

# THE ALAMANCE GLEANER.

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NO. 25

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## WINTER COVER CROPS.

What and When to Sow—Preparation of Soil—How and With What to Fertilize.

The following valuable information to every farmer is sent out from the Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, in conjunction with the Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration Work:

A winter cover crop is one of the most important factors in southern farming, especially hill farming. A system of poor farming has so greatly exhausted the humus in the majority of the fields as to make it well nigh impossible to prevent their further depletion by the heavy rains of winter and early spring, which carry off much of the valuable elements left, onto the bottoms, and into the streams. Nature, always resourceful, has furnished certain plants which may be used to restore the depleted soils.

These winter cover crops will hold our loose soils in place, and where sufficient growth is obtained, can be turned under to add humus to the soil. The sand hills and other loose soils can largely be prevented from leaching if heavy cover crops are turned under for a few years. This statement may be verified by taking new land where the plant roots and vegetable mold are still in it, or the same may be found in soil land where run to pasture for a series of years and brought back into cultivation. No washing occurs here even after the heaviest rains. A good cover crop will not only prevent washing, and add humus to the soil, but if clovers or vetches are used there will be nitrogen collected from the air and stored in the soil during the winter, as peas and beans do in summer. The plants most suitable for cover crops are rye, vetch, crimson and bur clover. Conditions, of course, must determine what to use.

**RYE.**—Rye is one of the old standard winter cover crops and has been used very extensively in some sections. It has the advantage in that it is generally known, is easily planted, will grow almost at any season, will grow on the poorest soils, seed are usually cheap, and it does not require extra care in the way of inoculation as is the case with the legumes. It can be sown in the middle of the corn or cotton at last cultivation or if not convenient to sow at this time it can be done a little later in the fall. When sown early it gives a better cover for the soil and also some good grazing for the stock. Where practicable, however, as would be on the corn land, it is better to turn under stalks and other growth and plant rye on good seed bed. It is also a good plan where the soil will grow it, to mix vetch with the rye, about 1 bushel of rye to 1/2 bushel of vetch, using a bushel of the mixture per acre. It is better to drill seed, especially where planted in middle of corn or cotton. It is claimed that the variety known as Abruzzes, which was imported by the Agricultural Department, is best suited to South Carolina and adjacent states. There are other good native varieties which can be had at a fair price.

**OATS.**—Oats may be used instead of rye in many instances, and the same general rule for preparation, planting, and after treatment, may be followed as for rye. 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 bushels of seed should be used per acre when planted alone; 1 1/2 bushels and 1/2 bushel of vetch when combined. Rust-proof oat seed gives the best results in nearly every part of the South. Unless the lands are fairly good, it will be necessary to fertilize the rye and oat crop to get sufficient growth for the most valuable cover crop. Stable manure applied broadcast at time of planting is good for this, or the following per acre: Acid phosphate 150 pounds; cotton seed meal 30 pounds; and muriate of potash 30 pounds, thoroughly mixed and applied at time of planting.

**CLOVERS AND VETCH.**—Until lands become more fertile and adapted to these crops, the best satisfaction with them can be obtained only by making a good preparation and by giving some special care in seeding and inoculating the soil.

## DREAD THEIR ANCESTORS.

So the Gwari Pagans Appraise Their Spirits With Food and Drink.

It is always a matter of great difficulty to get any really satisfactory idea of the religion of pagan tribes. During a stay of some three years among the Gwaris, however, I was able to form some notion of what was at the back of their minds. They have an idea of a supreme being, but do not worship him in any way that I have been able to discover. Probably this idea is just their paganized conception of the Mohammedan Allah.

Their actual worship is more closely connected with the spirits of their ancestors. They appear to live in dread lest these spirits should work damage to their farms, and with this in view they are careful to supply them at regular intervals with food and drink, which are deposited near their graves. These tombs are in the case of chiefs in the royal compound, and huts are built over them, wonderfully decorated with bright colors. In other cases the graves may be dug in some lonely place away from the houses of the living and often in the depths of the forest.

A spirit house which I have often visited is in a woodland glade with in half a mile of my compound and belongs to the family of the chief butcher of Kuta. Owing to its proximity to my abode it has fallen into disuse, as the pagans became somewhat chary of performing their mysterious rites so near the white man.

Some departed spirits are supposed to inhabit the large trees which are to be found in almost every pagan town, and small earthenware pots containing food may be seen surrounding these trees. It is not often that one can see the Gwaris at their religious exercises, but a few months ago, on entering a Gwari village, I saw a man kneeling in front of one of these small spirit huts with a pot of some drink in his hand, apparently expostulating with the spirit—possibly because it had treated him badly—and occasionally pouring some of the contents of the pot upon the outside wall of the hut.—Wide World Magazine.

**Little and Big Religion.**  
This story comes from Austria, where all conversation turns eventually to matters educational, because every parent is painfully anxious that his sons shall pass the standard which will free them from certain years of military service. A visitor was conversing with his host's small son and opened, as a matter of course, with the words, "Do you go to school now?"  
"Yes."  
"And what do you learn—reading, writing, same?"  
"Oh, yes, and I learn religion too."  
"Religion?"  
"Yes, I learn the little religion,

## STAKED HIS HEAD.

The Wager Sir William St. Clair Laid With King Robert Bruce.

Edwin Noble in "The Dog Lover's Book" recalls the historic story of the two famous deerhounds Help and Hold, a monument to which can be seen to this day at Roella chapel. The legend is that King Robert Bruce while hunting upon the Pentland hills had several times started a white deer, but had hitherto been unable to capture it. It had always so quickly outdistanced his own hounds that he began to imagine that it was gifted with supernatural powers and could not be overtaken by mortal dogs. Naturally his nobles agreed with him, as there was no one bold enough to affirm that he owned hounds which were better than those possessed by his sovereign.

There was, however, one exception. William St. Clair, who wagged his head at his two favorite hounds, Help and Hold, would kill the deer before she crossed the Pentland brook. Bruce accepted the challenge and wagered the forest of Pentland moor against Sir William's head.

The white deer was roused by a couple of bloodhounds and given a fair start before St. Clair released his two favorites. After a long chase, followed by Sir William and Bruce on horseback, the deer reached the brook, and Sir William, feeling sure that he had lost his wager, prepared to give himself into the hands of Bruce, but before the deer could get farther than halfway across Hold had seized her, and Help coming up at the same moment, they forced her to turn back. In the end she was killed within the stipulated boundary.

**An Extraordinary Case.**  
A young attorney not noted for his brilliancy recently appeared in court to ask for an extra allowance in an action which he was so fortunate as to have been retained in. The court, not discovering anything at all unusual, complicated or extraordinary about the litigation, inquired of the young man:

"What is there about this case that you seem extraordinary?"  
"That I got it," blandly and innocently replied the youthful aspirant for fees.—Case and Comment.

**A Query.**  
I wonder if  
Those kings and queens  
Have ever tasted  
Fork and beans.  
If they have not  
It seems to me  
They pay a price  
For royalty.

At 1 then I wonder,  
Too, if they  
Get pumpkin pie.  
If not, I say  
Their jobs do not  
Look good to me.  
A king or queen  
I would not be.  
—Detroit Free Press.

**Staggered, but Not Floored.**  
"Thomas," said the head of the establishment, "you are more than an hour late this morning."

"Yes, sir," answered the office boy. "I had to clean 'bout a foot of snow off the sidewalks 'fore I left home."

"A foot of snow, Thomas? The snow isn't more than two inches deep at the outside."

"I know it ain't more'n that here, Mr. Spotsch, but in the part of town 'where I live the climate's different."—Chicago Tribune.

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**A German Title.**  
In the matter of titles the Germans show more courage than we do. On a card which reached London the other day the sender was entitled "Staats schuldentilgungsbureauangehöriger Sekretarwive." Would any English woman venture to describe herself as widow of the manager of the state debt relief works? When this was shown to a German friend he produced a card on which the sender was entitled "Staats schuldentilgungsbureauangehöriger Sekretarwive," a description which she held to be her due as the widow of an official in the national debt office.—London Chronicle.

**More Terrific.**  
"I envy you," says the very thin man. "I wish I had your weight. Here I am, a skinny, dyspeptic creature, suffering half the time with stomach ache."

"Envy me?" chuckles the very fat man. "Why, what if you do have the stomach ache half the time? Think what a little bit of a stomach ache you can have. Now, when I have the stomach ache it amounts to something."—Life.

**Perfectly Natural.**  
"The supposed young millionaire bought a ship just before he was declared bankrupt."

"That was a perfectly natural proceeding."

"How so?"  
"Most people do buy airships before they go up."—New York Journal.

**Poetry.**  
Poetry is simply the most beautiful, impressive and widely effective mode of saying things, and hence its importance.—Matthew Arnold.

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## STRIPPED AND FLOGGED.

Fearful Ordeal of the Akou Binat in the Sudan.

The black man more stoical or more lawless than we are? "At fantasia in the Sudan," says Mr. Edward Fothergill in "Five Years in the Sudan," "I have myself seen the part that a young man plays of his own free will in order to obtain the title of akou binat (the brother of the girl). This ceremony would turn a reformer's hair gray.

"The men and the women of a village sit round in a circle, leaving a space in the center of some six yards in diameter. I describe it as I saw it myself. The strongest man in the village is then picked out of the crowd, and armed with a whip of hippopotamus hide, he and the young man who is to strive for the title enter the arena. The women beat their drums, and the men clap their hands to the tune.

"The candidate for honor is stripped to the waist. He stands with his arms folded in the center of the ring, and the strong man dances up to him to the tune which is being played. He brings the whip round with all the force of which he is possessed and lands it on the bare back of the man in front of him. He dances away; again he advances, and the operation is repeated. This goes on until the number of strokes previously agreed upon have been dealt. In the particular case I saw it was twenty-five. If the man who is being flogged winces, if he so much as moves an eyelid as the whip descends, he is disqualified and branded as a coward until such time as he may choose to undergo the operation a second time.

"On this particular occasion he went through with it like a Trojan. Indeed, the man who was delivering the blows got tired first, and the last three cuts of the twenty-five were unsteady and sickered round the ear and neck of the 'brother.' I leave my readers to imagine the state of his back when all was over, but he appeared to be as happy as a king, and certainly he was accorded a great ovation by the assembled crowd of women."

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