no one else has any right to except on payment of the price demanded by the owner, and they would soon come to the farm, or to the farmer's representative—his society—and meet his terms. Only thus can the farmer win his freedom and independence, and he can do it without infringing on the rights of any one else, and to the infinite betterment of all.

These questions seem simple enough, and yet they are apparently giving a good deal of trouble to certain classes of people who are already somewhat dis-

turbed at the thought that perhaps the farmers may decide to control their own business. In a recent number of Harper's Weekly, which is supposed to be dependent on certain Wall Street influences for its existence, there was printed an article entitled, "The Twentieth Century Farmer." It was, as all such articles coming from such sources invariably are, exceedingly flattering. We are assured, not only that the farmer is a good fellow, but that he has things pretty much his own way. "There are, for instance," the writer says, "scores of school districts in the thinly settled portions of the plains where the entire tax is paid by railroads and eastern corporations, and farmers' children attend the schools so supported." But the school tax is a tax on property, and if railroads and eastern corporations own the property in these districts, is there any reason why they should not pay the taxes assessed against it? How can this be considered a bonus to the farmer? Further, we know—if we know anything about taxation—that corporations shift the burden of taxation whenever they can possibly do so. If, in order to pay this school tax, the railroads raise freight rates, which are paid by the farmers, the farmers after all pay the school tax. At the very most our case simply is one in which the farmers find a chance to get even—pass the tax along; there is no gratuity involved in it, yet this movement means more than is yet evident. The tax will not

be passed along to the innocent consumers as I will show.

The Harper's Weekly writer speaks of the expense incurred by the general government for irrigation as something wholly for the benefit of the farmer. Surely it is for the benefit of all—of the whole country. Every foot of new territory opened up adds just so much to the wealth of all, and brings down the cost of food. This certainly is not to the special advantage of the farmers as a class. They are precisely the people that would be least benefited by it. Every new farm created out of the present arid region means just so much additional competition for the farmers already engaged in operating farms.

I have opposed this irrigation scheme at every opportunity and claim that if the government really is desirous of doing something for the farmers it can accomplish much more at less expense by helping the present farmers to irrigate their lands. Our present farms are not producing a third as much as they can and must in a comparatively few years when the population of the world has doubled again. Our averages of thirteen bushels of wheat, twenty-seven of corn, and other crops in proportion are distressingly low. Consumption has fully caught up with production, in fact in some lines is ahead of production. If the flow of the farm products to market was not hampered and restricted by the selfish interests of speculators and gamblers, and the

uncertainties of values, which enter into every transaction in agricultural products under the present system, the consumption to-day of grains, meat, fabrics, fruit, etc., would be immensely more. Intensive farming that will double, and finally treble the yields of our farms will be a necessity. It is not too early to begin now. This means irrigation, fertilization and scientific cultivation. Instead of the government, at fabulous expense, opening up a vast area of land that God did not design for cultivation until the more improved portion of our country was producing to its maximum, it can more equitably help the present farmers along the road to prosperity by irrigating the eastern part of our country.

One acre of irrigated land is equal in producing ability to three of non-irrigated land in our Mississippi Valley. Therefore, if the government would carry out its irrigation scheme completely, in a short time it would set our present farmers back a generation, and possibly prevent them from realizing their fond hopes of profitable prices for farm products. Our farmers are now just arriving at the point where they can rise above the competition of new territory being opened up for cultivation, and it would be a great calamity to subject them to this artificially created competition.

Let the government encourage irrigation and intensive farming on our present farms. It will result in dividing the large farms into small ones; prevent the small ones from being merged into large

holdings; furnish new homes for millions of families in sections of the country where the conditions are most favorable for social enjoyment and industrial success. True, this plan may not be of a great benefit to a few railroad corporations and other powerful interests, but will benefit many millions of the common people, and add untold millions to the wealth of our country.

The fact is that there are practically no laws for the benefit of the farmers, and it is the intention of the corporated powers, through the political machines, that there shall not be any. Ours is a government by the people in theory, but by corporations in practice. The people have won their way with little help from the federal government. In the very article under consideration we are reminded of the futile efforts of the farmer to get favoring legislation. "Once in a while," it is said, "there is a political insurrection, and a Farmers' Alliance sweeps the boards, sending farmer legislators to frame super-partial laws, which later are blasted by courts." So it is, and so it must ever be until the farmers learn how to exert their strength in practical ways and for practical ends. But we are told that "the settler demands the Indian's land and gets it." "That he demands the ranchman's grazing territory and obtains that." Of course this is true, and it would be true if there were not a government in existence. For the natural evolution is from the savage state to the pastoral state, up to the agri-

cultural state. Nothing could keep the farmer from getting the lands of the Indian and the ranchman. But the moment the farmer attempts to better his condition then we have a howl from the men who use every power they have, not simply to help themselves, but to persuade or force the government into helping them. So we have this in the article in Harper's Weekly:

"The demagogue devotes a great deal of attention to the farmers. Frequent schemes for uniting the wheat-growers or for forcing up the price of corn are evolved; cooperative plans to make unnecessary the 'middleman' are exploited—and usually with provision for a salary or commission to some shrewd city promoter who would not know a self-binder from a corn-harvester. Every little while the telegraph tells of the probable formation of a mighty union of farmers to reduce or limit the acreage of some crop. It ends in smoke—it was the dream of a schemer who hoped to profit by its success."

The threatened combination of the farmers is clearly not looked on with approval by the financial interests. Nothing that would benefit the farmer ever was looked on with approval by those interests. So in this article, the farmer is warned against "demagogues" seeking to make money out of their schemes, as if the very men who sound the warning had not all their lives made their living by "farming the farmers." There are many good texts in this Harper's Weekly article. Here is another:

"There are indications that the farmer does not take these things (proposed organizations) as seriously as he once did. He reads the daily magazines; he understands something of the other side of life. He travels more than in the days of high railway rates; the excursions back east for 'Old Home Week' bring him in touch with the people of other states. He is made broader and happier. Most important of all, he is learning to make of his occupation a business, and when that is done, he ceases to consider himself the favorite of fortune. As a result he becomes a business man, and takes rank among the captains of industry—not the commander, for none is supreme in rank, but an equal sharer in the advancement and prosperity of the nation."

Well, if the farmer has become a business man, why should he not act as a business man? Other business men strive to the uttermost to control the market; they form gigantic combinations to limit output, to lift prices, to regulate wages, and to "work" the government. Surely it is not demagogical to urge him to do what other business men are doing in the way of managing their own business. If Mr. Morgan may combine all the steel mills of the country in one great organization, there would seem to be nothing wrong in the farmer attempting to apply the same method to his own business. If he is to be a "captain of industry," he should profit by the examples of other captains of industry as far,

of course, as they keep within the law and the requirements of sound morals. Nor is there any reason why the farmer should not be the "commander," and "supreme." The farming class outnumbers any other class in the country. There are more than 10,000,000 men engaged in agriculture, and upon them we all depend for our very life. Probably one-half the people in gainful occupations are either farmers or people connected closely with cultivation of the soil. Their products constitute the great bulk of our exports, and their crops are the most valuable asset that the country has. We might survive the loss of our steel mills, but if our farms were to quit producing the country would go to ruin. Why should not the farmers be supreme? And if they strive for something less than supremacy—namely, mere parity with the rest of our people—ought they not to be encouraged? What is urged here is that the farmer should realize that he is, what Harper's Weekly says he is, "a business man," and govern himself accordingly. He should play the part which we all agree is his, use business methods, look out for himself and his own interests, and use his vast power for his own good. Surely there is nothing radical in all this. No line of action is marked out for the farmer which other business men do not follow to their own advantage. It is no more demagogical to say that the farmer ought to make his own prices and regulate his marketing than it is for a Wall Street promoter to suggest to the steel men

that they can make more money by combining for the purpose of controlling the market, regulating wages, and dictating prices. The cases are precisely parallel. The real truth is that the critics of such a policy on the part of the farmers know that it would be effective—and they do not want it to be effective. They know further than this, plans proposed—some of them in operation already in a limited way—are marked by none of the weaknesses that characterized the Grange, the Farmers' Alliance, and the People's Party. The fruit growers in some sections have already organized, and they have much to do with securing a profitable market for their product. When they find that the market in a certain city is full and in another is bare, they divert the shipments from the former to the latter city; and the association keeps its members informed as to the state of the market. So there are farmers' societies in certain sections, covering a few counties, which are doing the same thing.

There is nothing impracticable about this. If this limited cooperation is good, who will deny that complete national cooperation will not do more good. So when it is proposed to apply the same great principle of combination, which the Wall Street people have seen work so well in a limited way, to the whole agricultural class, we have a great outcry against it. They think organization is good for all people and all classes but the farmers. Some educators have tried to point out other ways for

farmers to make their business profitable. One of these advised to put wheat to one dollar a bushel, to "sow less wheat and put the ground in more profitable crops." That's easy; but he stopped too soon. Why did he not tell what these neglected crops are that would be more profitable? Another recommends, to cure all the ills of farming and make it profitable, to "Always sell at the highest price." A very simple plan. We recommend the farmer who can carry out this plan to not join a cooperative society. A certain professor of an agricultural college says, "Farm as we do. Our wheat yields thirty-one bushels per acre, while the average in Indiana this year (1903) is about ten bushels." When I asked him what he thought wheat would be worth if all raised three times as much without the ability to fix prices, he said: "Well, I had not thought of that." Others advise the farmer to "have patience and Divine Providence will work out their salvation." But I don't think it right to throw the whole job on God. Besides it is written, "God helps those who help themselves." Others say: "Wait for the regeneration of man, and your troubles will disappear." Having waited several thousand years already for this much desired time, I can not see much encouragement in this advice for present day farmers.

Organization by farmers is objected to now, simply because they know it will be effective in the light of twentieth century experience. No better

argument in its favor ought to be asked. But why object? Organization of farmers on the plan proposed will not harm, but will benefit every legitimate business.

CHAPTER III

In the rustle of the cornfields,
And the plowman's weary tread,
And the fingers of the tassels
Raised beseechingly o'erhead—
In them all a thousand voices
Whisper in the listening ear,
"Toil will ne'er possess its products
Until Equity is here."

In the broad and waving wheatfields,
A million heads may bow,
And in sunlight gold may glitter,
Promised fruitage of the plow;
Still the passing breezes whisper
In the anxious listening ear,
"Toil's just reward will linger
Until Equity is here."

So with orchard's blushing treasure,
And with meadow's wealth of hay,
And the lowing in the pastures,
And the garden's rich array—
All proclaim the same sad warning,
Toil in vain will seek its own,
For each season's stores will vanish
Until Equity shall come.

We thus have the three powers—money power, organized labor, and the farmer. And the question is as to the necessity of making the third power a real power. Let us consider first the relation of

these three powers, as things now stand, to the business of government. When a man is elected to congress he finds that the capitalist and the working man are keenly alive to their own interests, and that they are both capable of exerting, and as a matter of fact, do exert, much influence in Washington and in our various state capitals. Their representatives throng the lobby and committee rooms, and press in the most vigorous way on the lawmakers the claims of labor and capital. If a tariff is to be made, abundant opportunity is given to both capital and labor—especially to the former—to be heard, and the opportunity is improved to the uttermost. When a question of subsidy comes up the rich men who want the subsidy do not hesitate to urge the matter on congress, and congress is exceedingly deferential. The workingmen have got their eight-hour law, arbitration statutes, laws regulating the operation of factories and mines, anti-child labor laws, weekly wages laws, etc. And all this is taken as a matter of course. But back on the farm, far out on the lonely prairie perhaps, is a man who works with his wife, children and babes, harder than any other class of people on earth. There is no law passed to prevent child labor on the farm. No eight or even ten hour day. They work from sun to sun and then some more, and oftentimes when the year rolls around receive a smaller wage than convicts who are farmed out to corporations. Our new congressman hears little or nothing of him. He does not

spend much time in congressional or legislative halls. He is not consulted about tariffs or subsidies. Statesmen are not wearied with his importunities. No lobby fights his battles. He is practically forgotten. Congress taxes him for the benefit of the capitalists, and he does not complain—nay, he seems to feel that he has no reason to complain. He has his duty on wheat and a few other crops, to be sure, which in no way affects its price, a duty which is imposed simply for the purpose of making the farmer believe that he is getting some return for the taxes that he is forced to pay for the benefit of other people, and which in effect works to the benefit of the speculators and gamblers, by preventing a flow from outside countries when they want to manipulate the market here. If a farmer goes to Washington he feels so honored and flattered by any little attentions his representative may show him that he never thinks of suggesting that he needs anything in the way of legislation. And when the representative comes back to the district for re-election he talks of the honest farmer and sturdy yeoman, and every one feels that the account is square.

There is no use in getting angry at this, for the fault is wholly with the farmer. The politician knows perfectly well that in dealing with the farmer he is dealing with individuals, and with individuals who are divided into many different classes—even by their own societies, which number about 5,000 distinct organizations—by political and sectional

prejudices. But he knows quite as well that when a capitalist or a labor leader calls on him at Washington he has back of him a great and powerful organization which is able and ready to punish its foes and reward its friends. He has learned, too, that the farmer can be made to believe that he himself is protected by the very taxes that are levied on him for the benefit of others. But the main point now to be considered is, that the farmers are isolated, and incapable of concert of action. In these days men do not get things unless they go after them. The farmers do not go after them, and so they do not get them. Men in public life have to be coerced or persecuted into doing things. It is so much easier to drift along without doing things, that the statesman, who is always looking for the line of least resistance, is never disposed to champion any cause that demands affirmative action, unless the representatives of that cause force it on his attention. It is easy to ignore and forget the farmer on the lonely and far-distant prairie. It is not easy to ignore the rich lobbyist and his champagne and terrapin, in Washington.

My purpose in all this is, frankly, to make the farmer discontented, not so much with conditions as with himself for allowing them to exist. Discontent breeds action; action, investigation; investigation, knowledge; knowledge, the remedy. Therefore, be discontented. Here we have a class of men, the most numerous in the country, who fail to get what they ought to have, simply because they do not

combine to get it. Farmers should not have anything to which they are not entitled. And it is not the intention of the writer to array them against their brethren of the capitalistic and labor classes. All that is desired is that the farmer should profit by the example set by these other classes. The demand is for equity and nothing more. And equity for one is equity for all. The farmer can not be truly prosperous without benefiting the whole country. The country can not be prosperous without the farmer is prosperous. Keep the farmer prosperous and we can not have hard times. So the cause of the farmer is the cause of the nation, and of every citizen of the nation. Prosperity begins and ends on the farms. Therefore, keep the farmers prosperous. Keep the source of prosperity pure and strong, so it will flow a powerful stream that will invigorate every industry.

Having shown how organization helps the capitalist and the workingman in their relations with the business of government, it is now necessary to show how it helps them in the ordinary conduct of their own private business. The threshermen afford an excellent illustration. Recently in Indiana they have been asking and getting six or seven cents a bushel for threshing wheat. The threshermen have an exceedingly effective organization, and it makes the price for threshing wheat. The farmers have to pay it. The question is not whether or not it is fair, but whether the threshermen can compel their

customers to pay it. Feeling that the price was too high, some farmers recently tried to buy threshers and thresh their own grain, but they were told by the manufacturers that they would sell machines only to members of the threshers' association. Thus the farmer is confronted, not only by the threshers' association, but by a partial combination between that and the threshing machine manufacturers. Again it is a case of the organized against the unorganized, and, as always happens, the unorganized lose. They must lose. The farmers pay prices fixed by others, and they sell at prices fixed by others. There is neither equity nor common sense in this, but they are slaves to the system and will be until they can pass it along.

So the appeal is to the Third Power to become a real power, to the end that it may make itself felt for the good of all the people. If it is right for the thresher to say what he will charge for threshing the farmer's wheat, it is right for the farmer to say what he will charge for his wheat. It is at least not equity for the farmer both to buy and sell at prices made by others. If we admit that it is right for those who sell to the farmer to fix the prices at which they sell, and we don't dispute it, we must also admit that it is right for the farmer to fix the prices at which others shall buy from him. But really it is not a question of right at all—it is a question of power. If the farmer is to free himself from the compulsion to which he is now subjected, he

must do so by his own act. And it is better so. A prosperity won by one's own effort is better and more securely based than that created and guaranteed by government. The solution of the problem is not to be found in Washington, but on the farm. There is no need to ask for favors. The politicians can not greatly help, and we don't propose to call on them. The farmers organized, and pricing their own products, will be so strong in the control of the food and clothing of the world, which the other people must have, that they can put any price on them that they want to. Thus they can meet prices, expenses, and taxes, imposed by others. The farmers organized, don't need to care whether there is politics or not, nor how much they are taxed only in so far as they may be interested in another class—the consumers. Nothing should be asked of the politician except treatment that will make it possible to deal equitably with others. It is clear that the farmers need not look to lawmakers, Divine Providence or anywhere but themselves.

It has been said of the Irish people that they have fought successfully in all battles except their own. This is largely true of the farmers. They have labored and struggled and paid taxes for others, and upon their intelligence, industry, and thrift, to-day depend the welfare and prosperity of the nation. The farmers in the United States have been the soldiers of civilization. They have reduced a wilderness to subjection, and have made it a fruitful

garden. They have endured loneliness, hardship, severe toil, privation and hunger, in order that others might be fed. Our export trade, of which we boast so much, and which has indeed attained tremendous proportions, has been swelled by the fruits of the labors of the husbandman. The factory, the railroad and the mine all live off the farm. We talk of labor as the source of all wealth, and so it is—but it is the labor of the farmer. And yet we find that, after all these years these men on the firing line of our American civilization, who should be the most independent men in the world, are dependent on the captains of industry, the promoter, the underwriter, the labor leader, and the grain gambler. It is time to end this dependence. And unless the American farmer rouses himself, he will have to always be content to have his business controlled by others, to be called a "jay" a "rube" or "hayseed," and to see himself caricatured in the comic papers and on the stage as the ridiculous victim of the gold-brick swindler and the hay-fork note pedler, and indeed no gold-brick swindle was ever so palpable as that which is inherent in our present industrial organization. The Third Power can end it when it becomes a real power.

CHAPTER IV

Come shoulder to shoulder,
Ere earth grows older!
The cause spreads over land and sea.
Now the earth shaketh,
And fear awaketh,
But joy at last for you and me.

—*William Morris.*

But why, it may be asked, should the speculators and the moneyed men, the bankers, manufacturers, railroad people, etc., object to the organization of the farmers? There are many reasons, each one of which, however, is an argument in favor of the organization when considered from the farmer's point of view. Suppose some fall Mr. Hill or Mr. Leeds were to back his cars up into the wheat country, after having made every arrangement to transport the crop, and should find that there was no wheat to carry; and suppose the railroad president should find that the farmers had all resolved that they would not let go of their wheat for less than a dollar a bushel. If this resolution were backed by a national organization, the consequences for the railroad and the consumers would not be pleasant. The effect on stocks would be disastrous, and a

panic would surely follow. That is, unless concessions were made to the farmer. And as the capitalists and speculators think they don't want to make concessions to the farmer, they would intensely dislike being put in a position where they would have to make them or suffer ruin.

Every one that has a grip on the farmer, who sells to the farmer at exorbitant prices—all would find that their grip was broken, and that on the contrary the farmer had the upper hand.

The mere shifting of power from the few to the many would be enough to rouse opposition on the part of the few. Oligarchies always hate democracies. The four or five men who now fix railroad freights throughout the country would naturally feel that it was an impertinence for the 10,000,000 farmers to insist on being heard on the subject. Those few men may combine to regulate the commerce of a continent, but the farmers may not. They think control by the few is right and proper, but control by the many is a bad thing. The banker might find that with such a combination the farmers would have to borrow less money, and that they would have more to say about the rate of interest and the security than they do now. If, when the representatives of the organized manufacturers went to Washington to demand favors at the expense of the people, they found themselves confronted by a lobby of able and intelligent men representing the farmers' organization, the job of push-

ing through tariffs might be more arduous than it is now. Some of the beggars for tariff taxes might actually be called on to show why they needed them and ought to have them.

As for the speculators, they would not find life wholly pleasant under the proposed conditions. When, to return to Mr. Norris's book, Curtis Jadwin tried to corner the wheat supply, he was beaten by the new crop which came pouring in. Here is how it happened:

"And the avalanche, the undyked ocean of the wheat, leaping to the lash of the hurricane, struck him fairly in the face. He heard it now; he heard nothing else. The wheat had broken from his control. For months he had, by the might of his single arm, held it back; but now it rose like the upbuilding of a colossal billow. It towered, hung, poised for an instant, and then with a thunder as of the grind and crash of chaotic worlds, broke upon him, burst through the pit and raced past him, on and on to the eastward and to the hungry nations."

What if the farmers had controlled that "undyked ocean of the wheat," and had refused to let any of the ocean get through the dyke? The price would not have broken, and the corner would have won. The next deal would have smashed Jadwin. And what right had he to control the price of wheat for months? Neither he nor any of his tribe could do it if the farmers would assert their power. It would be the same way with the stock market. As

it is now, a few pirates get hold of some great granger road, "merge" it with another, buy the roads by paying for them out of their own treasuries, stock and bond them out of all proportion to their real value, issue "short-time" notes, and then expect them to pay dividends and interest. So rates must go up—and they do go up. They combine to regulate rates, discriminate against non-competing points, and it all comes out of the farmer. The legitimate value of the shares depends on the amount of business that the roads do, and on the price of the stuff they haul. The farmers, I estimate, are responsible for three-fourths of the tonnage hauled by the railroads and stored in warehouses, yet I venture the assertion that not one board of railroad and warehouse commissions in all the states has a farmer representative. It is on this basis that the speculation proceeds. Who would attempt to bear the market if he knew that the farmers' combination might refuse to send any farm products to market? The value of the shares would, as now, depend on the earning capacity of the properties, but the farmers would have a good deal to say about what that earning capacity should be. And this would be a great dampener on the speculative spirit. Grain and stock gambling would be much less popular than they are now. There would be a new and controlling element in the problem. And it would operate for the good of all. The case of the manufacturer would be much the same. He is, as are

we all, interested in selling dear and buying cheap. Backed by the government, and assisted by his combination, he has it in his power to make, or at least largely to influence prices. With those to whom he sells and from whom he buys unorganized, he occupies an exceedingly strong position. It would be less strong were his customers, the farmers, also organized. They might still have to pay the manufacturer's price, but they could, if organized, sell at their own price. The manufacturer, as do all the rest, "looks with distrust" on any movement looking to an organization of the farmers. This is natural, because all former farmer organizations were directed to pull the other person's business down to a level with unsatisfactory agriculture. But it is different in this movement. Now it is proposed to build agriculture up to a level with the best of them. Therefore, manufacturers, merchants, bankers, etc., are needlessly alarmed. In fact, when the plan to make the Third Power a real power is understood they will approve and help it.

Nor can the political phase of the question be disregarded. The tremendous power which organization would clothe the farmers with, could not be ignored by the government. If the combined agricultural interests of the country should ask the men at Washington to take off a protective duty—even though it were for the special benefit of Mr. Morgan's steel trust—that duty would come off. If the demand were made for special legislation in the in-

terest of the farmer or the consumer of his products, even though it might injure the manufacturer, or middleman, that demand would be complied with. Were the farmers organized, some plan would be found for checking the aggressions and extortions of the railroad and food trusts. All this is perfectly well understood by the minority that now controls the government. Should the farmers think it worth while to make any demands for legislation it will be more in the interest of the consumers than from any necessity on their part. When the farmers co-operate and name prices on their own products they will be so strong in their fundamental right to price our food and clothing products which the balance of the world must have that they can meet all aggressions by others. What matters it if the railroad charges fifty cents a bushel for transporting grain to market? The farmers' price of this bushel of grain—when the farmers represent the Third Power—was made out on the farm before the transportation company touched it. Therefore, I say, if the Third Power concerns itself about legislation, taxes, transportations, etc., it will be in the interest of the consumers, and to promote the maximum consumption by preventing the railroads and middlemen from imposing unfair rates. On the whole it is surprising that any person should oppose the organization of the farmers, and sneer at every scheme looking toward that end.

But there is even more in it than this. If there

were resistance on the part of any class to the farmer's demand for fair price for his products, and if the farmer should refuse to sell them for less, it is evident that there would be panic and starvation. The farmer can live on what he raises, and can even, as he once did, make his own clothes. But the men in the banks, the offices and the mills must have bread, vegetables, fruit and meat. Suppose they could not get them. Pushing the case to this last extremity you can easily appreciate the extent of the farmer's power, the absolute nature of his independence. God rules in Heaven, and the farmers own the earth. All others are suspended somewhere between and are absolutely dependent on the farmers in this world, as on God in the next. The farmer is, or may be, if he chooses, wholly self-supporting. No other class of the community can be, for all men rely, and must rely, on the farmer to keep them alive. If he should decline to market, on the ground that he was not being paid sufficiently for his service, a crisis would be presented with which the government would have to concern itself. Yet all the while the farmers would be doing nothing that the miners and manufacturers are not doing every day. Indeed, they would be doing only what other men are now doing with the farmer's grain, meat and produce. The only difference is, that the farmer's corner would be more complete and his control of output and prices, being applied to commodities that are absolute essentials, would

be more disastrous in its results. But what would or could the government do? It could hardly confiscate farm products, or compel the farmer to sell them at prices unsatisfactory to himself. Surely it could not compel those men who failed or refused to put in crops lest there should be overproduction, to cultivate their farms against their will.

The arbitration question here presented, if it is a question at all, would be one far more difficult than that between the anthracite miners and operators which President Roosevelt arranged for, and practically compelled. The government could not destroy the farmers' organization and continue to permit capitalists and workingmen to organize.

The difficulty would in all probability be adjusted either by fair compromise, or by a complete yielding to the demands of the farmers. But the problem would not be solved. On the contrary, the government would have had such a warning as would drive it into the adoption of a just policy. Theoretically we have the most just government in the world. The preamble of the constitution reads thus:

"We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, ESTABLISH JUSTICE, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America."

"To establish justice"—this is one of the purposes which our forefathers had in view in adopting the constitution. If it is found that justice has not been established, it must be either that the constitution is defective, or else that we have been false to its principles. It makes no difference which of these alternatives be true, the fact remains that our government at the present time is not conducted in accordance with justice and equity. It has too many favorites, and among those favorites the farmer is not found. He is taxed, not only for the support of the government, but for the benefit of others of his fellow citizens, who are not taxed for his benefit. As taxes are levied on land and as land can not be hidden from the taxgatherers, it follows that he pays proportionately more taxes than do those whose wealth is in money or stocks or bonds, which can be hidden. Under our constitution has grown up a system of laws which favor the corporations and trusts at the expense of the individual. And it has come to pass that our government is weaker than its citizens. The combination of politicians, speculators and corporations controls the government—nay, is the government.

The powerlessness of the central authority would be brought home to all men in such a struggle as that between those wanting to buy farm products (food and clothing) and those refusing to sell them. The people would demand that their government should at least be as strong as its most power-

ful citizens, or as the most powerful combination of citizens. Then it would be able to do equal justice to all. And we should all realize that justice pays—indeed that it is essential to the perpetuity of our institutions. So, without doing one illegal thing, or making a single demand on the government, the farmers could, were they organized, work such a radical and wholesome reform as would transform our whole social order. All the people—and that is what the government ought to be, and in theory is—might conclude to fix a minimum price for the necessaries of life, and say that no one should be compelled to sell for less than that price, or that, if the crisis were grave, any one who offered that price should get the commodities. At least the government would realize that it could not afford to be unjust to the farmers, the most numerous class in the country. If we are to have a class government at all, and this ought not to be, we should have a government of the largest and most influential class. If we are to have favoritism, it should be favoritism, not for the minority, but for the majority. If it be said that the scheme involves socialism, the answer is that socialism for the many would be better than socialism for the few. If the government helps the manufacturer to make prices which are often exorbitant—as it does by imposing tariff taxes—it surely might help the farmer make prices that are fair and just. So the result of the effort of the farmers to organize to control their own busi-

ness might easily have the effect of forcing reforms all along the line, and I predict it will have. Hence, hasten the farmers' organization—the Third Power —the equitable government.

CHAPTER V

UNITE, O LOYAL FARMERS

Unite, O loyal farmers,
  Beneath the banner true
Of equity and justice,
  That shall thy foes subdue.
Cooperate with others,
  And helped by numbers' might,
Go forward into battle
  For liberty and right.

Unite, O loyal farmers,
  Fear not the active foe;
The right shall ever conquer
  For those who reap and sow.
Fair Justice, ever smiling,
  Holds out her hands to all
Who follow in her footsteps,
  In answer to her call.

Unite, O loyal farmers,
  Waste not your time in rest,
Nor talk of mighty efforts
  If money you possessed;
But seek for higher prices,
  Reward for toil and care,
Let nothing you discourage,
  But all things do and dare.

Unite, O loyal farmers,
  And in one happy band
Press onward for the conquest
  Of this, your native land.

O let your watchword ever
Be Equity for all;
Unite and quickly level
Oppression's mighty wall.

Unite, O loyal farmers,
Press on—press on to-day;
The time is ripe for action,
Let nothing you dismay;
For victory is coming,
To those who brave the wrong
And push with earnest vigor
The cause of truth along.

—*Effie Stevens.*

It has been said, and it is not surprising, that those who are now more or less in partnership with the government, should oppose and sneer at this effort to organize the farmers. And yet there is no good or honest reason why they should not welcome it and cooperate with it. For its purpose is not to help any one class at the expense of the others, but by helping one class, which is now neglected, to help all, and to improve the general social and business conditions. It has been said that the country could not prosper unless the farmers prosper, and that the farmers could not prosper without benefiting all other classes. Neither of the statements can be denied or doubted. So the real reason why this movement is opposed is, that the men who oppose it are getting special privileges from the government, and they know that these would be taken from them when the Third Power compelled an equitable

government. The fear is, not that the farmers would be unjust, but that they would insist on equal and exact justice to all. And justice is the last thing that the corporation trust magnates, graft gatherers and the tariff-pampered manufacturers want under the present system. Many men in this country at the present time thrive on inequity, and so they do not want the present arrangement disturbed.

The man who both buys and sells grain or other produce at prices made, not by the owners but by himself, knows well enough that he would have no just cause for complaint if the farmer made the prices on the farm. But he does not want this, because he thinks it would interfere with his own game, and would curtail or destroy his profits. But he may be mistaken, as a certain profit would be better than an uncertain one. So the protected manufacturer, who buys in a free trade market and sells in a protected one, thinks he does not care to have the farmer share in that advantage. To his mind there is nothing wrong in compelling the farmer to pay tariff-raised prices on all that he uses, and to sell his products at free trade prices, and in competition with the whole world. The banker favors cooperation between himself and the farmer which shall enable the banker to fix the rate of interest which the farmer shall pay, but he thinks he would not like to have the farmers cooperate with one another so that they might become their own

bankers or put themselves in condition that they don't need to borrow. The combined railroads, which, subject to the slight restraints (?) imposed by the Interstate Commerce Commission, fix the rates on farm produce, will no doubt object to a combination among the farmers to secure equitable rates, a fair price for their crops and regulate their movement to market. Even the trade-unions, which vociferously, and often violently, assert the right of their members to say what wages they shall be paid, and who subject the country to great inconvenience and even suffering in the struggle to carry their point, might be disposed to deny the farmers the right to combine for their own protection and independence, on the ground that it might advance the price of living. Always this desire to secure an unfair advantage, or an advantage at the expense of some one else, develops opposition to an organization among the farmers.

But, as has been said, there is no good and honest ground for any such objection. For the farmers propose to demand nothing that is unfair, unjust or dishonorable, nothing that it would not benefit all classes for them to have. To illustrate: If farmers organize and put profitable prices on their crops, they will have more money to spend for labor and every necessary and many of the luxuries of life. It is only the profit that may safely be spent. Therefore, more profit—margin—to the farmers will benefit the country merchant, bankers, professional men,

etc. They intend to put such a price on their products that they can hire the best help in the country. Thus the demand for union labor will be increased by millions. The illustrations might be carried out indefinitely; but what the use? If unfair advantages are cut off, or other classes built up to a level, though the class enjoying them would lose something, it would lose nothing to which it was entitled, and everybody would be benefited. This government can not continue half just and half unjust, any more than it could be half slave and half free. Indeed, injustice involves slavery, for the man who is the victim of injustice is the slave of him who profits by it. Thus the question is one of emancipation quite as much as it was forty years ago. So it is proposed to raise up this Third Power as the defender and champion of liberty. The man who is forced to pay one dollar more for an article than it is fairly worth, or to sell it for a dollar less than it is worth, is to the extent of that dollar a slave. The toil represented in that extra dollar is as truly slave labor as was the toil of the black man forty years ago, or that of the miserable peon in the Alabama cotton-fields at the present time. And how can the American farmer, who is grandiloquently spoken of by campaign orators as the freest man on earth, be free at all, in any proper sense, when he is compelled to market the fruits of his hard labor at prices made by some one else, who frequently enjoys, at the hands of the government, an advantage that

the farmer does not enjoy? Many fantastic schemes have been devised for the emancipation of the American farmer, but they have all had one fundamental defect in that they looked in the first instance to the government instead of the farmer himself. No people was ever freed except by its own exertions.

"Who would be free themselves must strike the blow."

So this appeal is not to the government, not to the politicians, not even to the law, but to the farmers themselves. If they show themselves worthy of the blessings which they crave, they can get them. The demand is not for government warehouses, free silver, unlimited issues of paper money, loans from the treasury on crops or land, duties on farm products, or even for the better regulation of trusts and corporations, but simply for the use of the power which the farmers have to help themselves. The question is whether they are patriotic enough, intelligent enough, self-restrained enough, determined enough, and wisely selfish enough, simply to put out their hands and pluck the fruit which hangs within easy reach of their grasp. They, in the beginning at least, need no help from any one. Governments are like God in one particular, in that they help those who help themselves. When people generally, and the politicians in particular, see that the farmers are in earnest about this business they will promptly cooperate. The farmers will find that they have as many real friends as they now have pretended ones.

Success will bring unexpected allies, and will uncover and discomfit secret enemies. Would the American colonists ever have won their freedom if they had waited for France to begin the struggle? Nay, rather did not France withhold her aid till she was convinced that the colonists could win their freedom even without her aid? The Cuban patriots battled for a generation before our great republic, at last convinced that there could be no peace till Spain was driven from the island, intervened in behalf of Cuban freedom and independence. English liberties are the product of centuries of toil and fight, and it was the French people that won liberty for France and maintained it against combined Europe. So the American farmer must not whine, and beg, and supplicate, must not rely on politics and politicians, nor even on Divine Providence wholly, but must, as others have done, fight his own battles. The victory is sure. And when it is won, as won it will be, it will be found that all will be benefited. So it is true that no American freeman, able and willing to support himself without bonuses or subsidies from the government, and without the protection of unfair and unjust laws, loving justice and fair play, and asking for nothing more than is rightly his—an honest reward for honest toil—need have the slightest apprehension about this movement for the organization of the farmers. The beggars, the preyers on other men's wealth, the parasites, the government pets, the grafters, the bood-

lers, and all who look on government as an instrumentality for their own enrichment, may well be disturbed. But there is no warfare to be waged against the rights even of these. We want to take the broad and manly view of this movement. It is not a grab for privileges, or a war of reprisal, but simply a firm and resolute stand for justice and equity. The farmers are not going to ask any one to give them something. They are merely going to take what is theirs. The Third Power, representing the divinely established business of agriculture, when it is organized, will not need to ask favors; it will only have to insist on rights. Favors it does not want or expect. Rights it will have.

CHAPTER VI

A NEW REBELLION

One hundred years and more ago, when America was young,
And writhing 'neath the tyrant's chain, the cruel oppressor's wrong;
Her gallant sons for freedom's sake went at the country's call,
And faced the cannon's shot and shell to bravely fight or fall.

They fought and bled for liberty, that this fair land of ours,
Might throw the tyrant's shackles by, yield but to higher powers.
They fought the fight, in God's good time they won the victory,
They laid the gory saber down and called their children free.

But are we free, does the sun in Heav'n look down on men today,
Freed from all bonds of slavery, who own no tyrant's sway?
Do they tread America's standard soil all equals in her sight,
All sharers in her bounty under Equity and right?

Go ask the busy farmer there, who toils from sun to sun,
If he enjoys that liberty, the right of such an one.
He'll tell you that there still remains injustice in the land,
That foul oppression grinds the sons of toil on every hand.

The farmer knows no liberty, for Power holds the reins;
He has to take the leavings after others count their gains.
His fruits of labor are controlled by grinding Capital,
And he is deemed a servant who, in fact, is king of all.

To arms, to arms! then men of brawn, you won the battle once,
Gird on your shining armor now and rally to the front!
Take freedom for your battle-cry, your watchword Equity,
And make the tyrant tremble when your ready sword they see!

Fear not though you have tried and failed for lack of Union strong,
Cooperation will succeed and right will conquer wrong.
Think you that our forefathers quailed when foemen charged the field?
They bravely met each sharp attack and would not, did not yield.

Then, farmers, rise in all your might and strike for liberty;
Demand your rights in unity, then call this nation free.
Put forth your earnest efforts in this grand and glorious fight,
Associate, then work and pray, and God will guard the right.
—*Maude E. Smith Hymers.*

A little further elaboration of the general helpfulness of the proposed plan may help to a better understanding of it. It has been said that the farmers could not be prosperous without benefiting all classes, and that prosperity of the country depends on the prosperity of the farmer. No one doubts the truth of these statements. They have a very important bearing on this argument. For if they are true, as they are, it must follow that a movement to better the condition of the farmers will be in the interest of all. And this is precisely the point that I desire to emphasize. For, unless it is made clear, the impression may prevail that we are making war on other classes and trying to seek an advantage at their expense. The further we get into the case the more obvious will it become that this is not the purpose at all.

What do the stock speculators mean when they

say that the prosperity of the country depends on the well-being of the agricultural class? Simply that that class is the largest in the community, that all others depend on it, that our farm produce is our greatest national asset, and that a bad condition here is a national calamity. Foreign trade, railroad earnings, the price of stocks, bank deposits, wages, and of course the welfare of all the industries directly dependent on the farm, are all affected by the condition of agriculture. Prices are largely regulated by the ability of the farmers to buy. Thus, all our business and industry are based on the farm—it is the foundation on which the whole structure rests. Is it not clear that it is to the interest of all that that foundation should be solid and substantial?

Look at the matter in another way. The farming class is the greatest consuming class in the country. When it, through stress of circumstances, is driven to rigid economy, sales fall off, stocks accumulate in factory and store, prices decline, collections are bad, there is less available capital to loan, money gets tight just when it is most needed, and we all feel the pinch. Luxuries are dispensed with. There are fewer pianos and organs in the houses of the farmers, fewer pictures on the wall, fewer books and newspapers bought. The farmer and his family make the old clothes do for another year instead of buying new ones. Farms are allowed to run down, either because their owners can not afford to keep

them up, or because they do not think it worth while. Improvements are not made; less machines are bought, and fewer hands employed, and finally the gains of former years are wiped out, then comes the mortgage, and the whole process of reconstruction has to be gone through with again. In the meantime the whole country suffers. It is all the result of a diminished consumption on the part of the farmers, brought about by large crops and low prices. With the farmer out of the market, or in it only to a limited extent, the market is bound to suffer, and all industries be harmed.

The first thing that the merchant wants to know, when he sends his commercial travelers out to the smaller towns, is whether the farmers are buying, and whether they are paying their bills promptly. The credit to be extended to the local merchant depends largely on the financial condition of the farmers. If they are buying liberally, and paying their bills with reasonable promptness, the city merchant knows that he can afford to sell larger bills of goods to the local dealer, and give him better terms than he could do under other circumstances. All this is elementary, and yet we often forget it. We seem to feel that prosperity is maintained solely by the buying of the rich people in the cities who are so lavish with their money. But it is not so. The farmers are the great consumers, and when they cease to buy, or curtail their expenditures, they not only limit the market by just that much, but they

lessen the power of people in the cities to buy. Smaller stocks in the stores mean a smaller output from the mills and factories, and that means reduction of wages and of the labor force. So the working man consumes less. So, too, less freight is hauled, earnings and wages fall off in the railroad industry, and consumption again suffers. Thus the farmer is inextricably bound up with all other classes of society.

Looking at the question, therefore, from the non-farmer point of view, we see that it is one of maintaining and increasing the consuming power of the farmer, which is equivalent to the maintaining and increasing of the general consuming power. And that is a result which all are interested in bringing about. Thus this movement is not for the good of the farmer alone, but for the good of all—the good of the whole country. To regard it in any other way would be singularly to misapprehend it.

The name of the organization which is now in process of forming, and which will make the Third Power a real power is *The American Society of Equity*. It is not a farmers' society only, but an American society—that is, for all good Americans who want to see better conditions prevail on the farm. It is not a benefit society, but an equity society. Benefits are always for an individual or class, while equity is for all. Indeed, it can not be equitable unless it is for all. Equity for one and not for another is not equity, but inequity. It is a

society that knows no state bounds; one that reaches from one side of the agricultural region to the other; one that every farmer can join, and be the better for joining. So when we propose to organize and secure fair prices for the farmer, it is not simply that he may be benefited, but that all may be benefited, and it has been shown that all would be benefited. To demand more than a fair price would be inequitable, and so is not to be thought of. Fair wages for a fair day's work, fair profits for the manufacturer, fair interest for the capitalist, fair prices to the consumers, and fair values for the products of the farm—this is equity. It is important that this should be thoroughly understood. For the attempt will be made, indeed it has already been made, to make it appear that the farmer is proposing to rob others for his own enrichment. This has been the method used by other classes, and it is not surprising that those who have practiced it should think that the farmers are going to adopt it. In fact, unfairness is so prevalent in commercial enterprises that every movement is looked upon with suspicion. The outsiders begin to look for the hook that will catch them. The golden rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," is interpreted to-day, "Do him before he has a chance to do you." But it is not so with this society. The name and purpose of the society alike forbid it. It is an old maxim that those who seek equity should do equity. They are fortunate in being in such a position that

nothing can benefit or help them which will not help and benefit all others. So they are not subjected to the temptation to prey on others to which other classes have yielded. If they would put their prices too high they would curtail consumption. Hence, how reasonable then that they will do everything possible to secure the maximum market. In fact, this is one of the leading reasons for organizing and one of the principal objects of the society. If the Third Power controls the other powers it will be only because it is the biggest and most essential to the national welfare, and so ought to control. But it will be ruled by equity, and in and by seeking its own good it will, even admitting that it may not mean to do so, seek the good of others. Therefore, there is no reason why it should be antagonized and feared by any legitimate interest or industry. Rather it should have the cordial and friendly co-operation of all who want to see freedom and independence, peace and happiness, truth and equity, religion and piety established among the people of the earth.

CHAPTER VII

CLEAR THE WAY

Men of thought! be up and stirring night and day!
Sow the seed! withdraw the curtain! clear the way!
There's a fount about to stream;
There's a light about to beam;
There's a warmth about to glow;
There's a flower about to blow;
There's a midnight darkness changing into gray.
Men of thought, and men of action, clear the way!

Once the welcome light has broken, who shall say
What the unimagined glories of the day?
What the evils that shall perish in its ray?
Aid the daring, tongue and pen!
Aid it, hope of honest men!
Aid it, paper! aid it, type!
Aid it, for the hour is ripe!
And our efforts must not slacken into play.
Men of thought, and men of action, clear the way!

Lo, a cloud's about to vanish from the day!
Lo, the right's about to conquer; clear the way!
And a broken wrong to crumble into clay.
With that right shall many more
Enter smiling at the door.
With that giant wrong shall fall
Many others, great and small,
That for ages long have held us for their prey.
Men of thought, and men of action, clear the way!

—*Charles Mackay.*

It is, of course, obvious to all that the price of farm products bears little or no relation to the cost of producing them. Wheat may range in price from $0.50 to $1.00 a bushel, and yet it costs the farmers as much to raise it in years of low as in years of high prices. Fifty-cent wheat may even cost more to produce than dollar wheat. For the lower price indicates an abundant crop, and this means that the demand for labor is great, and that consequently wages of farm laborers are high; but the point is that there is no fixed and established relation between the cost of production and price. Surely there should be. The consumption of farm products is reasonably uniform from year to year, and there is not often any great decline in consumption that would account for low prices. There is little or no fluctuation in demand, no real surplus, and the cost of production is a fairly constant quantity. Yet prices have a wide range.

Of course, it will be said that they are regulated by supply and demand—and how often have we heard that phrase; it is used very glibly by many men who have no knowledge whatever of its meaning. Let us try and find out what it does mean. Demand and supply are really the same thing—or at least they are the two faces of the same fact. Money in the hands of the man wanting wheat is supply, while wheat is what he demands. The farmer, on the other hand, demands money and supplies wheat. This would be clear if there were no

money in the world, and if all trade were carried on by barter. Then all the goods in the country would be both supply and demand. It is only when we measure goods against money that we come to look on money as demand and goods as supply. So the farmer demands money and supplies wheat, while the miller demands wheat and supplies money. So the law of supply and demand describes the working of a force that is not so simple and easily understood as we may at first think.

Again, we talk of demand equaling supply, or of supply equaling demand. This means absolutely nothing unless we take into account the question of price. An increase of price will affect both supply and demand, increasing the former and lessening the latter. And this brings us to the main point to be noted in this connection, and that is, that the force under consideration is not a great natural force above and beyond the power of man to regulate or control. We may say that the price of harvesters is regulated by the law of supply and demand, and so it is. But the men who make them control the supply and manufacture no more of them than they think can be disposed of at a good profit. Further, by raising or lowering the price they can, and do, temporarily influence the demand for harvesters. And here is the thing to be borne in mind. We may admit that the price of farm products is, or should be regulated by supply and demand, or, better still, by production and consumption, but still it is true

that the farmer has—or may and should have—the power to say what the supply shall be. A controlled supply is as much within his power as it is in the power of the manufacturer. So when some amateur political economist talks to you learnedly about the law of supply and demand, tell him that you propose to make that law work for you instead of against you. Coal is mined and marketed under the law of supply and demand, but when the anthracite barons think that the demand is not sufficient to absorb their coal at the right price, although there are millions of tons down in the mines, they shut off the supply. If the price is too low they raise it at the rate of fifty cents a ton a month. The farmers may do the same thing, if they will. Supply and demand, certainly,—but they can make the supply large or small at pleasure, or withhold it altogether. And you may play upon demand by raising or lowering the price of your products as you see fit. Yet, always keep in mind that as much food and clothing will be consumed at a fair price as at an unduly low price.

So the man can not be left out of the problem. And that is something that you must never forget. There would be no supply of farm products at all except for the intelligent work of the farmers. From their partnership with the earth flow these assets that we all value so highly. Supply is a human product, not a natural growth like breadfruit. It must be adjusted and regulated at all times to the demand, but only at a price that is fair to both par-

ties to the trade, not a temporary over-supply at times to force prices down, nor a scarcity at others to force prices up. The plea is that these adjustments should be made by the farmers, inasmuch as the supply is theirs, and they are the only ones that can make the adjustment in a way to benefit all. And in making it they must consider, first of all, the cost of production—that is, what they pay for corn, wheat and cotton, fruit, vegetables, dairy and poultry products, etc., in investments, toil, pain, abstinence and self-sacrifice. We see how it is in other departments of industry. Wages are regulated, we may say, by the law of supply and demand. Yet trade-unions control, to no small extent, the number of laborers—thus regulating the supply. And they strain themselves to the uttermost to keep the supply of laborers small enough to insure good wages. The capitalist, on the other hand, determines to a considerable extent the amount of capital available for the payment of wages, and endeavors to lessen the competition for laborers. Both these classes influence, in a marked degree, both supply and demand. Why should not the farmer do the same?

So do not allow yourselves to be deceived by the talk about supply and demand. What you have to decide is whether you are getting prices properly proportionate to the cost of production. It is clear that often you do not. Indeed, cost of production is the last thing that you, and those who buy from you, take into account. If wheat at one dollar only

sufficiently compensates you, it is evident that wheat at fifty cents does not. There is no natural or economic reason for such fluctuations. They have a bad effect in many ways. Who can make any definite calculation on such a basis as this? Here is the secret of the failure of many farmers to make needed improvements. The owner is afraid to undertake improvements for fear prices will fall, and he may not be able to pay for them. What would you think of a manufacturing business which sold plows this year for fifteen dollars, but which was haunted by the fear that, the cost of production remaining precisely the same, it might have to sell plows next year for seven dollars? The business simply could not go on. It would be impossible for the proprietor to figure on prices, wages or raw material. Profits would be as uncertain and problematical as they now are in the farming business. It is so in farming, which, after all, is manufacturing. The farmer is capitalist, laborer, manufacturer, scientist and landowner, so that all the forces of production are combined in him. The earth is his factory, the plant food his raw material, the plant his machine, and the crop his finished product. Yet, though he is the supreme producer, and though all the forces of production center in him, he is, under present conditions, the most powerless of all producers, and the only one who takes no account of the cost of production. Is it not time that he asserted himself? He must quit increasing the supply extravagantly and to his

own hurt, and insist that the price at which he sells shall be such as to earn him a fair profit, year in and year out, over and above the cost of production. He can not do this by himself. So here, again, organization is absolutely necessary.

To illustrate more forcibly the need of regulating prices, we will say that, always, the larger the crops the lower the prices. Frequently the largest crops sell for the least bulk money, and vice versa, the smallest crops bring the farmers the most money. This is proven in the corn crop of 1901. It was the smallest this country raised for many years, yet it brought to the farmers more money than any other corn crop except the one of 1902. This latter crop was the largest ever raised; it had the advantage of high price established by the preceding shortest crop, yet sold for comparatively little more than the short one. This condition is also illustrated by potatoes. In 1895 this country raised the largest crop in its history, and they sold for only about half the money as did the crop of 1901, which was the smallest for many years. The same is true of wheat, oats, cotton, fruit and other crops. An enterprise which is subject to such wide, violent irregularities can not be healthy, and a system which makes them possible is bad and vicious. Any person who will take the trouble to study the crop statistics will be convinced that something is wrong. It is clear from this showing that it is the large crops and low prices that are a menace to the farmers—consequently the nation's

prosperity. Short crops will make good prices for themselves, as then the buyers go to the farm seeking them, and the farmers can price them.

By organization and cooperation the temporary surplus of any crop can be controlled—held on the farm—and the same conditions produced as when the crop is small. All that is necessary to do to make prices on the farm is to control that part, which, at times, overstocks the market, and which fixes prices on all. In other words, to keep the market in a seeking condition. We claim that as much of our food products will be consumed at a fair price to the farmer as at an unfairly low price. The cities are fairly reveling in prosperity. Labor is better paid now than ever before; manufactured goods sell higher than ever before. Therefore, the consumers off of the farm should pay a fair price for their food, even though it leaves them a little less for luxuries; but we don't believe it will be necessary for the consumer to pay more. The advent of the Third Power will beneficially affect distribution of farm products and cut down the mountains of profits realized by unfair middlemen between the producers and consumers. The success of the farmers' movement will guarantee an equitable price to the farmers, a fair margin to the middleman, lower prices to the consumer, and a larger market for all farm products. By removing the uncertainties of prices, encouraging free buying and selling on certain and legitimate

margins, greater consumption will result, again benefiting the farmers.

This matter of making prices on farm products is the most important problem before the people of the world. It directly affects half the population of our country (about forty million people) and many other millions in Europe and other countries. As the United States is the great surplus producing country, it can make prices on food products for the world. It has done it in the past, and has set the price too low. The result has been, our farmers are the poorest paid of all laborers in this country, and the European farmers are paupers. Through the Third Power operating through the American Society of Equity prices can be set on an equitable basis, the American farmer will rise to an equality with the best business men of the nation, his profession will be above any other, and the European farmers will rise proportionally.

This is the time for action, not for longer submission. Unless the farmers accept this opportunity I believe the opportunity will pass and a land trust be formed which will forever make it impossible for the rank and file of American farmers to own and keep a portion of God's green earth, but they will be ground down to serfdom indeed.

CHAPTER VIII

MARCH OF EQUITY

Face about and turn to freedom,
  Shout our blessing o'er the land!
Lift our flag of Equity,
  Show the emblem's triumph band!
Convert foes or turn them under,
  Here is Equity for all;
Let the light of this transcription
  Conquer prices to our call!

Free our farmers, free our farmers,
  From the harmers of their price;
We are striving, merchants thriving—
  Now we want our proper slice!
We will make it, we will break it,
  With a wise man as our guide;
Star is over Power the rover,
  Now we'll conquer ev'ry side!

—*Pearl Udilla Davis.*

Perhaps it has not been made sufficiently clear that organization is necessary to accomplish the results desired. It has been shown that the farmers ought to organize, and that organization is the law of the industrial and commercial world, and that in other businesses organization has been found to be necessary. Further it has been argued that farming is a business quite as truly as manufacturing, and that

the same laws govern both. It has been insisted, too, that unorganized power has little chance in the world at the present time, and that unity of action is necessary to make power felt. Yet some may ask whether it may not be possible, admitting that organization is desirable, for the farmers to better their condition, in the ways indicated, by their own individual efforts. This, at least, raises the question as to the scope of organization, for few will maintain that anything could be done without some combination. How extensive should it be? If you will stop to think about the matter you will see that if the farmers of one county, or even of one state or section should agree to market only at a fair price they not only would fail to accomplish much, but they would put themselves in great peril. What would it profit the Indiana farmers to adopt this course while the farmers of other states were rushing their crops to market to be sold at whatever price was offered?

Suppose there were two stores in your county town, and that the proprietor of one of them should make up his mind that the price of dry goods was too low, and that he would not sell to any one except at an advance of fifty per cent., and suppose that the proprietor of the other store should keep on selling at the old price. Obviously the latter man would get all the trade, and the former would have to meet his price or go out of business. If the anthracite coal men were in a combination, would it be possible for any one of them to raise the price of coal as long

as one kept on selling steadily at the old price? Clearly not. The lowest price asked for a commodity must be the prevailing price, for the reason that the buyers will pay no higher price than the lowest at which goods can be secured.

It is precisely so with the farmers. Recently the announcement was made that the farmers of Indiana seemed to be holding on to their wheat, and the question was asked whether attempts to organize them under the banner of "dollar wheat" were meeting with success. One of the millers said:

"It is a simple proposition which Indiana farmers will face if they withhold their wheat from the market. Other producers will supply the urgent demand and the holders will be glad to get what they can for their wheat after the others have sold out. The question resolves itself into the old one of supply and demand."

The supply and demand question has already been discussed, but on the main point the miller is right.

A combination of Indiana farmers can not fight against freely sold wheat in other sections of the country. Another miller said that he had no doubt that there was a combined effort on the part of Indiana farmers to withhold their wheat, but he said, and truly, "Indiana farmers can not control the market here as long as we can buy elsewhere at the same price." But suppose they could not buy elsewhere?

And this was the condition they met, but they did not want to admit it: Farmers were holding to a great extent in all the states, yet without sufficient organization and cooperative ability to force the price to the dollar mark quickly. The millers, however, would not admit it, and the statements made were calculated to stampede the farmers and cause them to market more freely. This occurred in August, 1903, and the farmers did produce a condition that fully justified dollar wheat by withholding supplies and decreasing the visible to the lowest point in many years. The speculators, however, were determined to hold the price down and defeat the farmers. Every bear argument that could be found, real or imaginary, was brought to bear. Another reason why prices were so strenuously held down was the fact that the 1903 wheat crop was sold out by the speculators around sixty-five cents a bushel in the spring when prospects were so flattering and a nine-hundred-million-bushel crop was predicted; also millers contracted flour that would keep their mills grinding for months. It was to the interest of these speculators and millers to keep the price down as low as possible until they could fill their contracts. The obvious conclusion, therefore, is that the combination, to be effective, must include a large number of farmers. The temporary surplus of any crop must be controlled; that is, a surplus must not appear at any time. I estimate that one million farmers will be sufficient. This is only a comparatively small

portion of them, but this number cooperating through one central head can, I believe, fully control the surplus of any crop this country produces, and fix the price equitably for all farmers in this country, and on staples like wheat, corn, oats, cotton, and meat, set the price for the world.

The Grange and Alliance had millions of members; therefore, if farmers organized before, they can again, if there is a good reason for it. The reason is more urgent now than ever before, also, the plan is so much more practical and the objects so much better, that I contend if the farmers will organize once more, they will realize such great benefit that they will never disorganize. And it is such an organization as this that it is proposed to form. Also, we expect, after the million members are secured for the American Society of Equity, other millions will come, until its growth will be stopped because there is no more material to grow upon.

The farmers' organization must be strong enough and general enough to regulate the marketing. The question is not one of holding products, but of selling them. The proposition is that they shall be held only for the purpose of securing a fair price. In a word, the farmers must make a seeking market, instead of dumping their fine, valuable products without system, like in the case of bankrupt stocks.

Incidentally, something may be said about the ability of the United States to control prices of agricultural products. It is a fact, that, do the best they

can, the other producing countries of the world of bread grains never have enough to supply the demand. Every year Europe requires about two hundred millions of bushels of wheat from this country. Without this, values in the thickly populated countries of Europe would probably rise to fabulous prices, and we predict famines would be frequent. Claims may be made that production in other countries can be greatly increased. In some cases this is true, but at the same time population and consumption will be increasing. Consumption has been increasing for a few years, faster than production. Witness the fact that three years ago this country had a visible supply of forty-seven million bushels, while at this writing (August, 1903) it is down to twelve millions. The same proportions held true in foreign countries. This in face of the fact that the crop of wheat in 1902 was the largest ever grown, and in 1901 was nearly as large. The figures clearly prove that consumption has been greater than production for the last three years, even when production was unprecedentedly large. We can not hope to keep up the recent rate of production of bread grain except through more intensive farming or the opening of new territory. This latter is problematic. But suppose the area could be augmented by another empire equal in size and productive ability to our Mississippi valley. Has not all our central west and northwest been put under cultivation within the memory of present men? Has not the world

consumed the products? Are we likely to have such an increase in producing area in the next generation? I say no. In short, to supply the food for future generations, will require intensive farming. This means organization, cooperation and better prices, so our present farms can be brought up in fertility to produce double or triple the present low averages.

To talk of foreign countries exporting wheat or other products to this country is absurd, even though prices were made higher here. The more likely result, in fact the inevitable result, will be for foreign farmers to put their price up to meet those of the United States. European farmers are more for cooperation than are the American farmers, and they will be glad to embrace the first opportunity to get rid of the competition of this country, in setting cheap prices. Besides, it is proposed to organize this society in all foreign countries. Thus, we will have the Russian Society of Equity, the German Society of Equity, etc. Already the movement is under way in the surplus producing countries of food crops, and great interest is shown in Europe in the plan that will enable them to cooperate with the American farmers to make equitable prices.

But suppose it was not possible to retain the foreign markets on wheat—our principal export grain —and our farmers were confined to the home market, the tariff tax of twenty-five cents a bushel will shut out foreign wheat until the home price reaches one

dollar and nine cents per bushel, on the basis of eighty-four cents, an exportable basis, and this would be a big lift. But if farmers will organize and get a profitable price for all their crops, I predict one of the first results will be decreased production of grain crops. With profitable prices assured, farmers would not need to put out as large crops as in the past. With farming removed from the old system when labor was the only factor that earned anything and the person who worked the hardest and the most hours in the fierce competitive struggle was the one who made the most, the tendency will be to not work so hard and cut down the acreage. At all events a short crop at a profitable price is always better than a bumper crop at a losing price.

This country produces nearly all the corn of the world, and is the only one that has the soil and climate to grow the crop successfully on a large scale. On this crop we can surely dictate to the world.

There need be no fear about our market. The world needs—must have—our surplus and will pay a fair price for it when it learns that it can not get it at an unfair price, nor will the Argentine or Russian exporters be able to beat the American farmers, when the farmers in those countries are also organized in the Equity society.

Do you not begin to see how powerful and beneficent this organization will be? Already the Chicago speculators have been heard crying for wheat. They can have all they want, but after the farmers' organ-

ization is completed, only at prices made by it. And the work has only begun. You are asked simply to conduct your business as other business is conducted at the present time. It has been said that the twentieth century farmer is a business man. It is for him to show it. The opportunity will be offered to him. A definite aim—dollar wheat and fair prices for all other crops—will be placed before him. We are to see whether he, like other business men, is able to get what he goes after. To say that he can not do this is to impeach his intelligence. Other men have no difficulty in seeing what is for their own good, nor will the farmer have. If others can organize, he can organize—and he can be true to his organization, especially when he would injure himself by being false to it. There will, of course, be predictions of failure, as there have been already, but they will come from the enemies of the farmer—from those who flatter him by telling him that he is a business man and yet want him to act as though he were a child or a fool. But such criticisms are the surest indications of success. If the movement were hopeless or weak there would be no objections to it. The fact that there are objections to it on the part of those interested in defeating it, proves that it is practical and powerful. The people at large, who love fair play, will support the movement when they fully understand it.

CHAPTER IX

THE FARMERS' FUTURE RHYME

The dawn of light is breaking
To quiet farmers' fears;
The sons of toil are awaking
To enjoy peaceful, happy years.

Then all that want protection,
Here is the way, you plainly see:
Don't continue competition,
But join the A. S. of E.

—*W. R. Freeman,* Woodville, Mich.

Undoubtedly one great, and probably unsurmountable, obstacle that has hitherto stood in the way of any effective and lasting organization of farmers by any of the plans tried, has been the isolation of the agricultural class. When towns were few and widely scattered, means of communication meager, and when the nearest neighbor was dozens, or even scores, of miles away and without any means in the organization for frequent communication, the farmer could, in the nature of things, know little of what was going on in the world, could have few or no relations with other farmers. Lacking knowledge of the lives of others, he lacked sympathy. There was no sense of relationship or interdepend-

ence. Men in the same county were farther apart then than are men now in widely severed states. Now, organization implies some closeness of touch. Men must know something of one another; care something for one another; have common interests and also a realization of the fact that their interests are the same.

A few illustrations will serve. Capital can combine easily because capital moves freely from one point to another. It can be, and is, handled in large masses. A dollar in Indiana is as close of kin to a dollar in New York as is the nearest neighbor of the New York dollar. Laboring men even yet find it difficult to migrate from one section to another, but capital flows freely to the place where there is the greatest demand for it. Distance is no barrier—the ocean is no barrier. A man may live in Kansas and have his capital working for him in the Philippines or in Wall Street. The natural tendency of capital is toward combination. And it knows nothing of isolation. Turning to labor we find that labor combinations are easily effected because laboring men live in cities, and close together. Thousands of them work in the same factory or on the same railroad. They meet constantly and talk over things affecting their condition. It is natural and easy for them to cooperate; indeed, they can hardly help doing so. Each man feels—and he would feel it whether there were an organization or not—that he is the member of a vast body, and he gets the daily encouragement

of touching elbows constantly with his fellow-soldiers. Thus there is this sense of unity independent of the organization itself. He knows that others are interested in him as he is in others. Combination and concert of action could not but come. And it was easy because the laboring men were close together.

It has been different on the farm. The farmer, to be sure, knew that there were millions of others engaged in the same occupation as his, but he never saw them, knew nothing about them, and he could hardly help feeling that he was a lone skirmisher, not certain whether he would be supported by the main body or not. He worked for himself as others did for themselves, and, as a consequence, each was subjected to the severest competition from the others. Community of interest was not thought of. Combination seemed unnatural, and so, impossible. The conditions implied division and separation. Isolation was the bar to organization. But now all this is changed, and henceforth the tendency will be strong in the direction of combination. The rural delivery, the telephone, the interurban trolley, good roads, the wider diffusion of books and papers, the growth of cities and towns throughout the rural region, have all served, and will increasingly serve, to bring the farmers closer together. The farmer can get to town every day now, whereas twenty-five years ago he could not, or did not, do so once a week or once a month. He meets his neighbors in socie-

ties and institutes, where they discuss subjects of interest to all. He, too, feels the touch of the elbow on each side of him, and knows that millions of others are fighting the same battle that he has to fight, and that they can fight it best by combining forces. Rural America is to-day one vast neighborhood with interests in common from ocean to ocean, and the American Society of Equity is specially constructed to promote good fellowship and cooperative industrial development.

So we hear from all sides talk of organization. This means that organization is felt to be both a necessity and a possibility. When men—at least when Americans—are brought together the first thing they think of is organization. No people that ever lived had such a capacity as the Americans have for concerted action. In the present case, men have not proposed to organize the farmers simply because they thought it would be well to do so, but because they saw that conditions invited organization. This is the way in which great and successful movements always come. Prophets and seers may dream of wonderful things, but if they are in advance of their time, they try to accomplish them and fail, or, despairing of success, they attempt nothing. The centuries roll by, and at last, in the fulness of time, the man and the hour coincide and then the world takes a tremendous step in advance. Only the other day a man wrote a book on submarine navigation. He showed that inventors had been busy with the prob-

lem for centuries, and that one boat had been built three hundred years ago, which actually did travel a short distance under water under propulsion of oars. But the writer said that this inventor could do little simply because he had outstripped the possibilities of the science of his day. Steam navigation was then two hundred years in the future. Even thirty years ago submarine boats were looked on as impracticable—Jules Verne writing fancifully of a trip under the sea as he did of a journey to the moon or the center of the earth. Now the problem is solved, not because the men of our day first thought of solving it, but because science had advanced sufficiently to enable them to solve it—had given them the materials to work with. Much the same thing is true of aerial navigation. It is so of reform movements. Even the Christian religion could not have spread so rapidly had it not been that the world was prepared for it. The Romans had built the roads over which missionaries traveled, had welded mankind together, had established peace, law and order throughout the civilized world, and created a system of government that was marvelous for its efficiency.

The moral is plain. Every influence that can be named is operating to bind the farmers together. Railroads, the telegraph, the wonderful extension of the telephone service, the rural mail service, the trolley roads, the growth of towns in proximity to the farm, the spread of education, the development of

the scientific side of farming, the multiplication of agricultural schools and farm journals, the work of the agricultural department of the government, the settling up of the country, and, above all, *the right plan has been devised*. And these will combine to knit the farmers closely together, to destroy the old isolation, and to make the farmers themselves see that organization is as natural and easy in their case as in the case of the city laborers, manufacturers and others. And now, with every condition favoring, the *American Society of Equity* has arrived. Those who have dreamed of an organization of the farmers may now see their dream realized. The new society is not an artificial thing imposed on a civilization not ready for it. On the contrary, it is the outgrowth of the very same influences which have wrought such marvelous changes in the condition of the farmer. As the close association which the working men have with one another inevitably suggested organization, so organization will be suggested to the farmer by the closer associations that now exist between him and his fellow farmers. Isolation will yield, as it has done already to some extent, more and more to combination, and the farmers, united and acting together for the good of each and all, will no longer be conquered in detail by other classes. Instead of ignorantly and unconsciously carrying on a guerrilla warfare against one another, they will henceforth cooperate loyally and

effectively for the improvement of the agricultural situation.

Who dare predict that farmers can not and will not stand by each other in a great national body for business benefits? He might as well attempt to deny that millions of farmers have not been loyal to the great political parties, Republican and Democratic, these many years. If the farmers will rally to the support of their party in politics as often as called upon will they not be faithful to themselves in a business body? The farmers united in the great American Society of Equity will each find a brother at his elbow on the right and on the left who is wearing the badge, "For Profitable Prices." They all have common interests. When they are called upon by headquarters to express themselves on any matter it will appeal to them even more than politics. The appeal will not be ambiguous. What they will be asked to do will be for their benefit. Their self-interests will be appealed to and why should they do otherwise than cast their vote in favor of their own interests? If the farmers are told to ask a fair price for cotton, wool, wheat, corn, oats, potatoes, eggs, milk, butter, tobacco, vegetables, fruit, hogs, cattle, etc., and each farmer knows that the word goes out to the millions of other farmers all over the broad land, do you suppose they would do the contrary thing? Or if we will admit that all will not obey,—some because they can not stop marketing,—there will still be enough in this great body to control the

marketing and make the price. All that will be necessary is to stop marketing, wherever the buyers will not pay your price. In other words, to supply the goods as the markets need them, and not dump them in uncertain quantities at uncertain times. The system of marketing the bulk of a crop soon after it is produced results in creating a large *visible supply*, which is used as a club ever after to beat down prices for the balance of the year. Speculators understand this to perfection. The clubs of "visible supply" and "daily receipts" are the bears' leading arguments. The farmers can prevent a large visible supply by keeping the produce back on the farm and let it come forward gradually during twelve months. And if they will sell only when they get the agreed price the buyers will look out for the daily receipts. When considering this matter of prices and marketing, farmers should always keep in mind this fact: That the world will consume as much of your products at a fair, profitable price as at an unprofitable price.

CHAPTER X

The dawn of light is breaking,
The darkness disappears,
The sons of toil are waking
To drive away their fears.
Let all be up and working
With all their might and main,
To make our union lasting
And all the youths to train.

The work is now before us,
Let's up and at it strong.
Let not a member falter
To push the work along.
Let every one unite
With shoulder to the wheel,
And carry the heavy load aright
That all may happy feel.

When to our homes we do return,
Our hearts are light and free
To know we have our honors earned
And made our brothers see.
Come brothers, sisters, all,
United now we stand.
Come heed our leaders' call
And make a firm, strong band.

Something has been said of the influence of agricultural schools and papers, which is undoubtedly good as far as it goes. But it does not go far

enough, and there is need here for reform. The whole purpose of those who teach agriculture as a science is, of course, to develop the scientific side of the business, and to teach the farmers how to make their land as productive as possible. This is well, but it must be remembered that what the farmer wants to produce is not crops, but money—or crops as a means of getting money. His aim is, or should be, to make his farm productive, but productive of money. To this end he should practise the economies that other business men practise, making extensive use of machinery, keeping his soil in good condition, studying the question of crops and their rotation, observing the markets; in short, trying to raise as big crops as possible are commendable, but, after all these are done, there is something more important. It is the profitable market. It is one that, in justice to the farmer, ought not to be overlooked by any of the teachers, speakers or experimenters.

The only people who profit more from a large crop than a small one are the consumers, railroad men, middlemen, and the speculators. The railroads charge as much for hauling a cheap bushel as a dear one, and the more bushels there are the better it is for them. The same way with the speculator and middleman. Cheap and abundant wheat is quite as profitable for speculative purposes as dear and scarce wheat. The farmer's prosperity, on the other hand, depends on both the price and the quantity. As the

freight is the same on the cheap as on the dear bushel, it is evident that a larger proportion of the price goes to the railroad in the former than in the latter case, to the reduction of the farmer's profit. So the question is much more complex than it seems to be on its face.

Suppose by the application of improved methods the average of wheat per acre could be raised from twelve to thirty bushels, and this is exactly what a professor of the Indiana Agricultural Experiment Station said the farmers could and should do, by coming to them and learning how. This on the same acreage as now would mean a yield of more than 2,000,000,000 bushels instead of 700,000,000. Under present conditions the effect on price would be most depressing. No one can say how far the price would fall, but it is certain that the farmer would get less profit for the large crop than he now gets, even at the present moderate price, for the smaller one. While it is not possible to increase any of our crops so enormously as in this illustration, it will serve to show the folly of the farmers' institutions, teaching how to raise large crops without the ability to put profitable prices on them. Better devote their efforts to teaching them how to raise less; as under present systems, if each farm would raise uniformly less, so as to always make a hungry market, our farmers would revel in prosperity. Better yet would be to join in the educational work and teach them

how to get a good price for a large crop as well as for a small one.

The farmer is more interested in the question of price now than in quantity of crop. However, with the ability to fix profitable prices on the farm, and prevent a surplus from appearing on the market at any one time, it will be practically impossible to raise a surplus of any of our crops for many years. As we have shown, profitable prices will curtail production at first, rather than stimulate it, while population and consumption will go on increasing. Those who advise the farmer to raise larger crops and to make his land more fruitful, without the ability to fix prices, are, therefore, unsafe advisers, and unconsciously have been playing into the hands of the transportation companies, middlemen, and speculators.

By all means the farmer should adopt scientific, up-to-date methods, but he should apply them to the marketing of his crops, as well as to the raising of them. Scientific business as well as scientific agriculture is needed. The crop in which the farmer is most interested is the crop of money. It is for that that he works. He does not want to raise crops simply for the sake of raising them. He raises them to sell. The money that he gets for them is his living. The bigger the crop the better, of course, provided the price be right. But, and here is the point, the bigger the crop, the greater is the necessity that the farmer should control the sale of it.

Under the present free competitive system, a big crop may be, and frequently is, anything but a blessing to the man that grows it. When the crop is small it, in a measure, takes care of itself, even as things are to-day. It is when his fields are most fruitful and the conditions most favorable that the farmer is likely to find himself swamped by the very plenteousness of his yield. I have made the assertion that the short crops of 1901 were responsible directly and indirectly in bringing more prosperity to the farmers than any other crop they ever raised. Really they, the farmers, get their blessings in disguise.

Thus it appears that the very instruction that is being given at our agricultural schools, experiment stations, farmers' institutes and by farm papers makes further instruction necessary. When you teach a man how to grow the largest possible crop on a given acreage, and press on him the necessity of doing so, you put yourself under obligation to show him how he may best deal with the products which he has raised in such abundance. Without this latter instruction the former may be worse than useless—nay, may be positively harmful. This is a subject to which our schools and papers ought to give their attention. Certainly the farmers should think about it very seriously. When you increase largely the output, you, of necessity—other conditions remaining the same—depress the price, unless you can control the marketing. A community or

country will, however, consume as much at a fair price as at a low price. A fair price appears to add dignity to a commodity, and make it more desired. Besides, if we can keep the farmers prosperous by giving them good prices, we can keep the world prosperous, thus stimulating consumption.

The present average yield of wheat is in the neighborhood of thirteen bushels an acre, and at that average the country can produce about 650,000,000 bushels. That is enough at the present time to supply the needs of our own people, and to furnish a quantity for export. Whether it would pay the farmer to raise more under the old conditions, depends entirely on the price he could get for it. A short crop at a high price might bring him more money than a large crop at low prices. This condition has frequently prevailed. In fact it is the rule that the smallest crops sell for more money than the largest ones.

So the question is whether the price of the large crop, though lower than that received for the small crop, is still high enough to enable the farmer to make at least as much money net on his investment. If it is not, he loses. This question of the ratio between quantity and price is of vital importance, and the ratio is one that is easily disturbed and thrown out of joint. He would be a bold man who, understanding the matter, tells the farmer that he ought to raise more than he is now raising, and the farmer who will listen to such teaching without a protest

does not deserve a better fate than has been his portion in the past. Yet the whole object of so-called scientific instruction in farming is to induce the farmer to do just that thing.

But the farmer will not forget the question of price. The American Society of Equity is not going to let him forget it. This is the first and great object of the society. It is the stepping-stone to the accomplishment of the Third Power. The society is willing to cooperate with the schools by showing the farmer how to market and by helping him to market profitably the larger crops which he is being taught to raise. The two things—up-to-date farming and up-to-date business—must go together. No sane manufacturer makes more goods than he thinks he can sell profitably, or increases his facilities beyond what he believes to be the power of his customers or possible customers to consume. He does not put in new and elaborate machinery simply that he may increase his output—whether he does that depends on the condition of the market, and his ability to control prices—but that he may produce more cheaply and thus, if need be, to sell more cheaply, yet make more money. It should be so with the farmer. He must never forget the question of price, and must ever remember that the product which he is after is not corn or wheat or cotton, or pork or beef, but *gold*. He who gets the most gold out of his grounds is the most successful, up-to-date and scientific farmer.

Good prices for farm products means increased prosperity, and increased prosperity means greater consumption. The element of waste alone of food and clothing when people are prosperous is a great item, and will have an important bearing on the farmers' markets and prices.

CHAPTER XI

All hail the cause of Equity!
  Let all the nation ring
With glad huzzas from wakened hearts,
  That blithesome tribute bring.
In honor of the dawn of truth,
  Of justice, fair and right;
For farmers who so patiently
  Have waited for the light.

That light is swiftly coming now;
  It spreads along the way,
And brightens all the world about
  With its hope-giving ray.
Soon, soon the day of right shall glow,
  In splendor through the land,
When every farmer lad shall march
  In Equity's fair band.

Such are some of the needs of the farmer. It has been shown that they can be satisfied only through organization, and it must now be inquired whether the American Society of Equity is the sort of an organization that the situation demands. A consideration of the subjects that it proposes to accomplish will at least prove that its founder intends it to do the work which it has been said must be done, if the farmer is to wield the power that he should wield. The objects that it aims at are precisely the ones

that have already been put before the reader. The very first thing proposed is, that the farmer should "obtain profitable prices for *all* farm products, including grain, fruit, vegetables, stock, cotton, and their equivalents." It has been shown that the farmers oftentimes do not obtain fair prices for these products, and that such prices can not be obtained without organization among the farmers. This is the theory on which the American Society of Equity is based. That organization can do this it has been the purpose of this argument to demonstrate. That the American Society of Equity can do it follows necessarily, if the argument already made is sound, for it is based on principles that have been set forth in the preceding pages.

But there are certain details connected with this question of price that need further exposition. In order to get a fair price it has to be proved that the farmers are under no necessity of selling their crops at irregular intervals and in uncertain quantities, and this involves two questions: First: Can the farmers hold them? and second: Have they the facilities for holding them? It is insisted that few farmers are driven to the necessity of selling their crops to the first purchaser that offers, for the farmers are even now the most completely self-supporting class in the country. Many of them have been asked, "Why do you sell your crops now?" and the answer almost invariably is, "I have found from experience that the price is about as high now as it will be at any time,

so I let it go." That is, they do not sell because they have to, but because they are disgusted with former attempts to hold and the results. They exercise a free choice, and they choose to sell because they think they can make as much money by selling as by holding. Undoubtedly this is the true reason in the majority of cases for their haste to get rid of their crops. The farmers think that the price, though not good, is as good as they can hope to get, and they fear that they may get caught in a decline. So they let go and then complain that farming does not pay. But do you stop to consider that somebody holds these crops—your wheat, oats, corn, potatoes, poultry, butter, eggs, fruit, tobacco, cotton, meat, etc. The world don't consume them—gulp them down—as soon as you let go of them. They go into elevators, cold storage houses, packing houses, etc. There they are held by comparatively few individuals until the hungry consumer wants them, when they come forth with profits added. The present system of marketing by farmers is similar to that of throwing bankrupt stocks on the market. And the farmers adhere to it, not because they like it, but because they have no better way. The purpose of the American Society of Equity is to point to and provide a better way. And as the farmers are free agents, they can tread that way if they choose to do so.

The other question is as to the ability of the farmers to hold their crops. This, too, is answered by the American Society of Equity. For another of its

objects is "to secure equitable rates of transportation, and to provide for storage in warehouses." There has always been more or less strife between the farmers and the railroads and the elevator interests, and in that strife the farmers usually lose. Of late co-operative societies have been formed in the western and northwestern states, the object of which is to enable the farmers to store and ship their own grain. As a rule they have been successful and profitable. These associations can easily affiliate with the American Society of Equity, and with the ability to control prices, as well as to save the grain trusts' profit and get equitable rates of transportation, they will be in a very enviable position. Without the ability to make equitable—profitable—prices, they will still be at the mercy of the trusts, speculators and gamblers. And without the power to hold the grain, prices can not be fixed. Thus the two things must go together. I claim the best place to hold grain is on the farm in a good safe, vermin-proof granary. The farmer then has no elevator charges to pay, which in public elevators is about one cent a month and eight cents a year. This is a heavy tax, and is about sufficient to build an elevator, if used to its capacity, in a year. The next best way is to have a community elevator. Several local unions of the A. S. of E. will join together and erect it. And beyond this it is the design of the society to have large elevators in the leading market cities, under the management of the National Union, where grain will be stored for members at

lowest rates. Cold storage houses will serve a similar purpose and on the same system for perishable products. Individual members can store their fruit, poultry, or dairy products, meat, etc., in the local union line of storage houses, or consignments from local union or large individual producers will be received in the National Union storage houses. In this way the produce can be taken care of, the market supplied regularly with what it needs, and uniformity of prices maintained throughout summer and winter. The producers will be benefited by higher prices and the consumers benefited by lower prices, because the mountains of greedy profits that are now added by unfair middlemen and food trusts will be cut out.

But you may ask, How are the poor farmers to hold their crops?

In the first place, it will not be necessary to hold all crops at any time, and those who do hold will make a better price for those who can not hold. Also our farms and farmers need the "rest cure," and will not work so hard with profitable prices in sight, thus reducing the crops.

Second, with the farmers organized and fixing a minimum (lowest) price dealers will see that they can not buy any cheaper, and there is a possibility that prices will be higher. Therefore, they will all want to buy all they can at the low price, and will put all their capital in the commodity as soon as the poor producers must sell. I predict that the market

would take more when this system is in force than will be offered.

Third, the society provides for those farmers who will hold their grain and other produce a rising market each month. This may be one-fourth or one-half, or one cent per bushel or hundredweight, depending on the commodity, kind of crop and the market. The advance will be sufficient to offset shrinkage, interest, etc. If there is a tendency to market too freely this monthly advance can be increased to make it profitable to hold. It is reasonable to believe that farmers will hold on to their crops if there is a certainty of making money by doing it. This monthly advance should be adjusted to a nicety, so it will not allow loss nor make a profit, but the inducement will be to maintain prices, which will result when twelve months' requirements are filled, by marketing one-twelfth of the annual crop each month.

Fourth, grain in a granary or elevator, produce in a storage house or property anywhere in evidence, establishes credit. If cash is wanted for pressing needs it can easily be raised on warehouse receipts, or on personal notes, at any financial institution.

Let me say right here that the American Society of Equity does not propose to loan money to its members unless it engages in the banking business later. Also we want to effectually explode the theory of maintaining profitable prices for farm products *by the use of money.* No individual, society, corporation, nor Russian government, nor United States

government can make and maintain profitable prices for farm products by the use of money, even though they had the treasure of these great nations to fall back upon. It would be possible to keep prices up for a while by the use of money, but remember, when a price is paid for a commodity that you can not consume yourself, you must find another party who will take it off of your hands *at a higher price,* and here is where the trouble comes. If the farmers' society would supply the money to take their crops at profitable prices it would be a great thing for the members as long as it lasted. They—the members—would not need to concern themselves about anything but to go back to the farm and raise as large crops as possible and turn them into their society, which must not only pay them a profitable price but find some other person to take them at a higher price. This is a sure way to run up an unwieldy surplus. The only way to handle this problem is to make each individual producer responsible for production and markets. If he produces too much he must take a lower price or hold it over to a season of less production on his own account. In this way he pays the penalty for his indiscretion. Also, if farmers will not sell at the equitable minimum price and foolishly hold out for a higher price, prevent the crops from going into consumption and run up a large surplus, the board of directors must declare a lower price, and thus they will suffer again for their stubbornness. The American Society of Equity does not stand for high

prices, but for equitable prices, believing that as large consumption will result at a profitable price to the producer as at an unprofitable price. It will as strenuously oppose holding for unfairly high prices as it opposes selling for unprofitably low prices.

How will the society secure money to build warehouses, etc.?

Farmers can do anything they want to do, or what they in equity should do, if they will organize and cooperate to put profitable prices on their products. Suppose they would want to build or buy elevators, cold storage houses, stock yards, telegraph systems, railroads, ship lines, make good county roads, etc., they could do all these things and not issue a bond, mortgage a property nor pay a cent out of their own pocket.

Suppose they would add a little extra to each principal crop they raise and cut it out of the middlemen's and trusts' profits. We have an illustration like the following:

Barley	119,000,000	bu.	at	10c	per	bu.	$11,000,000
Buckwheat	10,000,000	"	"	10c	"	"	1,000,000
Corn	2,666,000,000	"	"	10c	"	"	266,600,000
Oats	943,000,000	"	"	10c	"	"	94,300,000
Rye	25,000,000	"	"	10c	"	"	2,500,000
Wheat	658,000,000	"	"	10c	"	"	65,800,000
Potatoes	273,000,000	"	"	10c	"	"	27,300,000
Flaxseed	19,000,000	"	"	10c	"	"	1,900,000
Apples	175,000,000	"	"	10c	"	"	17,500,000
Hay	84,000,000	tons	"	$2.00	"	ton	168,000,000
Cotton	4,717,000,000	lbs.	"	2c	"	lb.	94,340,000
Tobacco	868,000,000	"	"	5c	"	"	43,400,000
Swine	10,500,000,000	"	"	2c	"	"	210,000,000
Eggs	1,293,000,000	doz.	"	5c	"	doz.	54,650,000
Dairy products	281,000,000	dollars	at	10 per cent. increase.			28,160,000
Total							$1,086,450,000

This, as you will allow, does not near cover all

the sources of income to the farm, and a like appreciation of value in other products would add additional millions to the total. Suppose this amount was to be expended for a few years, the farmer could own all the facilities for reporting their crops and markets, holding for advantageous prices and transporting them to markets.

Another way:

If it was not desired to raise money by an assessment on the crops, each member, when he is getting benefits such as this society will give, will willingly pay a few dollars a year to provide facilities for handling his business. With a membership of five million, an assessment of $10 each will raise a fund of fifty million dollars. If this amount is expended each year for five or ten years all the really necessary facilities will be provided. It is not, however, proposed to decide on the way to do these things now. But rather to organize and put the farmers in condition to do whatever they want to do when the time comes. Thus with no compulsion to sell, with facilities to store, with power to make prices, the farmers will be what they ought to be and now are in theory —independent.

But it is proposed to use this power fairly and honorably. It is not proposed to favor a high price, but simply a profitable price. And every one is entitled to a profitable price if he can get it. The question is how to get it. By the plan of the A. S. of E. no hardship will be imposed on any one, and the con-

sumers of farm products have nothing to fear. Indeed, it has already been shown that the whole country is interested in having the farmer get profitable prices. There need be no conflict of interest here.

What difference would it make to the consumer whether the price of wheat is eighty cents or a dollar a bushel? The average consumption of wheat is about five bushels per capita, or twenty cents increase per bushel is one dollar increase a year. This will be eight and one-third cents a month, or less than one-third cent a day. For a family of four persons a little more than one cent a day. The question is, however, whether bread would be dearer. I think present bakers' bread prices were made when wheat was higher, and they have not been put down. Also it is proposed to reduce the price of so many commodities when this society is in operation—notably meat—that the average will clearly be in favor of the consumer.

But suppose the establishment of the farmers' society and the Third Power would result in a slight advance in food. Wages have been increased out of all proportion to any advance that can result here. Also by giving the farmers a lift now along with the general industrial elevation we will be increasing his consuming powers for all manufactured goods, and for everything he can consume on the farm and in his family, thus benefiting the laborers in prospect of continued high wages. Also if we put the farmers in a position where each of them will keep one or

more hired men at union wages, the year around, which is what this movement means, we make a market for labor such as was never before dreamed of.

Is it necessary to illustrate this further? Is it not clear that if marketing was done systematically and the existing demand supplied, and no more, that prices can be maintained at equitable rates? The American Society of Equity, through its board of directors, will be the head or clearing house to the entire agricultural industry. Through the official paper and the press of the country this head will speak to every member weekly and give news about crops and crop prospects; advice about market and marketing. All the millions of farmers will have the same advice at the same time about the same things from an authentic head quite in contrast with the blind guessing as at present. All will thus be possessed of the same knowledge, influenced by the same motives, and they may act as one man—in short, cooperate—for the single purpose of securing the equitable minimum price.

The plan of the American Society of Equity is broad enough and comprehensive enough to care for every branch of agricultural effort—the grain grower, the stock feeder, the dairyman, the poultry man, the cotton grower, the tobacco grower, the fruit grower, etc. As soon as it is in operation it will benefit the largest operator, no difference in what line nor where situated, and also the owner of a few rods

of ground, by securing stability of price, which means stability of prosperity.

The plan is to recommend a minimum price at which staple crops shall be sold in leading or base markets. For instance, grain prices will be based on Chicago, cotton on New York or New Orleans, etc. Other markets and the farm prices will then be regulated by the base market. The farm price will be the base market price less transportation and cost of handling. Farmers whose produce does not go to the base market can calculate the freight from the principal market that receives their crops. This minimum value will be named each year when the crop is produced and will be equitable on the basis of production and consumption, lower in years of large crops than in years of small crops, but always a price that will protect the farmer. If speculators force the price over the minimum price the farmers may, of course, take it. Farmers will be expected, however, to stop marketing when the market will not take more at the minimum price. The minimum price will be the safety valve which will regulate the supply to the demand.

It must be understood that there has not been a genuine surplus of any farm crop produced in many years. All have gone into consumption. It is the temporary surplus that is responsible for low prices, and it is this temporary surplus that the farmers are expected to control in the American Society of Equity. We see illustrations nearly every day in

the market reports, when the visible of any crop increases considerably from free marketing the price goes down. When farmers stop marketing, prices go up. This is very clearly shown in the cattle markets. We reproduce from the Chicago Live Stock World as follows:

"Country shippers are surely not hurting cattle buyers by sending in little runs of cattle on days when more could be used at steady prices and piling up a glut on one or two days when prices go off ten to twenty-five cents and oftentimes worse.

"Here is the way it looks on paper:

Monday receipts.....	36,010, prices 10 @ 15c lower
Tuesday receipts.....	7,081, prices steady
Wednesday receipts..	25,174, prices steady
Thursday receipts.....	11,472, prices 10 @ 15c higher
Friday receipts.....	2,990, prices 10 @ 15c higher
Monday again.....	36,000, prices 10 @ 15c lower

"It ought not to be hard to figure out who gets the worst of this sort of a distribution of cattle."

But there are those who think that the farmers are getting fair prices now—and of course they do get fair prices sometimes. However, let us consider the case of wheat as typical. Is $1 too much? For the past fourteen years, from 1888 to 1902, the average price of wheat in Chicago was 76 2-3 cents. The average yield is less than thirteen bushels an acre. Taking thirteen bushels as a liberal average, it appears that during this time the farmer has realized $9.95 off each acre planted in wheat. This is for the use of an acre for one year, and must cover the cost of labor, of seed, of sowing, of care, of harvesting,

of twine, of threshing and of marketing. From this must further be deducted interest on investment, loss of fertility in the soil, wear and tear of machinery and operator's profit. It is such a price as this that is responsible for the farm laborer earning only twenty-six cents a day and that has put farmers in the very lowest class of laborers. Surely even those who hold that $1 is too high must admit that 76 2-3 cents is too low.

Thus it is that question of price is fundamental. We are all interested, not simply in the farmer, but in his land—which, in a sense, belongs to all of us. Rudyard Kipling, writing of the American, says:

> "An easy unswept hearth he lends
> From Labrador to Guadeloupe;
> Till elbowed out by sloven friends,
> He camps, at sufference, on the stoop."

It is so. We have been prodigal with our national domain, and we have invited people from all over the world to come here, take up land, and compete with those already in possession. And now we find that many of our farms are in an impoverished condition from long cropping, and the return from grain and other farm products is not sufficient to justify the expense of restoring the fertility. Farmers have truly sold their birthright for a mess of pottage. This is obviously a very serious matter, and it can only be dealt with by securing equitable prices for all farm products. The farmer should have $1 for

wheat this year (1903), and a proportionate price for all his other products. He can get these prices through the American Society of Equity, which is the organized Third Power.

CHAPTER XII

In council there is wisdom,
  In union there is strength,
And by cooperation
  We will succeed at length.
With a bold, united effort
  We are sure to win the day,
When Equity shall triumph
  And producers will have their way.

Now this is our condition,
  Though a shameful tale to tell;
The speculator prices
  The things we have to sell;
And when we want to purchase
  Our purchases come high,
For the speculator prices
  The things we have to buy.

Having spoken of the present dependence of the farmer on other classes, and having shown the effect of low prices on his consuming power, and also on his land, it seems necessary, before leaving this question of prices, to say a few words about the earnings of the farmer and present additional comparisons. There are many who tell him of his happiness, prosperity and independence. While there is no intention to make things appear worse than they are it is intended to put the exact truth before the farmer. The

census of 1900 shows that, taking all the farmers together, the average income per family during the census year was only $643, or only a little over $2 a day, counting 300 working days to the year. The average income of the families of other laborers was $1,146, or over $4 a day. Two and a third million of farmers' families had a yearly income of less than $200, while 4,000,000 families had an income of less than $400 each. Only one family in eight had an income of more than $800. If these figures are wrong then the census returns are wrong. Remember, they represent the *average* farmer.

Are farm prices equitable when two-thirds of the families on the farm are limited to an income of less than $400 a year each? For this they must work longer hours at the most exacting and wearisome labor, oftentimes under the most disagreeable conditions, while the laborers in towns and cities, who are largely engaged in producing the goods that the farmers buy, work short hours, under pleasant conditions, and receive three times the reward. Bradstreets has figured that manufacturers, with an investment of ten billion dollars, produce thirteen billions of products, while the farmer, with an investment of twenty billions, produces only five billions of products. In other words, the dollar of the manufacturer returns him $1.30 of products, while the dollar of the farmer returns him only 25 cents of products. Where is the equity when a dollar invested in one form of manufacturing returns five times as much

as in another? Is not James J. Hill, the railroad magnate, right when he says: "The time has come when the United States should take steps to strengthen the backbone of the country—the farming class," and James Wilson, our secretary of agriculture, when he says: "We can not do too much for our farmers"? Prices of farm products will never be maintained at profitable rates by the government, nor by buyers, nor by consumers. Uncertainty of values of farm products will never be at an end until, through national cooperation, farmers make their own prices on the farm.

When we consider the slight reward that the farmer gets for his labor we can understand why rural America is to-day largely the reflection of wasted efforts and hopes not realized. It should be a paradise of prosperous farms, beautiful homes, and happy, contented families. An equitable distribution of rewards will make it all this. Yet it is said that the farmer is responsible for the high prices which have recently prevailed. This is but an effort to shoulder off on him the burden which rightfully rests on the shoulders of the trusts and speculators. An illustration will serve to prove this. A bushel of wheat, for which the farmer may receive 72 cents in the Indianapolis market, will make forty pounds of flour, sixteen pounds of bran and four pounds of waste. The consumer pays 3 cents a pound for the flour, or $1.20, and the farmer buys the bran back at $22 a ton, or 19 cents. Here is a total of $1.39 produced

from an original value of 72 cents. It is thus seen that the farmer's wheat has doubled in price by the time it reaches the consumer. By the route of the bakery 50 to 100 per cent. more will be added. It is the same way with the farmer's meat, butter, eggs, fruit, vegetables, cotton, etc. The farmers are not responsible for the price consumers pay. They are not now and never were responsible for the high cost of living. And the consumers should rejoice at the thought that the farmers soon will be in a position, through the help of the American Society of Equity, to cut out the mountains of profit that have been raised between the producers and the consumers.

In the meantime it is important that the American people should know that both the price that the farmer gets and the price the consumer pays are made by organized speculators, trusts, middlemen and manufacturers. They say that prices are made by the law of supply and demand—which is the merest subterfuge. That law, under present conditions, is a myth and a fraud. It may be better called a machine erected by the boards of trade to work in an organized market, and directed against an unorganized source of supply. This machine is equipped with numerous levers, wheels and spigots. As you pull a lever of frosts, floods or drought, you reduce the supply, and prices go up. Turn a wheel of increased visible supply or open a spigot of favorable weather in the Argentine or elsewhere, and prices go down. And there are men who put in all their days and

nights pulling levers, turning wheels and opening spigots. And thus it is that the farmers and the consumers alike are robbed and squeezed.

We have seen that the farmer does not get high prices, that his annual average income is pitifully small, that the returns on his investment are meager, and that, not getting high prices for himself, he is not responsible for the high prices the consumer pays. And yet, confronting such a situation as this, all that the farmer asks is equity. Shall he not have it? Ought any man, with a proper sense of obligation to himself, to his family and to his country, to be satisfied with anything less than equity? Is it not what we all pretend to want for ourselves, and profess to be willing and eager to grant to others? The American farmer is very patient—proverbially so. He has been compared to Issachar, of whom we have this record in the Bible:

"Issachar is a strong ass crouching down between two burdens, and he saw that rest was good and the land that it was pleasant, and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute."

Rest may be good, and the land may be pleasant, but he who consents to become "a servant unto tribute" will know little of what is good or pleasant. It is on the patience and docility of the farmer that the capitalists and politicians have traded. And even now they are predicting the failure of the American Society of Equity, because, as they say, the farmer is contented and happy, and don't need it. Are they

right? It is for the farmers themselves to say. If they want "rest" and would enjoy "pleasant" country that they have made their own, they must make up their minds that they will have to free themselves from "tribute," assert their rights as American citizens, and at the same time show that moderation of which we all boast by demanding only what is equitable. So the American Society of Equity offers them the means by which they can demand and secure fair prices.

The need of some such agency as this has been shown, and so far it appears that the American Society of Equity is thoroughly adapted to meet the emergency, inasmuch as its aims, as thus far pointed out, are just what those of the farmer should be. It will be shown as we proceed that the other objects in view are quite as important as those already described. For the present we have the assurance that the society proposes to secure, or enable the farmers to secure, a fair price for their products, and to cooperate with them in securing facilities for holding or marketing products and in getting equity from those with whom they deal.

CHAPTER XIII

Then awake ye honest farmers,
  Producers one and all,
And let us be united,
  For divided we must fall.
Now a better day is dawning,
  When producers will be free,
For Equity is coming
  Through our grand A. S. of E.

Through Equity we'll conquer,
  No other way we can,
For in Equity we acknowledge
  The brotherhood of man.
In Equity there's justice,
  True principle of right;
Then let us join together,
  And work with all our might.

There is not one thing that the American Society of Equity proposes to do that does not bear directly on the question of price. As we have seen, it is intended to secure equitable rates for transportation. The price he is to ask is the minimum price that he may decide is fair in some selected market, and then deduct from that the fair cost of transporting and handling the products. When the minimum price is decided upon then the smaller the amount he has to deduct on this account the more will there be left for

the farmer. With reasonable rates, and with his crops stored in elevators or warehouses owned by the American Society of Equity, or local unions of the same, so much larger will be the profits of the farmer. So the plan is to increase his income both by raising prices and by lowering the cost of moving, handling and marketing the crops. This latter, however, is more in the interest of the consumer. What matters it to the farmer whether the middlemen or railroad charge 50 cents a bushel or $1 a cwt. for carrying his produce to market? In his fundamental position he puts his price on the absolutely necessary articles of food and clothing before any other person or corporation can touch them. Therefore, he takes his profit—all that he wants or in equity should have—first. You can not fail to realize the strength of position of the farmer, when organized, by this illustration. Therefore, it is mainly to protect the consumer and secure the maximum market that he, through his society, will interest himself in the elevator charges, railroad rates, taxes, insurance and a thousand other things. None of these things can hurt the farmer when organized, but through his strength he can prevent them from working injury to others.

It has been shown already what an influence the farmer could have on the railroads by simply putting himself in a position where he could refuse to ship unless the prices and freights were satisfactory to him. The railroads can not exist unless they have

stuff to haul and plenty of it. They are dependent, directly or indirectly, on the farmer, and they can easily be made to feel their dependence. This question of transportation is a very large and important one, in that it involves the future development and settling up of the country. Indeed, the whole history of the march of men across this continent is a history of transportation. It has been said by some supposedly wise men that our people have moved westward along parallels of latitude. But it is not so. They moved along the watercourses, first down-stream, and then up-stream. Always the effort was to make transportation as easy as possible. And the railroads have contributed powerfully to the making of the country. We must give them full credit. Still when it comes to carrying the farmer's produce east they have not always been reasonable in their charge.

And it seems to be probable that they are going to be more unreasonable as time goes on. While there was fierce competition competing points at least got the benefit of low rates, though non-competing points suffered severely. The railroads taxed the latter to make up for the low rates of necessity granted to the former. Certain sections have been discriminated against; all rates have often been too high, and some rates have always been too high. But it has been suggested that the situation may get worse for the farmer. If the tendency toward railroad consolidation goes on we may see an end to competition. It is certain that the purpose of combination is to check

and control competition. If it succeeds the farmer will be forced to look out for his own interests. He should be in a position to say that he will not ship at all unless he can be sure of a fair net price on the farm for the products of his own toil.

The farmer is often told that the railroads are his friends. He himself need not be an enemy to the railroads in order to realize that there are no friendships in the business world. That world is a world of struggle and conquest. In that struggle the strongest win. Under present conditions the railroads will be as fair to the farmer as it pays them to be. Under the conditions which it is proposed to create they will be as fair as the farmer can compel them to be. Other men use the power that they possess, often in illegal and criminal ways, to coerce the railroads into favoring them. It is not intended that the farmers shall do anything illegal or criminal, but it is meant that they should realize that these unfair concessions are paid for by less powerful and favorable shippers, the farmers among them. So it is important that these latter should stand up for their own rights. If all shippers were treated equally there is reason to believe that freight rates could be reduced considerably, to the great benefit of the whole country.

Further, in the vast reorganization schemes of which we have heard so much, some of the railroads have been over-capitalized just as other industries have. And the farmer has to pay enough to enable

these roads to pay interest and make dividends on their vast issues of bonds and stocks that don't represent real value. He may well question the fairness of this arrangement. At any rate, the American Society of Equity will give some attention to this vital question of transportation. The individual farmer can not fight the railroads, but he can make a good showing as a member of a great and powerful organization numbering a million or more, made up of farmers all over the country determined to get their rights. Mr. John D. Rockfeller, who knows something of the virtues of combination, and who has recently been engaged in an effort to secure control of large systems of railroads, says:

"To fight the battle alone is to be lost. Association with others is an absolute necessity if we would be successful. In union there is strength and success. We can see this illustration every day in the business world."

Mr. Rockefeller is right. Especially is organization necessary for the farmers who are at the present moment unorganized themselves, fighting organizations in practically every branch of industry. Mr. Rockefeller's reference to the "business world" does not at present include the farmers. Everybody knows that they are not considered business people. But is it not time for them to get into the business world? What is good for one class of people who produce, manufacture and sell, is good for others. If "in union there is strength and success" for Rockefeller

and his associates, why would it not mean strength and success for the farmers? A good many years ago the Chinese were oppressed and harried by the civilized nations of the world very much as they are to-day. The people of China could make no headway against the trained soldiers of Europe. Finally a formidable rebellion broke out in the empire, and the authorities secured the services of that great Christian soldier, Charles George Gordon, who organized his Ever Victorious Army, and with it suppressed the rebellion without losing a single battle. No better army followed a gallant leader to victory. And to-day, if there were another Gordon at the head of a Chinese army, he might sweep Russia out of Manchuria and compel all the powers of the world to respect the integrity and the sovereignty of that ancient empire. Yet precisely the thing that the Chinese lacked was the power of organization and cooperation. But when they did act together it was with decisive results.

It can be so with the American farmers. They, too, have been oppressed and harried by highly organized bands of marauders, and they have been unable to protect themselves simply because they have not acted together. What we want to see is an Ever Victorious Army of American farmers, which shall fight, not for conquest, but in righteous defense of their rights, their families and themselves. Their victory, which will be sure, will redound to their own

honor and prosperity and to the welfare of the whole country. We want a new declaration of independence and a new independence day. God grant that it will come speedily.

CHAPTER XIV

Thus the syndicates and bankers
Always crying out for bonds,
With both feet on the neck of labor,
While they're clipping their coupons.
With their palace cars and banquets
They can pass their time away,
And you old honest farmers
Will have their banquet bill to pay.

There are many corporations
That's no better now than knaves;
For they pay starvation wages
And make men and women slaves;
And they work the little children
In their sweat-shops day by day,
And to fill the rich man's coffers
They must wear their life away.

In the daily papers a year ago was this interesting item:

"An increase of $4,500,000 in the capital stock of Deere & Co. was announced here to-day. The present capital of the concern is $1,500,000, and the stockholders have voted to increase this to $6,000,000. The additional capital is to provide for the remarkable growth and expansion of the business during the past few years and the further increase that is assured. It has all been subscribed by the present owners."

Of course this meant that the farmers will have to pay the dividends on this quadrupled stock in the price of agricultural implements made by this firm. And this brings to the front another one of the objects of the American Society of Equity, which is to enable the farmer to buy advantageously. It is a fact that the farmers frequently pay much more for their farm supplies than is necessary to insure a fair profit to the manufacturer and the merchant. As I write a letter comes from a member in Oklahoma. He says: "I am paying 2 per cent. per month for money to meet current expenses so I can hold my wheat for $1." Must such sacrifice and determination go unrewarded? Would any banker dare charge a farmer 24 per cent. a year if they were thoroughly organized? Besides, the margin of profit placed on goods sold to the farmers is often much greater than that added to goods sold to the people of the towns and cities. The reason is clear. In trading, the farmer is not an independent person. He does business as the merchant or manufacturer dictates. He is usually a debtor to the implement dealer and the storekeeper, whereas if he had cash to pay for his supplies he could buy more cheaply in any market in the country. Wherever the farmer turns to make his purchases he finds himself face to face with a trust or union. He is worsted in the encounter and loses some of the legitimate results of his work when he puts his unorganized skill and labor against the organized efforts of the union la-

borer. He loses again in the encounter with the organized miners who mine the steel—or, rather, the iron from which the steel is made—which enters into his implements. He loses when he meets the woodworkers, the wagonmakers, the furniture makers, the implement makers, the horseshoers, the threshermen, the milk handlers, the carpenters, the masons who build his buildings, the armies who manufacture the household articles, the clothing, the army of leather workers, and behind them the army of tanners, the armies which run the railroads, and the armies which run the trains over the roads to haul to market the products of the farmer. The farmer does not drive a nail, use a pin, lift a hoe or spade, coil a rope, or turn a furrow but he pays tribute to some one of the numerous armies arrayed against him. Day and night, night and day, he is being taxed for the support of these armies, all because he is meeting them single-handed, can not resist their encroachments, nor pass the tax along. Plainly he needs help to enable him to buy advantageously, which will be, largely again, in the interest of the consumer.

And this it is hoped to give him. Considering the great number of farmers who will be members of the American Society of Equity, and the fact that they will soon have a good cash balance as the result of selling at profitable prices, there can be no doubt that they will be able to purchase for cash and at the lowest prevailing prices. Even if the farmer buys his supplies with his own produce, his ability to put

a price on it will enable him to turn it in at higher figure than is now possible. He will no longer be under the necessity of asking for long credit, and whatever credit he may need he will get on the same favorable terms that other business men receive. Mention has already been made of the combination among the threshing men, which enables them to charge seven cents a bushel for threshing. If a farmer were able to say to the thresher that he would pay five or four cents, and that no farmer in the United States would pay a cent more, and if this was an equitable price, he would get his threshing done for four or five cents. This is the position in which the American Society of Equity would place every farmer in the country with reference to buying. Probably as much money is lost to the farmer by exorbitant prices which he has to pay as by the inadequate prices which he is compelled to take. He loses in both directions. It is time to stop the loss. The farmers can do it if they will, for they have the power, and their interest demands that they should use it. If they apply it properly, that is, through organization, the result can not be doubtful.

In seeking to buy at fair prices the farmer, through the American Society of Equity, will help all the people. Economically the struggle of man is for cheapness. Men in trying to satisfy their wants always endeavor to do so as cheaply as possible. The call for cheapness by the farmer has, in the past, been of necessity, and this necessity has been of

such a degree that they not only got cheapness but nastiness—low grade. Witness the volume of trade to some catalogue houses, where the chief recommendation was cheapness. The success of the American Society of Equity will benefit the home dealer who will keep a high grade of goods and sell at equitable prices. We look for a turning from the cheap, low grades, to high grade goods at equitable prices.

We have seen how the price of farm products has been influenced by this tendency, and also how manufacturers combine to resist the tendency. Every new invention, every new process, every application of a newly discovered force, and every improved application of a well-known force, contribute to bring about cheapness. The old force of competition works toward the end. But recently we have had a great advance of prices with no effective effort to resist the advance.

The farmers propose to take the field in a campaign for lower prices on the things they buy where lower prices should prevail, and they are going to use a force the operation of which will be irresistible. It is not so much a high price or a low price, but an equitable price all around that is demanded. The entrance of the Third Power through the American Society of Equity into the economic problems of the world marks an epoch in the history of the race. Although the last of the great powers to be organized, it is yet the fundamental or first power

or force which will dominate all others. The development of this society and the power it will represent and wield may be compared with the development of the force, electricity, which has revolutionized the industrial world. The awakening of the agricultural classes, the organization of them into a great national and international cooperative body, which is now being accomplished, will make possible the control by them of practically all the material that enters into the manufacturing and commerce of the world, and on which human and animal life depend. Such a revolution might appall us were it not for the fact that in working out this stupendous movement everything will be in the direction of improvement and better conditions for everybody and for every legitimate enterprise.

It will be so in the matter of prices. There will not be one price for the farmer and another for the working man and professional man. Whatever conquests the farmers win in this direction will be for the benefit of all. What the farmer gets, all will get. In fighting his own battle the farmer will fight the battle of every American citizen. It will be impossible to charge the farmer a fair price and to charge other classes an unfair price. So the American Society of Equity does not come to oppress or enslave any class, but to give liberty and independence to the greatest class of citizens, and through that to all others—not to destroy or cripple any institution, but to benefit and strengthen all institutions, including the

government itself. Heretofore farmers thought when organizing they must fight every institution on earth to get their right. This we admit is human nature, but also is a relic of barbarism. There are too many such relics remaining. The farmers really have *no fight* against anybody or anything; all they need is equity, and this they can take, regardless of the disposition of other parties.

Many schemes have been devised, and many more suggested, for the regulation and control of trusts. The law does something, and more stringent legal enactments might do more. But no curb can be as effectual as an organization of American citizens greater and stronger than the trusts themselves. Through this and through this alone can trust extortion be prevented, and fair treatment be secured for all. The people can do it for them. And the trust magnates understand this. With the help of shrewd and unscrupulous attorneys they can usually find a way to evade the most formidable statute, and to organize so as to get within the letter of the law. But they could make little headway with the people organized against them, and when the farmers are organized the people will be organized. How could the cotton or woolen manufacturers get along without the farmer's cotton or wool, or the packers without his cattle? This but indicates the power which the farmer could exert as a member of the American Society of Equity. He could oppose his trust—if you choose to call it so—to the manufacturing trusts,

and in such a contest the farmer must, of necessity, win. This is a force—this new force, this Third Power—which the industrial trusts would understand and respect. Thus organized, the farmers could meet their enemies and oppressors on their own ground, and overthrow them, if necessary, for the common good. The trust problem would be solved, and solved in such a way as to benefit all. And the farmer, enabled both to buy and sell advantageously, would enjoy a prosperity and freedom such as he has never known, and that prosperity and freedom would be shared by all our people. The world has been waiting long for this Third Power. Now it is at hand.

CHAPTER XV

If farmers were only half as persistent
As politicians are wholly inconsistent,
    What a different footstool!
They walk up to the secret voting booths,
The aged and younger and hopeful youths,
And vote for men that others may choose
    Over them to rule.

The farmer produces the wealth of the land;
In framing the laws he should take a hand—
    Insist upon his rights.
He feeds the whole world by sweat and toil,
Forces great crops from the resisting soil,
From famine a safe and shielding foil,
    And no wrong incites.

Something has been said of the influence that the farmer can exert through organization on the politics of the country. One of the purposes of the American Society of Equity is to enable him to exert such influence. Here, again, it is not because the farmers, organized, need to look to politics for relief or strength on their account, but for the general welfare of humanity. The farmers, through their society, not only intend to do equity, but to get equity; not only to give equity, but to demand equity. It is not the object of the society to become

a political party. But it is intended to secure, through already existing parties, laws in the interest of agriculture. Though legislation is not the first thing sought, nor the most important thing, legislation is nevertheless needed. The reason that it has not been secured is that the politicians, though prolific in promises, when seeking election, forget all about the farmers when they get to Washington. They quickly fall under other influences. Moreover, they know that the farmers are easily put off; that they do not persist in the pursuit of their aims, and that when election day comes round again they may be trusted to support the party, readily accepting excuses and trusting to new promises. Nor are the farmers adequately represented in Congress by men of their own class. Thus they are largely without influence in shaping legislation. Until they are in a position, through cooperation, to secure what they want, progress will be slow. With the American Society of Equity a success, all these things can be rapidly accomplished.

It is not necessary to set out here all that the country needs in the way of legislation. But some things may be mentioned. Possibly the first and most important thing is some lightening of the burden of taxation; and this also implies less extravagance with the people's money, less graft, rake-offs and boodle, or, in short, the money wisely and economically expended, when we will see greater results with less tax. The farmer is taxed on everything

he buys and yet is protected on scarcely anything he sells. This is an evil that must be righted, and it can be righted, but only by the combined efforts of the farmers. Until there are such efforts nothing will be done. As long as there are a few people who can control the taxing power of the government, and many people who are content to have that power so used, it is idle to hope for relief. The few will control as long as the many allow them to control—and not one moment longer. Even the slightest measure of relief is denied at the present time. Opportunities have long been presented for making reciprocal commercial treaties with foreign nations that would have had the effect of making a much larger market for farm products, but they have invariably been put aside at the dictation of selfish interests demanding protection. Treaty after treaty of this sort has been killed or allowed to die in the Senate, which has been indifferent to the welfare of the farmer if only the protected industries were allowed to have a monopoly of the home market. Rather than remove or lower the duty on one article manufactured in New England, our Congress has preferred to allow the farmer to get along as best he could—to find his own market. Yet when protection hurts a certain corporation, Congress is quick to grant a rebate of the tax on any product that goes into a manufactured article when that article is exported. But nothing is done for the farmer.

Yet there are many millions of foreigners who

could be taught to consume the fine cereals and meats produced on our American farms, if an earnest and well-directed effort were made to open and cultivate foreign markets. Lower taxes and wider markets could thus both be secured by legislation, and the American Society of Equity will work for such legislation, bringing directly to bear on Congress the influence of over 10,000,000 American voters who now play little part in the business of lawmaking. This constant failure of the efforts to secure reciprocity has another bad effect on the farmer, for it provokes retaliation on the part of other countries from which the farmer even now suffers, and will suffer still more. Our fruits, cattle and meat products have been made the subjects of discriminating taxes and vexatious inspection imposed and resorted to by foreign governments in retaliation for exorbitant duties levied by our government on their exports to this country. There are threats of further retaliation, and we even hear talk of a European combination to save the European markets from the so-called American invasion. Yet we go on in the same old way, and our manufacturers get even for the low prices at which they must sell abroad, by charging the home consumer greatly higher prices. Thus the farmers are kept out of foreign markets that they ought to have, simply that the manufacturers may plunder the home market.

Such arrangements as these are plainly not the

work of the farmers or of the friends of the farmer. They were devised by men who understood perfectly that the agricultural class is docile, patient, and most easily fleeced. The farmer is not interested in paying taxes for the benefit of people who never seek to benefit him, in narrowing the market for farm products, or in provoking retaliation from foreign governments. What he wants is freedom, equity, fair play to all, markets as wide as the world, low taxes—and not one of these things is his at the present time. With all these, and with the American Society of Equity at work in his behalf, he probably would need little else from the government. But whatever he needed, he would get. For the politicians, who now so quickly forget the farmer, would realize that it was dangerous to do so, if they found that they were dealing with a great organization acting as a unit—an organization that refused to accept promises as legal tender, but that insisted on a redemption of those promises in honesty and good faith. Thus may the farmers make their influence felt in the condition of affairs which is rightfully theirs. The Third Power can easily defeat the first, second or third house. The farmers will be ignored as long as it is safe to ignore them, and no longer. The thing to do is to make it unsafe. The American Society of Equity is the means to bring that result to pass.

CHAPTER XVI

Of all the modern ideas,
  In the North, South, East or West,
The justice bringing idea
  Of Equity is best.
It can harm no human calling,
  And can boast none o'er the rest;
But brings equal chance to all of them,
  And therefore it's the best.

Manifestly it will be impossible for the farmers to cooperate unless they are kept thoroughly informed of what is going on in every part of the country, and indeed of the world. It would be foolish, to take a simple case, to attempt to fix and maintain a price on farm products unless each member knew what that price was. This information, at least, must be regularly furnished. It will be conveyed to the various members of the society through their official paper, which is a part of the plan. This official organ will be printed four times a month as soon as the society is sufficiently organized, and there can be little doubt that with this plan in operation the recommended price will be printed by all the other daily and weekly papers as regularly as the markets are reported now. The recommended price will have to be printed by all newspapers hav-

ing a market department, for it will also be the market price.

With this knowledge, concert of action will be easy. For every member of the society will have the same price and the same advice about the same crop at the same time, and, feeling sure that purchasers can not get those products from any one else for less than they can get them from him, he will be under no temptation to sell for less himself. Without this knowledge it would be wholly impossible to make the scheme work. But further than this, it is felt that the members of the society should have information that would convince them that prices agreed on are fair and reasonable—and attainable. So it is proposed, through the local unions or members, to carry on a system of crop reporting that will surpass anything ever before accomplished, or even attempted. Every member will be a crop reporter. The present system, or lack of system, of reporting crops is the source of great loss to the farmers. Take wheat, for instance: The harvest begins in Texas in May and ends in the Dakotas about September. Yet, as a matter of fact, crops are maturing and harvests are in progress in some part of the world every day in the year. From the beginning to the end of the harvest in this country, and more or less every day in the year, false crop reports are circulated, the yields are exaggerated, damage from weather, insects, etc., is emphasized, and all manner of frauds and deceptions are prac-

tised. The result is that the market fluctuates every day, and often several times a day, until the poor bewildered farmer sells rather than holds against uncertainties. The government reports, from the very conditions under which they are obtained, can not be more than reasonably good guesses, and consequently they are not held in good repute. So much discredit has sometimes been placed upon them that the market has been known to have acted in exactly the opposite way from that in which the reports should have influenced it.

So, the American Society of Equity will see to it that the farmers have full and accurate reports of conditions and crops. The size of the yield, and the character of the product; the nature of the season, whether favorable or unfavorable—all this will the members of the society get. Each member will be in a position to report the exact condition of growing crops on his own farm, and also yields and quantities on hand. He can also give a correct report of his neighbor's crop, if that neighbor does not belong to the society. These reports will be given to the secretary at each meeting, to be forwarded, or will be sent to headquarters, direct by members, where they will be tabulated by statisticians, and in this way more accurate results will be secured than could be obtained in any other way. The crop reports and market conditions will be sent to each member, and thus all will be able to cooperate in asking and obtaining uniform prices. This is not only one of the

strongest features of the proposed plan—it is an absolutely essential feature. With such trustworthy information, prices can be adjusted in such a way as to be equitable to both producer and consumer. Without this information such adjustment would be impossible.

But other information of an educational sort will be furnished by the American Society of Equity. Reference has already been made to the work of agricultural schools and colleges, but valuable as this work is, it does not meet the requirements. The time has arrived when more intensive farming must be practised, and conditions will soon be such that our farms must produce two or three times as much as they do now, if they are to supply the ever-increasing demands of the world. It is a fact that the average of our staple crops can be raised to three times the present average. This has been done in European countries, and what is done there can be duplicated here. Intensive farming implies more intelligent farming. To farm more intelligently, the people must be educated in the mysteries of the science. To educate them schools must be established and maintained. There are, at present, many agricultural schools and colleges, but they are not sufficient for the almost universal education of the young people from the farms which will be required when the American Society of Equity is in successful operation. Nor do they fully meet the requirements of the advanced agriculture that must be practised in

the near future. The schools and other institutions which it is proposed to establish should be the meeting-place of farmers within the neighborhood, and they should be looked to for enlightenment on the intricate matters related to seed, soil, fertilizers and cultivation. Each farm should be plotted; there should be a chart giving the analysis of the soil in each field, or parts of fields; and recommendations should be made regarding the plant food needed to produce 40 bushels of wheat, 80 bushels of oats, 100 bushels of corn and 250 bushels of potatoes, etc., to the acre. Such an institution could be of vast help in giving instruction concerning drainage, irrigation, breeding, stock, grain, fruits, vegetables; it could help in stamping out disease, fighting insects and blight, analyzing seeds for impurities, and guarding against and eradicating weeds. It could, and would, award prizes and medals for the best stock, the most successful crops, and in many ways it would guard and promote farmers' interests in the highest degree. The education which the sons and daughters of the farmer would get at these schools, at a merely nominal expense, would be of the greatest value, in that it would greatly increase their efficiency, and what is even more important, would give them a pride in and make them content with their lot in life. A membership of 5,000 for each such institution, and annual dues of $5, would afford a revenue of $25,000, from which enormous benefits would flow. And as agriculture is the foun-

dation of our national prosperity, we should strive to promote the most intelligent conditions on the farms to the end that our material prosperity may be large and perpetual.

Yet the qualification that has already been made must not be forgotten. All this education, as far as it involves the raising of larger crops, and an increase in productiveness of the land, would be calamitous unless the farmer also had the power to fix the price of his products. But with this power assured, and the American Society of Equity will assure it, the more education and the larger production there are, the better will it be for all. The two things hang together. The farmer must control the present supply before he devotes himself to the work of increasing it. And the greater his success in increasing it, the greater is the necessity that he should have the situation wholly within his own control.

CHAPTER XVII

The cause of Equity is good;
  It seeks not its own gain,
Against the weak ones of the earth,
  Who toil 'mid want and pain;
It welcomes all within its band,
  The strong as well as weak;
Its motto is, "Cooperate,"
  Each other's good to seek.

The cause of Equity is just;
  It lends a helping hand
In lifting up a mighty force—
  The third power in our land.
That is the struggle it may win
  Against foes unafraid,
Who wish to cause its overthrow,
  It needs each farmer's aid.

All this means, what cooperation must ever mean, unity and solidarity among the people cooperating. The farmers, instead of being strangers to one another and rivals and competitors of one another, will be friends and fellow helpers. This will be a great gain, and in many ways. Every person will be the better for knowing that he is a member of a great society the object of which is the good of all. He will know that while he is working for others, others are working for him, and that out of the combined effort good must come to the whole agricul-

tural class, and indeed to all other classes. There will be such an incentive to work and sacrifice as the American farmer has never known. The very sense of unity will be a great stimulus. Other men have found it so. They all have their organizations—manufacturers, working men, lawyers and physicians, etc., and these minister to their pride in their calling, and help to make that calling honorable and profitable. The farmers should learn from the experience of other workers unity, combination, cooperation, mutual helpfulness, each for all and all for each, instead of the fierce guerrilla warfare of competition—these are along the lines of present-day tendencies, and are the products of what we may truthfully call natural forces.

And it all strengthens the influences which make for self-help. There are many things that the farmers can do in combination that they never can do under the present individualistic system. It would be difficult to show, for instance, why farmers should not carry their own insurance. It has been abundantly demonstrated that fire risks on farm properties exclusively can be written at only a small fraction of what the old companies now charge. The hazard is slight, and of course it would be slighter still if each farmer were interested as a stockholder in the company which would have to pay for losses. Already there are farmers' insurance companies operating in various parts of the country, to the great satisfaction of their members. But whether it be

through local companies or through one central company, the farmers certainly ought to carry their own fire insurance. It is the same with life insurance. This insurance, if limited to the agricultural class, can easily be offered at a lower rate than that charged by companies that take all classes of risks up to the extra-hazardous. And with improved conditions on the farm, which it is intended to secure, life will be prolonged, and the farmer will become an even more desirable risk than he is now. This is incidental, and is not involved in the main plan, but it is important as being one of many things which the farmers may, and should, do for themselves. They even might, as has been suggested, in time, become their own bankers.

Viewed in this way the field of the American Society of Equity is almost limitless. It is remarkable how everything that is suggested contributes to solidarity. For example, the society will exert its influence to secure the improvement of the highways, toward which something has already been done. The amount of money that the farmers lose each year by bad and impassable roads is almost incalculable. The light loads which they are often compelled to haul, the wear on wagons and stock, the often enforced loss of a favorable opportunity to sell through the inability to get to town at all—all this is costly and wasteful. We all realize what the railroads have done for the farmer in the way of opening up markets, and we know that if the rail-

roads were allowed to get out of repair they would be of much less service. Insufficient or worn-out rolling stock, broken-down locomotives, unsafe tracks, weakened bridges, poor terminal facilities or none at all, would cost the farmer millions of dollars. It is precisely so in the case of wagon roads. When these are good and easy to be traveled every day in the year, there is just so much added to the value of the farm. When they are impassable, the value of the farm is lessened by just that much.

But this is not the whole story, one of the terrors of the farm is isolation and loneliness. Against these the American Society of Equity proposes to wage war by improving or compelling the improvement of the highways, in order that, among other things, there may be an increased social intercourse among the farmers. Good roads and human relationships alike tend to bind men together. Present conditions, on many American farms, have been beautifully and truthfully described by Meredith Nicholson in his poem, "Watching the World Go By":

Swift as a meteor and as quickly gone
A train of cars darts swiftly through the night;
Scorning the wood and field it hurries on,
A thing of wrathful might.

There, from the farmer's home a woman's eyes,
Roused by the sudden jar and passing flare,
Follow the speeding phantom till it dies,—
An echo on the air.

Narrow the life that always has been hers,
The evening brings a longing to her breast;
Deep in her heart some aspiration stirs,
And mocks her soul's unrest.

Her tasks are mean and endless as the days,
And sometimes love can not repay all things;
An instrument that rudely touched obeys,
Becomes discordant strings.

The train that followed in the headlight's glare,
Bound for the city and a larger world,
Made emphasis on her poor life of care,
As from her sight it whirled.

Thus from all lonely hearts the great earth rolls,
Indifferent though one woman grieve and die,
Along its iron track are many souls
That watch the world go by.

Is it not so? There is a spiritual side to this question of life on the farm that we can not safely ignore. And the man who is not deeply interested in making farm life all that it should be, and can be, is not fit to be an American citizen. We may not be able to bring the farm to the world, but we can take something of the world, its life, its virtues, its beauty and its intellectual stimulus to the farm. Something of this has been done already, as has been shown, but more remains to be done. We can not cure human discontent and dissatisfaction, but we can, and must, as far as possible, destroy those conditions which give discontent and dissatisfaction a reason for being.

CHAPTER XVIII

The time has surely now come to pass
When farmers should arise in solid mass
And throttle wrong.
They are the ordained rulers of the earth,
So intended from the day of creation's birth.
Without their help what'd our land be worth?
Arise, be strong!

General irrigation of the farms, the prevention of food adulteration, the settling of disputes without recourse to the courts, and the organization in other surplus-producing countries of societies similar to the American Society of Equity, are all within the scope of this movement; and they all have a direct bearing on the problem to be solved. With a constantly fertile and productive soil, freed from the wrongful competition of base and fraudulent products, relieved from the vexations and delays of litigation, and bound together with his fellows all over the world in a society seeking the good of all, the American farmer will be his own master, and will enjoy a peace, prosperity and dignity such as he never before knew.

Such will be the general result. Particularly, the farmer will find that the value of his land will increase from 25 to 100 per cent. Producing more

value, the farms will, of course, be worth more. It has been said that the capital invested in farming amounts to twenty billions of dollars, most of which is, of course, in land. This could easily be doubled, by making the farms more productive of money. Reference has been made to the action of a certain corporation in quadrupling its stock. This is common in the commercial world. Is it not in order for the farmers to declare their farms and plants worth four times the old value? It is quite the style for manufacturers of agricultural implements to quadruple their fortunes by the simple act of making a declaration to that effect, and then to put the price of their goods on a basis that will enable them to pay dividends on the increased capitalization. If the farmers must pay prices for their plows, cultivators and other machinery that makes such things possible for the manufacturers, why not put up the price of grain and farm produce so that the earning capacity of farms will be increased to such an extent that farmers also may declare their capital stock to be four times as great as it was?

But this would not be a case of simple "marking up," for the real value of the farms would be increased. With fair prices, close and intelligent cultivation, equitable laws for all, wide foreign markets, reciprocity, good roads, irrigation, information as to actual crop and market conditions, ability to direct produce to the best markets, systematic marketing

and organization, farm lands would rise in value greatly, and every farmer and the whole country would be the richer. On such a firmly established basis as this our national prosperity could hardly be shaken. As has been pointed out, the farmer could and would spend more money for improvements, more for education, and more for both necessities and luxuries. Indeed, things that are now luxuries would speedly become necessities. The certainty of the business, as contrasted with the present uncertainty, would put a new life and spirit into the farmers. They would be proud of their occupation, and happy and contented in it. Travel, books, pictures, better clothes, better house furnishings, more amusements, and a wider and fuller life, would all be in reach of the farmers. There would be no need of pinching economy in the good years to insure against distress in the bad years. Having a certain profit from their products, they would spend it freely, and every industry in the country would be benefited—even beyond the dreams of the past—thus benefiting every man, woman and child. The improvements that the farmer would feel that it was worth while to make would still further increase the value of the farms, and thus in every possible material way the improvement would be tremendous. The men on the farms would not have to work as hard as they do now, and they could shorten their working day, thus gaining time for other things. With a larger margin of profit, they would not be driven to raise

the largest possible crops in order to make a bare living. There would be less drudgery and more rational enjoyment, and thus rural life would take a charm which it so sadly lacks under present conditions. There would be more money, fewer notes in bank, possibly no mortgages, and with it a general ease and security which present uncertainty and anxiety make quite impossible. The farmer is the last man who should feel any anxiety, and yet anxiety seems to be almost his special foe. It grows out of the uncertainty that he feels in regard to his income from year to year, the inevitable result of uncertainty of weather, yields and prices and his sense of helplessness. It is from these things that he is asked to emancipate himself. Think for a moment of the effect that freedom of this sort has on the minds of men. They at once begin to feel that many things are worth while which never seemed to be so before. Even life itself becomes more worth while. This freedom would encourage the farmer to improve his property, to make his home more pleasant and attractive, would increase his pride in his occupation, keep his interest up to the mark and his mind on the alert, and would make his life the joy that it ought to be. To sum up: The effect of the American Society of Equity will be to benefit the farmers of the United States and of the world and all other businesses as well, for they are all dependent on the farm. It will mean higher education, better citizenship, less poverty, misery and crime, lower taxes,

fewer saloons, more schools and more innocent places of amusement. Present uncertainties as to price will be removed, farm values will increase, thus adding billions of dollars to the wealth of the country. Business everywhere will be stimulated, and there will be a more equal distribution of wealth, a much larger proportion of it remaining in the country. Speculation in the products of the farm will be done away with, and all its evil effects on those products and on the people who watch the board and ticker will vanish. The success of the American Society of Equity will make it possible for the farmers whose tastes run in that direction to have comfortable and even luxurious homes, and will make of the country a veritable paradise. And prosperity will be general and permanent because based on the prosperity of that industry on which all other industries depend. An ambitious program surely, but it can be carried out if the farmers will but loyally and intelligently cooperate. This is no dream—or, if it is, it is one that can be easily realized. The farmers of the United States can make it come true. The future of the United States of America is the future of agriculture; mark this prediction. So the appeal is to the patriotic as well as to the selfish motives of the farmers. Through their salvation the salvation of the country must be worked out.

CHAPTER XIX

Cooperate! Cooperate!
  If you would keep the boys
Contented with the farmer's lot,
  A sharer of his joys.
Lift them above the path that you
  Of old were wont to walk,
A humdrum round of drudgery,
  Where wolves of want close stalk.

Cooperate! Cooperate!
  The good wife needs a rest,
For she has shared your burdens long,
  Your true friend and your best.
Through countless tasks and thankless toil
  Her youth was gladly spent,
But now the load too heavy lies
  Upon her shoulders bent.

There are many problems that are troubling our wise men a good deal that will be solved by the successful operation of this plan. A few of them may well claim our attention. We have all read the mournful lamentation over the unwillingness of young men to remain on the farms. The tendency of population is, we are told, constantly toward the cities. And the tendency is growing stronger all the while. The percentage of the city to the total population is larger than it was ten years ago, it being

41 per cent. in 1890, and 47 per cent., counting in towns of 1,000 population and over, in 1900. The growth of cities in the United States is one of the most marked features in our American life. That the cities will continue to grow may be taken for granted, but there is no reason why they should grow so largely at the expense of the country and country towns.

A writer, discussing this question a short time ago, said that the reason the sons of farmers sought the cities was that city life was so much more complex than life on the farm, and that the whole tendency of our civilization was toward complexity. This may be the philosophy of it, and it is undoubtedly true that our people demand excitement and variety. Dullness and monotony are to most of us intolerable. So there is a shrinking from the uneventful farm life, and also a longing for the more stirring life of the large city. But this is not the whole of the question. What the American youth, whether he be country or city bred, wants above everything else is a career—an opportunity. The city offers a thousand chances to one offered by the farm. The chance of failure is greater in the city than on the farm, when a mere living is considered, but so is the chance of success. And Americans were ever drawn by risk. They will play for high stakes, and they do not as a rule grumble if they lose, provided they have had a fair chance to win.

So the young man wants his career. He considers

the case of his father, perhaps, and sees that he has worked drudgingly all his life for the most contemptible reward. Long hours, severe and heart-breaking toil, anxiety, pinching economy, self-denial and sacrifice, and finally old age, with, it may be, little to show for it all—what is there in the picture that is alluring to the high-spirited young man? The young man loves his home, and if he loves it he remembers it with affection, but still he knows that the life was narrow, that the hardships were many, and that the return was slight. Apparently there is nothing more in the life for him than there was for his father, and so he escapes to the city, where there is at least a chance for him to win his spurs. People may have theories and write learnedly on this subject, but there is no way of keeping the young man on the farm if we allow things to remain as they are. Our wise, good and honest men may deplore the tendency toward the city, but they can not honestly quarrel with the young man's choice. Nor can they forbid him to make his choice.

There is only one thing to be done, and that is to make farm life more attractive, and equip it with good possibilities. We can not exclude men from the cities or chain them to the farms, but we can allure, attract and keep them to the farms. And this is what we propose to do through the American Society of Equity. If the farmer's son could feel sure that he would get good prices for his products, that he would be able to control his own business, that he

would not, as now, be neglected by the government, be ridiculed by his acquaintances, and that all the capacity he possesses and all the education he might acquire would find abundant scope for exercise on the farm with the certainty of liberal reward, he would think long before migrating to the city. Give the farmer as many of the comforts of the city as he cares to possess, a fair chance at the city's amusements, plenty of books and papers and an education that would fit him to enjoy them, and he will, with a sure chance for a career, be quite content to remain a tiller of the soil. But if he is to be a mere drudge, a hewer of wood and drawer of water for others, we have no right to be surprised that agriculture has slight charm for the young man.

It is admitted that it is a bad thing both for the city and the country to have the young men in such large numbers leave the latter for the former. The professions are crowded; there are more clerks and bookkeepers than are needed, and the farm needs laborers more now than ever before, and it is besides dangerous when there is a large element of the population living in boarding-houses without any of the restraints and safeguards of home. This congestion of population is getting worse. And with it the chance for the individual is growing slighter all the time. Yet all the while there is a clamor for workers on the farms. Would the average young man run away from a good chance on the farm to a desperate struggle in the city with thousands of others perhaps

better equipped for it than he is? This is not likely. The farms need the young men, and it is to the interest of the nation that they should stay on the farm. There would be more than enough work for all if the conditions were right and if the workers could only be assured that it would pay to farm to the limit. With larger profits the farmer could afford to pay better wages and to grant a shorter working day to the men employed by him, and so those toilers who are now stranded in the city would be drawn to the farm, to the great advantage both of agriculture and themselves.

The possibilities in this direction are very great, and they should be attractive. Nothing is more needed in this country than a redistribution of the population wisely and judiciously made. To secure this we must make farming as attractive as it was meant to be by God when He created a garden and put a man in it to dress it. The poet Cowley writes: "God the first garden made, and the first city Cain," and Cowper assures us that "God made the country, and man made the town." True to his nature man has done what he could to spoil the country, God's handiwork. It can be, to some extent at least, restored to its lost estate. And it is fortunate that much is already being done to accomplish this. We have only to cooperate intelligently with forces already at work in order to keep the country from being depopulated and the city from being overcrowded. In some other countries rural life is popular.

It can be made so with us. Indeed, the popular taste is already turning in that direction. There is no business that demands more brains than agriculture if it is properly carried on. But in these days brains must be liberally paid. The competition for talent is severe, and the farm must be prepared to meet it. If there were assurance of adequate reward for farming even the present isolation and loneliness and other unsatisfactory conditions would not repel. Men go to the Klondike and live there simply that they may make their fortunes. They will brave anything for the sake of a chance to make their way in the world and to find free scope for the talent they feel stirring within them. The frozen north, the burning tropics, the islands of the sea, nay, the most barbarous and dangerous life—all these call to our young men, and they do not call in vain. Yet they turn their backs with something like contempt on the farm. Is it not strange? And does not the fact condemn us as a people? Surely we can do better than this. The American Society of Equity offers the chance. It would make farming attractive, and would again clothe it with the old seductiveness that it once had for our people in those days when every American citizen wanted to become a landowner. A shame it is that that charm has been lost. But it need not be lost permanently. Even as it is the life has a charm which the shriekers on the floor of the stock exchange and in the wheat pit know nothing of. For the farmer does produce something, and he

at least has the satisfaction of knowing that he is of some use in the world.

The problem, then, is to develop the life on the farm up to the full measure of its great possibilities. We must make farming a career in the sense that other honorable occupations are careers, assure the farmer of a fair return for his labor, develop in him a pride in his work, make him see that it is worth while for him to put into it all the brains he possesses and that scientific farming pays, and give him that intellectual stimulus which comes from a larger and freer life. We must elevate the farmer's business until it is on an equality with the best business in the country, and when farming as a profession is the best profession on earth. When we have done all this, when the Third Power at last asserts itself, there will be no difficulty in keeping the boys on the farm, and other boys will want to come. Is not the experiment worth trying? Do not the farmers see that they owe it to their profession, the most ancient and honorable of all professions, to exert themselves to the utmost to give it that standing in the eyes of the world that it ought to have and once did have? And can not all our people be made to understand that anything which contributes to the accomplishment of all these results is worthy of their cordial and enthusiastic support? There is nothing here suggested that may not be done. The question is, Will the farmers do it?

CHAPTER XX

Who, then, 's more entitled to inspire the laws,
Who'd take more interest in the common cause,
    Than he with good at heart?
As barnacles on the great ship of state,
Politicians decrease its fast sailing rate
And have no cares for its final fate;
    They know no chart.

It is, of course, quite impossible to consider this question apart from politics. Few questions in this country can be considered in this detached way. In this case it happens that there is a very direct and intimate connection between the reform proposed and politics—not party politics, but politics in the larger and more scientific sense. The air is full of talk about political reform. The abuses, injustices and oppressions incident to the business of government in this country are dwelt on with much emphasis. All know that corruption abounds on every hand, that graft is almost the law of our political life, that extravagance is the rule, that favoritism is prevalent, and that those with the strongest "pull" get the greatest consideration. There is discrimination everywhere, and it is in favor of the strong and against the weak. The law itself is too often the

mere agent of the rich and powerful for carrying out their doubtful schemes.

Why is all this true in a country in which the people are supposed to govern? None of us can be made to believe that the people are corrupt or that they deliberately prefer bad to good government. The people are not corrupt, and so far from preferring bad government it is they who chiefly suffer from it. The trouble is that the people do not govern. Nominally a democracy, this government is the oligarchy controlled by a comparatively small class in its own interest. The people simply take what is given to them. Thus we have turned our system upside down and are false to the fundamental law of our political being. When a scoundrel in the postoffice department is caught with money in his hands that does not belong there we all know that it is the people's money that he has stolen. When a rascally law is enacted taxing the people for the benefit of a few greedy and grasping individuals, it is not the people who are guilty of the oppression, for it is they that are oppressed. Divided into parties, the respectable and decent men of our cities are powerless to checkmate the rogues who prey on all alike, no matter what party they may belong to. The combination between men in office and corporations seeking franchises and favors is a combination in the interest of the politicians and the corporations and against the interest of the people. The people everywhere suffer, not because they govern, but because they are

governed, and really without their consent. Pulls, influence, money, party trickery, corporate corruption in politics practised by our leading citizens—these be our rulers. And to this perversion of our government from its true aim and purpose are due all the ills from which we suffer.

And it is only those who make something out of government who have any constant and effective influence in public affairs. President Hadley, of Yale University, writes:

"Except in those grave crises when a wave of patriotism sweeps over the community the support on which a democratic government relies is spasmodic and accidental. No man except the professional politician feels that the government is being run in his particular interest. On none, therefore, except the professional politician can it rely for continuous activity in giving effect to its decrees."

We all understand this perfectly well. Who are the men directly and keenly and continuously interested in politics if not those who work simply that they may get something out of the game? The men who speak in political campaigns are, as a rule, men who, if not paid outright for their services, expect to get appointments if their side wins. Year after year you see the same men hanging around the polls, and hoping, through their connection with the organization, to be "taken care of." Gradually the government has been wrested from the hands of the people, and more and more—and as a consequence—

the people have lost interest in it and influence with it.

Now the proposition is to restore to the people that supremacy which is rightfully theirs, and which they must have if this is ever again to be a government of the people. As this is even yet pre-eminently an agricultural country, the farmers are the people. With the millions of men directly interested in furthering their own interests, which are those of the people, and bound together in an organization, the usurpation of the politicians and corporations would be broken, and the real rulers would govern. Considered in this light the American Society of Equity —the Third Power—is an instrument for the restoration of true democratic government in the United States, regardless of name of party. No administration would dare to disregard such an influence, or would think of tying itself up to the politicians and those who now use them. Under such a system nothing would or could be done without the freely expressed will of the people. If they governed themselves badly, they would still govern themselves, and would be responsible for all mistakes and crimes. With this power and influence the people would regain their old interest in public affairs, and the government would no longer be forced to rely on the professional politician "for continuous activity in giving effect to its decrees." In a word, it is proposed to broaden the base of government and to put the power and responsibility in and on the peo-

ple. Favors enjoyed by all are not favors, but rights. A favor is something enjoyed by one at the expense of others. If we can secure the granting of justice to all and the withdrawal of privileges enjoyed only by the few, we shall destroy the "pull" and the whole system based on it. So this is a movement for democratic government—government for all and by all, in which all shall participate. With this secured most of the evils from which we are now suffering would disappear. The pull would not work when there is nothing to be gained by it. The people would not be interested in stealing from themselves. If there was nothing for corruption to win there would be no corruption. In brief, the remedy is to be sought in a simple adherence to what is the true American system, from which we have so widely departed, and in a loyal adherence to the old American ideals.

One other point is made by President Hadley that bears directly on this discussion. He calls attention to the fact that business and politics are now both regarded as games, and he says:

"A wider discretionary power for good or ill is placed in the hands of those by whom the public affairs of the city or state are conducted. These affairs will not be safe while politics is regarded as a game. * * * Under an imperialistic policy our government can not remain what it is. It must grow either worse or better. It can not remain a game in which the struggle for success is as far as possible disassociated from the moral sense of the

participants. It will involve either a direct breach of trust or a direct acceptance of trust."

How widely this "game" theory of politics is held we all know, or if we do not we can easily learn by a few minutes' talk with a ward worker. Perhaps we ourselves have held to the theory. However this may be, the theory is wholly pernicious. For what is a "game" except something at which some one must win and some other one lose? It is the risk of losing, the hazard, that gives the game all its charm. There would be no betting on horse races if it were positively certain that every one would win. If success were sure for all, our gambling laws would enforce themselves—for there would be no gambling. What, therefore, are we to think of a political system administered by, or in the name of, a free people, which is avowedly based on the theory that some of the people must win at the expense of others of the people? Yet that is the present situation. It should be ended. An honest government is one under which every citizen, even the humblest, would win—that is, it is not a game. It is a business, and a business conducted for the benefit of all. And that is the sort of government that is advocated by the American Society of Equity. Politicians do not struggle, and plot, and bribe in order that they may secure justice and equity; what they seek is privilege. They play the game, and they play it for rich stakes. So it is proposed to uproot this game theory, for, as President Hadley truthfully says, our "affairs will not be

safe while politics is regarded as a game." If we make it impossible, as we intend to do, for one man to win at the expense of another, we shall end the game business and destroy the interest in politics now shown by men who ought to be banished from politics. With the people in power, and with the government, which is now a great gambling affair, turned into an honorable business enterprise, corruption, bribery and extravagance will disappear, and elections, instead of being fierce and degrading struggles for spoil, will be, as they ought to be, sober consultations regarding questions of principle and policy in which all will have a legitimate interest.

CHAPTER XXI

While some may think him quite enchanting,
Heed not the politician's senseless ranting;
Down with his throne!
In your sturdy ranks are statesmen true
Who'd see that you received what's justly due.
Bring them forward, as you surely should do—
Have rulers of your own!

Much is said about the dangers of a strong government. But surely no one will deny that the government ought, at least, to be stronger than any citizen or combination of citizens. The power of all must be stronger than the power of less than all. Otherwise we shall have the rule of the many by the few, which is abhorrent to American ideas. So we shall have a government strong enough to prevent one man from injuring another. And it will make no difference how rich and powerful the would-be injurer is. In no other way than this can justice and equity be secured. The government must first itself be just, and then it must, standing above and outside of all classes and cliques, impose absolute justice upon all. We all know that weak governments can not do this. A feeble ruler is always, and of necessity must be, an unjust and oppressive ruler. In order

to maintain himself he is forced to seek the support of the rich and powerful or of certain classes of the rich and powerful, and to win their support he must favor them at the expense of the rest of the community. A study of the history of the South and Central American republics will show that this is true. To be just, a government must be great and strong, owing no favors to any one, and granting none to any one.

To this extent, then, we intend to have a strong government in this country. Putting the case in the other way, surely no one will say that it should be less strong than even the most powerful citizen, or combination of citizens. We want all the people—and not some of the people—to rule all the people. And this, and this only, is self-government. We may then start with the certainty that the success of the American Society of Equity and the triumph of the Third Power will mark the end of class rule and of the favoritism that has grown out of it. Thus we shall have justice and the destruction of all motives that lead men in power to be guilty of injustice. Surely that will be a great gain. Of course it would be foolish to attempt to say what such a government might do, for it could do whatever it pleased to do. What it pleased to do would depend wholly on the will of the people. It is conceivable that the new system might develop along socialistic lines, and that the central authority might interfere more than it does now with what we call private business. Yet

there is no tendency to the confiscation of property nor anything that will check enterprise, nor limit ambition or kill incentive to efforts. But if two classes of citizens got into a controversy causing inconvenience and loss to the whole community, it is very probable that all the people, acting through their government, would intervene to protect themselves and to end the quarrel. The Interstate Commerce Commission even now may say that a certain railroad rate is unreasonable, though it may not fix a reasonable rate. Under the new order the nation might do the latter thing—and it would be no very great extension of power. If it were found that the butchers were charging prices for meat out of all proportion to the cost of the cattle that they bought —as they have been known to do—the government, in the interest of all, would almost certainly order the price to be reduced. The coal strike of 1902-3 could have been ended before the evil effects of it were felt outside of the neighborhood where it started; and who will claim that immeasurable suffering, inconvenience and financial loss all over the country should be endured just because a few miners and operators disagree? If a government is not for this purpose, pray, what is it for? In the controversy, which it has been suggested might arise between the farmers and the consumers as to the price of farm products, the government would impose its just will on both parties to the quarrel and see that a fair and reasonable price was established. In a word, it would

instantly ally itself with all the people as against any class that was seeking to win for itself an unfair advantage at the expense of society. As it is now it allies itself with a given class against the whole body of the people. Thus that situation would be entirely reversed.

But, it will be asked, could such a government be trusted? Certainly it could be if the people can be trusted to govern themselves, as we all pretend to believe. And when we say that we believe in the principle of self-government we do not mean that we think that the people are infallible, and so incapable of making mistakes. What we do mean is that the people are honest, intelligent, swayed by good purposes, and are much better fit to govern themselves than any man is to govern them. We mean further that they will be much more patient under their own mistakes than they could be under the mistakes of any one else. They would recognize that the hurt came from themselves, so as there would be no one to punish there would be no basis for discontent or revolution.

It would, to be sure, still be necessary to decide questions of policy by a majority vote, and the danger of a tyranny by majority would not be wholly removed; but it would be greatly lessened. For we should have in government something of that cooperation which it is designed to introduce in the business of production. The government would be more directly by the people and less by the delegated

agents than is now the case. And the overwhelming preponderance of the farmers would strengthen and broaden the foundation of government and would give many more people an interest in it.

Thus the American Society of Equity, merely by calling attention very sharply to the grievances of the farmers, who constitute the largest class in the country, and without having anything directly to do with politics, may be expected to transform our government by restoring it to its first and highest estate.

What does it matter if mistakes are made? They are made now. The people are quite as wise as the politicians and ringsters who now bear rule. And surely the politicians ought to be willing to admit that people wise enough to put them in power are very wise indeed. To hear the defenders of the present system talk you would think that presidents and congresses were never corrupt or wicked or incompetent or foolish. They compare the new scheme with an ideal system, and because it does not measure up to it they condemn it, forgetting that neither does the old system measure up to the ideal. Yet it must ever be borne in mind that we do not advocate any new system—no patent device or trick. What is advocated is old enough, namely, a government which shall be controlled by the people and not by the agents and servants of the people—a strong government, that will protect its citizens and afford that protection quickly—an equitable government, that

secures justice for all. This is the true American theory from which, however, we have widely departed.

One thing which it is desired to secure is new in human governments, and that is justice. If that can be gained all will have been gained. Is it beyond our reach? For ages men have longed for it and struggled for it, but it has always gleamed just ahead of them, and they have never been able to reach it. Is it now at hand? Not ideally or in its fulness, perhaps, for this is an imperfect world of imperfect men, and selfishness is hard to kill. But substantially it can be secured. It can be secured, but only in one way—by enlisting selfishness (self-interest) in the struggle for it. If we can make a large majority of men see that it pays to be just, that they can not have justice themselves unless they are prepared to concede it to others, they will be as zealous fighters against injustice as are the most unselfish and idealistic of people. Men have in the past tried to eliminate selfishness. Now the purpose is to use it on the side of righteousness. The appeal must be made to the intelligence and self-interest of men as well as to their conscience. It ought not to be difficult to make sensible men understand that they would win more by freely yielding to every other man his rights than they could ever hope to win in a fierce scramble for unfair advantages in which they are as likely to be hurt as they are to hurt their brother. The farmer's cause will not be pro-

moted—the Third Power will not rise—on the ruin of other enterprises, but by building up alongside of them will strengthen every other legitimate business and institution.

A great economic writer has given us an allegory showing the wastefulness of a foolish and unenlightened selfishness. He once saw a cage of monkeys being fed. A plate full of food was placed before each monkey, but each one of them, instead of eating from the plate before him, wildly grabbed for the portion of his neighbor. And in the scramble much of the food was lost. What is suggested here is that each man should eat off his own plate and leave his neighbor to consume his meal in peace. Thus all would get enough, and the decencies would be maintained. Society at the present time is very like the cage of monkeys. In both cases there is selfishness, but it is of the silly kind. Surely we can order things better. If we can not, we might as well confess that self-government is a failure, nay, that men are not fit to live together in organized society.

CHAPTER XXII

Then come along! Come along! Make no delay;
Come from every dwelling, come from every way;
Let Equity be in your hearts, and on your banners gay,
Then right and justice will prevail and dwell with us alway.

Such is the argument in favor of the proposed society. For further details as to methods of organization, and rules for government of the society, I refer to the appendix in which the constitution, by-laws, regulations and other details are set forth explicitly. And these have to do directly with another exceedingly important question. Some farmers may say that such a combination would be very desirable, that it would accomplish all the things I have said it would accomplish, and that in every way it would be a good thing for the farmers and the people. But they may ask: Is the plan practicable? This is the great question which reformers always have to answer, and, of course, it is right that they should be required to answer it, for it is to the test of practicability that everything must be brought. A flying machine would be most useful—if it would work. But unless a device of this sort will work there is no sense in paying any attention to it. Always there is

this terrible test. Can the American Society of Equity stand it?

I have not, in what has been said, passed over this question. For it has been shown that organization is the law of industrial progress; that other industries are organized; that all the forces of our civilization are tending toward a closer unity among men; that the farmers have combined successfully already (witness the Grange, Alliance, Farmers' Mutual Association and others), and that every change for the better that has taken place in the farmer's condition —his greater intelligence, his growing sense of dependence on others in the same line, his closer association with others through the medium of frequent mails, telephones, trolley lines, the growth of cities and towns in the rural regions, and his greater use of machinery—all points the way to organization, and makes it necessary, easy and inevitable. The American Society of Equity is thus working along natural lines and in cooperation with natural forces. So the argument in favor of the possibilities of organizing by this plan is reasonably strong as it now stands. As to its practicability and durability, these depend on the benefits it gives. But a little closer and more detailed examination of it may serve to allay the doubts of the more timorous and conservative. Of course, the great objection is that the scheme is too large and involves too many men. Organization, it is said, is easy when only a few people are concerned, but it is exceedingly difficult when it becomes neces-

sary to take in millions of people, living in widely separated sections of the country, but this objection is based, not on the impracticability of the plan, but on the difficulty without conceding its impossibility. It will undoubtedly be harder to organize the farmers in such a way as to secure united action from them than it is for two men in the same city to form a commercial partnership; but the one is no more impossible than the other.

Surely the farmers in a certain neighborhood can organize without much trouble, and they can agree to abide by certain rules. They have done so and are doing this every day. So of the farmers in another and adjoining sections. Thus far the case is plain enough. If, therefore, the farmers in any given county have organized in the American Society of Equity—and they have in many—does it not follow that they can organize in other counties until a state is organized. If one state can organize another can. In fact, all the states can. If the farmers in the United States can organize (and they have more than once, but on very poor plans), the farmers in Canada can organize, where the needs are as urgent and the conditions are very similar. Now if the farmers in America can organize on this new plan of the American Society of Equity, and for the beautiful and meritorious objects for which it stands, does it not follow that the farmers of Europe can organize, particularly since they need organization even more? I do not admit

the necessity of organizing the farmers of Europe to accomplish all the objects of the American Society of Equity in this country, but organization there will follow. It will be a spontaneous lifting up or following in the lead of the American farmers until they are on the same level. There is not a step in the process which may not be easily taken. Indeed, the work has already been begun and is now going forward with great rapidity. It would not be too much to say that the organization has already been effected. The problem is not one of the creation, but of the extension of the organization. That the organization can be formed has already been demonstrated. But there is another question which may give trouble to some people, and that is, Will the organization work? Unless there is good reason to believe that it will not, we are almost justified in asserting, even in the absence of affirmative proof, that it will, since the presumption is so strongly in its favor. At any rate we may say that the only way to find out positively whether or not it will work, unless it can be absolutely demonstrated that it will not work, is to try it. The man who builds a flying machine does not hesitate to put it to the test. Many men were sure that no ship could ever cross the ocean under steam. Yet when the trial was made it was found that the doubter was mistaken. So it is here. There is, as I believe, a great, new machine. That it can be built has already been proved. Now we want to know whether it will operate. The ma-

chine is being built for benefits. We will leave you to judge if the plan as explained does not provide for every needed timber, all the wheels, levers and cranks; is there a nut, screw, bolt, rivet or nail lacking? Don't it look that all that is needed is the co-operative help of one million American freemen to man it, when it will start and continue forever to supply the needs of the entire agricultural needs of this greatest of countries? In order to be sure either that it will or will not work we must give it a trial.

We have seen what it would accomplish, assuming that it will work. Are not these objects worth taking some risk—especially when the risk is so slight to secure? If the machine breaks down the loss to each individual will be inappreciable; if it moves, his gain will be tremendous. You risk infinitely more on every crop you put out or every head of live stock you put in the stall, not knowing whether you will get your money back or not. If the machine works, it will insure you a liberal return for every dollar invested, or every hour employed in all future time. But why should it not work? It all depends on the farmers. If they come into the organization, are loyal to its rules, are true to one another, and cooperate faithfully and intelligently for the general good, there can be no possible doubt of the success of the plan. No, I will not expect this. All do not need to be loyal, considering the great number of farmers, and the fact that only a small portion of any crop needs to be controlled at any

time. If we admit that the great majority of farmers are stubborn, in fact rebellious, yet they can not affect the accurate working results of this machine. There will still be enough loyal ones left at any time to insure success. In this respect the great numbers of farmers which, in the past, was considered the great element of weakness in a farmers' organization will be its greatest strength, when working on the plan of the American Society of Equity. Give us a number equal to what were in some former farmers' organizations and the definite results will work out almost without an effort on the part of the individual farmer. Farmers should remember that they are not to be ruled from the outside. When the voice of the American Society of Equity is heard, it will be the voice of the farmers themselves.

So what we are to learn is not whether the organization can succeed, but whether the American farmers honestly want it to succeed; therefore, to doubt the practicability of the plan is to doubt the farmers themselves; after the organization has been effected the farmers can kill it if they wish to, but so can a man rob his partner. Railroads combine successfully, and yet how often do we hear of secret cutting of rates in direct violation of the agreement between the roads. So I admit that some of the farmers might play the traitor to the organization, and yet I hold that the organization would win in spite of their treachery. But there would be few

such men among the American farmers; having once decided to give the American Society of Equity a trial they would see to it that it had a fair trial.

The only people incapable of working together in organizations are savages, idiots and the insane. Among these a perverse individualism prevails. Are we to class the farmers in either of these categories? Organization is the great weapon of civilized and enlightened men, and so it is peculiarly the weapon of the American farmer. In his "Notes on Virginia," Thomas Jefferson wrote:

"Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if He ever had a chosen people, whose breasts He has made His peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue. It is the focus in which He keeps alive that sacred fire, which otherwise might escape from the earth. Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phenomenon of which no age or nation has furnished an example."

And writing to John Jay, in 1785, Jefferson said:

"Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty by the most lasting bonds."

What they were in Jefferson's day they are now. Yet it is of such men that we are asked to believe that they, like the insane and savage, are incapable of organization. The farmers are as intelligent as the mechanics, who combine without difficulty and

make their combinations effective. They are even as intelligent as the so-called captains of industry, who, through their organizations, control both the business and the politics of the American people. What the mechanics and capitalists do, the farmers can and will do. To say that they can not organize effectively is to put them in a class by themselves and to rank them infinitely below all other classes. And that is absurd.

One objection remains to be considered: There are those who say that the scheme is too great—that it is beyond the power of men to achieve. This is but another way of stating an objection already considered. But what are men put in this world for, if not to achieve great things? The very greatness of this enterprise, instead of being an objection to it, ought to be one of its chief recommendations. Further, if it has been shown that it is practicable, what matters it how great it is? The greater the better, one would think; besides, system is the servant of the twentieth century business man, and great enterprises frequently work out more definitely than small ones. It is a stupendous campaign in which the farmers are asked to enlist. But that very fact ought to stir their ambition and inflame their zeal. Instead of saying that the plan can not be put in operation, we ought to set ourselves to a consideration of those qualities that are necessary in those who would make it work. Ralph Waldo Emerson—an American prophet who was never staggered by

the great or impossible—has said that "nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." It is so. Therefore, our duty is, not to pick flaws in the proposed scheme; not to make up our minds beforehand that it can not win, but to kindle our enthusiasm to such a point as to make failure absolutely impossible. The cause is worthy; the weapon is at hand and effective; the only weakness, if there is weakness, is our own doubting spirit. The appeal is for men to fight in the cause and to wield the weapon. With them—and they will be had—the Machine of Cooperation will be built. The Third Power will be a real power; the grand American Society of Equity will be a triumphant success, and agriculture will be lifted to the plane where it rightfully belongs.

CHAPTER XXIII

Away with special privilege,
  Away with greed of gain,
Away with cunning schemes of men
  That equal rights restrain.
When Toil goes forth amid the fields,
  Its fruits mankind to bless,
Let Toil say what those fruits are worth,
  Let Toil its own possess.

The plan outlined ought to appeal to European farmers quite as much as to their American brethren. With the cheap land in America, and boundless quantities of it, and by the large use of machinery, the farmers of the United States have forced the price of European wheat, and farm products generally, to an extremely low price. So all the farmers, and not merely those in the United States, have suffered from low prices and inadequately rewarded labor. This American invasion has not been a good thing for any of the farmers. For they have been engaged in a competition that was hurtful to all. Of course the farmers of Europe can not possibly raise prices as long as they are subjected to the competition of American products at the present low prices. The thing to do is, manifestly, to combine to raise prices. Restrictive legis-

lation will accomplish little. In resorting to this, there is, too, the further danger of raising prices so high that people can not or will not buy. The farmers can check the present competition by combination more easily, and more effectively, than governments can kill it by law.

And the key to the situation is in the hands of the Americans. If they will refuse to compete with Europeans on the present basis, and will combine with them to lift the price of farm products all over the world, it is clear that, though competition will not be destroyed, it will be put on such a basis as to make it possible for all to profit. Every advance of price here, provided it be firmly held, will raise the price of the competing product abroad.

A combination among American farmers even without help from abroad would have that effect. It would establish a level below which the European farmers would not need to go in competing with one another. But with all the farmers in the combination the effect would be much more marked.

It seems strange that the European farmers should look for salvation to their most dreaded competitors, but it is from these latter that salvation must come. For they have found that in beating their European rivals they have also injured themselves. Now they propose to take themselves out of the unprofitable struggle for cheapness. And until they do withdraw from that struggle there will be no hope for any one. So this chance is of-

fered to the farmers of Canada, France, Austria-Hungary, Russia, the Argentine, far-off India, and, in short, the world where food for man and beast are grown, in the confident expectation that they will eagerly embrace it. The arguments that prove that organization will be a good thing for the American farmers prove, also, that it will be a good thing for the farmers everywhere. For the same conditions that operate against the former operate against the latter, and there is the additional element of American competition.

Let it be distinctly understood that the organization proposed is industrial rather than political. For nations differ in their forms of government and in their political institutions, and a political program that would work well in one country might not work at all in another. Production, however, is the same the world over. Everywhere it depends on the three factors, land, labor, and capital, and the problem is the same everywhere, namely, to secure a fair reward to all three. There is no reason why the Third Power should not operate as effectively and beneficently in Russia as in the United States, in India as in the Argentine. The farmers in all these countries are interested in checking speculation, in preventing the speculators from playing off the products of one against the other, and in securing fair prices for what they raise. In a word, their interests are identical. Therefore, all can easily cooperate.

The farmers of other countries need the society

even worse than those of the United States do. They have smaller farms and they work dearer land —and land that is more in need of constant renewing and fertilizing. They need to make even a higher interest on their investment than is necessary in this country, in order to be sure of a decent living. When they come in competition with American wheat, grown on large farms and on land that is yet cheap, they are at a serious disadvantage. There is not a farmer in Russia who does not know that it would be easier for him to compete with American wheat at a dollar than with American wheat at fifty, sixty or seventy cents. And if the Russian buyer were unable to get wheat from abroad at a lower price than that established by the Russian farmers, he would be compelled to take Russian wheat. Nor are the American farmers at all disturbed at the prospect of all farmers getting good prices for their products. They know that there is a demand for all the staple crops that is ever likely to be raised—that the market is big enough for all. The trouble is that the crop of one country is used to depress the price of the crops of other countries, and thus all have suffered.

It is this well-known fact that makes international cooperation desirable, and to make the benefits of the society world wide. Buyers operate on an international basis. Sellers must, if they would protect themselves against imposition, do the same thing. Thus business, and not politics, is the object

of the organization. The question is not whether a man is a Republican or a Democrat, a Liberal or a Conservative, a supporter or an opponent of the government, but simply and solely whether he wants to end the bad, uncertain and unprofitable system of the past. Elevate his business on a plane with the best of others, and make the best possible man out of himself. It is from this point of view that rulers and people alike are asked to consider this plan. The combination is one of the world's producers for their own, and so for the world's good. It is proposed to antagonize nothing except unfair commercial and industrial conditions. And when it is known that those conditions operate to injure by far the largest class of people in the world, surely no one can object to having them removed.

So the organization will be, and indeed has been, extended to other countries than the United States. The Russian farmers are roused, and are moving in the same path which the American farmers are asked to tread. Societies similar to the American Society of Equity will soon be organized in the Czar's dominions and other countries. The interest is intense wherever the plan has been developed. No man to whom it has been explained has failed to be convinced. Its simplicity, and, at the same time, its wide scope, its effectiveness, its justice and its equity, have all served to commend it to reasonable men. Whether a man lives in Russia or India, the United States, or elsewhere, he wants at

least a fair chance to make his living and care properly for his family. On this platform all can stand. It is the platform of the American Society of Equity. And this is the reason why it is so well adapted to act internationally. The invitation, therefore, is as broad as humanity. The call goes to all, and from all. For their own good a favorable response is earnestly desired. It comes from men who are firmly determined to control their own business in their own interest, and to quit paying unfair toll to the speculators and middlemen who so long preyed on the productive industries of the world.

CHAPTER XXIV

Let justice reign o'er our mighty band;
  Let our hearts with triumph fill;
Let all awake, ere 'tis too late,
  And every foe we'll still.
In unity we'll conquer all—
  Oh, may the day be near
When with God and right we will reign as might,
  With conscience bright and clear!

Oh, why should we, to whom life depends,
  Be trampled in the dust?
While others gain, we writhe in pain,
  For want of right and just.
If one and all would for duty strive,
  Then sorrow soon would end;
We supreme would reign and our rights we'd gain—
  On no one we'd depend.

As a final word, it seems to be necessary to urge the thought that success would not involve the enslavement or control of any one class, but the freedom of all the people. It has been said that the struggle to which the farmer is invited is one for emancipation. What is sought is as little government regulation as possible, and the widest possible opportunity for each one to work out his own destiny. The removal of obstacles rather than the imposition of new restrictions is the end sought.

Undoubtedly men who prey on others must be restrained, but even this restraint will be in the interest of general liberty. That man is not free who does not get a fair reward for his own toil undiminished by tax for the benefit of his fellow citizens. So the vice of our present system is, that it is not based on liberty. And the farmers are those from whom liberty is withheld. So it all comes to a question of freedom. In doing away with the present abuses we are attacking not simply commercial and industrial unfairness and oppression, but tyranny. It is not insisted that any man shall have less than he is entitled to, but that all men shall have all that they are entitled to. Liberty, then, is the great aim of the American Society of Equity.

And there can be no real justice where there is not liberty. For justice is, by its very nature, something that is due to a man; a debt owing to him; something to which he is entitled. When it is given or conceded to him as a favor or privilege coming from a benevolent despot, it is not really justice at all. Justice is not a thing to be granted, but one to be demanded. So when the American people came to frame their new and free government under the constitution they declared that one of their purposes was to "establish justice." They knew that a government could not be free unless it was just, or just unless it was free. And they were right. Surely this is a good precedent—one to which every American citizen should bow in reverence. But the appeal is

not to one people, but to all people. The greatest merit of the plan is that it does not antagonize any government. It seeks the cooperation of all governments, which, no matter what their form, are without exception based on the idea that the good and prosperity of the subject or the citizen must be their chief consideration.

If the rulers of the earth believe this, and they all profess to do so, they will find a valuable and useful ally in the American Society of Equity. All that is asked is that the men who feed the world should themselves be decently fed. Even in the most absolute monarchies it is of the first importance that the people should be happy, contented and prosperous. And that government is wise which exerts itself to the utmost to secure that result. When this can be achieved without cost or peril to the government, it would seem as though no objection could be raised even by the most absolute ruler to any plan that appeared likely to bring the result to pass. Kingdoms have been known to go to war for the sake of diverting the attention of the people away from ill conditions at home. There have, in the history of the race, been many wars prompted by this motive. But such relief is only temporary. For after the war is over we find that the same evils exist, and that the burden of taxation imposed by the war only makes them worse and increases the discontent of the people. So, at most, war undertaken for this purpose is a mere palliative. What is wanted is a permanent remedy.

And the true remedy is one which is not only consistent with peace, but one which demands peace. The late Lord Tennyson wrote of his vision of what the earth was one day to be:

"Robed in universal harvest, up to either pole she smiles,
Universal ocean softly washing all her warless isles."

That is the ideal. Abundance for all, general content, the greatest productiveness, justice, honest pay for honest toil, and universal peace—these are the things that the American Society of Equity would have the world enjoy. To keep the people happy is better than going to war to make them forget their unhappiness. It is in this direction that we must look for federation, not of Europe against America, not of one class against another, not of the people against their government—but of all people, of all the nations for the general good. It is through such industrial and commercial alliance that political alliances must come. The Russian, the American, the Argentine, the Indian and all other farmers ought to be friends, not enemies. They will be friends when relieved from the spell of the speculators and gamblers in farm products, the market manipulators and false crop reporters. And when they are friends their governments will be friends.

So this society is not American except as it is domiciled in America. It is world-wide, and there is not a toiler in the world who will not be benefited

by it. What has been said to, and of, American farmers applies to all farmers, and this organization is meant for all farmers. It all comes to the scriptural doctrine that the laborer is worthy of his hire. To withhold his hire from him, or any part of it, is to weaken all government and to impair the foundations on which society must rest. While to insure him his just reward is to strengthen the social order and to build anew the foundations of the political structures of the world.

Years before it came to pass, Arthur Young, traveling in France, predicted the great revolution that took place in that country more than a hundred years ago. He based his prophecy simply on the fact that the people were being robbed by the church and the nobility, and robbed to such an extent that they did not have enough left to live on. We are wiser in our generation, in that we do not push our spoliation to such an extreme point. But we want, not simply to avoid revolution, but to make all the people happy. The question is, not how much we can safely take from them, but how much we can give them. And when we are asked to give them only what is already theirs, in equity, with the assurance that by doing so we shall make them happy, shall we hesitate?

Peace, happiness, truth, justice, order, the death of anarchy, firmly established governments, the reign of law, contentment and satisfaction, together with real and widely diffused prosperity, and to

crown it all a real federation of the nations—surely these are things worth striving for. St. Paul said: "Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" And the Psalmist wrote to his people in their captivity: "For thou shalt eat the labors of thine hands; O well is thee and happy shalt thou be." We seek the fulfillment of these prophecies. There is not a human being in the world, and not a government in the world that will not be better because of the triumph of the Third Power through the American Society of Equity.

SECOND PART

INTERNATIONAL CONSOLIDATION OF AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS AND THE AMERICAN FARMER.

By Eugene Matrosow, D. C. L.

While the terrible agricultural depression of 1893-1897 is fresh as yet in the memory of the American people, opinions widely differ as to the present state of American agriculture. Though, by some people, the general agricultural condition of the United States is considered as not only satisfactory but even indicative of increased prosperity, there are many conservative and well-informed persons concurring in the opinion that American agriculture is still in the state of depression, although, of course, not in such a terrible degree as it was several years ago.

It is very remarkable indeed that in all these discussions of the general condition of farming throughout the United States an accurate analysis of the farmer's income was not undertaken. Meanwhile, in order to grasp the true condition of the American farmer of to-day, his income must be properly analyzed. We must go to the bottom and present the facts in their true significance.

Reports of Twelfth Census of the United States, published last year, contain no information as to the number of persons to a farm. Thus, we have to find out this number for ourselves. According to the Reports on Population, rural population of the United States in 1900 was 39,528,398 (vol. I, p. LXXXIX). The number of farms reported by the division of agriculture, 5,739,657 (vol. V, p. LXIX), is 0.7 per cent. greater than the number of farm families reported by the division of population, 5,700,341 (vol. II, p. CLXXXVIII). This variation is explained in the reports as being unquestionably the result of incomplete agricultural reports, mainly among the

Indian farmers. The population figures, therefore, according to the said explanation of census officials, more fully express the facts of the case, so far as the number of farms and of farm families are concerned, than those of the division of agriculture (vol. II, p. CCIII and vol. V, p. LXIII). So, dividing rural population in 1900 (39,528,398), by total number of farms as reported by the division of population (5,700,341), we find that the number of persons to a farm in 1900 was 6.9. It is necessary to bear in mind in this connection that number of persons to a farm is not identical either with number of persons to a dwelling, 5.3 (vol. II, p. CLVII), or with number of persons to a family, 4.7 (vol. II, p. CLVIII).

Total value of farm products of 1899 was $4,739,118,752. Average value per farm: Total, $826. Fed to live stock, $170. Not fed to live stock, $656. Average expenditure per farm: Labor, $64. Fertilizers, $10.

(Abstract of the Twelfth Census, pp. 234-237.)

According to this estimate the annual income from the average farm in 1899 was $582 ($656—$74). As the results of the last census show quite clearly, there were in the United States in 1900, 4,410,877 agricultural laborers in strict meaning of the word, i. e., of so-called hired help, (Abstract of the Twelfth Census, p. 24), for 5,700,341 farms or 0.77 of hired man per farm. If we allow 5.9 persons to each farm for 1899 (what was the case in 1900), deduct 0.77 of hired agricultural laborer per farm from 6.9 persons to each farm, and divide this $582 among them equally, we receive for the farmers of the United States an average annual per capita income of $94.9 ($582 divided by 6.13). If we again divide this amount by the number of days in the year we receive for those, who have to depend on the farm for their living, an average per capita income of 26 cents per day ($94.9 divided by 365). There are farm owners, part owners, cash tenants and share tenants, while agricultural laborers in the strict meaning of this word, which are just 0.77 per farm, receive an average annual per capita, $83 ($64 divided by 0.77), and average per capita income of 22.7 cents per day. Thus, it becomes apparent beyond any dispute, that an average daily per capita income of agricultural laborer of the United States is just

3.3 cents per day less than an average daily per capita share of the American farmer and members of his family in the total product, to say nothing of their daily net profit.

It must be remembered that this $582 or 26 cents per day per capita is not the profit made from the average farm or day's labor, but constitutes the value of the entire annual production of the farm, just the portion of the product fed to live stock and expenditure for hired labor and fertilizers having been deducted therefrom. It includes that portion consumed on the farm, as well as that portion sold. Out of this amount the farmer must pay his taxes, insurance, interest, the cost of seed, wear and tear of farm implements and repairing of fences and buildings. All these items must be paid out of the $582, before the farmer can have anything for himself and his family. The question then is, how much will the average farmer and his family have for their own support after paying all these items? As the profits in the most lucrative industries do not exceed 50 per cent. of joint product, then, assigning to the farmers of the United States even such an immense proportion of the total product, we discover that the average farming family of the country receives, at the present, for their own support, an average income (net profit) of $328 per year. Deducting 0.77 of agricultural laborer per farm from 6.9 persons to each farm, we discover that the average net income of farming family in the United States, amounting, according to the most liberal estimate possible, to $328 per year, must be divided among 6.13 persons to each farm, what gives for the members of farming families of the country an average net annual income of $53.50, i. e., $29.50 less than the same income of agricultural laborer or an average per capita net income of 14.6 cents per day, i. e., 8 cents less than an average net daily income of agricultural laborer of the country. With this miserable income, lower than the income of the lowest industrial strata of the land, the farming family of this free country must secure food and clothing, educate the children and pay incident expenses.

In report of the Industrial Commission on prison labor (Commission's Reports, Vol. VIII), we find data relating to the employment of prisoners during 1898 and 1899. In Ari-

zona the prisoners were worked by the Arizona Improvement Company under contract system. The territory was to receive compensation therefor at the rate of 70 cents per day per man employed (p. 81). In Connecticut, 240 prisoners were engaged in the manufacture of boots and shoes at the rate of 50 cents per day per prisoner (p. 87). In Indiana, convicts were worked under contracts as follows: 200 men at 40 cents per day, 50 men at 42 cents per day and 130 men at 32½ cents per day (p. 91). In Kentucky, convicts were worked under the lease system as follows: 650 men at the rate of 40 cents per day per man and 400 men at 35 cents per day (p. 95).

Here we are confronted with the shocking and disgraceful fact that the agricultural population of the United States is compelled to live on an income much below that provided by different states for their convicts.

The total expense of maintaining the United States Penitentiary, at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, during the year ending June 30, 1901, has been $160,316.88, and the daily average cost per capita about 54 cents. The average daily per capita cost of subsistence alone was about 11 cents (Annual Report of the Attorney-General of the United States for the year 1901, pp. 30, 31).

Here we are confronted again with the cold fact that daily subsistence allowed by the United States to her convicts is somewhat greater than the daily subsistence gained by the American farmer and members of his family by their hardest and most unceasing toil (14.6 cents per capita per day for *subsistence proper,* clothing, education, etc.).

How, then, it came to this, that in these days of "unprecedented economic and commercial progress of the United States," in this "midst of halcyon prosperity of the country," the average American farmer, the real producer of all these "stupendous" and "tremendous" exports amazing the world, in respect to his average daily income stands below the American convict if the census report is correct? Let us see.

The very first question of foremost importance which confronts us in this connection is this: Is the American farmer living upon the results of ownership of the land which he tills or of his productive toil? Is he, in other words, receiv-

ing his income from his investment of capital or from his labor? Almost every Agricultural Year Book, annually published by the United States Department of Agriculture, instructs us that with improved agricultural machinery of to-day, even not taking in computation the almost phenomenal machinery of California wheat farms, the productive power of the modern farmer is at least ten times greater than that of the farmer of a few generations ago. Thus, if average annual income of modern American farmer is $582, the income of average farm in the United States 60 years ago should have been just $58.20. But it is self-evident that solid comfort of life of early American farmer could not be had for such a trifle. Mere absurdity of the result reached by this calculation proves quite conclusively that the modern American farmer *does not* receive *all* he produces, to say nothing of receiving more than he produces and if he *does not receive* more than he produces this means that his income amounting to $582 a year derives, not from his investment of capital, but from his labor, the hardest and the most productive toil on the face of the earth.

This unavoidable conclusion has been reached already, several years ago by a high authority on economic questions in the United States. "By using all available statistics," says Professor C. K. Walker, "it becomes evident again and again that deducting rent and interest, the American farmer receives less for his exertions than does the laborer in the factory or the *hired man on the farm*." The consequence is, that the American farmer of to-day is living largely on his accumulated capital or the returns therefrom, and that this capital is so fixed that he can not utilize it for any other than its present use without an almost total loss (American Economic Association Studies, 1897, p. 56). This conclusion finds its further corroboration in our calculations exhibited above. If the American farmer receives from his farm an average per capita income of 26 cents per day and out of this amount must pay the taxes, insurance, interest, the cost of seed, etc., so that no more than a per capita income of 10 cents per day can be left for support of himself and his family, while his hired help receives in his wages an average per capita in-

come of 22.7 cents per day, it becomes apparent in this particular case the workman receives more than his employer and that the latter is simply his fellow co-worker, just with smaller pay.

The most striking illustration of this social phenomenon of free country we find in the most interesting and instructive article by Charles B. Spahr, published about three years ago. "When I asked this farmer," says Mr. Spahr, "why the large farms were breaking up into small ones," he put the whole case in a single picturesque phrase. 'There are,' he said, 'only two sure crops in the country—ice and children, and the small farmer has the children.'" (The Outlook, November 4, 1899, p. 566.) This means that the small farmer can successfully compete with the large farms and even compete them out of existence, simply because he employs the cheapest labor in the land, resorts to incredible and unbearable toil of his wife and babes, to which no hired man will ever submit. Yet, while the conscience of the nation has been recently aroused against female and child labor in workshops and factories, no one ever mentions about the terrible lot of farmers' children and his wife, who, according to the most reliable statistics, furnishes the largest percentage to the American insane asylums.

How, then, it came to this that the American farmers, who created the country and her institutions, once independent and contented producers, became reduced to the state of real proletarians of the land?

This is a long story and we will try to make it as short as possible.

This is a well-known fact that agriculture of to-day greatly differs from agriculture of several generations ago. While it still embraces several, more or less different industries, such as wheat raising, market gardening, poultry farming, bee farming, stock raising, etc., these are just a comparatively small part of all the industries, which constituted the agriculture of olden times. As soon as any branch of old, original agriculture becomes subject to great mechanical improvements, as soon as it has been touched by great industrial advance of our times, it is invariably taken from the farm and transferred to the factory. Whenever any process in agri-

culture was greatly improved and performed with complex labor-saving machinery, created by tremendous mechanical progress of last century, it practically ceased to be a part of agriculture. Thus, the agricultural industry of past generations has been divided and sub-divided into a great number of processes, which practically became separate industries, having been removed from all connections with the farm.

Carding, weaving, spinning, knitting, cloth making, skimming (skimming stations), churning (creameries), butter making, cheese making, cotton ginning, rice hulling, threshing, manufacture of agricultural implements, etc., all of these have left the farm more or less long ago and are concentrated in the factories. Beet sugar and meat packing industries represent especially a whole class of industries that grew up out of olden, original agriculture.

Thus we see that universal law of economic evolution, the law of differentiation and specialization with incident concentration, affected also the field of agriculture. The farmer of olden times, who was a *general* producer, whose income was always in *direct* proportion with his exertions (unless affected by natural calamities), has become to-day a specialist. As a specialist he is working within one little and narrow field, he is left to perform the most difficult and disagreeable processes, he is producing for sale instead of creating the wealth, as before, for his own benefit. To tell it shortly, the farmer has actually become a part of the *competitive system.* His customer is not some individual as heretofore desiring some article to be created for his use, but the great, impersonal, competitive world market. This fact of tremendous importance is almost invariably overlooked, not only by the farmer himself in reasoning about his own economic condition, but even by almost every writer discussing the problems of agriculture.

The size of the market reached by each farm has grown gradually and continually larger until the American farm, some time ago, an almost isolated industrial unit, met face to face with the world market. Just a few generations ago the American farmer made everything he needed upon his own farm and consequently cared nothing or little for what

the rest of the world might do. He produced for his own use and had little need for intercourse with the remainder of the world. Not so the American farmer of to-day, whose butter is made at the creamery and cheese at the factory and who never saw a suit of home-made clothes. He sells his grain and his fruit in the market of the world; he competes there, not only with the agricultural producers of all sections of his own country, but also with semi-tropical agricultural workers of the Argentine Republic and India and the peasants of South Russia. Therefore, droughts of South America, rains of India and floods of Russia affect his condition as much as similar occurrences in his own field.

Every year as methods of production are improved, stronger grows the competition among agricultural producers all over the globe. Bulky products, like hay, straw and so-called fodder in general are transformed into meat before being marketed, and in this form their market becomes as extensive as this of machinery or diamonds. Refrigerating system on railroad and steamship lines with cold storage warehouses have extended the market for once highly perishable products of dairy and poultry farming nearly to the same limits. Once new methods of transportation introduced, the cereals became eternally flowing through the channels of commerce and a few cents difference is sufficient to send them from one hemisphere to another.

This specialization of farming did not make, however, the task of the modern farmer any easier as it did in all other industries. To succeed in raising of many crops on modern, specialized farm, he must possess the knowledge of the chemical composition of the soil and of the system of fertilizing. The modern processes of sowing, tending and harvesting are comparatively very complex and to do them properly a modern farmer must have an elaborate and expensive equipment of complicated machines. The proper care of animals without a knowledge of scientific system of feeding is simply impossible. Truck farming and market gardening demand a knowledge of scientific application of heat, sun-light and plant food to growing plants. If the modern farmer has no knowledge of composition of the soil and of fertilizing, he is in many

cases on the road to bankruptcy and foreclosure. If he does not possess a knowledge of fundamental principles of mechanics, his expenses for repairs of machines will exceed all his income. The ignorance of the system of feeding animals will result in the cost of production being above the price fixed for the finished product and ruin is his lot. If he attempts after all to start truck farming or market gardening without a knowledge of scientific application of heat, sunlight, and plant food to growing plants, such an attempt in a very short time will result in disastrous failure and irreparable losses.

The marketing of his products is, however, for the modern specialist farmer a much harder task yet than the production itself. While he is absolutely dependent on the market, he has practically no knowledge of modern methods or system of marketing. It is a well-known fact of the competitive system of our times that the success of every producer depends much more on his ability to sell than on his knowledge of the processes of production. In the field of modern American manufacture, which is undoubtedly in much more advanced stage of development than modern American agriculture, the process of sale of many articles is much more expensive than the process of manufacturing the same. The former chiefly consists of impetuous advertising and skilful manipulating of the market. Thus the thing of foremost importance in modern marketing is to know what one's competitors are doing. The American manufacturer understands that perfectly, and what concerns him mostly in transaction of his business, is to learn in some way what his competitors are doing or intending to do. Not so with the American farmer. Not only he does not know what his competitors in some far away corner of the globe are doing, but in most cases even does not care to know what his neighbors are doing. Such a lack of knowledge of conditions of the market and its probable future movements puts the modern specialist farmer in the greatest disadvantage. He must either sell his crops to a local buyer, in which case the latter only knows the facts essential to the making of a bargain, or to intrust them to the noble and tender mercies of a commission man. Though such intrusting of the selling

of his products to the body of men he had never seen before might be considered little short of insanity, it should be said that in his present state of complete ignorance of modern methods of marketing and lack of organization, he has no other alternative, unless his crops are already sold in advance to some mortgage holder.

It must be pointed out, however, that this is not a lack of knowledge or rather complete ignorance of the best methods of marketing alone that puts the American farmer in such a great disadvantage in the world market, where he must compete with the farmers of all producing countries. There is another yet most powerful factor, which, being coupled with the said lack of knowledge, not only compels the average farmer to sell to the first bidder, which appears after the harvest, but even makes such selling imperative. The modern average farmer of the United States, being absolutely dependent on the market, lives from day to day under a constant and terrible pressure for cash, and, therefore, can not afford to hold his products for a better market. He can do that no more and even less than the American wage-worker can wait for his wages.

But here the modern farmer's troubles by no means end. He may master perfectly all modern processes of agricultural production, he may possess the knowledge of modern methods of marketing, he may even own the land which he tills, he may, year by year, raise the bountiful crops, but as long as these are still on the farm, they are valueless. To make them of any value he must transport them to the place where they are wanted to satisfy human wants. Of course, he can not transport them in the old way because, in the modern competitive system of production, only the cheapest methods can be used, where several methods are operating in the same field. For this very reason, the old slow ox-team and hand-carried bags have given place to the railroad, steamship and elevator, with pneumatic transfer tubes that suck up a whole ship-load in about the same time it took the farmer of olden times to unload a wagon-box of wheat or corn with bags and scoop shovel. But, while the ox-team belonged to him, the railroad, the steamship and elevator belong to another party.

Therefore, when he comes to the owners of railroads, telegraphs, elevators, stock-yards, cold storage warehouses, etc., they charge him for their inevitable and indispensable services as much as "traffic will bear." Railway charges and elevator tolls, combined with farm and machine mortgages, swallow up almost all the value of his produce.

Where, however, the modern specialist farmer of the United States is at the very tremendous and simply fatal disadvantage, this is in the final disposal of his crops. When, after all, he reaches the market, too often he finds there financial panics and fluctuations of prices, which sweep away practically all his possessions. Moreover, in the unhealthy structure of modern industry, founded on the wrong adjustment of production and abnormal distribution of produce, a new species of pests were bred, immeasurably more injurious to the welfare of the American farmer than any pest known heretofore to his forefathers. A special class of men came into existence in this great competitive world market, who made it their business to defy the natural basic principle of social economy known as the law of demand and supply, and by misrepresentations, misinformations and frauds of all kinds to filch away from the farmer his produce. Speculators, grain dealers, grain buyers, grain gamblers, grain brokers, tobacco buyers, commission merchants, commission men, cotton factors, cotton brokers and many, many others, whose name is legion, stand between the agricultural producer of this free country and the consumer of his products. The farmers are so numerous, and the competition among them in disposal of their products is so fierce, that they are inevitably at the mercy of this numerous army of so-called middlemen immeasurably more than any other class of producers, being practically compelled to accept whatever price is offered. Moreover, the middlemen buy from the farmers practically upon commission, and in this many not only make the latter sustain losses by their false reports as to the prices received, by dishonesty of their patrons and bad debts incident thereto, and by many other causes, but practically compel helpless agricultural producers of the country to supply the capital for their fraudulent operations. Being isolated and often lacking capital as well as

organization, the American farmer is unable to reach the consumers directly, and consequently is forced to a desperate bargain.

It has been pointed out not only by some writers on modern economic problems, but also in some official reports, that the latest tendency noticeable in the handling of agricultural products (as well as manufactured commodities) is to eliminate the middlemen. This contention is the result of misunderstanding, pure and simple. While the middlemen of small dimensions, like local grain buyers, are really disappearing, their place is taken by middlemen of much larger and positively formidable dimensions like grain dealers' associations and line elevator companies, into whose control about 98 per cent. of cereals pass now on their way from the farmer's hands to the primary market. This simply shows that the process of capitalization and concentration of the American agriculture in the department of distribution goes on and on, and in this stage of modern American agriculture at least (as well as in all manufacturing production), the big fish eat up the little ones. That these new giant middlemen are infinitely more able to exploit the agricultural producer and press him to the wall than the small middlemen, now completely disappearing, does not require any argument.

Thus in the field of modern, specialized American agriculture, we are confronted with the complex and most remarkable economic phenomenon. While in the stage of agricultural production small producers seem to compete out of existence not only large farms, but even these immense "bonanza farms," which are destined to disappear in not distant future; in the stage of distribution of agricultural products we find undoubtedly an immense capitalization and concentration of agricultural industry. We dwell particularly on this point because the relation of American agricultural production to American agricultural distribution constitutes a fundamental and most important of all the elements and factors, which determine the position of the American farmer in the modern American commonwealth.

It is a well-known fact that millions of acres of the most fertile lands in the United States lie still untouched, not only

by the plow, but also by surveyor's chain, awaiting the time when adequate irrigation works can be constructed. Breaking up of the old slave plantations in the South, which has taken place since the Civil War, has increased the number of small farms in the country very considerably. The operation of the well-known "Homestead Law" created again over 3,000,000 small farms. The immense grants of lands to railroads and for the benefit of schools, now surpassing 750,000,000 acres, resulted again in the creation of several millions of small farms, and even great "bonanza farms," which have had their origin in the same stupendous grants, are gradually breaking up into thousands of small farms. So long as there is in the world more land than is required to produce necessary agricultural produce, the ownership of the land means very little and conveys very little advantage. So long as the ownership of the land can be obtained so easily as in the United States and in the whole of America generally, this ownership economically amounts to almost nothing. With improved machinery and improved methods of agriculture, the amount of land required for a given amount of product grows continually less. With modern methods of intensive agricultural production—approximately speaking—Texas alone could supply the present world's demand for cotton, and the American "wheat belt" certainly could produce all the wheat necessary to satisfy the wants of the population of the globe. If the latter will ever become so increased as to require the entire surface of the earth for support it is extremely doubtful, and presents in our days the matter of merely theoretical interest anyway. It seems, however, that a much larger portion of the available land of the world is already under tillage, when cultivated intensively, than will be required for the support of any population that can appear for many generations. Meanwhile farm laborers in the United States become proportionately scarcer and scarcer every hour. Every year, particularly when harvesting season approaches, the farmers of the country, especially in the Central West, complain more and more insistively that good farm hands are more and more difficult to secure. While the American farmer needs more and more intelligent workmen, because the agricultural machinery be-

comes more and more complicated and demands a high intelligence for its operation, the qualifications of agricultural wage-earners in the United States are becoming lower and lower. So it becomes self-evident that the share of land in agricultural production of the country is extremely insignificant and the item representing the ownership of the land (interest on the capital invested in the total value of the returns of agricultural industry of the United States) is infinitely small. Thus the total value of agricultural production of the country, which in 1899 amounted to $4,739,118,752, or $826 per farm, represents almost exclusively the labor of the American farmers (owners, half owners, share tenants and cash tenants) performed by the farmer, his wife and his babes, with entirely insignificant help of hired men (just 0.77 per farm in 1900), only "bonanza farms" excepted. This is the very reason why the small farmer of this free country competes out of existence the great "bonanza farms," which are at present breaking up and gradually disappearing. By virtue of eternal and incredible toil of himself and his family in the fields, from sunrise to sunset of a long summer day, the small American farmer performed the impossible economic feat of eating up the big fish of American agriculture. This feat puzzled all writers of his country on economics, and some of them have even been driven to nervous prostration or to convulsions.

According to the latest and most realiable official wage statistics, farm laborers of this country during the last decade of the last century have never been working less than ten hours a day (sixty hours per week), quite often twelve hours a day (seventy-two hours per week), and in some instances fifteen hours a day (ninety hours per week) (Fifteenth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, 1900, pp. 532-534). Now, any one who knows anything about the American agriculture, knows very well that farmers themselves and members of their families, as a rule, work much longer hours than their "hired men," hastily picked up from anywhere. Thus it appears that cold and impartial eloquence of figures confirms our conclusion, that the American farmer, his wife and his babes work longer hours than any other working being in the land and

receive for their superhuman exertions the lowest pay known to the world of toil.

As long as the American farmer and members of his family are compelled to toil at least twelve hours on the average day; as long as his wife is overwhelmed by the work practically never done; as long as his babes have to work from the time that they are strong enough to walk—and are extremely happy—if they are not kept out of school during planting, harvesting, corn-husking and fruit pickings; as long as the ordinary farmer hires a man only during seed time and harvest, just for three or four weeks altogether, it makes no essential difference in the situation if he owns or rents a farm of three acres, or three hundred acres, and if he hires annually a man or one hundred men. There are thousands of hard workers in this terrible sweating trade of the large cities of the United States, who undertake much more work than they can perform by themselves, and to get through hire a few of their fellow workers, more or less systematically, paying them out of their own wages. Still such undertaking resulting in the hiring of help does not turn them into employers or capitalists. In the mining industry of this country there are also thousands of workers who, possessing a great experience in the trade, undertake the work on a much larger scale than they can perform by themselves, and in order to perform it, periodically hire a few of their fellow workers, paying them out of their own wages. But this does not turn them into any labor employers, in the proper meaning of the word and capitalists of any description. The more so with the farmers. They hire a few men periodically for very short time altogether, paying them, as we have shown already, higher wages than they get themselves, to say nothing of their wives and children. The returns of the last census show quite conclusively that the average size of the farm in the United States is decreasing (Reports of Twelfth Census, Vol. V, p. XXI), while in the same time the tenancy is permanently growing. Here is the table showing the growth of the tenancy in this country, compiled by us from two different tables relating to the subject, which we find in the same Reports:

(Vol. V, p. LXXVII):

Year.	Total No. Farmers.	Owners.	Cash Tenants.	Share Tenants.
1880....	4,008,907	2,984,306 (74.5%)	322,357 (8. %)	702,244 (17.5%)
1890....	4,564,641	3,269,728 (71.6%)	454,659 (10.6%)	840,254 (18.4%)
1900....	5,739,657	3,713,371 (64.7%)	752,920 (13.1%)	1,273,366 (22.2%)

Of 5,739,657 farms in the United States June 1, 1900, there have been of those under three acres in size, 41,882, or 7 per cent.; of three acres and under ten, 226,564, or 4 per cent.; of ten acres and under twenty, 407,012, or 7.1 per cent.; of twenty acres and under fifty, 1,257,785, or 21.9 per cent.; of fifty acres and under 100, 1,366,167, or 23.8 per cent.; of 100 acres and under 175, 1,422,328, or 24.8 per cent.; of 175 acres and under 260, 490,104, or 8.5 per cent.; of 260 acres and under 500, 377,992, or 6.6 per cent.; of 500 acres and under 1,000, 102,547, or 1.8 per cent.; and of 1,000 acres and over, 47,276, or 0.8 per cent (Reports of Twelfth Census, Vol. V, pp. XLIII-LIII). Thus the farms of fifty acres and under 100, and of 100 and under 175, are predominating in this country very conspicuously and, put together, constitute 48.6 per cent. of the total, while farms exceeding 1,000 acres comprise just 0.8 per cent. of the total (as reported by the division of agriculture). "Bonanza farms" are gradually disappearing (Reports of Twelfth Census, Vol. V, pp. XLIII-LIII), leaving the owners, part owners, cash tenants and share tenants of medium sized and small farms in full possession of the farming industry of this country. So it is evident that by both the size, as well as the source of his income, the farmer of the United States in the economic constitution of the country can not be classified otherwise than a skilled laborer specialized in the agricultural production. The only difference between the American farmer and his "hired man" in this respect is this: the farmer has a permanent job, while the latter enjoys a chance employment. This relation of the American farmer to his hired laborer bears all essential features of relations of the skilled laborer to the unskilled laborer in all other trades. It must be remembered in this connection that a very large proportion

of hired agricultural laborers of the country is composed of the tramps, outcasts of the large cities, and other representatives of the lowest industrial strata of the modern American commonwealth. This permanency of the farmer's job is, however, delusive to a considerable extent, as the uncertainty surrounding agriculture, combined with fluctuations of prices, threaten too often to sweep away all the results of his labor, representing besides many other items the wages of himself, his wife and his babes. Thus it can be seen quite clearly that the farmers of the United States constitute one homogenous body of skilled agricultural laborers, just of little different calibre and consequently of little different economic standing. This we find also in all other trades and industries of the country. Their wages, however, as we have proven already, are the lowest known to the world of labor and make them real proletarians of the land.

Thus we see that on the productive side of American agriculture are grouped the workers exclusively and on its distributive side the capitalists exclusively, while the mortgage holders constitute a particular class by themselves, which does not belong either to the productive or distributive side of agricultural industry of the United States. They are invariably bankers, stock-brokers and professional money-lenders, and usually residents of a few of the largest cities of the country.

Turning our eyes to Europe, we find there a similar condition of agricultural industry and a similar grouping of contending economic forces on its productive and distributive sides. Everywhere, even in England, the classical and traditional realm of primogeniture and landlordism, large landed estates are at present breaking up, much slower, of course, than the American "bonanza farms," gradually dissolving in small holdings passing into the hands of peasants and agricultural laborers of various names. Thus the average size of European farms is decreasing just the same as in the United States, the number of small farms gradually increasing and the army of tenants permanently growing. In a similar manner the character of agricultural wage-workers of the Old World is gradually deteriorating, while the agricultural industry there, just the same as in this country, demands more

and more intelligent and efficient workers. In order to secure more or less permanent and efficient agricultural labor the owners of great landed estates enter with the agricultural wage-workers and farmers of adjoining localities into special agreements, therein granting to them special privileges and particular inducements. In this way lack of the labor power on the great landed estates of Europe has resulted in the growing of especial productive agricultural units combining the features of agricultural trusts with those of agricultural labor unions. These agricultural combinations of Europe, however, even with the addition to them of American "bonanza farms" existing as yet, constitute relatively such a small percentage of all the productive agricultural forces of the civilized countries of the world, i. e., of all these countries which passed already the primordial stage of production by individual farmers for their own use only, that agriculturists of all the civilized world practically constitute a homogenous body of agricultural producers. The slight admixture to this body of "bonanza farms" of the United States, now gradually disappearing, and of the above mentioned new productive agricultural units of Europe, combining the features of an agricultural trust with those of agricultural labor union, does not change a bit *the character* of the said body of agricultural producers all over the civilized world as agricultural *laborers* producing all the salable food-stuffs for the world's consumption. Therefore, the interests of agricultural producers all around the civilized world, American "bonanza farms" and European landowners *not excepted*, are absolutely identical. These interests, being exclusively concentrated on the productive side of the agricultural industry of all civilized countries in its entity, are opposed by similarly identical interests of an immense army of agricultural middlemen of the newest type. Among them the railroad and elevator companies are representatives of comparative honesty and leniency for the producers. The immense army of non-producers, concentrated, also *exclusively*, on the distributive side of the industry, especially in the persons of produce gamblers, produce brokers, produce commission men, produce commission merchants, produce stock gamblers and produce stock brokers,

invariably succeed to filch away from the farmer his produce and deprive him almost entirely of the results of his labors.

While in this country, as well as in all other civilized countries, t. i., the countries which have entered already the stage of competitive agricultural production, nature yields her bounty to the producer in direct proportion to his efforts, but social relations rob him of nearly all he creates, while in other words, the army of non-producers arrayed on the distributive side of agricultural industry by virtue of their ownership of means of distribution, and particularly and especially by criminal manipulations of the produce market, daily commit an open and outrageous highway robbery on the farmer all over the world, while the American farmer, as well as the farmer of all civilized countries, just the infinitesimal percentage of "bonanza farms" and great European landowners excepted, have become practically reduced to the status of proletarians of the lands, hereby the economic outrage perpetrated on the farmer of modern civilized world by modern social conditions, by no means ends. Under the present system the producers of agricultural products in the United States must foot the entire cost of production, which, at a conservative estimate, must foot up to two billions dollars ($2,000,000,000) a year. If the agricultural producer of the country sells his wheat at a dollar per bushel and pays five dollars for a suit of clothes, the latter costs him five bushels of wheat, but when the protective tariff raises the price of the same suit of clothes to ten dollars, the latter costs the farmer already ten bushels of wheat instead of five bushels, as before. Thus the price of the suit has been raised for the farmer simply by the governmental action (the Tariff Act) irrespectively of its intrinsic value. In this way the protective tariff works in the United States all along the line, raising the cost of manufactured products averagely by 80 per cent., and thus practically reducing the proletarian income of the average farmer just to 20 per cent. of its nominal size. In this way it came to pass that in the case of the American farmer the question of the price for his produce is not even the question of *absolute quantity* of money, received by him for the same, but simply the question of a *proper proportion*. Similar is the condition of the farmer in all agricul-

tural surplus producing countries. It is very remarkable in this respect that the two leading agricultural countries of the globe—United States and Russia—which practically are the granaries of the world, possess the most atrocious protective tariffs on the face of the earth, thus putting all the burdens of fostering manufactures of the countries on the shoulders of their agricultural producers.

Therefore the amelioration of the condition of the American farmer lies undoubtedly in the same direction as the amelioration of the condition of the farmers of all civilized countries the world over. The American farmer being just a part of all the creators of agricultural wealth of the civilized world, his interests being identical with and just a part of the interests of all the agricultural producers of the globe, remedies for his wrongs must necessarily and inevitably be the same as those for wrongs of the farmers of all the civilized world. In order to find out the means of relief from social oppression and economic exploitation for the American farmer (as well as for the farmer of all the civilized countries) we have evidently to seek out the laws of economic advance, industrial growth and social evolution, because all the measures to accomplish all these high and just aims, if taken in opposition to the direction of social evolution and economic advance would inevitably prove abortive and disastrous. The history of all previous efforts at bringing relief to the farmers from social oppression and economic exploitation, ever made in the United States, as well as in various foreign countries (which history is outside of the province of our short sketch on the subject), is highly eloquent and sufficiently instructive in this respect. Thus the laws of modern economic and social evolution are to be defined at first.

It does not require a particularly strong intellect or very keen power of observation to see that modern state of society all around the world is a state of *universal war*, political as well as economic, war of different political and economic classes within the separate states as well as between the states themselves, with complete anarchy and undescribable horrors incident thereto.

This universal economic war and inevitable anarchy, result-

ing therefrom, constitute what is usually called "free competition." Fierce and bloody struggle on the economic field of the world of hundreds of thousands and millions of competitors naturally results in killing off and driving out of business an overwhelming majority of them. In modern industries (except agriculture) the advantages of large scale production are so great that the smaller establishments must inevitably and continually fail in "free competition," and in course of time these industries must of necessity be concentrated in a very small number of very large establishments. Then the owners of these surviving establishments agree to put a stop to the process by suspending competition. Thus the trusts are the natural outgrowth of modern industrial conditions. They do not owe their existence to any legislative device and consequenly can not be prevented by the same. They are as far beyond legislative control as the procession of the seasons of the year. The mere concentration of industry in a few large establishments does not constitute, however, the trust; it only creates conditions favorable to the formation of a trust. The trust is formed only when some sort of an agreement is entered into by surviving competitors whereby competition among themselves is suspended. In its original stage it was a mere agreement relating to prices and output. It passed through several stages until finally the typical trust is a single huge corporation which has absorbed a number of competing corporations. Thus in its original stage the trust was not a factor of concentration, but a means to prevent still further concentration. There is always a strong probability that the same conditions which destroyed a large number of small competitors, leaving only a few large ones in the field, would continue until all but one should succumb, leaving only a single surviving concern in complete and absolute possession of the field. In order to suspend these conditions and prevent this form of concentration the compact is entered into. It is a sort of agreement relating to the cessation of industrial hostilities, a measure for preserving the balance of industrial power, a kind of industrial disarmament. These compacts could not, however, prevent still further concentration tending to exterminate all competitors but one, leaving only a

single surviving establishment in the field of each industry, but they resulted in changing the methods of concentration from the extermination of competitors to the peaceful absorption of the same. Thus the compacts, constituting the original form of trusts, finally resulted in the benefits for the surviving competitors, saving them from the horrors of a life-and-death struggle and inevitable extermination.

The stage of political development, through which the world is passing, is absolutely identical with the stage of modern economic development. The proposals of disarmament in the field of international politics are identical with the suspension of competition among a few large competitors in the industrial field. As the sheer dread of a struggle between any of the great military powers of to-day is sufficient to create a general anxiety for some other means of settling international disputes, similarly the sheer dread of a life-and-death struggle among a few huge competitors in the industrial field, involving the loss of millions, is sufficient to inspire all those directly concerned with an anxiety for a peaceful settlement. As the disarmament or suspension of hostilities among the members of the trust threatens more the existence of small competitors, remaining outside of the trust, so the very existence of the small states never hung by so slender a thread as in these days of peace congresses and proposal for disarmament. The fact that the sentiment against the war among the great powers is so strong renders war among them much more improbable than ever before. As the formation of an agreement, whereby the competition was suspended among a few gigantic producers in certain industries, was for the purpose of preventing still further concentration, so in the field of international politics general disarmament is intended to prevent still further political concentration. As such still further industrial concentration could not be prevented, but its methods changed from the extermination of competitors to the peaceful absorption of the same, so in the field of international politics still further political concentration could not be prevented by the movement in favor of general disarmament, but the methods of such concentration changed from the process of military conquest to the process of "benevolent assimilation,"

The process of economic concentration did not leave, of course, the field of agriculture untouched, though, as we have shown already, in this field it took a form somewhat different from that, into which it developed in the field of manufacturing industries. The reasons for such a difference are manifold and more or less obvious as in agricultural industry the limit, beyond which further enlargement of scale of production ceased to be advantageous, has been reached long before the number of competitors was reduced to a few, and agricultural trust in its essentials *identical* with a manufacturing trust became unnatural and therefore impossible. A large farm may have certain advantages over a small farm, but the limit, beyond which large scale farming can not be profitably carried, is soon reached. It would therefore be impossible for larger farmers to continue crowding out the smaller ones until the whole market for agricultural products could be supplied from a few enormous farms. This is one of the reasons that an agricultural trust, essentially identical with a manufacturing trust, has become impossible. Another almost equally important reason for this is the universal lack of agricultural labor in all civilized countries and marked deterioration of its character. Nevertheless, in spite of this important difference of processes and forms of concentration in agriculture and manufactures, another essential feature of such concentration in both fields are identical. On the productive side of agriculture we find a continually increasing application of capital (machinery, etc.) and labor to any given area of ground, which makes a final transition from an extensive to an intensive method of cultivation. This is the same process which takes place in all industries. On the distributive side of agriculture we find a continually increasing control of the industry by a few other industries, namely: coal production, iron production, power transmission and transportation. This is also the process which is common to all industries of our times.

Having considered all essential features of evolution of agricultural industry as compared with those of manufactures, one can not fail to see that, while the stage of development, through which all the industries (except agriculture) are now passing, presents a fierce and bloody war between immense

industrial armies concentrated in a few points of industrial field, inevitably leading to the proposals for disarmament in the form of agreements to suspend the competition and to the changing of methods of industrial concentration, the modern stage of development of agricultural industry presents an unceasing, persistent and exhaustive guerrilla warfare between millions of small guerrilla bands scattered all around the agricultural field of the civilized world, the bands, which never thought as yet not only of disarmament, but even of armistice. This state of not belonging to one of the immense industrial armies of our times, but of conducting the exhaustive guerrilla warfare in the agricultural field in a small band, usually consisting of the members of his family with an occasionally hired helper, is the very independence, of which the American farmer so thoughtlessly and so ignorantly boasts.

Having thus defined the laws of modern social and economic evolution, we can see without any difficulty the lines along which the amelioration of the condition of the American farmer can be accomplished and must be conducted. In all civilized countries, i. e., the countries which have already emerged out of the stage of agricultural production by individual farmers for their own use only and entered the stage of production by them for sale, the agricultural industry presents a state of a stupendous and monstrous guerrilla warfare of millions of small farming bands with indescribable economic anarchy incident thereto, usually miscalled "free competition." The same as there are no means to humanize the war and alieviate its horrors because the atrocity, brutality and ferocity can not be humanized, there are no means also to humanize this heinous economic guerrilla war between the agricultural producers all over the world. As long as war, either political or economic, exists there always will be some killed and disabled for life, to say nothing about its terrible demoralizing and degrading influence on the future generations. The only means to humanize the war, either political or economic, is to abolish it altogether. Thus, this guerrilla warfare between the farmers of all civilized countries must be stopped at once. Prices of all agricultural products as well as their outputs must be defined and regulated since by

international agreements of their producers. As international surplus of each agricultural product, composed of separate national surpluses of the same, exported by different producing countries, in its grand total is a paramount, if not only, factor in establishing prices for the product, these international agreements of agricultural producers of the world shall have relation just to prices and outputs of export agricultural products. They will be sufficient to bring the agricultural industry of all the civilized world out of the present state of self-destructive competition and economic anarchy to the harmony of socialized and intelligently organized cooperative production and distribution, securing to the farmers of all civilized countries a fair and profitable price for their products. If these international agreements of agricultural producers would be international agricultural trusts, then let us have international agricultural trusts. It must be pointed out right here that the evolution from anarchy of competition to trust stage in any industry represents a social and economic advance of tremendous importance and far-reaching results. It is an universal and immutable biological law, running through all forms of life, economic realm not excepted, that that form of it becomes the fittest for existence and destined to survive, which first succeeds in eliminating waste. Accordingly, in the economic field, as soon as a certain form of waste has been abolished and a new method of accomplishing the same result with less energy substituted, the old wasteful method is thereby abolished and never can be revived. The most remarkable growth of trusts in the United States since the panic of 1894-1895 is but a decisive step in the direction of elimination of waste and improvement of production. In the modern state of industrial anarchy, known under the name of "free competition," plants, machinery and processes are quadrupled, and production is entirely unregulated so that natural resources, mechanical power and human facilities are destroyed in the most reckless manner, in efforts of different firms to undersell each other and drive all the competitors out of existence. The trust brings order into this industrial and economic chaos, and in this respect it is undoubtedly and undeniably a factor of great economic and

social progress. But, as in agricultural industry of the civilized world, all its iniquities and evils are concentrated exclusively on the distributive side, similarly in this new trust movement all evils and iniquities of the latter are concentrated on its *subjective* side. Being perfectly right, inevitable and beneficial in their *object,* which is the improvement in production, the trusts are monstrously wrong and harmful in their *subject,* i. e., as to the character of their present ownership. While trust is to industry as a whole what the machine is to the single establishment,—a means of saving time and productive power, the *fact* of their ownership being *concentrated* in a *few* hands, turns them into the instruments of industrial exploitation and economic enslavement of all producers of wealth. But just *broaden* their subject, just let all the people participate in their ownership, and all their evils will be transformed into the greatest benefits for the masses. As any attempt to oppose the economic and social advance represented by the trust movement, while being practically an attempt to move backward into the anarchy of the old competitive system, would be necessarily and inevitably abortive, if not disastrous, the *only* problem which confronts the human society in the trust issue is not, how to abolish or even hamper and restrict them, but how *to use* them for the benefit of all the people. The fate of anti-trust legislation in the United States is highly demonstrative and sufficiently instructive in this respect. Introduction and growth of profit-sharing and arbitration principles in the trust movement in the United States as well as in other manufacturing countries, especially in England, is exactly the principal movement in the direction of *broadening* the *subjective side* of the trust system, which is destined to transform them into economic and social factors, highly beneficial for the masses. As human society is not merely a mechanical conglomerate of individuals and represents some organic whole, and as, furthermore, it always develops as a whole, in one direction at a time only, the agricultural trusts seem to be bound to come. However peculiar conditions of agriculture in all civilized countries, which preclude its being concentrated in a few hands and render such a concentration impossible, are

necessarily and inevitably tending to eliminate all objectionable features of manufacturing trusts from these coming agricultural trusts in their very inception. Therefore, if any agricultural trusts will ever come, they *can not* be anything else but organizations highly beneficial for all agricultural producers as well as for the human society in its entirety. The same social and economic conditions, which have created national trusts, will undoubtedly create international ones—manufacturing as well as agricultural—if the latter are bound to come at all, what seems to be certain. Thus, if international agreements of agricultural producers relating to prices and outputs of each exported agricultural product, now being suggested by us, even would be international agricultural trusts, our suggestion would be just in the strictest accord with direction of economic development and industrial growth of modern society and undoubtedly would be bound to produce the greatest benefits for agricultural producers of all the civilized countries as well as for all mankind in general.

Nevertheless, international organizations of producers of exported agricultural products, now first time being suggested by us, would not be and can not be trusts. We have proven already beyond any dispute that the American farmer is simply a skilled agricultural laborer and that the price he receives for his produce represents merely his wages. Therefore, United States branches of these international agricultural organizations would be undoubtedly just agricultural labor unions. Identical with this in the United States is the condition of agriculture on all the American continent, and thus all American branches of the said international agricultural organizations would be simply agricultural labor unions. Very similar with the condition of agriculture in all the American countries is the condition of the same in all the civilized countries of the old world. Great landed estates of Europe, now of necessity combining the features of agricultural trusts with essential features of agricultural labor unions, represent relatively such a small percentage of all productive agricultural forces of the old world that they can not change a bit the character of European agricultural producers as simply skilled agricultural laborers. Therefore, in-

ternational organizations of producers of exported agricultural products, now first time being suggested by us, a newest and *only* means for amelioration of the condition of the farmer all over the civilized world, beyond any dispute, will be just *international agricultural labor unions.* Thus, we venture to call out so loudly that all the world could hear: "Farmers of all countries, great landowners attending to your business on your estates not excepted, unite: this is the only way to beat the wolf of speculator and price manipulator, sucking your blood, off your back!"

Now from the exposition of economic principles of international consolidation of agricultural interests of all civilized countries, we have to turn to the practical side of the case.

The transition from the present competitive system in agricultural industry of the civilized countries to the new cooperative one, now first time being suggested by us, as a newest and only means for raising most miserable income of the farmer all over the civilized world, and for the general amelioration of his present pitiful condition, in order to be effective and able to bring about desired results, must be accomplished fully and thoroughly. It would be of course a very great step toward such amelioration for the farmers of all surplus producing countries to enter into international agreements relating to prices and outputs of exported agricultural products, but this would not be enough. Before all, and above all, they ought to be able to maintain the prices agreed upon between themselves by the said international agreement on their national as well as local markets. Otherwise the transition from the competitive to the cooperative system in the agriculture of the world would be just merely a nominal one, without any practical significance whatsoever.

In the field of agriculture cooperation, in full meaning of the word, found as yet so limited application and its results in the modern hostile environment have been so sporadic and so uncertain that a wild confusion in respect to this comparatively new principle of social economy in its application to agriculture prevails, not only in the minds of ordinary mortals, but even in the intellects of political economists and

writers on agricultural economics. Therefore, a few explanations of this economic principle as applied to the field of agriculture, would be, not only appropriate, but even necessary.

There are three kinds of cooperation in agriculture, namely:

(1) Cooperation in agricultural production,

(2) Cooperation in direct purchasing by the agricultural producers of the articles desired by themselves and members of their families, and

(3) Cooperation in distribution of agricultural products, t. i., in the marketing of the same.

Of these three kinds, or rather phases of agricultural cooperation, the first has been tried the most, and consequently is known the best. The greatest majority of cooperative communities, established in the United States in the second part of the last century have been representatives of cooperation in agricultural production. As long, however, as modern system of distribution of agricultural products exists, as long as by organized forces of exploitation, concentrated on distributive side of agricultural industry, the agricultural producer is deprived of almost all results of his labor and driven invariably and inevitably to the point of mere subsistence, no improvement in agricultural production, cooperation in the same not excepted, can ameliorate the condition of the farmer of the civilized world. This is the very cause of the failure of almost all cooperative communities, usually established by the most enlightened and progressive thinkers of the age, in the United States as well as in the old world. No matter how much increases the agricultural production, almost nothing of this is left to the producer by the vicious and criminal system of modern agricultural distribution.

Cooperation in direct purchasing by the agricultural producers of articles desired by themselves and members of their families, entirely eliminating middlemen of all kinds and descriptions, constituted the first aim, and paramount object of existence and activity of the National Grange. It is known that in 1876, the Grangers owned five steamboat lines, thirty-two elevators, and twenty-two warehouses. Of all these very extensive financial and commercial transactions of the Grange

only mutual insurance companies and cooperative stores survived the wreck of 1879, and their only result is, at present, a very large mail order house, known as the "Original Grange Supply House." This kind, or rather phase of agricultural cooperation, entirely eliminating middlemen of all sorts and descriptions from the dealings of the farmer with the producers of *other* products, reduces the prices of all the articles wanted by himself and members of his family, to a certain extent and in this way increases purchasing capacity of his miserable income. Thus can be said of this phase of cooperation in agricultural industry, that it *indirectly* increases the income of the farmer. Nevertheless, as long as prices on *his own* products are fixed in the most arbitrary, oppressive and highway robbery manner *by* the forces and factors of exploitation, concentrated exclusively on distributive side of the industry, such an indirect increase of his income, always indefinite and uncertain, occasional and necessarily temporary, can not seriously affect his deplorable condition and bring to him more or less noticable relief. The fate of the Grange represents the most eloquent and unanswerable argument in this respect.

Turning to the third and last phase of cooperation in agriculture, t. i., cooperation in marketing of agricultural products, it should be said this kind of agricultural cooperation is a thing entirely unknown as yet to the modern industrial and commercial world. It would be then an entirely new machine put to work in the huge structure of modern agricultural industry. This cooperation in marketing of agricultural products by the farmers should consist of their socialized, concerted and coordinated efforts to sell their products intelligently, with precise knowledge of the condition of markets—local and national as well as international ones. While the present competitive system of marketing of agricultural products represents simply the blind throwing of them on the next market in uncertain quantities, and at indefinite, mostly inopportune times, so that they must take their chances in finding there any purchaser at any price, the new cooperative system of marketing of these products, founded on the precise knowledge of the condition of the

market, would represent the intelligent, methodical throwing of agricultural products on *certain* market in *certain* quantities and at definite times, so that, with relation of supply to demand being discounted, they would certainly find their purchasers at certain, *established* price. Thus, by the cooperative system of marketing, *only* the above mentioned international agreements of agricultural producers as to prices for their products can be realized, and thereby their present miserable income raised, what would mean a genuine improvement in their pitiful condition. It appears, therefore, that in agricultural industry of our times the cooperative system of marketing is really a whole thing, while all others, its factors and conditions, are indisputably just secondary and subordinate ones. So, according to the new cooperative system of agricultural industry now suggested by us, or rather to the cooperative system of agriculture in its full *meaning* and *complete* application, prices of all agricultural products shall be established on the ground: (1) of relation of the world's production of the product to the world's demand for the product, and, (2) of costs of its production, with a fair profit added. As of these two factors, which shall determine the price of each agricultural product in the coming Cooperative Agricultural Commonwealth of the World, the first, t. i., relation of production to demand, is entirely a natural one, and the second, t. i., costs of production with a fair profit added, just as much an artificial one as affected by protective tariff, the price thus determined and established will not be fixed arbitrarily for the consumers. On the contrary, as the new *cooperative* price for all agricultural products shall be determined and established in such a way that the present huge profits of enormous parasitic army of middlemen shall be equitably regulated, this price naturally will be not only profitable to both—producer and consumer—but also relatively lower than the old *competitive* one.

As the modern competitive system of agricultural industry is an international one in its foundation and its character, the new cooperative system of the industry, in order to eliminate and entirely supplant the former, necessarily and inevitably must be an international one also. It is self-evident

that in order to possess a sufficient knowledge of the condition of markets—local and national as well as international ones—and to obtain timely information of the prices, fixed for each of them by the said international agreements, the farmers of the civilized world must have an international organization. Of course the price of any product on local and national markets will be a price established by international agreements of its producers mentioned above for international markets, with costs of transportation deducted therefrom. It does not require of any argument that in modern social condition of humanity divided in different political nations, which live under different political systems, speak different languages, have different laws regulating commerce and industry and possess different commercial customs and usages, national organizations of agricultural producers shall be established at first. Such establishment of national organizations of agricultural producers in all producing, and especially surplus producing countries, is of course, a necessary prerequisite of creation of an international agricultural organization embracing all the agriculturists of the civilized world. There are existing at present, some agricultural organizations in different countries of the old, as well as of the new world, but all these organizations are merely local in their character or, if more than local in their scope, then limited just to a certain branch of agricultural production, such as grain growing, cattle raising, truck farming, etc. Gradual fusion of all these local and special organizations of agriculturists of each producing country in a single agricultural organization of broadest national scope is just the question of time. Though agriculture in its modern stage is but a general name for a large number of more or less different industries, all of these industries have closest connection with the soil and are therefore considerably interdependent. Moreover, many farmers in all civilized countries produce many different agricultural products at the same time and not only resort quite often to crop-rotation of more than three fields, but even turn their energies from one branch of agriculture to another of quite different nature, as from crop raising to cattle breeding, from market gardening to

bee farming, etc. Therefore, all these local and special agricultural organizations of different producing countries will naturally become united in national agricultural organizations, which thus will represent all agricultural interests of each producing country. For the same reasons the fusion of all these national agricultural organizations of all the civilized countries of the world in one international agricultural organization in the course of time will be, not only natural, but inevitable. This international agricultural organization, which shall embrace all agricultural producers of the civilized world, will be the very representative of all agricultural interests of the globe, which shall name the prices of all agricultural products on the international markets.

Of course, the agricultural millennium, when every farmer of every civilized country would belong to its national agricultural organization and through the latter to the international agricultural organization, which, through its representatives, shall name the prices for all agricultural products, is far off. However, in order to raise the miserable income of the farmer in all civilized countries and thus ameliorate his present pitiful condition it is not necessary at all to wait so long. As in division and organization of political forces of every civilized country a comparatively small body of men holds usually the balance of political power and thereby keeps political destinies of the country in their hands, in the same manner among many economic factors and forces, which create prices for all agricultural products in every civilized country, a comparatively small body of agricultural producers holds the balance of economic power to influence and establish these prices and thus keeps economic destinies of the country in their hands. This is a relatively small body of agricultural producers, which are able to hold their products, representing the temporary surpluses as under the old system, for a better market. This is an indisputable fact that such a body exists in every producing country. Here undoubtedly lies the key for the preliminary solution of the most tremendous economic problem of the age, called the amelioration of the condition of the farmer. It is apparent that thus far this is the only key. If in every producing country, nay, in

every surplus producing country, *only* a *part* of the farmers, which are able to hold their produce for a better market, could be united in national organizations, or have the existing local and special agricultural organizations united into the national ones along the lines of modern, intelligent, scientific marketing, the modern agricultural problem would be already almost solved. As soon as so frequent temporary over-supply of agricultural markets, inevitably caused by the existing antiquated, blind and vicious system of marketing of agricultural produce, by the new system of intelligent and concerted marketing, even partially applied, will be eliminated and made impossible, the amelioration of the condition of the farmer will be already almost attained. The fusion of the said agricultural organizations of this new type of just a few surplus producing countries, or even just simply their intelligent and concerted action on the international markets for agricultural products, would be already a long step toward a final, stable and permanent solution of the tremendous agricultural problem of the age.

As the evolution of modern society is steadily and invariably tending toward the substitution of the new cooperative system in all industries for the old competitive one, and agriculture, as we have shown already before, makes no exception of this general law of modern and social and economic evolution, it would be abnormal and very strange indeed, if even in such a foremost agricultural country as the United States there would not appear some men, which are able to understand the spirit of the time and to grasp the modern agricultural situation. Most fortunately for the American farmer as well as for the farmers of all the civilized countries, the initiative in such a great movement, emanating from the spirit of the times, is already taken and exactly in this country.

The American Society of Equity of North America, *first* national organization of the American farmers in *proper* meaning of this word, was organized in Indianapolis, Ind., last December and has already over 60,000 members in all parts of the country. The chief and paramount object of the American Society of Equity is to obtain profitable prices for all farm prod-

ucts, including grain, fruit, vegetables, stock, cotton, wool, etc., by *introducing* and *establishing* of modern methods of *marketing* of all agricultural products. As competitive system of modern agricultural production and distribution embraces all the countries, producing national surpluses of each agricultural product, in their grand total composing an international marketable surplus of the same, the chief and paramount object of the American Society of Equity may not be fully accomplished without the cooperation of farmers of all other surplus producing countries. Thus, to the *cooperation* of the American farmers in marketing their produce, which constitutes the basis of the American Society of Equity, the cooperation of the farmers of all other surplus producing countries in the same direction should be added. Fully realizing this fundamental principle of its activity and this necessary condition to insure the success of the latter, the American Society of Equity, first time in the history of the United States, has made arrangements for the establishment of similar societies in all leading surplus producing countries. These preparatory arrangements met with universal approval and support of prominent agriculturists as well as of statesmen of leading European countries. This shows quite decisively that if in this hour of extreme peril the American farmers would become aroused to exigencies of the situation, and would be prompt enough to join the ranks of their national organization in proper meaning of the word, which represents, undoubtedly, the embryo of the first and most powerful international agricultural organization of the world, they will become, very soon, powerful enough to drive the economic anarchy, so strenuously and so harmoniously defended and supported by capitalistic as well as the anarchistic press of the country, out of economic and commercial system of the United States.

Great movements are not born to die in infancy. When the spirit of the times finds its expression in social evolution and becomes incarnated into social organizations they are destined to growth and development. Therefore, the organization of the societies of equity in leading agricultural countries of the world is just the question of the time. Meanwhile

the American Society of Equity of North America would naturally and inevitably assume at present all the work toward the real amelioration of the condition of the farmer all the world over and promotion of *only* means of his salvation. Honor to the country where such a grand movement emanates from, honor to the men, which became incarnation of the spirit of the times. Thus, reversing the old, antiquated saying, which from beginning of the times was always a lie as to the social world, we will exclaim: "*ex occidente lux!*"

Agriculture is the foundation of all the industries of all the countries, and the farmers constitute the most numerous social and economic class in the world. Therefore, as soon as the societies of equity will have been established in leading agricultural countries of the globe, even only in surplus producing countries and will have taken a concerted action toward the introduction of the cooperative system into distribution of agricultural products, industrial slaughter and economic anarchy will cease, and industrial peace will come at last down to the earth.

Then, and then only, the long fight of man with man will be sunk in a cooperation of all mankind in a common effort to gain from Mother Nature all possible blessings for the benefit of all.

As in this short sketch, on the subject of the most complicated nature and the most tremendous importance, we have entered an entirely new field of social and economic thought, and had no single beaten path to follow, we earnestly hope that our errors and shortcomings will be leniently overlooked by our readers.

THIRD PART

The emblem of the American Society of Equity is symbolical of PRICE, being on an equality with PRODUCTION and CONSUMPTION.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY.

A Plan for Cooperation by Farmers to Secure Profitable Prices for all Farm Products.

"Read not to contradict and confute, not to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."—Bacon.

The machine must not belittle the engine that drives it, nor the engine the steam that propels it. Oftentimes as people look at the machines and note the great work they are doing, they do not think of the steam away back, which makes the machine useful. The farmer furnishes the steam for all the business in the country. He sows, he tills, he harvests, but if he would stop there the business of the country would be crippled. He must market, when all the machinery starts. The products of the farm flow like life blood through all the arteries of trade and give life to the whole body.

The farmer creates most of the wealth. Surely what he creates makes all wealth possible. He feeds them all and clothes them all; and he can starve them all. Yet he has, in the past, been the most helpless and dependent of all. The people who create wealth should enjoy many of its blessings.

Farmers are doing many things now because it has been the custom in the past. Merchants and manufacturers did the same way a few years ago, but they are changing their methods. The farmer may be the last one to get out of the rut, but the time has arrived for action. Progress, improvement, new methods, benefit farmers as well as other classes of business men.

The cost to produce a bushel of grain one year is about the same as another, yet one year it may bring the producer fifty cents a bushel or less and another one dollar or more. Who can make any definite calculations on such an uncertain basis as this? Here is the secret of lack of improvements

on many farms. The owner is afraid to undertake improvements for fear prices will be down and he can not pay for them.

The consumption of the various staple farm products is quite uniform year after year, whether the producer receives a fair return or not. The family who eat their loaf of bread, a pie, a cake, etc., daily when wheat is worth sixty-five cents a bushel, would eat the loaf of bread, the pie, the cake, etc., just the same if wheat was worth one dollar per bushel. A profitable—equitable—price will not curtail consumption.

Profitable prices do not necessarily mean high prices. Some farm products are high enough now, but this is the time to act and keep them profitable. Don't be deceived by a false feeling of security. Conditions may easily work around to fifteen-cent oats, twenty-cent corn and fifty-cent wheat. A fair, profitable price is what we want. No hardships imposed, but benefits bestowed on every man, woman and child.

We believe everybody will agree with us that land is the primary source of all wealth. Therefore the owners of the land have it in their power to direct the affairs of the world. A great thing to contemplate.

We believe there is one source of great danger to the prosperity of the country, and it lies in the uncertainties surrounding agriculture. No business may be considered healthy that yields such great profits as to induce extravagance, or such small profits as result in hardships; and particularly an element of uncertainty about any business is very deplorable.

It may be claimed that a very large number of farmers and producers can not be held in line to effectually control prices. We believe there are enough intelligent and sensible agriculturists in the country who, seeing the enormous benefits resulting from this plan, will not refuse to market conservatively, and thus exert the desired influence to control prices. The trouble, heretofore, has been that farmers have never yet realized the power they hold, nor has there been a plan or society through which they could cooperate for such great financial benefits.

To illustrate the relation of the farmer with the balance of the people: Go into any home in Indianapolis or any

other town or city and inquire how long the family could live without replenishing their food supply. The answer would be "we must buy to-morrow." Go to the grocery store and ask the same question and to the wholesale or commission houses, and they will tell you that, should the farmers stop marketing for a single day there would be hardships; for a week actual distress would be experienced. The same illustration can be applied to our clothing, which is made from the farmer's wool, cotton, etc. Where is there an intelligent man who is so dead to his own interests that he would not take legitimate advantage of such genuine necessity to secure his just rights and protect his own family from hardships? The producers of our food are under no legal or moral obligation to feed the world at an unfairly low price.

With things so much desired as the food we eat and the clothes we wear, the rule should be for the consumer to seek them—because he must have them—rather than for the producer to force or dump them on him.

Stop, good farmer, and consider what possibilities open up at this viewpoint. There are no other commodities in the world so desired as yours, in fact they are absolutely necessary for the comfort and existence of human and animal life. In your business you have all possibilities of extortion, yet the farmers can be trusted to feed the world at fair prices, even when cooperating on this plan, where equity rules.

This plan of cooperation contemplates a society or organization. It is called the American Society of Equity. (There may be a Russian Society of Equity, a German Society of Equity, etc., if necessary, but, as America is the great surplus nation, prices may be made here which will govern over the world.)

In support of the suggested name, "American Society of Equity," We will give Webster's definition, as follows:

"Equity—Equality of rights; natural justice of rights; the giving or desiring to give to each man his due, according to reason and the law of God to man; fairness in determination of conflicting claims; impartiality."

"Equity is synonymous with or equal to justice, rectitude. (See below.)

"Justice—The quality of being just, conformity to the prin-

ciples of righteousness and rectitude in all things, strict performance of moral obligations, practical conformity to human or divine law; integrity in the dealings of men with each other; rectitude; equity; uprightness.

"Conformity to truth and realty in expressing opinions and in conduct; fair representation of facts respecting merit or demerit; honesty; fidelity; impartiality; as:

"The rendering to everyone his due or right; just treatment, requital of desert; merited reward or punishment; that which is due to one's conduct or motives.

"Agreeableness to right, equity; justness; as the justness of a claim.

"Equity and justice are synonymous with law; right; rectitude; honesty; integrity; uprightness; fairness and impartiality.

"Justice and equity are the same; but human laws, though designed to secure justice, are of necessity imperfect, and hence what is strictly legal is at times far from being equitable or just.

"Justice, Rectitude—Rectitude, in its widest sense, is one of the most comprehensive words in our language, denoting absolute conformity to the rule of right in principle and practice."

The name, American Society of Equity, will always indicate the object of this society. We can not offer any more comprehensive explanation than contained in the word "equity" itself. Equity given and equity received will be the guiding principle of this association.

THE PLAN OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY.

The headquarters is at Indianapolis, Ind., and is called the National Union. Branches called Local Unions will be formed all over the country, in every township as frequently as necessary, to accommodate every farmer. They may be in every school district. It is not necessary for a member to belong to a local union, but it is recommended where ten or more members can join together and where they can have a meeting place. The plan of the American Society of Equity is so flexible, however, that a member, no matter where situated, can cooperate for all general benefits, with other members, without belonging to a local union. An official paper containing all advice, is the key to cooperation and goes direct to the farm. This is the only farmers' society in which members can get the full benefits of national cooperation without belonging to a local lodge or union, and without attending the meetings.

The affairs of the society are regulated by a board of seven or more directors. These directors will be experts on various lines of farm products. To illustrate, there will be a director representing each of the following and all other important crops: Wheat, corn, oats, cotton, beef, pork, poultry, dairy, tobacco, fruit, etc. The directors may be selected by members interested in the particular crops, or appointed by the officers of the society.

The key to the workings of the society will be the official paper. This will go to every member. At present it is published twice a month, as soon as the society is sufficiently developed it will be printed four times a month. Through the official paper the National Union—officers, directors and editors —will speak to all the members, giving information and ad-

vice, so that all may have the same information and be in a position to act as one man, or cooperate, as well as if they were all in one community, and could be seen individually. The National Union will be the head or clearing house for the entire agricultural business.

A very important part of the plan of the American Society of Equity is the crop reporting system. Each member will be a crop reporter. Either direct, or through his local union secretary, on blanks furnished by the National Union. This will be the most complete and most reliable crop reporting system ever undertaken or accomplished, and will afford reliable information instead of unreliable reports, as have been given to the public in the past. The crop reporting will also be carried to foreign countries which produce or consume sufficient to make them factors in this great problem.

With reliable information about crop yields and the known consumption of any commodity, the board of directors will decide what is an equitable value for each crop as it is produced, and recommend members to ask that price, and not sell for less. This will be called the *minimum* (lowest) price. If members will quit selling the moment the market will not take any more supplies at the minimum price, prices will be maintained, the demand will be supplied regularly as it appears, no over supply, surplus or glut will occur on the markets, and farmers, dealers, millers and consumers will be benefited, to say nothing of the relief from uncertainties and fear of loss attending the old system.

Remember, it will not be necessary for each person to be told when to sell any crop. The plan contemplates that each owner of produce, wherever situated, shall supply the markets through the regular channels with all they will take at the minimum price, and stop selling the moment the buyers won't take more. There need be no fear that buyers will be out of the market long, because the world must have your goods all the time. They can not do without a month, nor week, nor even a day. The price can be made and maintained as soon as this society has a million members. Then other millions will ask the price also.

We expect, under the new system, that speculation in farm

products will be at an end, but should the speculators choose to send the prices above the fair minimum price recommended by the society, members and non-members can of course accept them. It is the hope of the society that they can never bear prices below the equitable price named.

When a value is placed on a crop of grain, cotton, pork, beef, etc., it would be expected to control until the next crop year, unless very material changes occurred to affect consumption, or future crop prospects warrant a revision. To prevent too liberal marketing at the start an advance will be made on each staple article each month it is held, thus justifying part of the producers in holding their crops. This advance will be for protection only, but if there is a tendency to market too much it can be increased so as to make it profitable to hold back.

The frequent fluctuations of the market (many times a day) are not in the interest of the farmers, but for the speculators and gamblers. Do farmers profit by these fluctuations? Certainly not. But they could make many improvements, provide many comforts for their families, or indulge in many pleasures, if they knew the wheat in their granaries was worth not less than eighty-five cents or one dollar a bushel, the same in September, January and April, and the same way with other crops.

A plan such as this is the only practical one for the farmers. Manufacturers may form trusts and partnerships and be bound by ironclad agreements, but with the great agricultural industry any enormous concentration of capital to control prices would prove an incentive to unusual production, an inducement to hold crops and a desire to obtain fictitious values when the plan would fail. With our plan, where price is based entirely on merit, an unusually large world's crop, whether from increased acreage, increased yield per acre or accumulations in the hands of producers or holders, means lower prices in the future. This fear of lower prices will of itself be sufficient incentive to keep the crops moving into consumption. The safety-valve will be reliable information placed before them, a fair minimum price and the intelligence and common sense of a fair portion of the American farmers. Array

on our side the intelligent farmers who are amenable to facts and reason and the results are accomplished. The balance of the farmers, at any rate, are the stubborn, ignorant portion who are either driven or led, and are not sufficient to effect the general results.

We know, with a profitable price obtainable, the temptation to hold will not be so great, and we predict crops will be marketed closer during the year and the consumption will be greater of every staple product. Also, with profitable prices for each crop the inducement will not be present to put out an exceedingly large acreage of any one crop, which has been one of the great faults of farmers in the past.

We have had some experience with human nature, and we believe enough producers can and will demand the minimum (lowest allowable) price to make the workings of the plan definite and reliable. As to controlling production this feature will take care of itself. Consumption has overtaken production in all important lines, while with a profitable price assured, each producer will not attempt to put out a whole township as he oftentimes attempts when prices are low, in order to "make both ends meet."

Manufacturing and mercantile enterprises are not conducted by chance. Why should farming be an exception? It need not be. We appeal to every producer of crops to consider this matter very carefully and decide in the future to do business on business principles.

The selling of farm products in the past has always been a guessing match. Guessing is good enough if it hits, but a certainty is several thousand per cent. better. With profitable prices made on each crop, farmers can put up elevators, warehouses or granaries to hold their products, or build co-operative cold storage plants to hold their fruit, if necessary. Did you ever think of it? The farmer may be the greatest monopolist of them all. To illustrate: He can take the rawest kind of material (plant food), put it in his land and manufacture through his plants and animals the very highest finished products, such as meat, butter, eggs, fruit, etc., and sell them to the consumer at the highest possible price. There need be no person to share profits with him if he lives up to

his privileges. The plan of the society, however, is not to interfere with established business methods as long as the other people will concede to the farmers their rights, but only to put farming on a safe, profitable basis and secure for farmers benefits equaling those realized in other business undertakings.

With this plan in successful operation it will limit or stop all speculation in agricultural products—such as wheat, oats, corn, cotton, pork, beef, etc.—by gamblers, who only thrive on uncertainties.

THE RESULTS OF FARMERS' CO-OPERATION BRIEFLY STATED.

It will increase the value of all farms from 25 to 100 per cent. It will make of the farmer a spender of much more money for improvements on the farm, for necessaries, luxuries and education. It means enormous benefits to all people engaged in agricultural pursuits, also to merchants, millers, grain dealers, manufacturers, professional men, etc. It means unprecedented and uninterrupted prosperity for America and the civilized world. Uncertainties about prices, over-production or unprofitable prices in any great enterprise like farming are constant menaces to the prosperity of a nation.

The success of this plan means steady, uninterrupted prosperity for farmers. It means that they can make many improvements that otherwise they can not. It means substantial buildings, with many comforts for the farmers' families and stock that may never be enjoyed under the old order of things. Having a certain profit from their products, they will spend it freely, and every industry in the country will be benefited, thus benefiting every man, woman and child. There can be no mistake about this prediction.

The success of this plan also means the control of the markets of the world by the farmers; and they can be trusted to feed the world at fair prices. But should the fair prices be refused they can starve the world by withholding their produce.

More than this: Remove the uncertainties surrounding any business and you make better citizens of those people. They will be better morally, mentally and physically. Remove the uncertainties of prices for agricultural products and you will lessen sickness, poverty, crime and taxation. Our schools and colleges will fill up and our poorhouses, asylums, jails and penitentiaries will have fewer inmates. Give us equity and you will give us happiness. The success of this plan will cause the farmer to love his business, to care for his farm, to raise better crops and larger crops. He will be encouraged to irrigate and to do a thousand things that now he can not do.

The success of this plan, where equity rules, will obliterate that feeling, "Do him or he will do me." On the contrary,

when you get your just reward, you can love your neighbor as yourself. The churches will be filled because humanity will have much to be thankful for, and the saloon will be empty because of no sorrows to drown. Uncertainty of price does not stimulate demand and consumption. Remove the uncertainty of prices of farm products, give the producer a fair profit and the middleman a fair margin and there will be a constant stream flowing to the consumer, causing greater consumption and benefiting every person.

The plan is simplicity itself, as already explained. Give us a fair proportion of the farmers willing to ask a fair price, based on production and consumption and the result will be accomplished. Give us unity in cooperation among the farmers, if that is possible, in the carrying out of this plan, and no trust ever dreamed of would represent such a power of capital as would be behind the American Society of Equity.

The farmers are strong enough and rich enough now to take this important step. Prompt action will prevent prices from slipping down to an unprofitable basis, with all the hardships attendant on a condition of poverty and bankruptcy that large crops and unprofitable prices will bring sooner or later. Profitable prices for good crops is what we must have, then the benefits will be evenly and generally distributed, and permanent national prosperity guaranteed.

Note—Any attempt to control prices through a large fund as recently proposed by several companies will fail because it will encourage producers to increase production and to hold their crops, which will result in an unwieldy surplus. If the fund is actually used to buy and hold the crops, it will certainly result like the Leiter deal—in an inability to find buyers, who will take them at a still higher price, when they must be disposed of. Neither individual, corporate, nor national aid along this line can be effective, unless the surplus that is bound to result will be destroyed.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF N. A.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION.

We, the undersigned citizens of the United States of America, hereby associate ourselves together as a society, hereinafter named, under and pursuant to the statutes of the state of Indiana, same being an act of the general assembly of the state of Indiana, approved March 6th, 1899, and being an act entitled "An Act for the Incorporation of Societies, not for pecuniary profit, etc.," by the following articles:

Article I. Name.

The name of this society shall be "The American Society of Equity of North America.

Article II. Stock.

This society has no capital stock and is not organized for pecuniary profit.

Article III. Objects.

1. To obtain profitable prices for all products of the farm, garden and orchard.
2. To build and maintain elevators, warehouses and cold storage houses in principal market cities or in all localities where necessary, so that farm produce may be held for an advantageous price, instead of passing into the hands of middlemen or trusts.
3. To secure equitable rates of transportation.
4. To secure legislation in the interest of agriculture.
5. To open up new markets and enlarge old ones.
6. To secure new seeds, grain, fruit, vegetables, etc., from foreign countries, with the view of improving the present crops and giving a greater diversity.
7. To report crops in this and foreign countries, so that farmers may operate intelligently in planting and marketing.
8. To establish institutions of learning, so that farmers and their sons and daughters may be educated in scientific and intensive farming and for the general advancement of agriculture.
9. To improve our highways.

10. To irrigate our land.
11. To prevent adulteration of food and marketing the same.
12. To own real estate, build, maintain and operate elevators, storage houses, stock yards, railroads, ship lines, etc., as may be deemed wise and expedient.
13. To promote social intercourse.
14. To settle disputes without recourse to law.
15. To borrow and loan money and do a banking business.
16. To do an insurance business, both life and fire.
17. To establish similar societies in foreign countries.

Article IV. Incorporators.

J. A. Everitt,	Eli A. Hirshfield,
Mark P. Turner,	A. D. McKinney,
H. W. Miller,	Sid Conger.

Article V. Place of Business.

The principal offices of this society shall be located and maintained in Indianapolis, Marion county, Indiana, with such branch societies elsewhere as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the society.

Article VI. Term of Existence.

This society shall have and is incorporated for a term of fifty (50) years' existence.

Article VII. Seal.

The likeness and imprint of the official seal of this society is hereto attached. (See page 233.) The seal is the regular emblem of the society, with the word "Seal" added.

Article VIII. Election.

The officers of this society shall be a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Organizer, General Counsel and Board of Directors, and each and all shall be elected by popular vote of the members at the annual meeting of the society at Indianapolis, Marion county, Indiana, on the first Monday in October of each year. Members who can not be present can vote by proxy through their Secretary. (The date of the annual meeting for 1903 has been changed to the first Monday in December.)

Article IX. Management.

The business and prudential concerns of this society shall be managed by a Board of Directors, consisting of seven or more persons, including the President, Secretary and Treasurer; who shall be members of this society in good standing.

The Board of Directors and officers for the first year, and until a Board of Directors and officers are elected at the annual meeting, are as follows:

OFFICERS.

J. A. EVERITT, President.
SELDON R. WILLIAMS, Vice-President.
ELI A. HIRSHFIELD, Vice-President.
A. D. MCKINNEY, Secretary.
H. W. MILLER, Treasurer.
MARK P. TURNER, General Counsel.
SID CONGER, General Organizer.
FREMONT GOODWINE, Advisory Counsel.
....., Statistician.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

J. A. Everitt,
Hiram Miller,
Mark P. Turner,
Fremont Goodwine,
A. D. McKinney,
Sid Conger,
Eli A. Hirshfield.

STATE OF INDIANA, MARION COUNTY, SS:

Before me, Kathryn C. Tilly, a Notary Public, in and for said county and state, appeared J. A. Everitt, Eli A. Hirshfield, Mark P. Turner, A. D. McKinney, H. W. Miller and Sid Conger, the above named incorporators, and each for himself duly acknowledged the execution of the above and foregoing articles of incorporation to be his voluntary act and deed for the purposes and uses therein set out.

Witness my hand and notarial seal this 17th day of December, 1902.

(Seal.) KATHRYN C. TILLY,
Notary Public.

My commission expires August 21, 1906.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS.

GOVERNING LOCAL UNIONS OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY OF N. A.

Article I. Name.

This union shall be known as the ..... Union of the American Society of Equity of ..... (To save confusion all unions must bear the postoffice name, and not more than one union bear the same name, except where the territory is too large for one union others may be formed and must be designated by numbers, as Riverside Union No. 2 or No. 3, etc.)

Article II. Membership.

Any person, of good moral character, male or female, of the age of fourteen years or over, who is engaged in any branch of agricultural work; also all persons not engaged in agricultural work but a friend of agriculture may become members of the American Society of Equity by paying the required fees.

Proviso 1. A person may be a member of the National Union and enjoy all the general benefits of the society until there are a sufficient number of members to form a local union, but no person shall be a member of a local union without supporting the National Union. All members of the National Union are required to affiliate themselves with a local union as soon as one is organized in the neighborhood, and in this way carry out the complete plan of the society.

Proviso 2. Any young persons between the ages of 14 and 21, who are children of members of the society, and wives of members, also old men and women (75 years or older), whose life has mainly been spent on a farm, may become complimentary members, without any membership fee or dues. The object being to encourage the youths to start aright and to smooth the pathways of the old people who have become aged in the service of agriculture. Such members must be indicated when reports are sent in.

Proviso 3. In the case of a woman who is actively engaged in agricultural pursuits on her own account, membership must be granted her on exactly the same terms as to men. In case of death of the husband, his membership will fall to his successor, be this widow or son, and such cases must be reported to the National Union by the secretary.

Proviso 4. No person can hold membership in more than one local union at the same time.

Article III. Form of Application.

Application for membership should be made in the following form, to-wit:

"I, James M. Goodwill, whose postoffice is ....., in the county of ....., state of ....., desire to become a member of the American Society of Equity, and hereby make application for membership in the ..... union of the A. S. of E.

"I fully appreciate the disadvantages of the old business system of farming, and I also appreciate the great advantages that must result to the agricultural class if they will in the future cooperate on the plan of the American Society of Equity. Now, therefore, I, being desirous of securing for myself, my family, and my brethren and sisters who are laboring in the same work, all the benefits that will result from cooperation, do hereby agree to follow the reasonable advice of the society regarding crops, prices, etc.

"Also recognizing the great benefits that have accrued to other lines of business through cooperation, and admitting that equal and greater benefits will result to farmers if they will cooperate, I hereby promise to, at every opportunity, induce others to join the society and cooperate.

"I hereby subscribe to the by-laws of the society."

(Signed) .....

(Date) .....

Article IV. Admission of Members.

Members may be admitted at any regular meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present, not less than seven members, including officers, to constitute a quorum.

Article V. Fees.

The membership fee of the National Union shall be one dollar (which also covers the dues for the first year), and dues one dollar a year thereafter (or twenty-five cents a quarter); also, fifty cents additional for the official paper and

bulletins. They must be paid through the local union, except if no local union, they may be forwarded direct to the National Union, Indianapolis, Ind.

Membership fees must accompany the application.

Dues to the local union will be fixed by that union in each case. It will depend on the business they undertake to do.

The dues to the National Union may be reduced or increased after the society is in working order, depending on the work undertaken, and as experience demonstrates.

The membership fee, including the official paper, has been placed at fifty cents until one million members are secured.

Article VI. Officers' Salaries and Bonds.

The officers of a local union shall be a President-Treasurer (the two in one) and a Secretary. It shall be their duty to perform such duties as usually fall to such officers. The officers may be reasonably paid for their services, such a sum as will secure entirely competent men. The benefits to members, if they live up to the privileges, will be so great that no hardship need be imposed by the legitimate expenses. The rate of compensation shall be fixed at the annual session.

All officers holding responsible positions should execute a safe bond.

Article VII. Election of Officers.

The officers shall be elected by vote of the members; first the President-Treasurer, then the Secretary. The majority electing. The election shall be held on the third Saturday in September of each year, or on such a date as the local union may select. Officers shall be elected for one year, and serve until their successors are elected.

Article VIII. Vacancies.

In the case of a permanent vacancy of any office for any reason, a successor must be chosen, temporarily, at the next meeting following the vacancy, and permanently at the following meeting. In case of a temporary vacancy, a temporary officer may be appointed by the remaining officer.

Article IX. Organization of Local Union.

Ten or more persons eligible to membership may organize a local union.

Article X. Appeals.

Matters affecting the union, and that are not covered by the existing by-laws, may be appealed to the National Union. Such an appeal must be made in writing with the evidence.

ARTICLE XI. CHARTER.

The fee for a charter for a local union shall be one dollar, payable to the National Union.

ARTICLE XII. SEAL.

The seal of a local union shall be the name of the society, with the town, state and number and the word seal added. The cost will be charged to the local union.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS.

These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting, providing the amendment is voted favorably. It is expected that each local union will enact such additional laws and change these laws, as will best serve the condition existing in their district.

ARTICLE XIV. TIME OF MEETING.

The regular meeting of this union shall be held on the ..... day of each (week or month), at ..... o'clock. Seven members shall constitute a quorum. (Where the union owns its meeting place it is recommended that the room be kept open constantly for the use of the members.)

ARTICLE XV. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES.

Litigation is to be discouraged, and in no case shall members of the American Society of Equity enter into litigation at law with each other, or a member against a non-member, until the matter is presented to the union and its good offices used to settle the difference, except when delay will be detrimental.

Any member violating this provision shall be liable to expulsion.

ARTICLE XVI. WITHDRAWALS.

Any person may withdraw by making his desire known previous to calling to order of any meeting and being present at the meeting, when the demand will be considered in the regular order of business. Unless the applicant is persuaded to continue a member, permission to withdraw shall be given by the President. All dues are to be paid up to time of withdrawal.

ARTICLE XVII. PAYMENT OF MONEY.

All orders for warrants must be signed by both the President-Treasurer and the Secretary.

ARTICLE XVIII. RECORDS, REPORTS, NOTICES.

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep a record of all

transactions. The minutes of any meeting must be approved at the next meeting and then become matter of permanent record. Also, to secure reports on crop conditions, acreage, yields, etc., and forward a copy to the National Union as frequently as twice a month, and more frequently when conditions out of the ordinary prevail; also to report all new members, withdrawals, delinquencies, deaths, etc., sending a report to the National Union (suitable blanks will be provided for these purposes), and to do all things as will tend to the building up of the society and the advancement of the interests of the members.

ARTICLE XIX. LOCAL CONDITIONS.

In each locality some conditions exist that are peculiar to that place alone; therefore, it is expected to amend these by-laws to meet the conditions of the particular sections.

While cooperative buying and the conduct of cooperative stores is not deemed necessary when the farmers get profitable prices by cooperative selling, yet cooperation in any line or in any direction that will benefit the agricultural classes is not prohibited. We simply ask each member to keep in mind the motto of his beloved society. "Equity."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Read carefully. There is not a trouble affecting agriculture that cooperation will not cure. If all the problems are not solved here, it is because no person has brought them forward. There is a solution in cooperation for every problem in the agricultural book, and for nearly all the other problems of our social, political and business life.

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1. Q. Can farmers organize?

A. They did in the Grange, Alliance, Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association and other societies. Therefore, they can again, if there is a good reason for it. The reasons are more numerous now than ever before.

2. Q. Can farmers cooperate?

A. The farming industry is the same all over the country, and practically all over the world. Farmers all have their investments for one purpose, and all labor to one common purpose, viz.: to produce the necessaries and comforts of life. Laborers, on the contrary—while they all sell their labor for wages—are subject to many varied conditions, as found in the factories, stores, banks, mines, on the railroads, in cities or country, etc. They are also influenced by many interests of their employers and frequently attempts are made to prevent them from organizing and cooperating; yet they have organized and do cooperate, and have secured great benefits from such cooperation. If laborers can cooperate for their mutual good under such conditions, who dare say that farmers can not? No fair person will oppose the farmers' organization on the plan proposed by the American Society of Equity. On the contrary every person doing a legitimate business will help the organization, because it will help him. Farmers are surely as intelligent as coal miners and factory employes, and surely they can see it is to their great (yes, enormous) interest to cooperate for every good thing. Every class of people can cooperate except Indians, idiots and the insane—unless we except the farmers. We will see if farmers must be classed with the above after giving them a trial on a good plan.

3. Q. Will farmers hold together and cooperate?

A. Give them all, or half, or quarter, of the benefits that the

A. S. of E. promises, and you can not drive them apart. Appeal to their self-interest—selfish interests, if you please—and they will stick to the thing that makes them money and elevates their calling.

4. Q. Does speculation injure farmers?

A. It certainly does. It is the greatest curse of the country. Usually the farmers' crops are sold months before they are grown, when, if conditions justify higher prices the speculators won't let the price go up until their contracts are filled. The boards of trade are the devil's workshops, in which the earnings of farmers are forged for the benefit of a few individuals who become immensely wealthy.

5. Q. Is not cheap food a blessing to the world?

A. Cheap food and dear pleasures are not equitable. In prosperous times the masses spend money extravagantly for pleasures. Why should they not pay good prices for food? In fact, low prices to the farmers will speedily put them out of the field as consumers, and every business and all working people in the country will suffer.

6. Q. What are the speculative commodities?

A. Agricultural products, railroad shares and mining stocks.

7. Q. Why are these selected to speculate in?

A. Because of the uncertainties attending them.

8. Q. How can agricultural products be removed from the list?

A. By making prices certain. By fixing a price once a year, when the crop is produced, and demanding that price. This is equitable, the farmer has as much right to do this as the manufacturer, the banker, the lawyer, the physician, the gas man, the ice man, the union laborer or any other person on earth. Besides, the farmer has a better chance to enforce his demands than any of the others. His goods are indispensable; the others may be done without.

9. Q. When is the time to organize the farmers?

A. Now is the time. There are more farmers in an independent condition now than for many years. These are the farmers who have good land and raised good crops in the short crop years. Short crops make good prices. Big crops make low prices. Farmers suffer more from big crops than from small crops. This is the time to organize and keep prices up. Have you not noticed how the speculators price your crops down as soon as crop prospects are good? As soon as you raise big crops two years in succession prices will go away down. Don't you want good prices for good crops? Then the blessings will be equally distributed. Organize now, and not when mortgages are plastered all over your homes.

10. Q. Will farmers' business grow worse?

A. Lines opposed to the farmers—and they constitute every

other industry, profession and consumer in the country—are being drawn closer in organization and cooperation. As they all get their living from the farm, they will employ the sharp practices that the stirring times have developed to beat down the farmers' prices to the very lowest level. True, there will be seasons of short crops, when prices will stay up, but in seasons of large crops there will be absolutely no sustaining power to prices of farm products unless the farmers will furnish it. I defy any person to show me the man or set of men who will protect another man or set of men in trade, who will not try to protect himself. The grasping, greedy disposition is not the spirit of Christianity, but it is human nature. The weak are always oppressed by the strong, the disorganized by the organized. There is absolutely no safety or good prospect in this country for an industry not organized.

11. Q. Are there not too many farmers to cooperate?

A. This is a popular fallacy that sound reasoning will dispel. The great number of farmers will be the great element of strength in farmers cooperating. All the farmers don't need to hold crops at any time, as the markets will take immense quantities of supplies every day. All that will be required will be enough farmers to control that part that goes on the market and creates a temporary over supply or surplus. This over supply makes the low price on all. Take, for example, the year 1901: all crops except wheat were short; everything, corn, oats, fruit, vegetables, meat, etc., brought high prices. Why? Because there was no over supply at any time and the buyers were eager to get all that was offered. Now let us see how about wheat. It was a large crop. The price ruled low. Why? Because growers of wheat fed the market faster than it needed it; yet the entire crop was consumed, although it was the largest crop the country ever raised. No business can maintain prices or control prices that markets a year's supplies in a few months. Cooperation is intended to produce the same condition that prevails when there is a short crop—i. e., keep the stuff back on the farm or in warehouses until the demand comes for it. Comparatively a small portion of the producers can do this, even though the others won't try. IF WE HAVE A MILLION OR MORE MEMBERS IN THE A. S. OF E., ENOUGH OF THEM WILL HOLD THEIR CROPS BACK TO PREVENT THE TEMPORARY OVER SUPPLY, IN SPITE OF ALL THE WEAK, STUBBORN FARMERS THAT MAY BE ARRAYED AGAINST THEM. The A. S. of E. proposes, however, to make it profitable to hold crops.

We train ourselves to watch ourselves,
  Until we find at length
We've made our very weakness
  The pillars of our strength.

12. Q. Is the American Society of Equity a good name?

A. Yes, considering the power of the farmers when cooperating, it is necessary to have a motto that will influence their actions. For instance, the farmers could practice inequity to the disadvantage of all other classes if they wanted to. Therefore, the originator of the plan of the A. S. of E. selected this name as a promise by the farmers that they would DO EQUITY and a notice to the world that they would EXPECT EQUITY. EQUITY means justice, right, honesty, impartiality. It is the basis of moral strength and potent influences. It is the ground swell of fraternity, of good fellowship and the essence of neighborly kindness. It will make the world better to the extent to which it is recognized and practised. No one can hide behind it with a plea of ambiguity, as it is one of the most uncompromising words in the English language, covering not a shade of selfishness, unfairness or one-sidedness. A society founded on EQUITY is founded on the solid rock of fair dealing and righteousness. No better foundation word could be found for self-protection or society.

13. Q. If farmers get profitable prices, will they not overproduce?

A. Take into consideration the fact that in the last fifty years practically all our great western and northwestern states were brought into cultivation and immense areas in the older states cleared, drained and made productive, yet all the products have been consumed. There are no more such areas to open up. Also, farmers need rest, and their farms need rest to recuperate in fertility. Is it not reasonable to suppose, with profitable prices, that the farmers will work less and produce less?

14. Q. If a surplus should exist any time, what would be done with it?

A. When farmers control their crops and regulate prices they have done a great thing. There are, however, other uncertainties connected with farming that they can not control. We refer to the weather. Do the best they can, they can not control rainfall, frosts, heat or cold; also, insects and blight are uncertain factors in the production of crops. These factors will make short crops some seasons. If farmers are cooperating they can easily hold the surplus of good seasons, should they exist, over to the short years, thus equalizing supplies and prices, and benefiting both producers and consumers. In case of perishable products, fruit, vegetables, etc., they can be preserved, canned or manufactured to far better advantage than when each farmer is for himself.

15. Q. How can poor farmers hold their crops to help maintain the minimum prices?

A. 1. We don't think they will need to hold. 2. But suppose they do: under the new system it will be profitable to hold; therefore, more will hold than under the old plan. Each additional farmer who holds will make a better market for the poor farmer who can not hold. 3. A slight increase in price will be made each month to offset interest, shrinkage, etc., to those farmers who hold. This is not intended to be enough to be particularly profitable, but for protection. However, if enough don't hold, the monthly advance can be made larger until it is PROFITABLE TO HOLD, and until the supply dries up enough to maintain the minimum price. This will give the poor farmer the early market all to himself. 4. With a minimum price established dealers will want to buy all they possibly can. They know the price won't be lower, and will be higher (on account of the monthly increase in price). We believe there will be buyers for more grain and staple crops than will be offered. It will be the aim of the society to keep the bulk of the crops out of the hands of speculators and back on the farms or in farmers' warehouses, and feed the markets as they need it. If the farmers would sell all their wheat, corn, oats and other grains to me now at prevailing prices, and contract all their year's output of meat, dairy products, eggs, poultry and fruit to me at prevailing prices, I could make a billion dollars profit on the deal. Perhaps it would be necessary to destroy some of the perishable products, but I would not market a single lot of stuff except at a profit. All I would want, is control of the products, and I would make the market price. This is what the A. S. of E. proposes to do, by farmers cooperating. 5. With profitable prices secured, farmers would take the rest cure for themselves and their farms. Thus there would be less production and a better chance to maintain prices.

16. Q. Is the 1903 wheat crop worth a dollar a bushel?

A. From the producers' standpoint it undoubtedly is and will afford a very meager profit at this price. The average of this year is only ten to eleven bushels per acre. From the consumer's standpoint there is nothing else he can buy of equal intrinsic value. From the standpoint of production and consumption it is abundantly worth a dollar. All fair people will admit our claims, and it is a crying shame that the price is arbitrarily withheld from the farmers who have been marketing at a less price.

17. Q. Will dollar wheat come?

A. I predict it will. It will come when the first run is over. Harvests ended in September. The world is taking and consuming the wheat as fast as it comes to market all over the world. Warehouses and elevators are empty. Those farmers who hold will get their price, after the farmers of the

world who have not heard of dollar wheat, or can not hold, have marketed. Remember, there is a shortage of wheat for the world's needs this year.

18. Q. Who are eligible to membership in the A. S. of E.?

A. Farmers (owners and renters) of all descriptions, and friends of farmers, with their wives and sons and daughters, between 14 and 21 years of age.

19. Q. Why do you admit merchants, bankers, etc.?

A. Their's and the farmers' interests are mutual. The success of one class makes it better for other classes. The merchants want the farmers to organize and get good prices, so they can pay good prices for good goods, and not buy the nasty cheap goods, as they now oftentimes do. Bankers want farmers to organize, because it will add stability of value to all property and insure permanent prosperity. The farmer may as well take them into their society if they want to come, as it will be easier to control them on the inside than to shut them out, arouse their antagonism and control them on the outside. Besides, most merchants and bankers are farmers also; therefore, you could not debar all unless you limit a farmer's business to farming. In the A. S. of E. we hope all the people in the country and small towns will cooperate to the upbuilding of rural America, get more profit for the goods in the country and spend the money there.

20. Q. Is the A. S. of E. a secret society?

A. No. The farmers don't need to have any secrets from anybody else. Where equity is given and received, you don't need to hold your meetings behind sealed doors. The farmers cooperating will be so strong that they can go boldly before the world, make their equitable demands and get justice, or take it.

21. Q. Must a member belong to a local union?

A. No; a member anywhere can get the full benefit of national cooperation without belonging to a local union. The official paper will be the key and guide for action. It will give advice regarding markets, crops, prices, etc., so all can act as one man. Local unions are particularly for local affairs, social features, and assisting each other to hold crops.

22. Q. Will farmers stick together?

A. They will when there is something to stick for. In the old attempts they did not get enough benefits. What is buying at lower prices as compared to selling at fair prices? The A. S. of E. is built for benefits, from the ground up. Once let farmers realize some of the benefits of cooperation on this plan, and no influence on earth can drive them apart.

23. Q. How are members bound?

A. There is no binding agreement. It is proposed to make it

to their interests to belong to the A. S. of E. If, after a fair trial, great benefits can not be shown, then farmers can not cooperate. It would be useless to bind farmers in an ironclad agreement, as many would break the agreement, and then they wouuld have disrespect for it. If farmers will hold crops, as they do now, for an uncertain advance, will they not market conservatively to maintain a profitable price?

24. Q. What is the membership fee and dues?

A. ~~Fifty cents~~. This also pays for the official paper, badge, certificate, all advice and crop reports from the National Union and all dues for the first year. Future dues will be small, as the membership will be very large. Membership to his wife is free, also to his sons and daughters, between 14 and 21 years.

25. Q. What is the local union membership fees or dues?

A. No membership fee. The dues will be fixed by each local union to meet their requirements. There is, however, an organization fee.

26. Q. Will not profitable prices for farmers make higher prices for consumers?

A. No. We expect consumers' prices to average lower when farmers cooperate. At present the middlemen and trusts often get more than the farmers. They pile up mountains of profit between the two. This will be regulated or cut out entirely if they do not deal fairly.

27. Q. How will the farmers' organization effect labor?

A. When farmers get profitable prices the labor problem on the farm will be solved, as they can then hire the help needed. It will make a market for a million or more laborers the year around. This movement is the greatest thing for working people that ever was proposed.

28. Q. How will this movement effect the producer of perishable products?

A. Cold storage houses and warehouses will be provided where fruit, butter, eggs, vegetables, meat, etc., will be held as the producers' property until the market can use them. In the case of berries, peaches, etc., the markets will be known and supplied to the maximum consumption at good prices, but no more. By knowing the needs of all the markets a much greater volume of products can be directed to them than in the uncertain way as at present, and if an actual surplus exists it will be left to spoil at home, or be preserved by canning or otherwise. The society will be of enormous benefit to producers of perishable crops.

29. Q. How about meat? Will you advance the price?

A. Beef is too high to the consumer and too low to the producer. The society will elevate the farmer's price and reduce the selling price. Other meat will be put on an equitable basis and kept there.

30. Q. Can this society regulate the price of potatoes?

A. Certainly. This is a crop that frequently sells at ruinously low prices when the production is large. It will be one of the easiest to control. When the farmers are organized in Maine, New York, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, the trick will be done. Consumers can pay fifty cents a bushel for potatoes as a minimum price—which should net the grower thirty cents to forty cents, when the crop is large—as well as anything under. The chances are that the city consumer who buys in the small will pay twenty cents a peck if the grower got only twenty cents a bushel. This society will prevent such inequalities. The same illustration will apply to apples, only the difference is usually greater.

31. Q. Can you help the tobacco grower who is now at the mercy of the tobacco trust?

A. Most assuredly. If the tobacco districts are organized and sell their product through their own representatives on the national board of directors, they can absolutely take a good profit on their crop before the trust can touch it. It is not proposed to dictate to trusts, or put them out of business—unless their existence jeopardizes maximum consumption and markets—but simply to take the growers' profit first.

32. Q. Will the minimum (profitable) price limit consumption?

A. No. It will rather stimulate trade and increase consumption. Because it will remove uncertainties. Under the old system, if the farmer thought prices too low he would not sell. If the buyer thought they were too high he would not buy; also, the buyer was always fearful the price would go down, therefore he always wanted to buy as low as possible. Under the new system certainty will prevail. There will be no fear or hesitancy. All will sell and buy as much as the market wants, and farm products will go into consumption with greater ease and regularity than by the old system. This plan has beauties and advantages that can not be fully realized or appreciated until it is in working order.

33. Q. How can farmers store their produce?

A. Several local unions can join together and erect necessary warehouses, cold storage houses or elevators. These will be under their direct control. There will be another class owned by the society in principal cities, where produce can be shipped and stored for account of the owner. Warehouse receipts will be issued on grain and produce, which can be used as credit at banks to secure money. Non-perishable goods should be held on the farm as much as possible. A good granary is as good as an elevator, while no storage is charged.

34. Q. How will you regulate railroad rates, stock yard charges, grain inspections, grading, etc.?

A. Let it be understood that the farmers in this society don't intend to control anybody or anything but their own business and prices. Heretofore the farmers were taught that to get justice they must fight everybody and everything on earth. It is a grevious mistake. All the farmers need to do is to put the price on their goods at their market town and get their price there. They don't need to care what the railroads or stockyards charge, unless they want to protect the consumer, and this they can do when they are strong and powerful through organization. Don't let anybody make you believe that you must fight anybody when you have the goods everybody else must have to live on and for their comfort.

35. Q. Is it a fact that the larger the crop the lower the price?

A. Invariably, and there are many cases where the smallest and nastiest crops the country ever raised brought the most money to the farmers, and the largest, finest crops the least money. Hundreds of times farmers see their efforts crowned with success in producing a crop, only to meet crushing disappointment when marketing.

36. Q. Will you not need to control production as well as supply?

A. No. The world will take all the food crops this country will grow, and pay a fair price for them if the farmers will regulate the marketing so as to prevent over supply at any time. Consumption is ahead of production now, and we predict will increase faster than production, unless our farmers get better prices to encourage better farming and larger crops.

37. Q. Do farmers need to market a twelve months' supply in a few months?

A. No. We have referred to this before. Here is the whole secret of failure in the past and success for the future. Suppose a year's supply of coal had to be marketed in three months in the summer. The miners would get a very low price, the middlemen make a mountain of profit, and the consumer would pay more than an equitable price.

38. Q. Will it not be sufficient to have storehouses and get a low rate of freight?

A. Never. What profiteth a farmer if he stores his grain, but lets the speculator, trust or middleman price it at last? This is not another way to whip the devil around the bush, and the devil will catch him coming or going. Storage charges, commissions and reduced railroad freight combined are not equal to putting a fair price on your own stuff and taking your profit first.

39. Q. Do you think money can be well spent in marketing farm products?

A. Surely. It is a fact that manufacturers and merchants

frequently spend as much money in advertising, traveling representatives and in other ways to find a market as the goods cost in the first place. Farmers have been spending nothing—simply dumping their fine products, to let them take their chances on prices, and without any regard to their brother farmer's interests. Through cooperation farmers can market their goods much cheaper than can any other class, because there is a natural demand for them. Others must create a demand.

40. Q. On what does the prosperity of our country depend?

A. On the farmers. They constitute about half our population. They are also the greatest consumers. Keep them prosperous by always getting good prices, as this society proposes, and the country can not have hard times. I am not thoroughly acquainted with European countries, but I think the cause of their depression of business is with the farmers. The European farmers are kept down by the competition of this country.

41. Q. But many of the farmers may not join and thus defeat your plans.

A. We will first get the million, and then make it impracticable for the balance to stay out of the society. For instance, we will, first, make it profitable for them to come in; second, union farmers' products will be marketed in distinguishing packages and under the A. S. of E. label. These goods will be of guaranteed purity and high quality and will be sought after and taken first before the non-union farmers' products will be taken; also union laborers will buy only the union farmers' products, because the society proposes to make a great demand for labor at good wages.

42. Q. Tell about the system of crop reporting.

A. Every member will become a crop reporter. In this way we will have the most complete and reliable reports, quite in contrast with the guessing at the present time.

43. Q. Who will this movement injure?

A. No person doing a legitimate business, but will build them all up.

44. Q. Can this society prevent adulteration of food products?

A. This is one of the chief objects of the society, and when established it can effectually prevent adulteration, by inspection of food products, and by demanding and securing legislation against it. Fraud in food must cease. It is injurious to health, besides reduces the farmer's market to an amazing extent.

45. Q. Why not have a society for each crop. For instance, grain growers, cattle growers, fruit growers, tobacco growers, cotton growers, etc.?

A. Quite unnecessary. One national society, with representatives from all of these special crops on the national board,

can act as the clearing house for all the crops. In this way fewer officers will be needed. The expenses will be much less; a better knowledge of crops and markets may be had, and, more than all, a mixed producer need not belong to a half dozen societies to secure representation.

46. Q. How many members had the Alliance and Grange?

A. About three or four millions each.

47. Q. Do you think they could have succeeded if they had operated on the plan of the A. S. of E.?

A. I do. I am sure if they had made their first object to secure profitable prices for their own goods instead of attempting to put prices on the other party's goods, farmers would be successfully cooperating to-day, and rural America would be a paradise.

48. Q. Are agricultural colleges, experiment stations, farmers' institutes and farm papers doing good for the farmers?

A. Yes. It is well for all classes to be educated and enlightened; but also, no, for they are teaching how to increase production, while we all know the larger the crop the lower the price. Now don't think that I am opposed to educating the farmers, but until they are also educated as to how to get a good price for increased crops the effort toward education is largely lost. Think about this. Farmers should demand of their institutes cooperation to bring about better conditions in marketing.

49. Q. What will be the result if this effort to organize the farmers fails?

A. There will be a land trust formed. The owners of the land will go into a trust, or capitalists will buy up the land. They can easily then control production and prices. This will be the worst thing that can happen to the country, but it is inevitable. In short, as we have shown that capital is dependent upon the farms, the capitalists may conclude that they must control the land to insure the integrity and permanency of their capital and investments.

50. Q. Suppose when the farmers organize, buyers would refuse to pay the price they demand?

A. How can they? Can consumers (human and domestic animals) do without food and clothing? If they would not pay the reasonable prices, farmers could strike for higher wages, and the strike would have the proper effect in a very few days. A farmers' strike would mean much more than a strike by union laborers. All others are dependent on the farmers. The farmers are dependent on no other class.

51. Q. How does the food trust operate?

A. It has warehouses in many parts of the country. It buys the farmer's fruit, vegetables, potatoes, butter, eggs, poultry, etc., in the summer, when prices are low, puts them in cold

storage, and they come out at two or three times the price between seasons. The farmers can attend to all this when organized.

52. Q. Could the government help the farmers by loaning them money at a low rate of interest?

A. No, not permanently. Besides the farmers don't need help in that way. It would be the most degrading thing that could be offered them to make them the special objects of the country's charity. The farmer's position is the strongest of all. If they will only rise to their true position, they will never need to look to the government or outside sources for help.

53. Q. Are not farmers taxed too heavily?

A. Yes; but here again if they will cooperate and get profitable prices they won't need to care how much they are taxed. They can simply add it on the price of their goods.

54. Q. When the farmers are organized they will likely become a power in politics?

A. They could if they would. But why will they want to bother with politics? They won't need anything in the way of profits that they can't take when they price their goods. We expect them, however, to dictate to political parties, for the interests of consumers and equity to all.

55. Q. Is the ground as productive now as formerly?

A. No. Our farms have been robbed of their original fertility and the crops sold at prices that did not afford renewing it. It would bankrupt many farmers to restore the fertility to their farms, and it will bankrupt them if they continue farming under the present system if they don't. So here you have a dilemma that absolutely demands better prices for farm products. Many farmers have already sold their birthright (the accumulated plant food of centuries) for a mess of pottage, and others will do it under the old system.

56. Q. You speak of intensive farming. What do you mean?

A. I mean raising the average of all our crops to two or three times the present yield. This can only be done by scientific farming, building up the soil with plant food and irrigation. All these wait on profitable prices for farm crops.

57. Q. Could not good prices be made for farmers if your society had a large capital with which to buy the crops?

A. Never. If all the money in the United States treasury was employed for this purpose the scheme would fail. Farmers must individually be responsible for their production as well as prices. If a company would agree to take all they raise at profitable prices there would be no check on their production, while the company or society MUST FIND SOME OTHER

PERSON WHO WILL TAKE THEM AT AN EVEN HIGHER PRICE; and here would come failure in time.

58. Q. Why not organize one state and see how the plan will work?

A. This would be useless. It would not work. The farmers in Indiana could not do anything unless the farmers in Illinois, Ohio, etc., will cooperate with them. Also, it would not be possible to control prices on one crop and let the others take their chances, as then the crops that are not controlled would be neglected and the other one would be overproduced.

59. Q. Can farmers secure profitable prices on their crops regardless of the European farmers?

A. As soon as the European farmers know the price set by American farmers they will gladly rise to it. America has set the price on food in the past, and set it too low. European farmers suffered more than did our farmers, and they will be glad when the range is set higher. America can do this thing without the cooperation of Europe, because it is the greatest surplus country. But European farmers will cooperate, and arrangements are now making to organize them.

60. Q. What will be some of the results of cooperation by farmers?

A. The results will be everything the farmers want or should have. Then land will increase in value 25 to 100 per cent. They will build good, modern, comfortable houses and barns. They will beautify their grounds. They will educate their children. They will build good roads all over the country. The farmer and his wife and children will work less and hire more, visit and entertain more. The farmer's wife will furnish her home as well as the city woman does. The farm labor problem will be solved. The boys will want to stay on the farm, because it offers possibilities equal to any other business, and the farmers' profession will be the best one on earth. Besides all these things, and many more not necessary to mention, the success of this society will build up the country towns, and through the country merchants the benefits will reach the cities. It will, in short, benefit every legitimate industry and every man, woman and child in the country. It means more for humanity than anything since the Christian era.

INDEX