

# The Farmer's Forum or Monthly Digest

Edited by J. N. BIGHAM

## Crop Rotation-- How to Maintain Soil Fertility

By J. N. Bigham.

The farmer that has not already done so will soon be resting on his laurels as to what he will plant in this year's crop, the coming season. The cotton acreage will of course come under consideration. Time was when the selection of the cotton was made solely for the purpose of keeping the yield above the cost of production. The time has come when the cotton acreage must be looked at from quite a different direction. The high prices of all kinds of feeds, corn, wheat, oats, in fact all products of the farm will have to be reckoned with. The farmer will have to raise these products in order to be independent of what the market S. or B. does. Not only that but the fertility of the soil, the result of the continued year after year crop of cotton is becoming a serious problem. The farmer who is engaged in planting or not. To many farmers this fertility is becoming quite a problem. When Mr. Lee got out his estimate of the cotton crop for 1908, he estimated rather low in view of the average and the seasonal weather. The high price that has prevailed for corn for the last three years has enabled farmers who have been renting land to earn on the shares to uniformly make more money than when they were on a cash to men who fed their own stock. This naturally checks the movement—which we regard as of the utmost importance—towards crop rotation, stock feeding and the maintenance of soil fertility. Moreover, high prices of cotton have led to the planting of cotton in the cotton states without doubt due to the depressed demand of cotton in the United States.

It is shown an increase of nearly double the yield of 100 years, thus proving that we have so long contended for that land when properly farmed, instead of decreasing in productivity will not merely retain its fertility, but actually becomes more productive as the years go by. Not a bit of improvement, therefore, to be found. If it is the fault of the farmer and not of the land. What faulty farmers we must have had in this country. Surely it is time we mended our ways. The land of England has been cultivated for centuries, hence the first century has not yet been passed with most of our land, and in the oldest settled portion little more than two centuries have come by, and yet we have millions of acres of exhausted land. Let us with this year make a new start and a better one.

We close with the proposition we started out with that the time has come when the farmer must look at the reduction of the cotton acreage from quite a different point than what the price will probably be in the fall. Any system of farming that does not carry with it a plan of improving or at least maintaining the fertility of the soil will surely prove disappointing. This has been proven north, south, east and west. Nature has beneficently provided the remedy if the farmer will comply with the conditions—rotation with the legumes.

### A THOUGHT FOR FARMERS.

If the faith, the mother of humanity, is to "wear out," what is to become of the race? The fact is that soils, properly treated, maintain their productivity indefinitely under cultivation. The further fact is that, with the disappearance of pestilence and the discontinuance of war, which belong to the future, all contributing to the growth of population, the productive capacity of the soil must be sustained at its highest point or the world suffer want. The life-sustaining power of the soil is lowered in two ways: (1) by physical destruction, through the carrying away of the earth to the sea; and (2) chemically, by the withdrawal of the elements required for plant life. The waste from the former cause is very great. It accounts for sterility in the soil; which are abundant in more hilly portions of the cultivated country. Throughout the South this process of denudation has proceeded far, and is going forward rapidly. And even more serious, universal and speedy is the process of deterioration of the soil, as pointed out by James J. Hill, at Minnesota State Fair.

### The Girl and the Lobster.

Dorando Pietri at one of the many Italian banquets given in his honor in New York, talked about professional athletes.

"Amateurism is no doubt more romantic than professionalism," he said, "but we live in an unromantic age."

"Only the other night at one of your gayest Italian restaurants," he said, "I overheard a dialogue that illustrated forcibly the age's lack of romance. It was late. At the table next to mine a rich young Italian contractor was supping with a beautiful young girl. As the young girl played with the stem of the wineglass I heard her murmur:

"It is true, isn't it, that you love me, and me only?"

"Yes," said the young man, "though this lobster is certainly mighty good."

### The Charity of Youth.

Not long after the Chelsea fire some children in Newton, Mass., held a charity fair, by which \$18 were realized. This they forwarded to the rector of a certain Boston church, who had taken a prominent part in the relief work, with a letter which read somewhat as follows: "We have had a fair and made \$18. We are sending it to you. Please give it to the Chelsea sufferers. Yours truly, etc. P. S.—We hope the suffering is not all over."—Harper's Magazine.

### The Language of Commerce.

"I understand that your wife and daughters have acquired several foreign languages."

"Yes," answered Mr. Cumrox, "when they're having a good time in society or at the opera they talk French or Italian. But when it comes to telling their troubles they get back to plain English, so that I can take a hand."

### DON'T KNOCK.

Don't be a knockin' the weather! Seasons will come an' will go; Seedtime an' harvest together. God sez 'twill allus be so. Look at the blooms that are fingin' Sweetest of increase on you; Listen! The birds are a-singin' through. Look! See the sunshine stream through.

—E. A. Bristol in Los Angeles Express.

## PLACE OF THE TELEPHONE IN MODERN FARMING

The wheels of the business world are revolving faster every day. Human ingenuity is constantly seeking new devices to save that most valuable asset of modern business—time. One after another, new inventions are being brought into use in an attempt to increase the speed of these wheels to the utmost.

Of all such time saving inventions the greatest is undoubtedly the telephone. Introduced only about thirty years ago, it is under present conditions an absolute necessity as a means of communication. Take for example, the telephone service suddenly from the city of New York and business there would be paralyzed; the wheels of commerce would come to a standstill. This necessity has spread from the large city to the small city, from the small city to the town, and is now making itself felt in the rural districts. The modern farmer does not regard his telephone as a luxury but recognizes its value as a financial asset. He realizes the necessity of keeping in close touch with trade conditions. With the aid of the telephone he can buy his supplies when the market is low and sell his crops when it is high.

Science and invention have done wonders in raising the standard of farming. The farmer of yesterday was poor, over-worked and narrow in many ways. The farmer of the present is prosperous, broad-minded and contented. The telephone has been an important factor in his development. Brought into closer relations with business, he has been able to keep pace with the times and to adjust the wheels of his farm to run more in accord with the larger ones in the city.

The telephone holds perhaps a more important place on the farm than in the city. Although not used with such frequency, yet the long distances which prevail greatly increase its value.

That farmers all over the country are having their farms connected by telephone is the best possible proof of its value and that it has come to stay. The farmer, as a class, is not backward in the world to be persuaded to adopt an uncertain proposition in spite of the proverbial "gold brick" stories which are credited to him. His decisions are the result of careful thought and due deliberation. But once convinced he is not slow to action.—Southern Cultivator.

## AWAITED DEATH IN A GRAVE.

Japanese Youth's Attempt to Bury Himself and Die Afterward.

A youth of Kobe, Japan, who sought manly than professionalism," he said, "and have an accomplice 25 cents to place the earth upon his coffin achieved some degree of notoriety even in Japan, where new things are happening every day. He failed of his original purpose, however.

A policeman was strolling along the bank of the Minatogawa river outside Kobe one day last month when he happened to spy a kind of bamboo pipe sticking a few inches above a mound of fresh earth. Being a Japanese and also a policeman, his curiosity was especially keen. He looked down the bamboo pipe but could see nothing.

"Then," he began to dig around the pipe. He had a considerable wrench put on his nerves when a voice came out of the end of the pipe right at his ear:

"Permit me to die peacefully."

"The policeman did not so. He dug some more and finally unearthed a pine box, the length of a man's body and about three feet wide. The bamboo pipe led through an opening into the box. The policeman pried off the cover of the box, which had been securely nailed down, and dumped the self-appointed corpse out.

Yamada Katsuro, the man who would have thus died, told the prefect of police that he had wanted to die in a seemingly fashion because he had been out of work. "The lack of food had suggested to him the practicability of starving himself to death, but in order to be sure that he should accomplish this purpose he had determined to bury himself in a securely nailed coffin and await the ravages of hunger. He didn't want to suffocate first, so he had thought of the bamboo pipe."

The day before the policeman discovered him, Yamada said, he procured the box and the services of a coolie. Then he dug the hole out on Egawa and after giving the coolie his obi and fifty sen, his last bit of money, he was nailed up in his coffin, lowered into the grave and covered under six feet of soil.

Yamada promised never to try burying himself alive again and the police let him go.

## HUMMING.

All the mills are humming—bake it partridge, dear on toast, And let me help your mother to another piece of roast; A servant in the kitchen and an overcoat for Jim, Better times are coming, with a bim-bam-bam; Better times, busy times—a bigger slice of pie, Buckwheat cakes for breakfast, and the goose hangs high! —Baltimore Sun.

## These Terraces.

The ugliest sight that comes in view to one who loves the soil and trees, as he rides along the railway is to see a hillside or a gentle slope marked by a hundred red gullies and the land as barren as the ocean beach. If you ride much you will see many such places, looking as if a curse rested on them. The next ugly sight, but better than red gullies, are terraces covered with weeds, grass and often bushes several feet high. These terraces stand year after year and they get a little wider too. If you are obliged to have terraces make new ones above or below the old ones and plow and harrow the old. Then level off the new and plant a row of the same crop plant. The weeds will get on top and then the growth of weeds and grass will stop. It is well to change terraces every year or two any way. But a ten inch soil with an abundance of humus will do away with the use of terraces. It

## Volunteer Oats.

It is useless to say that good preparation of land and sowing seeds in the fall will insure a crop every year provided they are put in the open furrow. About a year ago the writer saw a two-acre lot near Gaffney, that gave a fair crop of oats which were followed by peas. When they were cut off the oats came on and the stand was so good that they were left. Nitrate of soda was applied about the first of April and the yield was 25 to 30 bushels to the acre. Near the same place we have a 4-acre lot. A fair crop of apples, oats and peas were made last summer. Last week the stand of oats appeared to be good except they were too thick in spots. The plan is to harrow them about twice in March and then apply 100 pounds of nitrate of soda at the proper time. We believe it will beat cotton for all the oats over do away with the use of terraces. It

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# Mrs. Rubberino Talks of Dogs

"Now I wouldn't for worlds have Mrs. Dorglyv think that I thought so," said Mrs. Rubberino to her visitor, "but have you noticed, my dear, that queer angry, reddish rash on her face lately?"

"Yes," I knew you must've, because it is so frightfully disgusting, and you know Mrs. Dorglyv whatever her other defects, used to have a nice skin, though, of course, she spent half of her time having her face bleached and massaged and all that sort of nonsense.

"Well, when Mrs. Dorglyv was here the other day I felt real sorry for her, 'deed I did, even if she had had four or five of my books for the last three months and hasn't even suggested returning them, and, of course, I'd rather go to the stake than ask her to bring the books back, for if a woman can't get enough delicacy to—"

"Well, anyhow, my dear, I felt so sorry for her that, of course, I couldn't refrain from asking her what ailed her skin. She got as red as the bumps all over her face when I asked her that, though I am sure I don't know why."

"Oh, this little rash on my chin?" she said, just as if it was nothing, and trying to make believe that it was only on her chin, when her whole face was covered with the red bumps.

"Why," she said, "the young woman who attends my face as massuse worked a little too hard with her fingers on my skin the other day, and that caused a little irritation, that's all, and positively the woman looked as if she really believed that I was going to swallow such an absurd story as that."

"Of course, though, I didn't press her any further, seeing that underneath all of her studied calmness she was taking it to heart so much. But my dear, I don't mind telling you what I think about, as I say, I wouldn't have Mrs. Dorglyv, poor crazy thing, know for worlds that I think so, even if it does serve her purposes, perfectly good and right for I always did tell her that if she didn't stop being so careless with those miserable little wheezy, asthmatic, coughing, sniffling mutts of hers, why, she'd be sure to catch something or other from them some day."

"Now, darling, don't ever breathe it that I told you I thought so, but I honestly believe that Mrs. Dorglyv has the mange!"

"Oh, well, of course, I feel sorry for her, but still it's pretty hard to get real dependent over the troubles of a woman who wastes her whole life on a pack of yippy-pappy, sniveling, sneezy, growly, lanky, good for nothing dogs, 'deed it is.

"Why, that woman hasn't a single other thought in life except for those horrid little flees of hers. Now, I am not taking the point of view, my dear, as some folks do, that a woman ought to be ostracized from society and be drummed out of town, so I speak, and all that sort of thing, if she hasn't a whole household of children. But it certainly is disgusting, to say the least, to see a woman rushing around like a chicken with its head cut off every time one of her herd of nasty little mutts gets a cold or becomes sick any other way."

"Why, do you know that Mrs. Dorglyv once bragged to me that she stayed up all night two nights running with that snuffy little Japanese spaniel of her when it was sick? The idea, the very idea! Of course, there's no way of proving it, because she hasn't any children, but I'd be willing to bet anything that she'd hate like all outdoors to sit up two nights running with a sick young 'un if she had a whole household of 'em, because I happen to know how Mrs. Dorglyv loves her comfort, you know, and particularly what she calls her beauty sleep—the idea of an old married woman who's 43 if she's a day talking about her beauty sleep!"

"I hate to mention it, my dear, but did you ever in all your born days see such a poor housekeeper as Mrs. Dorglyv is? My her apartment always looks like as if it had been rocked by an earthquake; dirt and dust and grime everywhere, things littered all over the floor, and a general appearance all over the place as if it hadn't seen a broom or a duster since the Deluge."

"How that woman's husband stands living in such a state of dirt is more than I can tell you, although men get used to these things, in time, of course, and Mr. Dorglyv himself isn't any neater with himself than he should be, and maybe he finds the dirt of his home congenial, I am sure I don't know."

"One thing I should think he'd make an awful roar about, and that is that there's never a chair to sit down in in the Dorglyv apartment, because those miserable mutts of Mrs. Dorglyv grab and monopolize all of the chairs. I s'pose she expects folks to sit on the floor when they call upon her."

"The last time I was over there every last one of the comfortable chairs in the sitting room was being used as a snoring place by her dogs, and they all dreamed in their sleep and harked in their dreams and sneezed while they slumbered and went on something awful."

Well, there wasn't anything to sit

down on except an uncomfortable looking davenport, and I am sure I had no intention on earth of squatting myself on that with a whole roomful of nice chairs that the dogs had grabbed for themselves, and so I just gently, but firmly pushed one of the mutts off one of the chairs and took the chair myself; and I'd know Mrs. Dorglyv didn't like that one bit in me, and she picked up the little cur-mudgeon of a mutt that I had pushed off the chair and made much over it and said to it, 'Did the mean ol' ooman push mamma's darling off'n the chairs?' and a lot more like that, a-purpos, of course, to make me feel mean over having taken the chair."

"But to get back to the perfectly abominable condition of her apartment, the very idea! Of course, the answer is her dogs."

"She hasn't a particle of time for anything in the wide world except for that flock of mutts that she keeps around her all the time, and that's why her apartment looks as if it had been raided by policemen and the place was being used as a billiard parlor—or is it pool room? It's something of that sort, anyhow."

"Why, she washes the flees every day of her life and takes hours and hours for the job, when she might be getting a few tons of the dirt and dust out of her home. Washes and dresses them, she calls it—the idea! Well, then, after spending hours and hours washing and dressing the skunky little beasts, why, she has to cover them all up in their 'cute little blankets'—that's what she calls 'em—and do you know that women worked for a solid two weeks making those blankets for her pooxies? Yes, she really did—worked for two weeks to make 'em without once getting out of the house."

"Well, after blanketing the bawky little sneezy, sniffling, growly mutts, she takes 'em all out for an airing in rays. She takes only two of them at a time, because when she takes them all out in a bunch they are liable to get lost or stolen, she says, for it is too hard for her to watch all of them at the same time, and do you know that Pomeranian spitz or spaniel, or pug, or whatever it was—when that Pomeranian of hers whimpered and whined around

## Farm Work for The Month Of February

By Chas. Petty.

This is a very important month on the farm. Harness, plows and all farm machinery should be put in first class condition. The provident man will lay in extra plows, plow points, single trees and keep a supply of heel screws on hand. Extra plow stocks should always be handy. This will save much time when plowing begins. Every farmer who runs a two-horse or larger farm, should have a blacksmith shop and a supply of coal. When that is the case, if there are four or five plow hands on the place, some of them will be sharpening plows every morning, or noon. It insures better work and makes the work easy. The preparation makes the work easy. The man who saunters around and never gets ready will accomplish little. Good tools should be bought. It is false economy to give hands a half worn hoe or a plow that is only fit for the junk heap.

### The First Work.

Up to the last days of January there has been no weather suitable for plowing. To-day a neighbor came rushing up to me with a handful of clay balls and says: "Do you see that?" I went over to my lot awhile ago and found a hand turning my hand. He began in the lowest and wettest part. Here is the clay he was getting up. I told him to stop at once." That clay had water enough in it to make mortar, with a little addition. That is one danger. The two-horse and disc plows should not be used when the clay is wet. It should be dry enough to crumble and mix well with the top soil.

### The Garden.

A farmer's dinner without vegetables is a poor affair, and the farmer who does not prepare for and have a good garden the year round is only a half man. He ought to hire out to some good neighbor and hire him to repudiate him till he reforms. Deep plowing and much harrowing will prepare the garden, but before that is done it should be well covered with pulverized manure from the lot. If acid phosphate at the rate of 400 pounds to the acre and the ashes from the fire place or ash hopper are scattered over it after the plowing and harrowing, the garden will be ready for planting. Manure from the hen-house mixed with three times its weight of rich dirt that accumulates about the premises, makes an excellent fertilizer for all vegetables. Just now cabbage and lettuce plants should be set out, if you have them or can get them. English peas should be planted. Onions planted in the fall should be cultivated. They need lots of manure. Spinach and mustard sown now will give fine salad when the turnip salad falls. Grape vines should be pruned and the strawberry patch cultivated so as to get out all weeds and grass. Get brush or sticks ready for running peas and beans so that when they need sticking little time will be required. Prepare the Irish potato beds thoroughly and manure with pulverized manure. They should be planted February 20 to March 10th for an early crop.

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