

RALEIGH REGISTER

AND NORTH-CAROLINA GAZETTE.

Our aim is the plane of fair, delightful Peace.
Our way is by party rage, to live like Brothers.

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GUINEA GRASS.

As there appears, at present, a wish amongst the Farmers of this vicinity, for information in relation to this valuable Grass, we re-publish the following Paper from that excellent Agricultural Work, which ought to be in the hands of every Farmer in the Southern States, entitled *Agricultural Essays* by ANNICOLA.

This grass is as yet little known, as it has been only partially cultivated in the United States. But the few experiments made in its cultivation, have succeeded so well as to prove that it is well adapted to the soil and climate of the Southern States. It has been proved to yield a quantity of grass and hay, almost exceeding belief. It merits the particular attention of the farmers of North-Carolina; for should it be found to succeed well in this State, it would prove of more real value to them than the discovery of a gold mine. The writer has made several fruitless attempts to procure some of the seed of this grass; he means still to persevere in his exertions, and with the view of inspiring others with the like desire of introducing this valuable grass among us, and of interesting them in its favor, the following account of it is given, as taken from a communication addressed by Dr. S. Brown of Natchez, M. T. to the Philadelphia Agricultural Society:

Six years ago, I saw one or two plants of the Guinea Grass, in the Garden of M. Treme, near the city of New Orleans—but as I was, at that time, in no way concerned in agricultural pursuits, it attracted little of my attention. Last autumn, I again met with it, in great perfection, at Mr. Munson's, a few miles north of Fort Adams. Although Mr. M. had not more than half a dozen plants, he obligingly furnished me with a pint of seed, which I shared with my friends in this Territory, Kentucky and in Tennessee. Having determined to cultivate this grass, I sought for information on it from such books as were within my reach. In Bryan Edward's History of Jamaica we have the following account of it:

Guinea Grass may be considered as next to the sugar cane, in point of importance, as most of the grazing farms throughout the island, were originally created, and are still supported chiefly by means of this invaluable herbage. Hence the plenty of horned cattle both for the butcher and planter, which is such that few markets in Europe can furnish beef at a cheaper rate or of a better quality than Jamaica. It thrives on the most rocky parts of the island, bestowing verdure & fertility on lands which otherwise would not be worth cultivation.

From Willch's Domestic Encyclopedia, I make the following extract:

Guinea Grass, a valuable species of herbage, thus denominated, as it was first discovered on the coast of Guinea, whence it was brought to Jamaica and afterwards imported into this country. (England.)—About ten years since, it was introduced into the East-Indies, where it is successfully cultivated, and grows to the height of seven feet; it admits of being frequently cut, and makes excellent hay; cattle eat it both in a fresh and dry state with great avidity; hence the culture of this valuable herbage has been strongly recommended to the farmers of Cornwall and Devonshire.

The subsequent remarks on the culture of this grass, are by the late Henry Laurens of South-Carolina:

In the last spring I procured from Jamaica three half pints of Guinea grass seed, which I planted in drills, of one fourth of an acre of very indifferent land. The seed sprung, and soon covered the ground with grass, four feet high and upwards. Being desirous of saving as much seed as possible, I cut one bundle of grass for horses; they ate it all with great avidity. In August I took one of the grass roots, and divided it into twenty eight parts, which were immediately replanted—every part took root, and the whole are now growing very finely, and seeding.

I am of opinion this grass will make the best pasture we can wish for. It is easily managed, requires but one good hoeing, after which it will take care of itself.

With this stock of information, I commenced my experiments. In the month of April, I prepared a piece of ground in the city of Natchez, and planted the seed I had reserved for myself, in holes two feet distant from each other.

Seed may be had at J. Gale's Store, at 25 cents a paper, containing four ounces. It is curious to calculate the quantity which an industrious planter can obtain from one seed. Suppose that each of the 28 divisions of the root produced less than one half of the number of stalks I obtained from one seed, for instance 50 stalks, this will give 1400 stalks in one season, from a single seed. On a good soil, in a favorable year, these will attain the height of at least seven feet. Note by Dr. Brown.

When the plants attained such a size as would admit of it, I took them up, and dividing the roots, set them out when the soil was wet, and in this way filled up the ground I had appropriated to my experiments. I did not begin to cut the grass until the 16th of July. I then weighed the produce of one seed in the presence of a number of gentlemen, at Mr. Robbins's hotel in Natchez. One hundred and sixty-four stalks, from six to seven feet high, growing from one root, weighed together 30 pounds. At Mr. Winn's tavern, on 10th of September, a second cutting from one seed, weighed 35 pounds. The number of stalks was 184, some of which measured 10 feet 11 inches in length. Some parts of the lot in Natchez is very poor soil, and the grass on those places did not grow higher than six or seven feet. But on a good soil, in a favorable season, in this climate, I am persuaded it is a very moderate estimate, to allow every square yard 10 pounds at a cutting, when we cut only three times in the season. This would give 30 pounds to every square yard, or 147,000 pounds of green grass to the acre. But this production seems so enormous, that I should not have ventured on such a calculation had I not the respectable authority of Mr. Edwards to support me. He asserts that the Scots grass, which he seems to consider as far inferior to the Guinea grass, is so productive, that one acre of it will support five horses the whole year round, allowing each horse 56 pounds per day, which is 102,200 pounds per acre. Admitting that my calculations are extravagant, I suppose that an acre will produce one third of what I have stated, still we must consider Guinea Grass as the most valuable of all the known grasses.

At Percyfield, near Fort Adams, Mr. Oglesby, my manager, planted about the eighth of an acre of very fertile land, with plants obtained from Mr. Munson, in the first and second week of May. They grew without any trouble, except that of cutting down the first growth of weeds. On the 20th of June, he began to cut it for the use of the plough horses & mules—and this small quantity of ground continued to supply them with as much as they could eat of it, during the whole summer. On the 25th of September, he wrote me that he had cut it four times. From 20 roots he obtained at the fourth cutting 250 pounds of green grass, and in two weeks he would cut it the fifth time. I find no difficulty in collecting the seed; I have already obtained a bushel in return for three or four spoonfuls, which I sowed on my lot in town—I cut off about two feet of the top with the panicle, as soon as the seed begins to fall, and after it is dry, comb out the seed with a coarse comb.

As the seeds vegetate very slowly, the most certain mode of obtaining young plants would be to prepare the ground and sow the seeds as the cultivators of tobacco do tobacco seed. As soon as the plants have attained the height of two or three inches, and when the danger of frost is past, they should be removed to the ground where they are to stand, where they readily take root. A rich black mould, and a soil somewhat moist, I think produces the most luxuriant grass, but I have had very little experience as to the soils to which it is best adapted. I hope that before many years, it will be tried in every climate in the United States, and on every variety of soil. No kind of grass with which I am acquainted, supports the heat of the sun so well; and this property, was it even less productive, would recommend it to the notice of the agriculturalist, for, from the first of July, until it is killed by the autumnal frosts, it will afford a constant, and an abundant supply of green food, and consequently enable the farmer, whatever may happen to his other meadows, to lay up a plentiful stock of hay for the winter. The hay is uncommonly fragrant, and horses prefer it greatly to the best corn blades.

If Guinea grass succeeds as well with others, and in every season, as it has done this season, with me, and as it has done in the West Indies for more than half a century, the planters of the south will have no reason to envy their northern neighbors their luxuriant clover pastures, or their numerous ricks of timothy hay. If Guinea grass is substituted for clover, timothy & ozonera, at least seven eighths, of all the grounds appropriated to those crops will be given to the cultivator for the purpose of raising sustenance for the human species. To what amount this change will increase the sum of national wealth, I leave to those to estimate, who are more conversant with such calculations.

There is no more difficulty in transplanting it, than in planting cabbage or tobacco. A basket or two of the young plants will be sufficient for an acre. One hundred plants would enable a poor family to keep a cow in town or to supply a dray horse with food all summer. How much would the general cultivation of this grass add to the comfort of the poor and middling classes of society! Note by Dr. Brown.

One of the best Pianos, chosen from a number by a Professional Man in Philadelphia. It has a Meda, is considered as of very fine tone, and is elegantly mounted. Apply to J. Gale, Raleigh.

TREMENDOUS STORM.

Norfolk, Sept. 5.

Among the rest of our misfortunes, we are grieved to state, that our town was on Monday visited by a storm, or rather tornado, far surpassing in violence and calamitous consequences, any that it has ever experienced within the remembrance of the oldest inhabitants. The best description we are prepared to give of it at this moment, can convey but an imperfect conception of its terrors.

The morning was dark and gloomy, and about 6 o'clock the black and lowering clouds began to discharge their watery contents, not in gentle showers, but literally in torrents. At 10 o'clock the rain abated for a few minutes, as if to collect itself for a more copious discharge: for it presently set in again with increased violence, and the wind commenced blowing a heavy gale from N. E. which continued to increase to a most alarming height. From half past 11 till half past 12, so great was the fury of the elements, that they seemed to threaten a general demolition of every thing within their reach. During that period the scene they presented was truly awful. The deafening roar of the storm, with the mingled crashing of windows, and falling of chimneys—the rapid rise of the tide, threatening to inundate the town—the continuous cataclysms of rain sweeping impetuously along, darkening the expanse of vision, and apparently confounding the heavens, earth and sea, in a general chaos; together with now and then a glimpse, caught through the gloom, of shipping forced from their moorings, and driving with rapidity, as the mind might well conjecture in such circumstances, to inevitable destruction. Even to those, if any there were, who could contemplate such a scene unappalled, it must have been painful to reflect on the wide spread devastation which could not but be the result of this fearful war of elements. About 12 o'clock the wind shifted round to N. W. but without abating its fury until half an hour after, when it ceased raining; the storm began to subside, and the water to recede. At 4 o'clock it changed to S. W. and the weather became calm and serene.

We now proceed to the unwelcome task of enumerating the casualties resulting from this awful visitation; the most important of which is the complete annihilation of the Drawbridge over the Eastern Branch, from the toll-house to the draw, a distance, we should judge, of about 250 yards; and of about 100 feet of the bridge across the Southern Branch. The destruction of these bridges, independent of the heavy loss it occasions to the Company who owns them, is a sore misfortune to our town, as it completely cuts off, for the present at least, the land communication, and must measurably diminish the intercourse, with that part of the country, whence our market draws its chief supplies.

As might have been expected on an occasion like this, where the suddenness of the danger gave no time for preparations to meet it, the shipping have suffered severely. The following are the particulars:

The brig Georgiana, of this port, taking in a cargo, and having 95 barrels of rice on board, parted her fasts and soon after capsized: in this situation she was driven up the Eastern branch and grounded opposite to Col. Godfrey's, where she now lies apparently half full of water—spars and rigging all safe. The Eastern Drawbridge was carried away by the force with which the Georgiana was driven against it.

The brig Mexico, of Bath, laden with lumber, went ashore on Washington Point (opposite Hotchings' wharf), and carried away her top-gallant mast.

The brig Minerva, of Bath, lying at Frost's wharf, was forced in between two hulks, where she remains, nearly high and dry at low water, and so situated that she will probably not be got off.

The schooner Columbus, of Gardiner, drove ashore upon Washington Point, where she lies high and dry.

The schr. Independence, of Bath, with lumber, drove against the southern causeway of the Drawbridge, and will probably be got off without much difficulty.

The ship Hiaw, of this port, drifted up the Eastern branch, about half a mile above the Drawbridge, and will be got off again.

The sloop Mary, of this port, sunk, and a few being carried up the Eastern branch by the wind, was dashed down again by the ebb tide, below the forts.

The schr. Francis Miller, of W. Idboro' run ashore up the Eastern branch, and will probably be got off with but little damage.

The sloop Dan, of Petersburg, with tobacco, got ashore near the Francis Miller, and was dashed.

The schr. Larcine, of this port, in ballast, capsized and sunk up the Eastern branch, opposite Frost's mill; nothing but her mainmast standing—rigging all gone, stern stove in, and full of water.

The steam-boat Richmond, drove up the Eastern branch, is ashore on the point below Tatem's, about ten feet above ordinary high water mark, both anchors, cables, and two boats lost, her larboard stove in, and otherwise damaged—Will not be got off without much difficulty and expense.

The steam-boat Petersburg, got ashore against the Richmond, about 6 feet from ordinary high water mark; cables and anchors, and one boat lost, guards stove in, bulwarks and stanchions carried away and otherwise materially injured—will be got off with difficulty.

The steam boats Virginia and Potomac were also pelled up the Eastern branch; but kept afloat and returned soon after the storm subsided. The V. had both boats stove, and bulwarks broke in.

The ship Georgiana, of this port, had her rudder carried away and lost, pintle and hook broke off, and rigging injured.

The schr. James Harvey, of Petersburg, was considerably injured; had her spars carried away, and one of them in falling, struck a negro woman (belonging to Mrs. King), and killed her.

The schr. Pilot, of this port, bilged and sunk in the dock.

The schrs. Lovely Keziah, from Charleston, Union, of Norfolk, from St. Croix, with sugar and rum, and a sloop laden with shingles, ashore in the bend below Fort Nelson, but will probably be got off again without very great difficulty.

An Eastern Shore schr. filled and bro't up against the southern causeway of the Draw bridge.

Several other small vessels have sustained damage; two or three have sunk; but we have not ascertained their names. At Portsmouth, the ship Lothian, lying in dock at Myer's wharf, drove up the Southern branch, where she lies aground. The Southern Draw-bridge was broken away by the L. being forced against it.

At the Navy Yard, the U. S. vessels are all safe and sound. The Delaware, Guerriere and Congress, dragged their anchors, but did not go ashore; the U. States and John Adams broke from their moorings at the wharf, and both touched, but have since got off. The merchant ship Vigilant, Capt. Smith, taking in lumber at the Navy Yard, for Boston, drove ashore upon the opposite shore, where she grounded.

Of the damage done to houses we have ascertained the following particulars—there are no doubt some others of which we have not heard:

The warehouse, end of town point, occupied by Messrs. P. Christian & J. Klein, two chimneys blown down.

Mr. M'Phail's warehouse chimney blown down and roof much injured.

Mr. Mcintosh's (late Whittle's) warehouses, gable end of the larger fell out upon the roof of the smaller, broke it in, and knocked down the chimney.

Mrs. Capron's dwelling, two chimneys blown down; and the house next it, on Martin's lane, 1 ditto.

House belonging to Col. Wright, Main opposite Bank street, gable end down.

On Bank street, two houses, a chimney each, and the gable end of an unfinished brick house; all belonging to Mr. Farmer.

Dr. Gregory's house, a chimney, and half the length of the parapet. The greatest sufferer by this accident is Mr. Bousal, upon whose back-store the bricks fell and crushed it in—Mr. B. narrowly escaped being buried in the rubbish!

A house adjoining the residence of Mrs. Read, occupied by Wm. Maxwell, Esq., the gable end fell in—Mr. M. had withdrawn only a minute before from a desk upon which the bricks all fell!

As. Kiley's dwelling, 1 chimney.

The Town Hall, 1 chimney blown down, and roof very much injured.

House occupied by Capt. Anderson, 2 chimneys.

Jas. Woodward's house occupied by J. Johnson, Esq. Collector, 1 chimney down, and roof much injured.

Christ Church received considerable damage; a part of the west gable end fell in, and crushed the organ to atoms—and nearly one half of the roof was blown off. The organ was undamaged, cost \$3000.

Dr. Barrand's large brick house on Smith's point, occupied by Com. Sumner, was partly unroofed, all four of the chimneys blown down, and the premises otherwise injured.

The U. S. magazine, (formerly the Old Distillery,) was partially unroofed—there were 1400 or 1500 barrels of powder in it.

Mr. Josiah Cole's house, gable end fell down, and roof blown off.

Col. Camp's house, both chimneys down—one fell upon the side of the next house in which Mrs. Fitzhugh lives—1 brick broke through, and fell into the room where Mrs. F. and 5 of her children were sitting, but not one of them were hurt!

Mr. G. W. Camp's new blacksmith shop, gable end fell down—Mr. H. Holt's brick kitchen, ditto.

Doctor Hodges's dwelling, 2 chimneys; Mr. F. S. Taylor's 2 do.; Mr. A. Taylor, Jr. 2 do.; the Farmers' Bank, 2 do.; and Custom House 1 do.

We regret to state also, that Colley's bridge is carried away. This is a serious loss to Mrs. Colley, the proprietress, and will be a great inconvenience to many of the inhabitants.

Catharine-St. bridge, too, was lifted up by the water, and drifted ashore, over upon Tabbot's St.

Several small frame tenements were blown down, but no person hurt.

A very considerable amount in merchandise deposited in the lower stories of warehouses on the wharves has been either lost or damaged by the tide, which rose fully a foot higher than it has ever been known to be. The principal sufferer in this way is Mr. J. S. Barcott. A large quantity of tobacco in the public warehouse on Town point has also got damaged by the tide.

Besides the above losses, the palings and fences all over town have been laid flat; many slated houses have been almost uncovered; windows demolished; the contents of lumber yards, drifted away; wharves injured, &c. &c. In short there is not a family which is not a loser in some shape or other.

Our streets present a melancholy appearance; scarce a tree that is not uprooted, or limbs torn off.

In Portsmouth and Gosport there has also been much damage done to the houses by chimneys falling; among the sufferers we learn are, Messrs. J. C. Hines, Tapley Webb, Abiam Watts, Kay, Swift, Dickson, Benson, Lincoast, and Mrs. Gray. A poor woman, whose name we have not learned, was killed by the fall of her chimney, while her infant, which she held in her arms, escaped unhurt!

The protecting hand of Providence was never more manifest on any occasion, than in the preservation of the lives of his creatures on this occasion; for excepting this poor female and the negro woman killed on board the James Harvey, (as mentioned above) not a single individual has experienced the least harm in the whole of this scene of danger—though there were many hairbreadth escapes.

At Washington Point, Capt. White's house blown down; Mrs. Harding's do.; Mrs. Toy's chimney, do.; Mrs. Allmand's do.; Mrs. E. Herber's house much injured; Mr. Arrington's brick lichen blown down; Marine hospital much injured—windows blown in, partially unroofed, &c.

We have thus detailed our own sufferings and misfortunes—(the aggregate amount of which, is estimated at little short of 200,000 dollars)—what those in other towns have been, we almost dread to hear. From the mariner and the farmer too, we anticipate the most disastrous tidings. The crops of Indian corn, we fear, are totally ruined.

The preceding statement contains all the details of the effects of the tornado which it was in our power to collect on Monday, and was issued in the form of an extra to our correspondents and such of our distant subscribers as we had an opportunity of forwarding it to, by mail or otherwise.

Yesterday, upon further enquiry, we ascertained the following additional particulars:

At Fort Nelson, the wooden roof of the magazine was blown off; and all the chimneys to the dwelling house occupied by Col. M'Lee were blown down, and the roof materially injured. Several large trees were torn up by the roots, and the works much defaced.

A brick house belonging to Mr. E. Frith, (formerly Fitches) had two chimneys blown down; a large frame house belonging to the estate of S. Marsh, 2 ditto; the dwelling of W. A. Amistead, Esq. 1 do. The wind tore the copper off the flat roof of Murray's warehouse and rolled it up exactly as if it had been paper! The end of the same warehouse, which projects out to the edge of the wharf was much injured. The steam mill at Messrs. Caldwell's distillery was considerably damaged by the falling of a chimney. Mr. J. Dickson's dwelling lost a chimney. C. M. Cassin's dwelling house in the Navy Yard had a chimney blown down.

Mr. Roberts's sister sustained a heavy loss by having the contents of his lumber yard blown away, and a warehouse containing sugar, salt, &c. inundated by the sea. Mr. Timm's lumber yard also lost a considerable part of its contents.

In Portsmouth, Wm. Wilson, Esq. and Mr. Francis Green had the bridge and stairs at their watering places carried away; a large brick shed in Mr. Jarvis's yard was blown down, and a new center, belonging to M. J. broke her mast and drove up high and dry.

At a venture we estimated the whole loss sustained by the tornado to be little short of 200,000 dollars; our own observation since, and the opinion of others satisfy us that we have not over-