OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

OF THE NEBRASKA STATE FARMERS' ALLIANCE

AT ITS ELEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING HELD AT

Lincoln, Nebraska, January 12th to 15th, 1892.

Tuesday morning session. Called to order at 10:30 by President Powers.

Opening prayer by C. A. Bradley, of Phelps county.

The president then introduced Mayor Weir, who welcomed the Alliance to the city in the following address:

MR PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:—I have made the statement a number of times, but yet it will bear repetition, which is—That there is no duty which devolves upon me as Mayor of the city more pleasant to perform than to welcome to our city the various business, social, benevolent, and political organizations which have honored us with their presence during the past year; and this occasion is no exception to the rule, for when I look into the faces of such an intelligent body of men as gathered here this morning I feel that your coming can only be of service to the city and an advantage to this community.

I was surprised to learn when the committee called upon me and asked me to appear here on behalf of the city of Lincoln, that there was a feeling in this organization of prejudice against the city as the place in which to hold your annual sessions, because of some neglect or inattention in the past, of which I know nothing, and the first thing I want to do, is to assure you that so far as I am concerned, while I am Mayor of the city, no respectable organization of any kind of character whatsoever shall knock at our gates without finding the latchstring hanging a yard outside and the heartiest and most cordial welcome awaiting them on the inside, and I trust that this noble organization, representing as it does, the honest and intelligent yeomanry of the state of Nebraska, will during my term of office at least lay aside any pre-existing prejudices against this fair city and come here at any and all times assured of every courtesy and attention that I can bestow. I can pledge you this not only myself but for every officer of the city administration. The best we have in the house is yours—from parlor to pantry—come whenever you choose—come in any number you choose—come with your uncles, your cousins and your aunts.

Young men bring your sisters, or if you have no sisters of your own bring someone else's sister, and all will meet a generous and hearty welcome.

I am proud of our beautiful city. Proud of her public and private enterprise—her colleges and public institutions and business development—her private residences and splendid hotels, and more than all of her public spirited and intelligent people, and certainly no city in the state is better able to receive and care for any organization within the borders of the state.

We have the public halls and Opera Houses sufficient to accommodate the largest of state gatherings, and our hotels and restaurants and lodging houses are more than sufficient, so with the honest feeling of kindness and courtesy on the part of the present administration, if you do not come it will be your own fault.

I am glad to have you come, not only because I believe we can accommodate you and make your stay with us pleasant and profitable, but also for a personal reason. I am pleased to meet and become acquainted with the men of all classes, who are interested in the organizations designed for the betterment of their own condition and the condition of those about them. Hence I welcome with feelings of sincere pleasure, such organizations as the Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Woman's Christian Association, the Medical Societies and even the Undertaker's Convention, for sooner or later we all fall into their hands. If there is an organization designed to benefit the masses of the people especially outside the cities in our state it is this "Farmers Alliance" as represented in this convention here today.

I do not propose to take up (for it would not be proper that I should do so) the questions at issue between yourselves and the political parties of the state, nor to defend you from any charges made against you, for while you have doubtless made mistakes, who has not? They say that even Moses made mistakes, and in consequence failed to get into the promised land. Let us hope your mistakes will not result in a like lamentable condition.

I was surprised, when preparing the subject matter of this brief address, to learn hat the "Alliance" was a non-partisan institution, and while more or less of a political sentiment and influence attached to it, as must necessarily adhere to all strong organizations like this one, yet its work and development was based on educational and social interests, rather than political dogmas. Education in the lines of political economy if you please, but educational just the same, and certainly no instruction is more needed or desirable for the masses of the people than instruction on the great questions that are vital to our very existence as a Nation. No true "American" can look with any but feelings of alarm on the dense ignorance of so many of our voters on the questions and interests which lie at the very heart of our National life. So I say "God speed" to the organization, whatever may be its name or character which has for its objects the enlightenment of its members and the people on these great questions of political economy.

Lincoln is interested in, and is the friend of every part and section of this great state. What is the state's interest is Lincoln's interest. Whatever benefits Lincoln, benefits the state, and whatever advances the state's interests cannot but advance our interests.

This city is peculiarly the creature of the state, for the state made it by act of its Legislature, and hence in a peculiar sense it belongs to the state, so that in coming to Lincoln the people are simply coming to their own, to the creature of their own hands.

It was born in the travail of the states' Legislative body and suckled at the public breast in early infancy, but like all healthy children it has outgrown its need of nurses and is able to rustle for itself and is getting along pretty well now thank you, and is able to open its house for the old folks when they come in on a visit.

We hope to make this state, (the parent of "Lincoln") proud of her offspring. We are proud of our parentage and believe that the admiration should be mutual.

I trust your deliberations will be pleasant and profitable, and that whatever the work may be before you, it shall be accomplished to the satisfaction of all.

Whatever I as the executive of the city can do for your comfort or convenience will be gladly done, and I trust you will not fail to call upon me or any of the officers of the city for any service you may need.

While you are here I shall be glad to show you any department of the city. Our system of Water Works is interesting and worthy of investigation to those who in other cities are contemplating putting in a system of water service. The water problem is the great problem of all large cities today, especially as it relates to Municipal or private control. Our schools and institutions of learning are worthy of attention. Our Police and Fire Dept. is open to inspection and criticism if you like, and in fact anything of interest to you is at your service.

I do not feel that I can let this opportunity pass without some reference to this organization and its power and influences as I see them. As a general statement—any organization or combination of men united for the accomplishment of a purpose, possesses power limited only by their numbers and the purposes for which they are combined. This is true whether their objects and desires be good or bad, yet I believe that it is an invariable rule, that combinations for evil or unwise purposes, and especially if against the interests of the masses, or if designed for the benefit of a class of citizens and not the common good, generally develops such opposition as renders their defeat more certain than if no combination had ever been formed, and I believe, therefore, that it is all important to the permanency and influence of this organization, that its plans and purposes should be wise, consistent and conservative.

The first impulse which the known possession of power gives, is toward its despotic and tyrannical exercise. When the masses rise from under the heel of an oppressor, they overwhelm both the good and the bad in the first wild exuberance of their new found liberty. Thus organizations when they are successfully formed and find themselves in possession of new and untried powers, are apt to forget the rights and interests of others, and they think only of securing to themselves, privileges, interests and emoluments, which in their estimation, they have already been too long deprived of by the general will. If the "Alliance" in my judgment has made any serious mistakes in the past, it has been in the evident determination to make too sudden and radical changes in the existing order of political affairs, without knowing definitely and satisfactorily what could take the place of the interests set aside.

And further.—In the development of new leadership in these great movements, the camp followers and political foragers of all the old organizations and political parties, are so apt to fling themselves into the breach and claim leadership because of their ostracism elsewhere, that great caution is necessary not to be misled by the black sheep of other folds. In no element does success or failure more surely develop itself, than in the leadership of such great movements as this.

Demagogues and political tricksters will surely bring wreck and ruin. A wise and conservative leadership, with definite plans and purposes for the general good, will certainly bring success and perpetuate your organization.

Perhaps this advice may be considered obtrusive, but the committee said to make such remarks as I pleased and my interest in and regard for your organization leads me to wish for it only the best and to hope to see it properly managed. Seek only the common good. Eradicate all known evils. Educate the masses in a knowledge of the principles upon which our "American" institutions are founded. Drive from power all known corrupt officials, who are prostituting their position and influence for personal advantage, and purify the political atmosphere of the country from the foul stenches of "Boodlerism" and corruption, and your organization and all like it will come as a benediction to our beloved country.

□ Senator W. A. Poynter, of Boone Co., responded in behalf of the State Alliance, and spoke as follows:

BROTHER POYNTERS REPLY.

In behalf of our order I wish to offer our thanks to his honor, Mayor Weir, for his generous words of welcome to this beautiful city, and the good wishes just expressed. It has pleased some to call us in derision the mud-sills of society, and though the name has been given with anything than by the way of compliment we accept the appellation. We are at the foundation of all the prosperity in our country. No more can the superstructure of national prosperity stand without the solid foundation of a prosperous agricultural people, than can the great bridges bearing the immense train loads of commerce except they rest upon a solid foundation. In short, the mud-sills must be solid, sound and able to bear the strain put upon them. Ours is a great agricultural people. We are the bread producers of the world. Not alone are the minds of our own 64,000,000 people turned upon the success of our farmers, but towards us are turned many eyes from accross the seas, and the productiveness of our farms and the energy of our farmers are looked to for food supplies. Agricultural depression in this country means general business stagnation. Prosperous and profitable farming means increased activity in every branch of commerce. This is an age of combination. What the individual is unable to accomplish alone, associated with his fellows becomes an easy task. The small capital driven to the wall by fierce competition joined with innumerable other small capitals defies all competition, because it can do away with it entirely, and hold the public at its mercy, controlling supplies, and compelling remuneration according to its own standard. In our age private enterprise is considered of little account unless backed by wealth that should aggregate a great number of individuals. The old laws governing in the days of early political economy are now obsolete. Supply and demand are alike controlled by vast combinations of capital. In all this combination and agrigation of wealth the single industry remaining dependent upon single individual enterprise is the one which we have to-day represented. All that golden stream of grain flowing through the great arteries of commerce filling the vast store-houses in our seaboard cities, flowing into the great steamers plowing the billows of old ocean, is the product of the lone toiler. In days of lonely labor has all been produced, and not until he found unusual difficulty in making support for self and those dependent upon him did he begin to cast about him for the reasons for the agricultural depression of which he read in his weekly paper. And now for a few years past the farmer, as he plows the long furrows, as he reaps the waving grain, or gathers in the golden ears, has been thinking out this problem. With the example set him on every side of combination, beholding their vast success, what could you expect but that he too should desire at least a closer relationship with those of his own class. While, of course, a combination of their capital under existing circumstances would be impossible, a bettering of conditions could be effected by counsel and co-operation. Our order is the offspring of the economic conditions existing in our country.

Realizing that the prosperity of the farmers is the first necessity for the prosperity of every other class in our country, they have set about the task of bringing about that prosperity so noticeably lacking for the past decade. Our order is not a band of Ishmaellites whose hands are against every man, neither anarchists seeking the overthrow of law and order. No class of citizens of our country are more conservative, none look with greater suspicion upon any radical change in our government than our farmers. None are more patriotic; neither have any demonstrated that love of country more clearly in time of our country's need. Many a plow left standing in the furrow, many a farm left untilled, many a field left unreaped, many a farmer soldier left on southern plains, attiste the loyalty of our farmer citizens.

Our order seeks not the overthrow of government, but its prosperity, and that it shall accomplish the end for which all governments are instituted amongst men, the protection of each citizen alike. We seek to create a better condition socially, morally and financially. We aim to educate the members of our order in such a way that they may have a better understanding of their duties as citizens, and understanding them, be enabled to discharge them. We are asking no special favors for our class, but are demanding a fair field, and having that the farmers of America are able to take care of themselves and the balance of mankind who may be unfortunate.

Our order seeks to inculcate good fellowship and brotherly love amongst its members to the end that a higher standard of moral obligation than mere human greed may prevail. The Divine injunction, "Look not every man on his own things, but also upon the things of others," belongs to the code of ethics governing every true member of our order. We are a political organization, but in no sense partisan. The careful study of the science of government is the duty of every citizen of our republic. The multum in parvo of our politics as an order is 'Equality before the law."

The growth of our order has been phenomenal. From end to end and side to side of this great country our principles have extended. Objects so grand, principles so noble, and demands so just as ours have found myriads of supporters amongst those who were not engaged in agriculture. But for misunderstanding of our claims and false representations of our order by those whom a personal interest makes enemies to our cause, there is not a laborer of any kind in this broad realm but would join glad hands with us for the speedy accomplishment of our purposes.

That we shall ultimately triumph and agriculture occupy the possition in the minds of the people, that its importance in the prosperity of the nation demands, there can be no reasonable doubt. Rome was not built in a day. We, my brothers, should never grow discouraged. "Be not weary in well doing, for in due time we shall reap if we faint not." It is the constant dropping of the water that wears away the stone. Line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little will ultimately instruct all in the right way. Extend our membership. Single individuals can do each a little. Added together make a mighty whole. In numbers there is strength. Push our doctrines. Let the world know our position.

Good Henry IV. of France made it the heigth of his ambition that every farmer in his kingdom should have a chicken in his pot on Sunday. In this glorious country, with no wars devastating our rich fields, with climate the most salubrious of any on the globe, a soil so diversified as to produce everything for man's comfort and enjoyment, should not the farmer here have every luxury for himself and family and be enabled to educate his children for any position in life? Ours the noble task of bringing about such a state. With such a state of agricultural prosperity, every industry of our land would take on new life.

The laboring man of whatever kind is deeply interested in this prosperity, for it creates for him better employment at more remunerative prices. The business man of whatever branch should hope for and help along this prosperity, for prosperity opens up new wants and supplies the means for their gratification. Such prosperity would give the manufacturers more sure market for his product. For some wise reason the Creator has made us dependent in greater or less degree upon each other. Then, how much wiser for every department of our great commonwealth to assist every other. When the producer becomes educated to understand that union of effort is the only sure road to prosperity, the great battle is more than half won. The dawn of a better day is dreaking. They are receiving this education and already the industrial classes are making themselves a power. Soon with clear understanding, with fixed purpose and united effort the objects of our order will be acheved and undreamed of national prosperity will result.

Recess taken until 1:30 o'clock.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION.

Meeting formally opened by the President.

Prayer by acting Chaplain C. S. Bradley, of Nuckolls county.

The report of the committee on credentials showed 671 Alliances represented, and over 300 credentials were received by the Secretary where delegates could not come on account of the severe storm. Seventy-one counties were represented.

Moved and supported that all members of the Alliance in good standing who may present themselves, may, on proper proof to door-keeper be admitted to all sessions of the Alliance but not be allowed to vote.

Program of the day was then announced by the President.

President Powers then delivered his annual address.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

BROTHERS AND FRIENDS:—It is with feelings of pleasure and sincere gratitude to God that I greet you to-day as a State Alliance.

I congratulate for the continued and increasing prosperity of our noble society.

During the past year Providence has smiled upon our farms and has given us the rain from Heaven in due season, which has been followed by the natural results in a soil so fertile and a sunshine so vivifying, a bountiful harvest in field and garden.

Our members, instead of being as many were last year, depending on assistance for the necessities of life, have taken their accustomed places as almoners of God's bounties for the support of the world.

It is true our labors on the farm have been especially arduous. The Providential failure of last year's crop made the necessity for success this year the more imperative. The same causes, which produced a vigorous growth of grain, produced the same effect on the natural enemies of the farmer, the weeds; and they must be subdued or failure was certain. The going out of many of our workers during the previous autumn, many of whom did not return, rendered employed labor scarce, so that seldom in the history of mankind has more labor been performed by so few, as during the past year by the farmers of Nebraska.

But while Divine Providence and the farmers have worked together for the prosperity of our noble state, other influences and efforts have been brought to bear to make all this bountiful return for the year's labors inure to the prosperity and enrichment of foreign and domestic capitalists and corporations and a few unprincipled speculators in our midst. That they have to a great extent succeeded is but too apparent. The reports of the immense business and profits of the railroad companies, the large receipts of interest, and the numerous foreclosures of mortgages by the banks and loan and trust companies on the one hand, stand right over against general financial depression, and numerous failures among our farmers and merchants; while the immense foreign demand for farm produce, especially wheat, is in striking contrast to the almost unprecedentedly low prices of most of the farm products of our farms.

It is becoming more and more apparent every year that the objects which the Alliance is intended to accomplish are absolutely necessary to preserve the business and interests of the farmers of the state from complete overthrow and ruin.

Overtures were made to the officers of the State Alliance during the past summer looking to the co-operation of the farmers of this state with those of the other wheat-producing states of the country to withhold the crops from market until a fair price should be paid. These propositions came in so unpropitious a time, when many of the state were entirely helpless financially, that, aside from the principle involved, which it is charged, would seem to give countenance to corporation trusts for the exaction of exorbitant prices, it was not thought best to enter into such combination. But the indications now are that self preservation will force us into such a measure. I would, therefore, suggest the propriety of sending a memorial to congress stating the facts in the case and asking that the commissioner of agriculture be instructed to consult with actual farmers in the several wheat producing sections of the country to ascertain what would be a fair minimum price for the production of wheat, and also for its transportation to actual consumers; and that a report of the same be made to congress and to the public as a basis for such legislation by congress and the different state legislatures as may be necessary for the protection of farmers and the citizen consumers from the extortion of corporate and individual speculators in this the "staff of life" of the people.

As the efficiency and usefulness of our Alliance depends primarily on the wisdom and intelligence of its members I would respectfully recommend that provision be made for a more systematic and energetic carrying out of the educational features of our society. To this end I would recommend that the number of assistant state lecturers be increased to five; and that the executive committee divide the state between them as shall seem to them from time to time the most convenient for successfully and efficiently instructing and encouraging the Alliances of the state. I would also recommend that the state lecturer and assistants, together with the other officers of the State Alliance, hold a conference at the beginning of each quarter of the year to compare their experiences and to secure, so far as possible, uniformity of the aims and work of the Alliances throughout the state. This plan, I think, preferable to the formation of district Alliances, which has developed a tendency to array the different districts in the state against each other, and, in one instance at least, has endangered the stability of of the State Alliance.

I fear that there is not enough energy displayed in organizing new Alliances, and in convincing outside farmers of the truth of our principles and their duty to unite with us in maintaining them and in building up our organization.

The work of organizing is not well done in any neighborhood so long as one honest and intelligent farmer, or farmer's wife, son or daughter, remains out of the Alliance fold.

There seems to be a disposition in some of our subordinate Alliances to turn their meetings into mere literary entertainments or debates, with no other object in view but to attain a faculty in expression of ideas, and readiness wielding arguments. This is well as far as it goes. But where the subjects discussed are vital to the welfare of our whole people, and the earnest aim is to arrive at the truth in regard to such subjects, unmixed with prejudice or error, it is thus, and thus only, that the Alliance can carry out the education it was designed to accomplish.

A demand is made by some members of the Alliance of this and other states for a more elaborate and complicated secret work, so that the time of our meetings may be mostly occupied with mysterious forms and ceremonies Now, while I do not ignore the attraction which secrecy has for the human minds and while such a waste of time might do for the pampered sons and daughter, of luxury and wealth, the members of the Alliance have no time to waste. It is well and necessary to so conduct our meetings as to awaken and sustain an abiding interest in our members. But it should rather be reached by such exercises as will call out and make permanent noblest powers of the mind, and the best impulses of our natures; in earnestly seeking to know the truth in regard to every question which effects the welfare of the farmers and laborers, and especially those questions which affect the interests of the whole people; and in patiently seeking to know our duties as members of familes, as workers, and as citizens of our state and nation; and then we should devise the best methods to perform all these duties. The aim should be in the Alliance to supply all the deficiencies in our education which are not provided for outside of the Alliance, are which are beyond the reach of the farmers and laborers and their families.

Especial attention, I think, should be given to prepare the membership for intelligent and right political action, both as respects the great social questions which agitate the public mind and occupy its attention, and also the arrangement of the business by law, so far as may properly be done, so that those who work shall own the product of their labor and those who earn shall enjoy their reward.

The enemies of our principles and organization, though not one whit abated in their opposition, have lately been rapidly changing their methods of attack and their alleged grounds for contention, although composed of the same material, viz: all the combinations for concentrating the wealth produced by the workers of the country into the hands of a few schemers and speculators, including the most of those who are known as capitalists in this country and backed by many in Europe; but all these depending for their active opposition on all the talent and shrewdness among the people which money can buy or patronage and influence can control, including to some extent the state and general government.

In the early history of our Alliance our numerous resolutions were met by good natured ridicule and our petitions with advice to be content with our inevitable lot. But when it became manifest in 1890 that our resolutions were bringing forth fruit in political action, and our petitions were changing to demands backed by ballots; when they saw the majority of the people were beginning to recognize the truth of our principles and to make our cause their own; then a change was inaugurated. Sophistry has taken the place of ridicule and patronizing advice has given place to fierce calumny and detraction. All the shrewd talent they can control is employed to diligently examine our armor of truth to see if some flaw or fracture cannot be detected, or some point where the joints do not perfectly meet.

Those principles which from their nature are easily understood and which, mainly through the influence of the Alliance, have been adopted by a majority of the people, have been openly accepted by our plutocratic foes, as the Australian ballot system, or opposed only by secret bribery and corrupt political manuevering, as in the control of the railroads and the suppression of trusts by law

But the right of the workers (who compose probably at least nine-tenths of the people of our country) to their proportional share in the composition and control of our government, and the duty of our government to furnish a medium for the exchange of property for our people, whose government it is; and to see to it that such a medium, or money, be secured to the people for the purposes for which it is created and no other; against these all the batteries of the enemies of the Alliance are directed. Every mystery which sophistry could invent has been thrown around them, and every political prejudice which partisan influence could create has been arranged aginst them. Against these they have massed all their forces and concentrated their attacks. Nor is this to be wondered at. Grant to the millionairs capitalists and their servile tools the control of the peoples' government and the first possession of the peoples' money, and all the opposition to the other forms of oppression will be but as the squirming of the worm on the fisherman's hook, or the buzzing of the fly in the spider's web.

Prudence and wisdom dictate that we should be well prepared for these new modes of attack. We must see to it that every principle is well fortified by argument, and that every plan of practical application be wisely constructed and prudently and persistently carried out.

Our membership seems to be nearly unanimous in regard to the general principle of the government issue of money directly to the people and for their benefit. But when the means by which this shall be practically carried out come to be considered there is still some difference of opinion.

Some still claim there is no practical way but that which is known as the subtreasury plan. Others say that plan is impracticable in the northern states, and the land security plan is the only one which will admit of universal application. Others again object to both these plans, and claim that some form of postal savings banks with powers extended to loaning government money to the people is the most practicable way.

I confess that at one time I viewed with alarm these differences of opinion. But the spirit which is manifested in our Alliances to discuss and examine each of these, and other plans which have been suggested, in a spirit of candor and fairness, has led to such a modification and blending of the different plans that there is no doubt that a complete agreement will soon be arrived at.

The advocates of the subtreasury plan are becoming convinced that it would be of but little benefit to the conductors of what is called mixed farming which prevails to so large an extent in the northern states; while the advocates of the land loan plan begin to realize that the land is so nearly absorbed by the plutocracy that it alone would not be sufficient to distribute the money so widely as it is needed. It now seems evident that a combination of these two kinds of security with some system of government banks including the essential features of the postal savings banks plan may be so arranged as to obiviate every objection, and be acceptable to all. The objection urged by some that the issue of money on such security would be unsafe, falls to the ground when we consider that those two forms of security include all the permanent security the people can give, and that the security is from the people to their government and not from the government to the people, or to the world. They forget that any limited security on the part of the government, aside from the merchantable value of the material of which the money is manufactured only retracts from that complete security which an unqualified issue of money involves; and that the cheaper the material, provided it is such as experience has proved to be suitable and convenient for circulation, the greater financial advantage to the whole people.

A secret and untrammeled ballot is now insisted on by all our Alliances, and accepted as law by the people of the state; and so vital is it to the liberties of the people that it cannot be too carefully guarded, or too completely carried out. And any defects which experience should discover in the present law should be promptly remedied.

Government ownership of the whole railroad system of the country is also generally accepted by our Alliances as the only way to settle the difficulties which always have existed between the railroad companies and the people, especially the producers of the country. The only question now to be determined is, how to bring this about and still respects the equal rights of all.

The security by law to each honest and industrious family sufficient land for a home and for cultivation if required and the assurance of perpetual possession of the same, is recognized, not only by our Alliances, but by all intelligent patriots, as being absolutely necessary for the stability and perpetuity of our government. The necessity for education in a free republic is almost universally recognized. Yet deprive an intelligent and educated man or woman of the influence, restraints and responsibilities incident to the ownership and occupancy of a home, and they become fitted for tramps and anarchists, and their education but renders them the more dangerous to the welfare of society and the supremacy of law.

The principle of laying the heaviest burden of taxation for the support of our government on those who are financially best able to bear it is now, I believe, accepted by all our people as the true theory and system for creating the public revenues.

When all these principles which I have mentioned are fully developed and agreed upon by the Alliances and other industrial organizations in this state, if they prudently exert the influence and power which they possess, they will be speedily endorsed by a majority of our whole people.

But it is for the continued possession of the political power of the state and county that every energy is directed, and every dollar staked by our determined foes. Sometimes it is proclaimed that all the demands of the Alliance (modified somewhat by the superior wisdom and experience of the plutocracy) will be granted to the farmers, if the Alliance will only keep out of politics. Our members are appealed to individually and collectively by every consideration which can be brought to bear to prevent their political co-operation. They say it stultifies the non-partisan character of our constitution. That it endangers the supremacy of the republican party, which has done so much for the cause of liberty; and on the other hand, that it will be equally destructive to the democratic party, whose very name indicates the rights of the people, and whose long connection with the history of our country should entitle it to respect and support. Thus they appeal to all the partisan prejudice which is supposed to linger in the hearts of our members. They have used all their influence, backed by promises of political preferment and support, and in many instances, no doubt, by financial inducements, to create divisions in our Alliances and discord in our councils, sometimes by inducing our secret enemies to join our order and act the part of spies and traitors, and sometimes by corrupting those who are not well grounded in the principles of honesty and truth.

But in spite of all these machinations their combined effort on our membership has been so slight that the few that have been effected by them have had no influence, except to call forth the contempt and pity of their fellow members.

Our Alliance now stands throughout the state a solid bulwark against the peoples' oppressors, and their determined and unanimous voice promises speedy political death to every tool of the plutocracy in our state.

Our membership now fully understand that while the Alliance is not, and cannot be, a political party, the inevitable tendency of the systematic education which is its chief object, is to bring about united and effective political action in support of the equal rights of all the people.

The relation of the Alliance to the other labor organizations of the state is worthy of your attention. While I do not for one moment think it practicable that the city and country organizations should be combined in one society, I do think that the brotherly feeling which now exists between them should be fostered and strengthened; remembering always that the true interests of the laborers in city and country are identical. But I can see no valid reason why different organizations of farmers having in the main the same objects and made up of those whose occupations ae well as interests are identical, should exist in the same locality. I am aware that in our own state there is no other strictly farmers' organization but our own and the Grange, that has developed any strength. But the signs of the time admonish us that none of our energy should be wasted in the jealous strivings of rival organizations either in state or nation, and that every effort should be made to bring about that complete union of purpose and co-operation in action which is necessary to defend and maintain our rights.

The prospects of our Alliance were never before so bright as at present. The lull in organizing incident to the arduous farm labor of the past season has given place to a waking up throughout the state From every county comes the shout, "We are coming determined to conquer," and all seem ready to build up the walls of the Alliance right over against their own houses. It is yours to perfect and put into practice such rules and plans as will make the combined energies of our aroused membership the most effective for the advancement of righteousness and the maintenance of the liberties of the people. To this end, I trust, all your sessions will be directed. To this end, I trust, that all available funds of the Alliance, after discharging existing obligations, will be expended. And I trust that any revision of the constitution which may have become necessary by the advance in the history of our society from a state of feeble growth to one of immense and increasing power, may be promptly made. Remember, it is one thing to build up, and another to wisely sustain and permanently establish. Let these aims characterize all your deliberations and I have no fear but the result will be a mighty increase of the strength and efficiency of our order.

There are some offices in our society which are of such a character that the experience gained by efficient service cannot safely be dispensed with, and wisdom would dictate that the incumbent should be continued in office so long as he remains faithful to his duties. But there is nothing in the office of President to interefere with a judicious rotation of service. If in carrying the sword of office your President has forgotten how to perform the duties of a soldier in the ranks, it is time it was known.

For three years I have borne the office, and in my imperfect way performed the duties of President of this Alliance. I cannot express to you the gratitude I feel for the considerate manner in which you have treated my failings, and the kindness and efficiency with which you have sustained me in every effort for building up our noble order. I am proud of the wonderful success of our united efforts. My deliberate judgment is that you should choose another to the office, and may your choice be wisely directed.

A glorious prospect spreads before us in the future. God has given us the numbers and the ability and He will give us the ultimate victory.

The other states are falling into line. Our enemies show their fears by their frantic efforts and their pathetic appeals for protection from the wrath of the people.

In God we trust; and through His help we will triumph over every opposition, until not only the rights of the farmers, but those of the whole people shall be vindicated and sustained; and liberty be proclaimed throughout all the land to all the inhabitants thereof.

On motion the address of President Powers was referred to committe on resolutions to be hereafter appointed.

Report of Secretary-Treasurer was then read.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATE SECRETARY.

To the President and Members of the Farmers' Alliance:

BRETHREN:—It has again become my duty to submit an annual report of the progress of the State Alliance for the year just closed, so far as it has come under the observation of the Secretary, together with the present condition of Alliance work, so far as the facts relating thereto lie more especially within my knowledge.

The past year has been one of importance in the history of our organization in Nebraska. The Alliance growth in the year preceding was very rapid, and in some sections of the state the work of organization was but imperfectly done, so that the larger part of the labor of the year had to be spent in strengthening and building up the Alliances already organized. The efforts in this direction have resulted in great good, and never before in its history have the principles of the Alliance held so large a place in the hearts of its members, or had in so large a measure their confidence and esteem, as at the present time. The organization also occupies a larger place in the respect of the general public, and its purposes and aspirations are accorded a larger measure of sympathy as they become better understood. The people of the state recognize that the mental life of the farmer was never more active than now, that whatever may have been the case in the past, he is now reading and thinking, and the study and investigation of the great problems connected with the wise administration of economical government, has a larger place in his mind than ever before. This thought and study is developing a determination that hereafter his interests and welfare must be equally considered with those of his fellow citizens of all other classes. That the Alliance has been the chief cause of this spirit of investigation, of independence and tendency toward progressive citizenship, admits of no question.

The work of organization has progressed steadily during this year. We have organized fifteen new County Alliances, and now have organizations in every county in the state. Two hundred and four new Alliances have been chartered by the State Alliance and a good many of the Alliances have been re-organized that had not been reporting and were suspended. The past season has been one of unusual stress of work on the part of farmers in our state, and the apparent lack of interest in local Alliance work was largely due to this cause, as the recent reports from Alliances all over the state indicate an increased activity on the part of the members that promise great things for the future welfare of the Alliance in Nebraska.

While considering the growth and dealing with the statistics of the Alliance, it would not be improper to state that we have sustained losses the past year, and indeed it would be strange if in a movement like ours none should fall by the wayside. A few charters have been surrendered during the year, in most cases, however, they have been given up for the purpose of uniting the strength of two or more Alliances, very few of them indication a total loss of interest in the Alliance and its work. Over sixteen hundred Alliances have reported during the year, and as the dues from nearly a thousand Alliances have been remitted during 1891, a large number of western Alliances have neglected to send in their reports, so that we cannot properly estimate or calculate our actual strength, but it must exceed that of last year by several thousand.

I cannot pass the work of organization without referring to the labors of our State President and Lecturer. During the opening months of the year President Powers was largely engaged in work connected with the National Alliance, his first important active work in this state being in February, when a number of the northeastern counties were visited and the foundation for aggressive work in Dakota and adjoining counties was laid. About the middle of April he began a tour of visitation and work that embraced nearly all the counties in the southern and western parts of the state, extending up to about July 10th. Another trip occupying the months of September and October was made by him in which he visited all the northeastern counties and others along the line of the U. P. westward, and on this tour he put in fifty-two days active work. During November and December he has visited several counties and every where with good results.

Our State Lecturer, Bro Hull, has also done very efficient work in his capacity during the year. During the first six months of the year he was almost constantly in the field, and the records of his movements show that he covered a large part of the state during his term of office. Some counties were visited at different times, owing to inclement weather and other causes interfering with the success of his first meetings. Reports from all places visited by him unite in commendation of his labors, and the wise counsels given were well received by our members everywhere.

The Assistant Lecturer, Bro. Pratt, visited a number of the northern and western counties also during the year. Two principal tours were made by him: one from Clarks via Norfolk to Crawford over the line of the F. E. & M. V. and returning by way of Box Butte county over the B. & M., occupying twenty-four days of actual work; the other westward from Lexington, Dawson county, by way of U. P. to the western part of the state, then north and east through Wheeler, Blaine, Loup and Garfield counties. Itemized accounts of these tours are on file in my office and show a record of faithful work on behalf of your state officers.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATTER.

The demand for printed matter explaining the purposes of the Alliance continued unabated throughout the year. Two large editions of the amended Constitution were distributed, also an edition in German and one in the Swede language. A large edition of the proceedings of the last annual meeting were also sent out together with large numbers of the proceedings of the National Alliance held at Omaha, and other supplies and printed matter furnished in considerable quantity. The proceedings of a meeting of the various county Lecturers of the state, held at Hastings in July were also sent out. Reasonable care was used in this distribution that no unnecessary waste might occur, yet all requests so far as possible were complied with.

EDUCATIONAL WORK.

The educational work of the Alliance has received during the past year a great deal of attention. In addition to the work of the State Lecturers the County Lecturers have been urged to adopt a systematic plan of work in the discharge of their duties. In order to secure united and harmonious action all over the state in this direction a meeting of the various County Lecturers and officers was called to convene at Hastings on August 19th. At this meeting about two hundred were present and the discussion of the Alliance and its educational work was of vast benefit to all who were present. A synopsis of this meeting was printed and distributed over the state as noted above.

LITERATURE.

The demand for papers and books on matters of interest to our political and economical welfare has largely increased during the past year. Our members show a disposition to support those papers that fight their battles, that is very encouraging, and a number of local and other papers have been established during the year and are now doing good service in defending the rights of the producers of our state and nation. Reform books have been purchased by Alliances and members, and in many Alliances circulating libraries have been secured that will prove productive of much good in enlisting the energies of our people in the maintenance of those rights so dear to the American heart.

I have in this report but briefly outlined the present condition of the Alliance and its work in Nebraska. In the past year we have had much to encourage us. The organization is much more permanent in the character of its members than a year ago. Its educational system is improving in efficiency and its social features are more and more appreciated. It calls the attention of all to the farm and its interests, and points to reforms that must be labored