

An Opinion and a Reply.

Said the Charlotte Democrat: "The humbugging talk about our farmers shipping their cotton direct to Europe, and not selling it in our villages, towns, and cities, will not amount to much. After two or three of our farmers have been cheated out of their crops of cotton, by the home and foreign agents, but few will afterwards be fooled by the smart and selfish men, who manipulate the Grange organization."

To this the Concord Sun replied:

We think the above remarks exceedingly unjust and ill timed. The gentlemen who have the manipulation of the Grange movements in this State are not men to whom the epithet of humbug can be applied. Dr. Columbus Mills, the Master of the State Grange has a reputation, that defies such assertions. He was elected because he was a gentleman of enlarged ideas, a successful farmer, a polished gentleman, and an honest man. Who can deny this? The Grange organization, in their wisdom, and with a desire to promote the best interest of the farmer, adopted this Direct Trade Union as a means to assist one another, and to keep the manipulation of the cotton crop out of the hands and beyond the control of New England capitalists, who with their money could put the price of cotton up or down, just as their good dictated—and have appointed captain James F. Johnston, of Charlotte, as the agent of the Union.—Captain J. is well known, personally, to many of our farmers—they made his acquaintance during the war, (he is a brother of the gallant General Robert D. Johnston) and none who knew Captain J, during the war, or who have since made his acquaintance, can believe that he is the man alluded to by brother Yates, as one of the "smart and selfish men," who manipulate the Grange organization, and one of the home agents, who would cheat them out of their cotton.

A Fair Criticism.

A correspondent maintains, with good show of justice, that it is "a shame on the name of Agriculture" to couple it with the majority of modern fairs, and he expresses the sentiment of all thoughtful and conscientious people when he asserts that unless these exhibitions can be conducted on correct principles, it might be better for the country to have them abandoned altogether. It is worth while, he thinks, for each individual manager to ask himself whether he is not concerned in an enterprise which tends directly or indirectly to corrupt the morals of his neighborhood.—While our common schools and academies have been vastly improved, and while the people, as a general thing, have been advancing both in morality and intelligence, the agricultural fairs so called have become so demoralized that they offer more temptations to vice than any other gathering of the people. If the cause for this is carefully traced, it will, in many instances at least, be found to arise from the influence exercised by wealthy men living in towns and at the county seat, who contribute largely to the expenses, who drive fast horses, and who care little about the common people. Still being active, and in some respects public spirited, they contrive to obtain a controlling influence, and then during the days of the fair they are out in their carriages, the greatest men of all. If there are to be fairs worthy of the name the best farmers must insist upon having the management, and in many cases the location of the fair should be in the center of the farming, not in the center of the commercial region.—N. Y. Tribune.

The Compost Heap.

The winter is the time to prepare the compost heap, to gather the materials and incorporate them, so that in spring they will be in a condition for the crops to digest easily. It is a work which is easy of accomplishment, if it is steadily pursued, but unfortunately it receives but little attention from the majority of Southern planters. There are very few places where the materials for a large and valuable compost heap cannot be collected during the winter months, if we only take the necessary trouble. The fallen leaves from the woods, all refuse vegetable matter, creek mud and a little lime, will make an excellent compost with stable manure, cotton seed and all other matter which will produce fermentation and decomposition. It is astonishing what a large pile of fertilizing matter can be collected in a short time, if attention is given to it every day.

Wherever river mud or muck can be had without too much hauling, nothing is better when mixed with slacked lime in the proportion of a bushel of the latter to half a cord of the former. The heap should be worked over well, so as to pulverize and mix the ingredients thoroughly, and when warm weather commences, decomposition will take place immediately. We should begin now to gather leaves, trash and muck, and sprinkling the heap, as it grows, with lime, as already indicated. Leave it until spring, when, by adding to it about one-quarter of its bulk of stable manure, cotten seed and such other vegetable matter as can be collected, it will become one of the richest possible fertilizers. Ashes can be added to such a pile with great advantage, and the refuse from the kitchen and outhouse,

if thrown in to swell the pile, will be of value, instead of as now, a complete waste.

We should not complain that our lands are becoming poorer every year, while we neglect the means within easy reach to sustain their fertility. We must not grumble because we cannot afford to buy the expensive artificial manures of commerce, and give this as an excuse why we make poor crops, when we allow hundreds of cords of natural manure of the best quality to lie ungathered and unused all around us. One hand and ox-team put to work now will build up an immense bank of fertility before seed time, which will in harvest add many a bale of cotton and barrel of corn to the crop.

But now is the time to begin. Let no consideration arrest the work. Gather up the leaves, clean up out of the fence corners, pile up the corn-stalks, haul away the muck from the borders of the branch, burn up the old logs and brush now cumbering the ground, and collect the ashes, mix them all together with a few bushels of slaked lime, making the pile broad and flat on top, and early in the spring add the stable manure and other fermenting matter.

The labor expended will cost very little. The lime can be bought for a few dollars. The result will be a permanent enriching of the land and largely increased crops.—American Farmer.

How to Drive Sheep.

Like many other persons, I handled sheep a long time before acquiring the art of driving them to the best advantage, when the sheep are turned on the road without any help to assist me. The first day I drove from eight to ten miles, and got them in good pasture, at night. The next morning, after getting under way, I found the sheep were very hard to drive; they wanted to lie down under every shade, and I labored hard all day, and only made seven or eight miles on the journey; and this was my experience for three or four days. I began at last to reflect as to the cause of the sheep driving so badly, and it occurred to me that the reason was, they had filled themselves during the night, and wanted to lie down and chew their cud, instead of travelling on a full stomach. I resolved to change my tactics at the next stopping place. Accordingly, when night came, instead of turning them into a pasture field as heretofore, I put them into a nice, clean barnyard, and let them rest all night instead of eating. The result was that next morning when I turned them on the road I had to get before them to restrain them. I found it necessary to use a long pole to keep them back, so marvellous was the change, and so impetuous was their anxiety to push ahead. The reason for this change was simply owing to the fact that the sheep had had a good night's rest, and were fresh and hungry.—Selected.

Lies.

The most successful of the Farmer's Clubs and local horticultural organizations with which we are acquainted, are those in which the social feature is not ignored—those where the club or society meets at the house of some one of its members and is entertained with a dinner and social reunion, as well as instructed by the discussion of some farm, orchard or garden topic. This seems the best mode devised for securing and perpetuating attendance and cohesion. Besides, the informality of such meetings secures an expression of opinion and the giving of experience from those who might be too timid to speak formally in a public meeting.

We call attention to these facts now that the length of the evenings and the closing up of the autumn work will enable farmers and their families to meet each other in such profitable social intercourse. Where Granges are organized this feature is secured to the neighborhood and such a suggestion is unnecessary; but where there is no Grange, or where there may be objections to organizing one, a neighborhood club of the character above indicated, in which all the adult members of every family may participate, will be found to be a wholesome means of instruction and entertainment during the winter months.—Rural New Yorker.

Preserving Manure.

The Boston Journal of Chemistry states that the sources of loss in the storage of manure are two: first, the escape of volatile ammonia and other gases and, secondly, the loss of valuable salts by leaching. The first difficulty may be obviated by covering the excrement with eight or ten inches of good soil or loam, which will absorb all escaping gases. A bushel or so of plaster may be advantageously scattered over the heap before the soil is thrown on. The whole mass should be perfectly covered, leaving no "chimney" for gaseous exudation. The danger of leaching may be avoided by covering the heap with hay or straw sufficiently thick to shed most of the rain. If kept in this way a sufficient time, the manure will undergo spontaneous decomposition, the products of which will be ready for immediate assimilation by plants. The usual process of carting manure to the fields in the autumn to waste, by both the above processes, some of their most valuable constituents.

Ship Building in North Carolina.

At one time ship building was carried on as extensively in this State as in any State in the Union. Commencing from a very early period when the first settlers built their canoes, small boats and "plantation built" vessels, down to 1666 when the business of building ships on the Pasquotank river for transportation of produce to West Indies and where the vessels were sold with their cargoes, up to a few years since a large number of the vessels required in the trade were built of North Carolina material and by North Carolina mechanics and were considered as good as any constructed abroad. Why is it that this business has been abandoned? The State has an abundance of as good material now for ship builders as then—there is the same demand for good vessels, and we cannot but believe this branch of the mechanical art, if carried on extensively, would become one of the most important of trades in the State. Let some of our friends in the "Old North State" revive the trade and we have no fears of their success.—N. Y. South.

Changing Seed.

Every wide-awake, intelligent farmer knows from experience or observation, that it is to his interest financially to change seed, more particularly that of cereal crops, frequently. It is not necessary that a day's journey be made to effect the exchange, but the desired quantity may be engaged from a neighbor a few miles away. Just now is a very proper time to look after the matter, while farmers are preparing their year's product for market. The best, or as desirable an article as the granary affords, can probably be obtained; and even if a slight difference per bushel is demanded, and the article pleases, there should be no hesitation in paying it. Look well to the germinating properties of all seed grain, and its entire freedom from obnoxious seed.—Country Gentleman.

Fish Scrap as a Fertilizer.

At Lubec I noticed a mowing field which shew plainly that it had been well fed, not with neat stock, but fish. The owner informed me that 25 tons of hay had been taken from five acres in one season. It had to be carried from the field to be cured, and 18 tons was cut last season. Some of the land had been mowed 19 successive years, dressed once in two years (in Sept.) with small herring, at the rate of from 10 to 15 bbls. per acre. Farmers are now securing the small and refuse herring at the fish houses at 25 cts. per bbl. Some are composted while many are spread upon grass land or ploughed in in their crude state.—Cor. Maine Farmer.

Badly Ginned Cotton.

A Macon, Georgia, paper says that a very carelessly put up bale of cotton was received at a warehouse in that city lately. In the center of it was found an iron gudgeon, an old sausage grinder, a pair of hinges, and four pieces of iron tie, each a foot and a half in length. The whole of the iron contents of this bale weighed eighteen pounds. The original shipper of the bale will be notified that the articles are here subject to his order. He ought to be more careful in future about how he allows extraneous matter to get mixed with his cotton, as the bale might fall, fall into the hands of some suspicious person, who might believe the iron was purposely placed there, and prosecute the packer for fraudulent practices.

Women Farmers.

I found some thrifty farmers at "Little Kennebec" in Machias and Englishman's River, Jonesboro, while from the latter place to Jonesport there is quite a variety of soil and scenery. On this route to-day I met a young team of six steers, two yearlings and four 2 year olds, all attached to a cart and driven in good style by a girl. Accosting her to learn her age, she raised her goad and replied "eleven next January." The steers must have been well trained or else she was a good trainer for one so young. On another occasion a woman was driving two cows with a cart to the forest for fire-wood.—Cor. Main Farmer.

Corn North and South.

The introduction of a Northern variety of corn into a Southern latitude would result in its early change, and the loss of all its native peculiarities. No plant is more plastic under the influences of soil and climate than corn, and a small variety in the North would very soon become a large variety when grown in the South.—N. Y. Tribune.

Banking Fruit Trees.

Heaping up soil around the stems of trees the first winter after planting prevents swaying by wind, protects the roots, is a barrier to mice, and turns off superabundant water. To cover the banking with lime is not absolutely necessary, although, when properly used, lime is beneficial to fruit trees.—N. Y. Tribune.

What some Western Farmers are Doing.

The Farmer's Union (Minnesota) of October 10th says: "Grasshoppers, potato bugs, drouth, chinch bugs and prairie fires and two per cent. a month are driving many farmers from their farms in various sections of the West. Some have thrown up their claims entirely, preferring to risk starvation in the towns rather than on the prairies."

A days Work on the Farm.

No State has fixed by law the number of hours which shall constitute a legal day's work on the farm. But there is just as much reason why the farm laborer's day's work should be measured as the mechanic's. The length of a day's work may always be governed by specific agreement between the employer and employed; but in the absence of any such agreement a legal standard should always govern. But in the case of farm labor there is no such legal standard, hence custom in localities governs and is frequent cause of dissatisfaction and dispute.

Plaster and Grass.

It has been shown that at the Michigan Agricultural College a single bushel of plaster added to a full ton of hay to the yield of an acre of ground in the five, most of it in the four mowings that followed—two crops being taken off the ground each of the two years succeeding the sowing of the plaster.

A CABBAGE STORY FROM COLORADO.—Mr. Taylor, of Lorimer, has harvested this year from 4½ acres "nigh on to" 40 tons of the melancholy bulb. One load of a summer variety averaged 26 pounds per head. But this is moderate along side of what was done during the early history of the Territory, i. e., three years ago. In that primeval time, "by putting on temporary sideboards, two feet high, on top of those of the usual height, Mr. Taylor was enabled to load 39 heads on his farm wagon. The fortieth head was put on but couldn't be made to stay. He drove the load to Chevenne and endeavored to sell to the proprietor of the Railroad House. This individual, however, wanted but a sackful, but when informed that it would be impossible to get one head in the sack, the landlord desired to see the load. His report soon drew around the wagon a number of Eastern men, and in fifteen minutes the load was disposed of at a cent and a half per pound over the market price, and every head was sent to the States as specimens of Colorado's productions: The load weighed over 1,700 pounds, making an average for the 39 heads of 46 pounds each.—N. Y. Tribune.

REPEATED ACTS.—While shaking hands that some of his fingers, the day we noticed ward, and he had not the power of straightening them. Alluding to this, he said: "In those crooked fingers there is a good text for a talk to children. For over fifty years I used to drive a stage, and these bent fingers show the effects of holding the reins for so many years." This is the text. Is it not a suggestive one? Does it not teach us how oft-repeated acts become a habit, and once acquired it remains generally through life! The old man's crooked fingers are but an emblem of the crooked tempers, words and actions of men and women.

This, from the Elmira Gazette, may serve as a hint to whom it may concern: "As the season for social festivities approaches, our Farmers' Club begins to consider its annual public re-union and to receive invitations to similar pleasant parties arranged by kindred societies."

Large quantities of tobacco are being shipped from Richmond, Danville, Petersburg and other points to this market.—Durham Tobacco Plant.

Camels are raised in Nevada. Upon one ranch upon Carson river there are twenty-four fine healthy animals, all of Nevada growth. He has become thoroughly acclimated.

Louisville, Kentucky, has 500 manufactories, investing \$20,000,000, producing wares worth \$56,000,000, employing 10,000 persons, who receive \$8,000,000 annually in wages.

An Iowa agriculturalist raised this year sixty-three acres of onions, which, according to the Western Farmer, "it is thought would average over 400 bushels per acre.

EXTRAORDINARY FARMING.—With four hands Mr. C. T. Thomas who resides in the neighborhood of Danville, made 14,000 pounds of Tobacco, which brought him \$2,800; also, 300 bushels of corn, 164 bushels of wheat and about 500 bushels of oats.

This speaks well for Mr. Thomas' industry and skill, and for the business of farming. If Mr. T. would consent to work on a salary, he could command more than any clerk in Danville, having been offered \$1,400 a year.

When a man puts his whole mind and body on it, farming in the Dan Valley pays.