SOUTHERN ✣ FARM ✣ NOTES.

TOPICS OF INTEREST TO THE PLANTER, STOCKMAN AND TRUCK GROWER.

Nitrogen.

Just what amount of nitrate of soda is used in this country for fertilizing purposes we do not know, but the amount is certainly very large. The whole output has been in the hands of a combination, which is composed of English capitalists, who, on a capitalization of $800,000 have cleared $2,100,000. Now we are informed that the combination is about to break up, and it may result in a lower price for the nitrate. The Chilean Government gets $25,000,000 annually from the export duty on nitrate of soda. Now we are sure that a very large part of the enormous amount of money that has been spent on nitrate of soda has been wasted, by reason of bad farming. It is doubtless that it is early truck crops, but its economical use in general farming is not so certain. Farmers annually buy nitrate and other forms of nitrogen merely to get a little more to sell at once from the land, when by the use of the legumes, and a proper rotation of crops, they could improve their soils without the purchase of nitrogen in any form. And of late many have been deluded with the notion that they can, by a few bacteria on dried cotton, induce the greater accumulation of nitrogen by the legumes, and they have paid $2 per acre for what cost less than ten cents to make, and at that generally worthless. There is no doubt that if the soil is well supplied with the bacteria suited to the legume being grown, there will be a greater nitrogen fixation by the legume. But where the bacteria already exist in the soil, the further inoculation could do no good. And then, no matter how well the soil may be inoculated with the bacteria that live on the roots of the legumes, if it is deficient in phosphoric acid and potash, no amount of inoculation will avail much. Now, if instead of buying so much of the evanescent nitrate of soda, and paying $2 for a vest pocket package of raw cotton, farmers would devise a rotation of crops that will bring the legume crop generally grown in their section, and would liberally supply that legume crop with phosphoric acid and potash, they could get all the nitrogen which farm crops in general need, without cost. In the large section of the country where clover has been the legume crop, there is seldom any need for inoculation with the clover bacteria, and in sections where the cowpea has been grown for generations, no inoculation is needed for it, and if there was, no amount of inoculation will be of much use unless the soil is supplied with the mineral elements of plant food. The fact is that there are few of the legumes that will not finally inoculate the soil with the germs carried on the seeds, and there are millions of acres more in need of the plant foods that the legumes need than of inoculation.

Some years ago a German bacteriologist sent out under the name of Nitragin a laboratory culture of soil bacteria, and a little vial of this as large as one's little finger was to put all the nitrogen needed on an acre of land. In field practice it was found entirely useless, just as the last vest-pocket packages of cotton have proven. The fact remains that we can get all the nitrogen we need through the agency of the legumes, if we supply them liberally with the plant food they require, phosphoric acid and potash. When this is done, there may be some good done in many cases by soil taken from a field where the particular legume has been long grown, and the soil better inoculated than the one sown last. A bushel or two of this, scattered over an acre, will beat the cotton wads every time, but will not atone for any lack of phosphoric acid and potash in the soil.—W. F. Massey.

A New View of the Hog.

It is natural for the hog to wallow, but that does not prove that he should roll himself in a germ-infested, filthy animal hole, to maintain his health. The present day hog is the product of a great deal of cross-breeding, the object of which was to change the shape and nature of the primitive hog. Our domesticated hog would die if he were placed in the haunts of the wild hog, and expected to live as did the primitive wild hog, because he has constantly been bred away from the nature and habits of the wild animal.

He needs water to cool his body, but he does not need mud. Give him the choice of a dirty wallow or a trough full of clean water, and four times out of five he will take the water.

Then why should the hog root? His feed should be easily found above the ground in a domesticated state. This vigorous form of athletics is not necessary to his health or well-being, but is positively harmful. The low-priced joints, jawbones and shoulders are increased in size at the expense of ham and bacon. The nervous energy expended in rooting should be reserved for digesting the abundant supply of feed that finds its way into his capacious intestines. As he grazes or feeds from the slop trough there is no need of the tough piece of cartilege that adorns his swineship's nose. While crushing grains or chewing the stalks of juicy sorghum the pig's snout is out of business. It is only when peanuts, sweet potatoes or artichokes are left in the ground for him to harvest that the rooter has any reason to root in this day and generation.

A Farm Repair Shop.

The good old precept, "A penny saved, is worth two earned," will apply to the farmer's business probably more than any other. It is the small and numerous leaks that defy the pumps and sink the great ship, and it is the many small expenses of the farm that render the business unprofitable unless avoided. Things are constantly wearing out about the farm, and unless there are facilities for repair on the farm, in the crop season when time is valuable the broken article must be sent to town for repair, the cost of the trip being far more than that of the repair, and the loss of time from the cultivation or harvest of crops, many times more than all the rest. Right here is where the all round handy man wins out against the one who can only do ordinary farm work. With the proper facilities at hand, if a machine is broken, in a few minutes the iron is welded or the broken wooden part replaced by a new piece, and the farm work proceeds and valuable time is thus saved. At all times of year there are many improvements and repairs about the place that the farmer can make himself at but a slight outlay of money, and therefore a well-equipped repair shop and the skill to make repairs are necessary adjuncts to successful farming.—The Epitomist.

Abolish the Blinders.

We find an item, in the Savannah Weekly News, which we can heartily endorse. We have not used blinders on a horse for years. If we have to take a new bridle with blinders, we cut them off before using it.

The best handlers of horses are condemning blinders.

The purpose of blinders is to shut off from view any object from behind that horse that might cause the horse to become alarmed and try to run away.

As to this, blinders have proven more disastrous than beneficial. If a horse passes some object that is not fully understood by him and causes fright, the shutting off from view of this scarecrow by blinders only increases the fear.

Any horse of ordinary good sense can soon be taught not to scare at flags, cars, covered wagons, umbrellas, etc., by letting him see them and understand them.

Give the horse the full power of all his senses; let him see, hear and smell, if need be, to satisfy his fears.—Florida Agriculturist.

Eleven Dairy Rules.

1. Keep the cows clean and wash the udders before milking.
2. Keep the barn clean, with walls and ceiling whitewashed; have it well lighted, ventilated and free from dust at milking time.
3. Always make a clean toilet before commencing to milk.
4. Keep utensils clean and bright.
5. Remove the milk from the stable as soon as drawn and strain and cool at once.
6. Never expose milk to bad odors.
7. Do not mix fresh warm milk with that which has been cooled.
8. Give the cows only wholesome food and pure water.
9. Never add anything to milk to prevent its souring. Cleanliness and cold are the only preservatives needed.
10. Milk regularly, quickly, quietly and thoroughly.
11. Always treat the cows kindly and never excite them by loud talking, hard driving or abuse of any kind.—Oklahoma Farmer.

Growing and Feeding Sweet Potatoes.

I will give my experience in raising and feeding sweet potatoes: I have rows three and a half feet wide, set draws twenty inches in rows. I manure with coarse farm yard manure in drill with fifty to 100 pounds muriate potash, fifty to 100 pounds cottonseed meal, and 100 to 200 pounds sixteen per cent. acid phosphate per acre. I vary the fertilizer according to the character of the soil. Very sandy land needs a large per cent. of potash, and poor land needs more ammonia.

Few of us have understood the feeding value of the sweet potatoes. With sweet potato patch in each field so as that hogs can eat peas or potatoes they do better than on peas alone. I am trying feeding my mules half feed potatoes; give one-third more in measure than you do corn in ear. With pea vine or soja bean hay you may feed sweet potatoes entirely, if not at very hard work.—H. M. Johnson, Johnston County, N. C.

Pointed Paragraphs.

His appearance puts a promise into our bitterst partings.

They find the life of glory who follow the glorious Lord.

They cannot enter His life who know nothing of His death.

Isn't it suprising what a lot of good bargains are offered a man when he's broke?

News Notes.

Half of San Francisco was destroyed by earthquake and fire, 200 lives being lost more than 1,000 persons injured and enormous property loss caused.

Strikers in and around Lens, France, had combats with troops and wounded many, only dispersing when the riot act was read.

A woman can have an awful nice cry thinking how hard it would be on her children if she weren't such a good mother to them.

Often the head that rejects the argument on the future is overcome by a heart that is led by little hands reaching out from another life.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., addressed his Bible class on the Tenth Commandment "Thou shalt not Covet."

People who aren't married have very optimistic views about wedded bliss.

The Old Brocade.

In a black oak chest all carven,
We found it laid,
Still faintly sweet of lavender,
An old brocade.
With that perfume came a vision,
A garden fair,
Inclosed by great yew hedges;
A lady there,
Is culling fresh blown lavender.
A-singing goes
Up and down the alleys green—
A human rose.
The sun glints her auburn hair
And brightens, too,
The silver buckles that adorn
Each little shoe.
Her kerchief and her elbow sleeves
Are cobweb lace;
Her gown, it is our old brocade,
Worn with a grace.
Methinks I hear its soft froufrou,
And see the sheen
Of its dainty pink mossrose buds,
Their leaves soft green,
On a ground of palest shell pink,
In garlands laid;
But long dead the Rose who wore it—
The old brocade.

—M. S. Brereton, in A Celtic Christmas.

Isn't it suprising what a lot of good bargains are offered a man when he's broke?