Various factors contributed to a revival of the farmers' organization movement in the late 'seventies, the 'eighties, and the 'nineties. In the words of Mr. Peffer, one of the farmer Senators, "The origin of the farmers' movement is found in the operation of three of the most powerful and active agencies in modern civilization, whose work is clearly traceable in our recent history-railroads, middle men, and banks." Other farmer leaders would include the high tariff, the trusts, and the whole financial system, the cause of "scarce" money. People other than farmers have placed the blame for the troubles of the farmers on overproduction of the staples, and on the unfortunate circumstance that the farmer's "knowledge of economic laws has lagged behind his progress in scientific agriculture." As is generally the case in a controversy, there was truth in the contentions of both sides, and that something was wrong, and that there certainly was an alarming economic unrest, all were agreed. As the "Progressive Farmer" (Raleigh, N.C.) put it:

"There is something radically wrong in our industrial system. There is a screw loose. The wheels have dropped out of balance. The railroads have never been so prosperous, and yet agriculture languishes. The banks have never done a better or more profitable business, and yet agriculture languishes. Manufacturing enterprises never made more money or were in a more flourishing condition, and yet agriculture languishes. Towns and cities flourish and 'boom' and grow and 'boom', and yet agriculture languishes. Salaries and fees were never so temptingly high and desirable, and yet agriculture languishes." (April 28, 1887.)

THE TARIFF: The high tariff on manufactures naturally increased the cost of those articles which the farmer required to run his farm, and at the same time the price of his crops was so low that his profits did no amount to very much at the end of the year. The McKinley Tariff called forth particularly bitter comments, as witness the following quotation from the Chicago Times (Independent) :

A "The trick tariff committee admit that agriculture is depressed and express deep sympathy for the struggling farmer. They tell him that the principle reason why he suffers is because he is subjected to ruinous competition with the pauper tillers of the soil of other lands. And in proof of this they say that our imports of agricultural products have increased from $40,000,000 in 1850 to more than $356,000,000 in 1889. From this we would expect them to shut out the greater part of this $356,000,000 by increasing the duties to the prohibitory point on the imported farm products. But when we come to look at the facts what do we find they have done? They have increased the duties on farm products of which we imported the following values during the calendar year 1889:

"Live animals of all kinds	---	$7,000,000
Breadstiffs of all kinds	---	6,600,000
Provisions of all kinds	---	1,800,000
Linseed	---	4,100,000

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Vegetables	---$2,800,000
Wools	---18,700,000
Eggs	--- 2,000,000
Tobacco	--- 4,000,000
Total	$47,000,000

"Round figures are given, but in every case a little in excess of the exact figures, except in in the case of linseed, or flaxseed. What is more, many articles are included the duties on which have not been increased. Thus, live animals imported for breeding purposes, etc., now on the free list are included to the amount of $3,600,000-though for the most part they remain on the free list in the McKinley bill. All breadstuffs are included, though the duties on some articles have not been increased, and the same is true as to provisions and one class of wools. Making proper deductions on these accounts, and we have left not to exceed $45,000,000 of the agricultural products imported last year affected by the high duties. No account is taken of fruits, nuts, hides, flax, and hemp, because the duties on them remain unchanged, or substantially so. Neither is account taken of sugar because the bounty is offered as an equivalent for the present duties. Indeed, it ought to be assumed that the change from duties to bounty is adverse to the sugar branch of agriculture since the cane, sorghum, and beet-growing interests energetically protest against it. On one agricultural product-rice-the duty is reduced more than half. It comes, then, to this: The McKinley Committee propose to relieve the farmer by increasing the duties so far that they may partly exclude $45,000,000 worth out of $356,000,000 worth of imported agricultural products, leaving the other $311,000,000 worth to come in and compete on precisely the same terms as at present. And to make up for this lean streak of goodness the Committee propose to add at least $105,000,000 to the burden of taxes on the kinds of articles the farmers have to buy. Oh, how these high-tariff economists do love the suffering farmer." (April 19,1890)

THE RAILROADS: To quote Senator Peffer again: "Railroads had made profitable agriculture possible in the new States, but they and the elevators and commission merchants took about all the profits. They divided one haul into three parts, adding expenses at every change. For example, grain or other farm produce shipped from any point in Kansas to New York, was billed to a 'Missouri River point,' -Kansas City, say-thence to Chicago, and from there to New York; a different freight rate ruling between each two points, and the farmer paying tribute twice on the way, thus reducing his profit to a nominal figure. And the power of railroads to enforce the rule of exacting 'all the traffic will bear,' was absolute." (The Farmers' Defensive Movement" Forum, Dec. 1889, P. 466)

On July 26, 1882, the "Kansas Farmer" thus expressed itself: "Kansas is the victim of a proposed robbery, whose extent is appalling. Our farmers had 1,500,000 acres of land in wheat

* Chicago Times See p 334 of Ms

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this year, and from every county comes up the report of 20, 25, 30, 40, even 50, bushels per acre of the best wheat ever raised. Let us put the general average at 22, and that is only a little better than it was in 1878, when the average was 21. That gives us 33,000,000 bushels for our entire crop. Ten cents a bushel on this is equal to $3,300,000; and that is precisely the sum of which eastern railroad companies propose to rob the farmers of Kansas. It has been determined by the Southwestern Railway Association, which includes all the roads leading from Chicago to Kansas City, Leavenworth, Atchison and St. Joseph, to raise the freight on wheat after August 1, five cents per hundred pounds from all Missouri River points, making the total charge thirty cents. The eastern roads have united in the advance, jumping up to 27 cents from Chicago to the eastern markets. 30 and 27 are 57. This does not include any elevator charges or re-handling; it is freight simply, and charged by the railroad companies. Neither does it include the cost of taking the wheat from the farms to Kansas City. We pronounce this a most gigantic robbery! a proposed theft of millions of dollars from men who have fought untold hardships in opening up new farms in a new country. With all the disadvantages of settlement in a new region, ignorance of climatic conditions, insect ravages, spoliation of sharpers and political villains, the Kansas farmer has had a hard time. Now, when the darkness begins to give way, and the cheering prospect of better times dawns upon him, here come the kid-gloved autocrats of the railway and dig out of his bins 50% of his garnered crops. Can language describe the enormity of this outrage? Is it wonderful that the indignation of the people should develop into powerful organizations to resist the infamy? This is not all of it. The grain gamblers are in the pool. They have large contracts to fill in August and September, and by giving notice that freights will be raised August 1, immense quantities of wheat will be hurried in to save the rise, the market will be glutted, prices will drop to a nominal figure, and these swindlers will grow fat on their purchases." (Quoted, Ibid.)

The Republican New York Tribune, on the other hand, did not think that the condition of the farmers was as bad as they painted them to be. Thus, an editorial of August 18, 1890 declared:

"An official statement of recent date makes the mortgages on farm property only a sixth of their value in Ohio. The State Labor Bureau makes the amount in Michigan about one-eighth, and the Illinois State Bureau makes the amount in that State about one-eighth. Where 66% of the farmers have become owners within ten years, and yet all outstanding mortgages cover but 12 to 16% of the entire value of farms, it is the almost inevitable conclusion that the business must be prosperous enough to enable much the greater proportion of purchasers to pay off purchase-money mortgages, and also the debts created in buying stock and implements and in making improvements.---------A business is not as a rule unprofitable which enables millions of persons in every decade to start with heavy debts and clear off more than half of them. The obvious proof is that a large proportion indeed of the

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farmers are accumulating profits, either in the form of more land owned and paid for, or in money invested. Only a minority fail to accumulate wealth, either through their own incapacity, or from all other causes. Yet it is this class of men who are asked to organize against the National policy of protection. This is the class of persons who demand that railroads shall be forced to charge less for their services, although much more than half the railroads in the country are at present unprofitable".

THE FINANCE SYSTEM: Prof. Buck in his "Agrarian Crusade", (Pp.108-109) quotes two irate editors to the following effect:

"Few people are aware of the boundless advantages that the national banks have under our present accursed system. They have usurped the credit of the people, and are fattening a thousandfold annually from the unlimited resources at their command." And again:

"We find the following private card on our desk: 'The last report of the Secretary of the Treasury shows the banks as loaning $1,970,022,687.' Four times the amount of money there is to loan. Four interests in every dollar. They are drawing from the people enough to run the National Government. How long will it take them to gather in all the money of the nation? This does not include the amounts loaned by state, private, and savings banks. Add to this the billions of dollars of other loans and think if it is any wonder times are hard. Will the American people never wake up to the fact that they are being pauperized? Four people are paying interest on every dollar you have in your pocket-if you have any. Wake up! Wake up!"

And the Journal of Agriculture, the official organ of the Farmers' and Laborers' Union of Missouri, on August 14, 1890, said:

"The (national) banks were conceived in infamy and were organized for no other purpose but to rob the many for the benefit of the few. The establishment of national banks was of the same character of vicious legislation that demonetized silver and changed the terms for payment of our national bonds. The infamous scoundrels who perpetrated these frauds, if they had lived in any other country, would have been hung without judge or jury or sent to the penitentiary for the rest of their natural lives, either of which would have been no more than they deserved."

MORTGAGES: "Prices dropped but the interest on mortgages remained the same. One hundred seventy-four bushels of wheat would pay the interest at 8% on a $2000 mortgage in 1888, when the price of wheat was higher than it had been for ten years and higher than it was to be again for a dozen years. In 1894 or 1895 when the price was hovering around fifty cents, it took 320 bushels to pay the same interest. Frequently the interest was higher than 8%, and outrageous commissions on renewals increased the burden of the farmer. The result was one foreclosure after another. The mortgage shark was identified with the 'Wall Street Octopus', and between them there was little hope for the farmer." (Buck, Pp.105-106).

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GENERAL: "They [the agricultural masses] are robbed by an infamous system of finance; they are plundered by transportation companies; they are imposed upon by an unjust system of tariff laws: they are deprived of their lands and other property by an iniquitous system of usury; they are fleeced by the exorbitant exactions of numerous trusts; they are preyed upon by the merchants, imposed upon by the lawyers,misled by the politician and seem to be regarded as the legitimate prey of all other classes. Monopoly names the price of what they have to sell,and charges them what it pleases for what they are compelled to buy.------- The relentless,remorseless and unyielding grasp of monopoly is upon every avenue of trade and commerce.---When this state of affairs exists throughout the whole country; when these modern barons are levying tribute on everything the farmer sells and all that he buys,is it to be wondered at,that the law of self-preservation is forcing him to unite with his fellow sufferers to repel the encroachments upon his rights?---The organization of farmers is the outgrowth of an invasion of their natural rights." (Morgan, Hist.of the Alliance, Pp.15-16)

"Low prices for his produce,further depressed by the rapacity of the railroads and the other intermediaries between the producer and the consumer,mortgages with high interest rates,and an inequitable system of taxation formed the burden of the farmer's complaint during the last two decades of the nineteenth century.---Investigation demonstrated that,even when reduced to a minimum,the legitimate grounds for complaint were extensive."-(Buck 107)

STATISTICS: The machinery used by farmers in 1880 was worth $406,520,055; in 1890 the value had increased to $494,247,467; and by 1900 it was worth $761,261,550. Agricultural implements manufactured in 1850 were worth $68,640,486; in 1880 they were worth $81,271,651; and in 1900 the manufactures were worth $101,207,428. These figures do not tell the whole story because improved methods of manufacture and large scale production,decreased the price of the manufactures in the later years. From 1880 to 1900 the value of the agricultural product per person employed per year rose from $286.82 to $454.37,an increase of 58.4%. During the period from 1850 to 1889 "population,farms,and the production of the more important staples increased as follows:

Population	--175%	Bales of cotton	--201%
Number of farms	--260%	Bushels of corn	--257%
Cattle	--185%	Bushels of wheat	--389%
Swine	-- 66%	Bushels of oats	--411% " *

*(C.Wood Davis, Forum Vol.IX P.233)

From this table of percentages Mr.Davis concludes as follows: "The logical conclusion from the evidence offered,is that the troubles of the farmer are due to the fact that there are altogether too many farms,too many cattle and swine,too many bushels of corn,wheat,rye,oats,barley,potatoes,too many tons of hay,and too great a production of nearly all other food products for the number of consumers." (Ibid,241)

See here also my Part III, Page 33

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THE FARMERS' ALLIANCE: With the agrarian discontent so widespread and so deep-seated, it was inevitable that there should be a revival of the farmers' organization movement. The old Grange or Patrons of Husbandry still existed but it wasn't active enough to satisfy most farmers. Accordingly new and more active organizations began to spring up and flourish. What had "contributed more than anything else to the almost total eclipse of the Grange throughout the West" was the failure of the various co-operative enterprises that had been undertaken by the State granges, as well as the failure of the Grange to accomplish everything that had been hoped for with respect to the railroads and railroad legislation. (Buck, Granger Movement, P.73) The new associations aimed to accomplish similar reforms.

The Farmers' Alliance, which later came to be known as the Southern Alliance to distinguish it from the Northwestern or Northern Alliance, originated in Lampasas County, Texas, about 1876. At first the object of the association was purely local, its purpose being to protect the farmers of that section against the depredations of horse and cattle thieves. (The World Almanac for 1891 and various other sources give 1876 as the date for this organization, although Buck gives "1874 or 1875.") Some years later a member of this early alliance, one W.T.Baggett, moved to Parker County, Texas, and in 1879 organized another alliance there. This alliance grew rather rapidly and was chartered in 1880, and in 1881 the name was changed to the Farmers' State Alliance. So rapid was the growth of the Alliance that eighty-four counties were represented at a meeting held in Cleburne in 1886. At the annual meeting in 1887, representatives of the Texas Farmers' State Alliance met representatives from the Farmers' Union of Louisiana, and when the similarity of principles and aims was discovered, the two organizations united to form the National Farmers' Alliance and Laborers' Union of America. The meeting of 1888 was attended by delegates of similar State Alliances which had meanwhile grown up in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee and Indian Territory. This meeting, however, was adjourned in order that another might be held in December of the same year at Meridian, Miss., in order to effect a consolidation with the National Agricultural Wheel whose annual meeting was scheduled for that time and place. The consolidated organization was then called the Farmers' and Laborers' Union of America. A year later, when the Alliance had spread over practically the whole South and West and Northwest, the name was finally changed to the National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union.

Throughout the whole movement, the original declaration of purposes as drawn up by the Texas Alliance, served to set forth the objects of the association. These purposes, as expressed in the Constitution of the Alliance, were:

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"1. To labor for the education of the agricultural classes in the science of economical government, in a strictly non-partisan spirit, and to bring about a more perfect union of all classes.

2. To demand equal rights for all, and special favors to none.

3. To indorse the motto: "In things essential, unity; and in all things, charity."

4. To develop a better state, mentally, morally, socially, and financially.

5. To strive constantly to secure entire harmony and goodwill to all mankind, and brotherly love among ourselves.

6. To suppress personal, local, sectional, and national prejudices, all unhealthy rivalry, and all selfish ambition.

7. The brightest jewel which it garners are the tears of the widows and orphans, and its imperative demands are to visit the homes whose lacerated hearts are bleeding, to assuage the sufferings of a brother or sister, to bury the dead, care for the widows, educate the orphans, exercise charity toward offenders, construe words and deeds in their most favorable light, grant honesty of purpose and good intentions to others, protect the principles of the Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union until death. Its laws are reason and equity; its cardinal doctrines inspire purity of thought and life; its intention is, "on earth, peace, and good will to man." "

(Ashby, Riddle of the Sphinx, 441-442. Annual CycL., 1893, 299)

At the meeting at Ocala, Florida, in December, 1890, the Alliance drew up its famous "Demands" which became a sort of platform of principles, and which was typical of the desires and demands of all farmers' organizations. The "Demands" were:

"First.-We demand the abolition of National banks; we demand that the Government shall establish sub-treasuries or depositories in the several States which shall loan money direct to the people at a low rate of interest not to exceed two per cent. per annum, on non-perishable farm products and also upon real estate, with proper limitations upon the quantity of land and amount of money. We demand that the amount of the circulating medium be speedily increased to not less than $50 per capita.

Second.-We demand that Congress shall pass such laws as shall effectually prevent the dealing in futures on all agricultural and mechanical productions, preserving a stringent system of procedure in trials such as should secure the prompt conviction and imposition of such penalties as shall secure the most perfect compliance with the law.

Third.-We condemn the Silver Bill recently passed by Congress and demand in lieu thereof the free and unlimited coinage of silver.

Fourth.-We demand the passage of the laws prohibiting alien ownership of land, and that Congress take prompt action to devise some plan to obtain all lands now owned by aliens and

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foreign syndicates, and that all lands now held by railroads and ex other corporations in excess of such as is actually used and needed by them be reclaimed by the Government and held for actual settlers only.

Fifth.-Believing in the doctrine of 'equal rights to all and special privileges to none,' we demand that our national legislation shall be so framed in the future as not to build up one industry at the expense of another; and we further demand a removal of the existing heavy tariff tax from the necessities of life, that the poor of our land must have; we further demand a just and equitable system of graduated tax on incomes; we believe that the money of the country shall be kept as much as possible in the hands of the people, and hence we demand that all national and state revenues shall be limited to the necessary expenses of the government economically and honestly administered.

Sixth.-We demand the most rigid, honest and just State and national governmental control and supervision of the means of public communication and transportation, and if this control and supervision does not remove the abuse now existing, we demand the Government ownership of such means of communication and transportation.

Seventh.-We demand that Congress of the United States submit an amendment to the Constitution providing for the election of United States Senators by direct vote of the people of each State."

The extent to which the demands of the other farmer organizations agreed with these, at least in so far as the financial aspect is concerned, can be seen from the following table prepared by Mr. Frank M. Drew in the Political Science Quarterly Vol. VI, P. 295:

	Grange	Northern Alliance	Southern Alliance	Colored Alliance	Mutual Benefit Assoc.	Patrons of Industry (Knights)
Abolition of National Banks	X	X	X	X	X	X
Free coinage of silver	X	X	X	X	X	X
"Sufficient" issue of paper money	X	X	X	X	X	X
Loans on land	X	X	X	X	X	
Establishment of sub-treasuries	?		X	X	X	
Income tax		X	X	X	X	
Tariff revision	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tax on evidences of debt		X	X			X

OTHER ASSOCIATIONS: The Northern Alliance: This alliance was founded chiefly throught the efforts of Mr. Milton George, editor of the Western Ruralist. At a meeting held in April, 1880, in Cook County, Arkansas, Alliance, No. 1 was organized. This Alliance issued charters to other locals, the first being issued to the Monitor Alliance, in Nebraska. On October 14, 1880, all the existing branches sent representatives to a meeting held in Chicago, where

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the National Alliance was formed. "The attendance upon this convention was estimated at five hundred representing alliances, granges, farmers' clubs, etc. The day was spent in discussion, and in the drafting of a series of resolutions, embodying strong anti-monopoly sentiments." (Ashby, 407) The constitution which was drafted at the time declared:

"The object of the organization shall be to unite the farmers of the United States for their protection against class legislation, and the encroachments of concentrated capital, and the grasp of monopoly; to provide against being imposed upon by swindlers and swindling advertisements in the public prints; to oppose in our respective political parties, the election of any candidate to office, State or national, who is not thoroughly in sympathy with the farmers' interests; to demand that the existing political parties shall nominate farmers, or those who are in sympathy with them, for all offices within the gift of the people, and to do anything in a legitimate manner that may serve to benefit the producer."

In 1881, at the second annual meeting they adopted a platform stating that they favored the equal taxation of property, a just income tax, "the salaries of all public officials should be only a fair compensation for services rendered," and as many government positions as practicable should be elective. They further condemned the issuance of free railroad passes to officials and demanded federal regulation of commerce "between the States," to remedy the "oppressive and tyrannical transportation systemb due to the "combination and consolidation of railroad capital, "better patent laws, and drastic laws to prevent the adulteration of food. (Ashby, 408-410)

This Alliance was much more active politically than the Southern one. At a meeting of the Minnesota State Alliance in 1886, a resolution was adopted declaring that "the Alliance, while not a partisan association, is political in the sense that it seeks to correct the evils of misgovernment throught the ballot-box." Accordingly the people were asked to "unite with us at the ballot-box next November to secure a legislature that will work in the interests of the many against the exactions of the few." In April, 1890, the United States Supreme Court decided that state railroad commissions and state legislatures had no right to fix the rates on the railroads of the states. This decision came while the Executive Committee of the Minnesota Alliance was in session, which committee at once declared it to signify "the subjection of the people and the states to the unlimited control of the railroad corporations of this country." A resolution was passed, to the effect that the Alliance would "appeal from this second Dred Scott decision to the people of the nation--with a request that they unite with us in an effort to so amend the Constitution as to abolish this new slavery." (F.M.Drew, P.300) At the same meeting too, one of the usual sets of demands was drawn up and members of the local alliances were "urged to submit this platform of principles to

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every candidate for the legislature in their repective districts, and to vote as a unit against every man who refuses to publicly subscribe his name to the same and pledge himself, if elected, to live up to it."

In 1889 a meeting was held in St. Louis at which representatives of both the Northern and Southern Alliance met for the purpose of uniting. However a union was not effected, due to a number of reasons. The Southern Alliance was secret and wanted to remain so, while the Northern was non-secret. The Southern Alliance wanted a complete merger, while the other wanted a sort of federation. There was also a difference of opinion as to the extent of political activity to be engaged in and according to Buck there was also some sectional feeling left which prevented absolute harmony and co-operation.

THE AGRICULTURAL WHEEL: The history of this association is best described in the words of one of the lecturers, Mr. Ashby:

"The Wheel first saw the light of day in February, 1882, at Mr. Bee's school-house, about ten miles west of Des Arc in Prairie County, Arkansas. It was originated with nine members headed by W.W. Tedford, a farmer and school-teacher, and was intended merely as a debating society. The debates having taken an economic turn, the opposition to monopoly and corruption in politics soon became a cardinal principle with the infant organization.

"In March, 1882, there were three clubs in Prairie County, with about 200 members, and it was decided to incorporate under the State laws. A meeting of the three societies was called and a platform and declaration of principles adopted. Suggestions for a name were called for, and as the members were mainly farmers they wished to adopt a name suggestive of the agricultural calling. Several names were mentioned, among which were 'The Plow', 'The Wagon', 'The Reaper', and several others, all of which were objected to until finally 'The Wheel' was suggested and accepted as the name of the order.

"State organization formed in 1883; consolidated with Brothers of Freedom in 1885. The organization had been in existence four years, or until 1886, before the National Wheel was organized." (In Litchfield, Arkansas.) (Ashby, Pp. 439-440) In 1888 the Wheel was consolidated with the Farmers' (Southern) Alliance.

THE FARMERS' UNION of Louisiana was organized on March 10, 1886 at Antioch Church throught the efforts of Samueal Skinner and I.A. Tetts. In 1887 it was consolidated with the Texas State Alliance as noted above.

"THE FIRST COLORED ALLIANCE was founded in Houston County, Texas, in December, 1886. On January 10, 1891, eleven state associations had been chartered, though the order had members in thrity states. On that date the estimated membership was 1,250,000, of which number 700,000 were adult males, and 150,000 more were males between 18 and 21 years of age. A national organization was effected in 1888 and the third annual meeting was held at Ocala, Florida, in December, 1890" where a union was effected with the Southern Alliance.

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The purposes of the Colored Alliance according to its charter were as follows:

"To elevate the colored people of the United States, by teaching them to love their country and their homes; to care more for their helpless,and sick,and destitute; to labor more earnestly for the education of themselves and their children, especially ina agricultural pursuits; to become better farmers and laborers,and less wasteful in their methods of living; to be more obedient to the civil law; to become better citizens, and truer husbands and wives."

THE SUB-TREASURY SCHEME,mentioned in the Ocala demands probably weakened the cause of the Alliances considerably. It was a very weak point and became the subject of a great deal of ridicule from newspapers all over the country. The scheme, as conceived by the Alliance Committee on the Monetary System at the St.Louis meeting was as follows:

"Let us demand------that the system of using certain banks as United States depositories be abolished,and in place of said system,establish in every county in each of the States that offers for sale during one year $500,000 worth of farm products; including wheat,corn,oats,barley,rye,rice,tobacco, cotton,wool and sugar,all together; a sub-treasury office,which shall have in connection with it such warehouses or elevators as are necessary for carefully storing and preserving such agricultural products as are offered it for storiage,and it should be the duty of such sub-treasury department to receive such agricultural products as are offered for storage,and make a careful examination of such products and class same as to quality and price and give a certificate of the deposit,showing the amount and quality,and that United States legal-tender money equal to 80% of the local current value of the products deposited has been advanced on same with interest at the rate of one per cent. per annum,on condition that the owner or such person as he may authorize within redeem the agricultural products within twelve months from date of the certificate,or the trustee will sell same at public auction to the highest bidder for the purpose of satisfying the debt. Besides the one per cent. interest the sub-treasurer should be allowed a trifle for handling and storage,and a reasonable amount for insurance,but the premises necessary for conducting this business should be secured by the various counties donating to the general Government the land,and the Government building the very best modern buildings,fireproof and substantial. With this method in vogue,the farmer,when his produce is harvested,would place it in storage where it would be perfectly safe and he would secure four-fifths of its value to supply his pressing necessuty for money at one per cent. per annum. He would negotiate and sell his warehouse or elevator certificates whenever the current prices suited him,receiving from the person to whom he sold,only the difference between the price agreed upon and the amount already paid by the sub-treasurer." (Morgan,P.180-181. Morgan was a member of this Monetary Committee.)

Probably the chief objection to the scheme is that " it would have given the farmer a power over consumers which might have been much abused." (Arnett,Populism in Ga., P.96)

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Here are a few examples of the sort of treatment that the sub-treasury scheme received at the hands of some of the country's newspapers:

St.Paul Pioneer Press,August 2,1890:
"Its (i.e.the Alliance's) main idea is the adoption by the Government of the wildly impossible Federal sub-treasury scheme.--The central idea and the soul of their campaign is the notion that the Government should provide repositories for agricultural products,to which the farmer may take the yield of his fields,receiving therefor some form of certificate or treasury note that shall pass current as money." This "transcendent absurdity" was then likened unto "a project to level the Rocky Mountain Range and spread the material all over the Mississippi Valley." (Public Opinion,Vol.IX,P.408)

Minneapolis Tribune,May 24,1890:
"The proposition is so absurd that it verges on imbecility.--There is plenty of money to be borrowed upon good land mortgage security at lower rates than other borrowers have to pay.----(The scheme) is so indefensible that it is almost impossible to argue against it. The patience required to refute these fantastically absurd proposals is a gift that few men possess." (Pub.Op.,IX,P.168)

Minneapolis Journal,called it a "fantastic notion--an absurdity on its face." (Pub.Op.,IX,408)

Philadelphia North American,December 9,1890:
"The Farmers' Alliance does not want money. It wants due bills. It wants pawn tickets,and though its chiefs do not know a mowing-machine from a mully grub,they want the earth." (Pub.Op.,X,218)

The New York Commercial Advertiser did not know which scheme was the madder,the sub-treasury scheme or government ownership of railways. (Pub.Op. IX,408)

(In a number of instances the labor organization known as the Knights of Labor co-operated with the farmers in demanding the various reforms and in drawing up declarations of principles. This will be considered more fully under the heading Knights of Labor.)

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THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT: ~~In as much~~ as one of the complaints of the farmers was against the middle-men who lowered their profits and raised the prices of their needs, it was only natural that they should turn to co-operative movements as a solution of the difficulty. Co-operation if carried on successfully would enable the farmer to sell his produce directly to the buyers in the East as well as to buy whatever he wanted at a much lower price for there was no merchant to make any extra profits on the articles. The Grange had tried to establish state exchanges and other co-operative enterprises, but the mistakes made were so many, and the opposition of the other interests so strong, that the whole movement failed, and with its failure came the decline of the Grange. The Alliance did not benefit very much from the mistakes of the Grange. The same mistakes were made over again, and, what is more important, perhaps, the members of the Alliance did not co-operate in the manner they should have. While the prices in the "co-op" store were cheaper than anywhere else, the member made his purchases there. However, when the merchants, in order to ruin the "co-op" lowered their prices even below the price of the Alliance, the farmers at once bought where they could buy cheapest. They could not see that in the end they would be forced to pay much more through their own short-sightedness, for as soon as an Alliance store was put out of business, the merchants raised the prices to the old level again. As W.S. Morgan, lamented, the farmers would have to be educated to co-operation before the movement could be successful. Often too, the merchants combined against the Alliance enterprise and were able to crush it in that manner. The following is a rather lengthy and complete account of the whole movement and its failure.

"The first effort at co-operation under Alliance tutelage was the establishment of Trade Committees whose territory corresponded with the county. The best five men from various sections of the county were appointed to serve as a committee whose duty it was to approach a merchant and offer to buy supplies only from him providing he was willing to sell to them at a discount. If such an agreement was entered into between the merchant and the trade committee the information was then given to all the members of the sub-alliance and all were expected to purchase from the particular merchant designated. Complaints as to prices or quality of service were made to the trade committee which was to take action in the matter of securing justice to all parties concerned. The contract entered into usually stipulated that the merchant should employ at least one Alliance clerk, who was the farmers' representative and who was to report violations of the agreement. In addition the trade committee fortified itself against fraud by demanding that it be given full liberty to examine invoices, and all costs, as well as be made acquainted with the cost mark used by the merchant. Dr. Macune says that this so-called contract system by which the farmers' trade was centered with certain merchants was for about a year the main purpose of the order. While the plan was being tried the entire energy of the lecturing force was used to extend it to

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every sub-alliance. After about a year's trial the plan seems to have been generally discarded and the energies of the Alliance leaders and lecturers was now directed toward the establishment of the practice of appointing business agents who were to conduct the buying and selling of goods consumed and produced by the farmers,without the intervention of the merchant. A state exchange was created and county business agents dealt with this exchange. It purchased supplies for the farmers and sold their cotton.

"Before co-ordination among the counties through the creation of a state exchange was effected,the farmers within each county were advised to co-operate in the sale of their products. The feature was thoroughly discussed at the meeting of the Texas State Alliance held in 1886. It was suggested that the membership hold their cotton and have sale days on which city buyers were to be invited. It was thought that the scheme would develop competition among the buyers and thus raise the price to the farmer.---Whenever practicable the Alliance advised that cotton yards be provided.At these yrads the cotton was to be received,weighed,sampled,graded and prepared for shipping. The plan proved unsuccessful because buyers from a distance failed to patonize the sale days. The Alliance cotton yrads were converted into warehouses and as such served a useful purpose.

"With the failure of the county cotton sale days,which were said to have failed largely because the merchants had combined against the farmers,the Alliance members resolved to organize a state business exchange which was to receive the cotton collected at the county warehouses and sell it direct to the mills,thus ridding themselves entirely of the middle men. The contract system for the purchase of supplies from certain merchants was also discontinued. 'Supply stations' in the county were provided for,a business agent was appointed,and orders for goods the farmers were in need of were by him dispatched to the state business agent,who would buy in large lots and distribute goods in small quantities among the counties as required. It is claimed that this practice reduced costs considerably to the farmer. It was,howver,not properly appreciated by the farmers generally,it is said,for the reason that competing merchants would in many instances meet the exchange prices and in fact at times even sell below them. This made the farmers' organized efforts appear altogether fruitless and unnecessary,resulting also in his making the business agent the victim of considerable unpleasnat criticism.

"The State Exchange: In order to sell the cotton held in the county warehouses the state business agent,who happened to be Dr.Macune,made a trip to Boston and Fall River and tried to negotiate a sale direct with the mills. He discovered that the cotton could be sold in this manner and at the State Alliance meeting of 1887 he proposed the establishment of the Farmers' Alliance exchange of Texas,which included a plan to raise a capital of $500,000,of which,however,only a small amount was at first to be paid in. Members of sub-alliances were assessed $2 each and the capital was divided into 25 shares of $20,000 a each and committed to 25 trustee-stockholders selected from the several congressional districts. The stock-holder held the stock

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in trust and considered the interests of his constituents,in the discharge of his duties. The capital was used to erect buildings,purchase farmers' supplies and sell cotton as well as other products that could be collected in bulk. Under wise management it would seem that the plans of the exchange so far were not unsound. In fact,it is reported,that large profits were saved to the farmer. It was the next step that brought ruin to the undertaking.

"It was found that many of the cotton growers mortgaged their prospective crops to the merchants in the spring in order to secure the necessary funds with which to do the planting. This practice placed the cotton under the control of the merchants and foiled the scheme to sell Alliance cotton through the Alliance exchange. Undaunted,Macune now proceeded to extend the necessary credit and virtually carried the Exchange into the field of banking. Notes were taken from the farmers and submitted to the state Exchange through the county business agent,who was to see to it that all such notes were properly secured. The Exchange accepted notes aggregating $400,000. This was an obligation on its part to furnish merchandise to the farmers during the spring and summer so as to allow them to continue their farming operations. Its total paid-in capital was $56,000,while the building in course of construction was to cost $35,000,leaving a balance of $21,000 with which to buy the $400,000 worth of merchandise. An attempt was made to borrow the necessary money at the bank,but inasmuch as the security behind the notes was not known to the bankers,and also because the Exchange was new and without an established repu$ation,the notes had to be posted at a collateral value of only 40% of their face value. This meant that only 40% of the $400,000 plus a portion of the $21,000 not needed for expenses was available for advancing merchandise to the farmers. The plan therefore necessarily failed."

(Ed.Wiest, Agricultural Organization in the United States, 464-467)

The efforts and enterprises of the other organizations were similar to this of the Texas State Alliance and practically all of them failed though most of them saved the farmer a good deal of money for a time.

C.W.Macune was born on May 20,1851 at Kenosha,Wisconsin. He was only one year old when his father died,and accordingly his education was very meager. His great-grandfather on his mother's side had settled in Kentucky with Daniel Boon. Macune worked on farms in California,Kansas and finally Texas. In his spare time he studied law and medicine and in 1887 he actually began to practice medicine. He joined the Farmers' Alliance in 1886 and became chairman of the executive committee of the Texas Alliance in the same year. In that capacity he held the Alliance together in the fall of 1886 when a division of opinion over political acitivity made both the President and Vice-President resign. After the consolidation of the Alliances was completed he became chairman of the National Executive Committee. He was also managing editor of the National Econmist published in Washington, D.C.

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Revival of Farmers' Organizations (Cont.):

DECLINE OF THE ALLIANCE: "Signs of approaching dissolution of the Alliance movement were already apparent at the Ocala meeting. The finances of the Southern Alliance had been so badly managed that there was a deficit of about $6000 in the treasury of the Supreme Council. This was due in part to reckless expenditures and in part to difficulties in collecting dues from the state organizations. Discord had arisen, moreover, from the political campaign of 1890, and an investigating committee expressed its disapproval of the actions of the officers in connection with a senatorial contest in Georgia. The decline of the Southern Alliance after 1890 was even more rapid than that of the Grange had been. The failure of many of the co-operative ventures contributed to this decline; but complications and dissentions resulting from the establishment of a new political party which took over the Alliance platform, were principally responsible. The Northwestern Alliance continued for a few years, practically as an adjunct to the new party, but it, too, lost rapidly in membership and influence. With the year 1890 interest shifts from social to political organization, from Alliances to Populism."
(Buck, Agrarian Crusade, P.124)

On September 7, 1896 the New Orleans Times-Democrat quoted the Monroe Bulletin in appreciation of the work of the Alliance as follows:

"The greatest and best educator of the farmers was the Alliance, which was founded on the broad principles of humanity and justice. It was a noble order, and its purpose and platforms pure and lofty. It was a friend of the producing classes, and led them up to a higher plane of enlightenment. It taught the farmers the benefits of association, and gave them lessons of far-reaching importance. Many a thrifty farmer owes his salvation from debt and penury to the holy teachings of the Alliance. Women and children were benefitted as well as men. It contributed to the social pleasures and broke the monotony of farm life. Peerless, grand, beautiful order. How we would like to hear its songs again. How we would like to see the bright faces and the hearty welcomes of the brethren in council, sweet as the 'dews of Herman and the oil that ran down on Aaron's beard.'"

(Quoted in Melvin J. White's Populism in Louisiana, Miss. Valley Hist. Rev. Vol. V Ft. P. 4)

L.L. Polk was born on April 24, 1837, a descendant of the same family as the President of the same name. Orphaned at fourteen, he was reared on a farm and eventually acquired a farm himself. In 1860 and 1861 he was elected to the Lower House of the General Assembly in North Carolina, his native state. During the war he enlisted as a private though offered a "splendid captaincy." In 1864 he was elected as the "army candidate" to the Legislature, and in 1865 he was elected to the State Constitutional Convention ordered by President Johnson. From 1877 to 1880 he was State Commissioner of Agriculture for North Carolina and in 1886 he began publishing his Progressive Farmer which was made the official organ of the Alliance in 1887. He was prominent in organizing farmers' clubs and a leader in the Alliance movement. In 1889 he was elected President of the Alliance.

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Revival of Farmers' Organizations (Cont.): Populism:

Political activities of the organizations: Prelude to the organization of the Populist Party:

"The Song of the Populists" sung by despondent Southern housewives to the tune of "The Bonnie Blue Flag."

My husband came from town last night
As sad as man could be,
His wagon empty, cotton gone,
And not a dime had he.

Huzzah! Huzzah!
'Tis queer I do declare:
We make the clothes for all the world,
But few we have to wear.

Perhaps that is why we hear of the "heart-breaking 'nineties."

1890: The "campaign of 1890 was the most thrilling ever known in the West. The country school-houses were packed with excited throngs. County, district, and State conventions were attended by great crowds of eager, earnest and indignant farmers. The excitement and enthusiasm were contagious, and the Alliance men deserted their fomer parties by the thousands. Putting a gill of fact and grievance into a gallon of falsehood and lurid declamation, these oratorical Alliance quacks doled out an intoxicating mixture. In vain the reports of the meetings were surpressed by the partisan press. In vain the Republican and Democratic leaders sneered at and ridiculed this new gospel, while they talked tariff and War issues to small audiences. The leading Stalwart Republican organ of Nebraska pleasantly referred to the new party men as 'hogs.' All the ridicule, abuse and evasion aided wonderfully the Alliance cause. Its members shouted that they were being persecuted in their 'battle for human rights,' and converts came more rapidly. Thus was produced that clamoring brood of Peffers, Simpsons, Kems and Mc Keighans, and the hundred other political rain-makers who proclaimed their virtue on the Western prairies in 1890."
(F.B.Tracy, Rise and Doom of the Populist Party, Forum 16, P.243)

Why should this have been so? Why were the farmers indignant and angry? The farmers in 1890 were angry because their demands had been disregarded and laughed at. Their cries remained unanswered. Neither Republicans nor Democrats nominated men "friendly to their interests." In 1889, Macune, who from the very beginning had insisted on non-partisanship, declared: "We have reached a period in the history of our Government when confidence in our political leaders and great political organizations is almost destroyed, and estrangement between them and the people is becoming more manifest every day." What had the national legislature done for the farmers? In answer to their demand for a downward revision of the tariff, the McKinley Tariff Bill was passed, which, instead of lowering

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the duties on the manufacutred articles that the farmer had to buy, left these practically the same, and "protected" the farmer by placing a duty on some of the agricultural products which were imported in very small quantities. Their demand for the free and unlimited coinage of silver was answered by the Silver Purchase Bill which required a lot of "log-rolling" before it could be passed, and which then didn't satisfy anyone. The cry for vigorous anti-trust action was to be quieted with the passage of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law, "a law which might or might not curb the monopolies under which they believed themselves crushed." Thus, "all the unrest which had been gathering during the previous decade, all the venom which had been distilled by fourteen-cent corn and ten per cent. interest, all the blind striving to frustrate the industrial consolidations which the farmer did not understand but feared and hated, found expression in the political campaign of 1890."

It is therefore without wonder that we read in the Annual Cyclopedia that "early in 1890 the Farmers' Alliance began to make itself felt as a political power. In the Southern States it sided uniformly with the Democratic party, but in the Western States it worked, for the most, outside of both the Republican and the Democratic party, although its strength was drawn more largely from the Republicans. At the general election in November, 1890, the Alliance elected governors in Georgia, Tennessee, South Dakota, and South Carolina, the last-named in opposition to the regular Democratic candidate who was accepted by the Republicans. It carried its State ticket in Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and other States, and it also elected Congressmen in some of the Southern and Western States. A total of thirty-eight members of the Farmers' Alliance was claimed for the Fifty-second Congress. The Alliance also elected several United States Senators." (1890, P. 301)

To take the campaign individually in some of the States, the "political contest of this year was remarkable for the breaking down of old party lines" in Kansas. The Farmers' Alliance was established here in 1888, and "during 1889 it enjoyed a surprising growth, absorbing the State Grange in December of that year, and began the year 1890 with a membership of over 100,000.---While they (the leaders) refrained from converting the Alliance directly into a political organization, they united in creating a so-called People's Party, which adopted the Alliance principles and which every Alliance man was urged to support." Furthermore, "before the close of the canvass the Republicans became thoroughly alarmed at the defections from their ranks, and, in their endeavors to hold the party together they went so far as to assail the character of the gubernatorial candidate of the People's Party . The charges against him were based upon the official records of the county court, and it is probable that the publication of these records saved the Republicans from defeat. They elected their entire ticket, with one exception, but their plurality of nearly 80,000 in 1888 was reduced to nearly one-tenth of these figures." (Annual Cyclopedia, 1890, P. 472) The result of the election was the election of 5 Populist Congressmen and a large Populist majority in the State lower house, as well as a United States Senator, Wm. A. Peffer (elected by the state legislature, of course)

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Since Kansas "came somehow to be regarded as particularly representative of the Populist Movement," we might go into the campaign there in even greater detail. Thus, in the words of a sympathetic Kansas historian, "the upheaval that took place in Kansas in the summer and fall of 1890, can hardly be diagnosed as a political campaign. It was a religious revival, a crusade, a pentecost of politics in which a tongue of flame sat upon every man and each spake as the spirit gave him utterance." For Mary E. Lease, Jerry Simpson, Anna L. Diggs, S. N. Wood, Judge W. A. Peffer, Fred Close, Ralph Beaumont, Cyrus Corning, Prof. Vincent, Judge Rightmire, and a half hundred others who lectured up and down the land, were not the only people who could talk on the issues of the day.---The meetings were at first held in school-houses," but as they "grew bigger and bigger till no buildings could be found to house the crowds which drove for miles and miles to hear their orators." (Eliz. N. Barr, The Populist Uprising, in Connelley, Standard History of Kansas and Kansans, Vol. II P. 1148).

Without question the leaders in Kansas were Mary E. Lease and Jerry Simpson. Mrs. Lease was born in Ireland but educated in New York, and at nineteen she went to Kansas. In 1885 she was admitted to the bar there and in 1890 she became a member of the Farmers' Alliance Lecture Bureau, and was more in demand than any other speaker. She made more than 160 speeches during the summer and fall (of 1890) to immense audiences. The press did all it could to drive her off the field by ridicule and slander, but she kept right on talking and telling her listeners: "What you farmers need to do is to raise less corn and more HELL." (Ibid P. 1150) The following is typical of her rather fiery speeches:

"We wiped out slavery and by our tariff laws and national banks began a system of white wage slavery worse than the first. Wall Street owns the country. It is no longer a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, but a government of Wall Street, by Wall Street, and for Wall Street. The great common people of this country are slaves, and monopoly is the master. The West and South are bound and prostrate before the manufacturing East. Money rules, and our Vice-President is a London banker.---The parties lie to us and political speakers mislead us.---The main question is the money question.--The common people are robbed to enrich their masters.--We want money, land and transportation. We want the abolition of the National Banks, and we want the power to make loans direct from the Government. We want the accursed foreclosure system wiped out. Land equal to a tract thrity miles wide and ninety miles long has been foreclosed and bought in by loan companies of Kansas in a year.--We will not pay our debts to the loan-shark companies until the Government pays its debt to us. The people are at bay, let the blood-hounds of money who have dogged us thus far beware." (Ibid P. 1150-51. Also quoted in Buck's Agrarian Crusade but not in quite the same form as I have taken it from Barr.)

* Barr Eliz N. The Populist Uprising. v II. p 1130-47

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Jerry Simpson was born in England in 1842, came to America and for a time was a sailor on the Great Lakes, rising to the rank of captain. He enlisted in the Union army, because: "Hand-cuffs and auction blocks for fellows who work don't heave-to along side of justice." Then he went to Kansas and became active in the farmers' affairs. In 1890 he ran for Congress against Col. James R. Hallowell, whom he "playfully dubbed Prince Hal", and "derived what fun he could out of Hallowell's silk stockings", pointing them out as a sign of aristocracy. In retaliation he was called "Sockless Jerry" or "Sockless Simpson", a young reporter having spread the report that he didn't wear any socks at all. William Allen White later called him "Sockless Socrates" in derision. With the idea of making Simpson appear ridiculous, the friends of Hallowell arranged for a series of joint debates between the two candidates, but at the first meeting, the crowds were so obviously pro-Simpson and anti-Hallowell that the latter failed to appear at the subsequent dates. Simpson was elected, of course, and his demeanor in Washington was such as to reflect credit on his State.

"As an index to the feeling at that time, an incident is told of a man who had worked so hard for the Populist cause that he took sick on election day and had to go home. Upon hearing the results of the voting he rang a sixty pound dinner bell for one solid hour yelling: Glory! Glory! Glory!"

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OTHER STATES: In Nebraska "the political contest of this year exceeded in interest any in recent years.--The Farmers' Alliance was active in arousing among the farmers of the State a spirit of discontent. The railroads were especially attacked by the Alliance orators, and radical reductions in the freight rates on agricultural products were demanded. The existing rates were denounced as ruinous to the farming interests. The tariff policy of the Republican Party was also denounced, and the farmers were urged to protest against the wrongs they were suffering, by independent political action.--On July 29---a State convention composed of representatives of the State Grange, the Farmers' Alliance and the Knights of Labor, assembled--to form a People's Independent Party and to nominate a State ticket." The Democratic candidate for governor was elected, although he had only 1,224 votes more than the Independent candidate. The Independents had a majority in the State senate and had exactly half the members of the Lower House. (Annual Cycl. 1890. 584-585)

In Florida "members of the Farmers' Alliance formed a large portion of the (Democratic) convention, and were conspicuous in its proceedings. The platform is as much a declaration of Alliance principles as of Democratic doctrine.---The election in November resulted in the success of the Democratic ticket by the usual large majority. The Democrats elected nearly all the members of the next State Legislature, a majority of whom were also Alliance members." (Annual Cycl. 1890, P.319-320)

In Georgia and North Carolina the Alliance controlled the Democratic Party and naturally it was entirely successful. The South Dakota Independent Party secured the balance of power

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