



THE



PROGRESSIVE



FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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OUR FARMERS' CLUBS.

What our Farmers are Doing and How the Work of Organizing is Progressing.

TRINITY CLUB.

Subject:—Commercial Fertilizers, pro and con.

August 21, 1886.

A. Parker.—I am glad to know that when I do know a thing I can know that I do know it.

I have been experimenting with and using commercial fertilizers on various kinds of soil and for various crops for thirty years. You are all familiar with my farm and the most of you know its condition when I bought it. To renovate, reclaim and bring it up even to its present state of fertility alone with my home resources was an utter impossibility. To carry stock to make manure, you must have feed and this the place would not produce in sufficient quantities to rely on. I was compelled to resort to other means.

In all departments of trade some investments do not yield satisfactory dividends. Bank stock, railroad stock, merchandise each and all sometimes fall short, with consequent loss to the operator. Money properly invested in a pure article of commercial fertilizers and judiciously used will pay. I have tried it and know whereof I speak. Furman, noted for his successful farming, relied almost entirely upon chemical and commercial fertilizers to bring up his father's old farm. He made a grand success of it as you all know. Dickson, another eminent Georgia farmer, made big money by using fertilizers. He said it paid him one hundred per cent. Both of these men are generally conceded to be good authority on this subject as they had ample opportunity to test it to complete satisfaction. Some entertain an idea that chemical manures are a stimulant only. This is a false theory. If you give to a plant nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash, the very elements it needs to feed upon, would you call that "stimulating only?" You had as well say that feeding a healthy laboring man on fat meat was a stimulant only. It nourishes and strengthens him for more work. Many of you will doubtless remember Skitt Brown's attempt at fattening his hog on a peck of bran put in a barrel of cold water and at each feeding time he drew off a bucket of the bran tea and punctually fed and watered his hog.

It is hardly necessary for me to remind you that his hog never got fat. We need pure concentrated food for our plant growth, as well as wholesome food for animals. Give me all the barn yard and stable manure you please, forbidding me the use of any chemical fertilizer I would not compete for a prize with one allowed full liberty to use all the fertilizers he chose. He would beat me. As conclusive evidence in favor of commercial fertilizers I refer you to the noted and instructive experiments of Lawes and Gilbert, extending over a term of 30 years with commercial fertilizers on poor land. They sowed wheat every year with no other manure, with an annual increase of yield. The entire crop is sold off the land and nothing returned except chemical fertilizers.

W. W. Andrews.—All flesh is grass, all grass is mineral. From decomposed grass and animals we have plant food. The decomposition is without loss. It would require the power of God to destroy one single atom of matter.

It would seem that man loves to have something to waste. We not only see in nature the straightest economy but the lesson of co-operation and mutual dependence is taught. No plant liveth to itself, no plant dieth to itself. The tree is not enriched by its own fruit, but it is first to be eaten by animals and

then it is good food for the tree, and when the tree dies it is decomposed and furnishes food for other trees. It may seem that God causes plants and animals to grow, but they just rot themselves. This is a mistake. The same Almighty power is required to decompose as to compose. Otherwise we would have no room for new growths.

If all the ants that have ever lived were on the ground now they would be 11 1/2 feet deep. When Christ fed the multitudes he said "gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost." But when the farmer feeds his multitude does he save the fragments? Nothing seems to do him so much good as to have barnyard manure to waste, though he knows it is good for every plant and every soil. He looks upon that as being too bulky—not worth hauling out—not concentrated enough. He wants somebody to chew for him, he don't want anything to do but to gape and swallow. The most villainous sight I ever saw was an old toothless woman chewing for a great hulk of a boy, and wiping it into his mouth with her fingers. This deluded farmer buys fertilizers because he can ride when he puts it out. Thousands are willing to go to the bad if you will just let them ride. Hence phosphate is sought after with as much eagerness as a Louisiana State lottery ticket and with less chance of gain, as some few do draw a prize. The strangest thing of this age is that the farmers can be so fuddled as to believe that chemicals can be prepared and transported at a price we can afford to pay for them.

There are only two ways to make them; one is to burn the substance, filter a liquid through it and then fry it down. The other is by distillation. In these operations a very large portion is lost. In nature's laboratory nothing is lost. I have no doubt that the phosphate makers and Agricultural Departments are in collusion. They go to the dealers and say if you will fiddle for us we will rosin your bow. We will make money out of these old chuckle headed farmers. Can we get the pay? We will have blank mortgages furnished and the fools will mortgage their farms and we will soon own the South.

Pure dissolved bone will take. It is a fertilizer, but you know that there is not enough raw bone to be had to supply one millionth part of the demand of this one article alone. But the farmer will not think. We can get baked bone, steamed bone and old bleached bones, South Carolina rock and other minerals, and then it will be easy to guarantee it to contain 3 per cent of ammonia, over ten per cent of available phosphoric acid. They will bite at a bait that gives them 13 chances in a hundred and be glad of the opportunity.

It flies over the Sunny South with wings blacker than hell. King Cotton lays down his sceptre and pays it tribute, not only a tribute in money, but thousands have been compelled to part with the dear old homestead and the graves of their ancestors. For pure raw bone, made of South Carolina rock, they have sold the bones of their fathers. But when I mildly remind my brother farmers as I have done to-day, they say I oppose scientific farming. I have seen several of your scientific farmers. Take Mr. John. Smith as a fair sample. He lives several miles from market, is pig-eyed, spindle shanked and poor. He has a few blackberries, some dried apples and cherries, one pound of beeswax and nine chickens. He hitches up an old poor horse to an old shacking wagon and off to buy fertilizer. He finds the fertilizer man, who looks sleek and fat and impudent. Mr. Smith asks him for fertilizer, but he is told that the price has gone up and the price of his barter has gone down, nevertheless he must have the fertilizer. I have seen hundreds of such scientists pass my gate, and I have shed many briny tears for

them and wiped them on my sleeve. Such fellows are constantly discussing the merits of the different brands. One is for the double eagle, another for the Star-brand.

But who can blame honest John Smith, when he sees men who have been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel are under the same delusion. I remarked to one of my brother farmers that these fertilizers might stimulate and do some good, he would not allow that, but contended that they were a bona-fide plant food, a renovator of the soil, the farmers' sheet anchor. Any man who goes and scatters a little dust of fertilizers on an old field and expects 40 lbs of solid grain for one of this precious plant food expects a miracle. What would you think of a man who would go every morning and scatter a peck of corn to 50 hogs. That would be much wiser than to expect a crop of wheat under such circumstances.

In the near future the news papers will contain something like the following: "After years of scientific research Prof. Charles Von Waddestrydre has finally succeeded in making a perfect animal food, which entirely obviates the necessity of having to digest coarse and bulky food, such as corn, oats, hay &c. The Prof. has analyzed the flesh of the different animals and has kegs of the food labeled for each class of animals so that the purchaser need not make any mistake. Money refunded if the animal food does not do all and more than is claimed for it."

Testimonials.

William Snider, of S. C., writes: I bought one keg of your animal food labeled Beef. Fed to a large cow one pint per day for 14 days. After the first few days she entirely quit voiding any liquid or solid manure, proving conclusively that the food was pure and that none went to waste.

Jacob Starling, Huckleberry Ridge, N. C., writes: I bought one keg of your animal food labeled Pork. Fed to hogs one pint per day to each hog. Found that after nine days trial that each hog had gained 31 pounds. Corn for the purpose of fattening hogs is a thing of the past. Thanks to Prof. Charles Von Waddestrydre.

Col. James Raspberry, Pine Cross, Texas, writes: I have known for years that there was a perfect plant food, but had some doubt about your animal food, though I bought one keg labeled Beef and one keg labeled Pork. Business caused me to be away from home nine days. I told my hired man to carefully feed according to the labels to an old ox and an old sow. When I got back home I saw a sight I never shall forget. My old ox was wallowing in a pond of water grunting like a hog. He had shed his horns and from each corner of his mouth there had grown an enormous tusk. And on his back there was the finest crop of bristles I ever saw. And my old sow was scraping with her fore feet like a bull. My man had given the food to the ox that he should have given the sow, did not follow the label.

But you say if such a thing was published is would be a lie. I know it. And I also know it would be no bigger lie than every one of you believe who buys an ounce of this villainous fertilizer.

Dr. Bird.—All plants that grow and perfect seed take into their structure certain elementary substances, numbering in all 13. Carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, sulphur, phosphorus, calcium, silica, potassium, sodium, iron and chlorine. Of these carbon, oxygen and hydrogen, form from 90 to 95 per cent of the plant and are abundantly, if not mainly supplied by air and water. Of the other ten only four, potash, phosphorus, nitrogen and calcium in form of lime, need be considered, the remaining six enter into the plant in infinitesimal quantities, and

are abundant in almost all soils, even lime although often doing good when applied to soils, is yet present in all soils sufficient for plant structure. Potash, phosphorus and nitrogen are present in all virgin soils sufficient for all plant life, yet they are the elements that generally disappear in the cultivated field and the deficiency of either one makes poor land.

Now to supply and keep these elements in the soil is the business of the farmer, and certainly it is a business of vital importance to the farmer. The resources for these elements are the manure heap and commercial fertilizers. All admit the efficiency of manure, that from well fed stock is better than manure from poor fed or straw fed animals, that the nitrogenous feeds and feeds rich in phosphates make the best manure, and that these manures must be entirely decomposed, i. e., reduced to their ultimate elements for availability or immediate plant use. The more nitrogen, phosphorus and potash these elements have the more abundant plant growth they produce. Now does it matter where we get these elements from, provided we get them in a form equally available and cheap. The immense fertilizer business grown up within the last few years, has developed almost unknown resources for these elements. The bone black of the sugar refineries, the liquid ammonia of the gas factories, once a nuisance, but now a source of profit. Four million pounds of sulphate ammonia made last year by the New York and Brooklyn companies. All the offal, wash, &c., of the great slaughter houses and the butcher shops of our great cities produce immense quantities of very valuable material for fertilizers. The immense natural deposits in the earth of these elements—the muriate and sulphate of potash found in the salt mines near Strausfort in Germany, the nitrate of soda in various parts of South America, notably, Chili, Peru and Pernambuco, and the phosphate of lime in extensive deposits in South Carolina, West Indies, Canada, California and the Pacific Isles and every country in Europe. These different salts and animal fertilizers are now sold on the market according to their analysis. The potash salts according to their available potash, the available nitrogen of the nitrates and of the dried blood and phosphoric acid of the phosphates. I hold it to be as legitimate to buy these elements to fertilize our crops as it is to buy feed to fatten our stock: as we increase the fertility of our soil so do we increase our yield. Instead of endeavoring to leave more acres to our children, leave the land more fertile, more productive.

J. J. White.—I prize barnyard manure as highly as any one. I try to make and save all I can, and after I do this there is not half enough to supply the urgent demands of my crops. Besides our stable and lot manures are filled with noxious seeds and filth. You can't make as clean, plump grain with it as you can with commercial fertilizers. If you put on enough to make big crops the straw will fall down and the grain be chaffy. Chemical fertilizers properly applied give the young plant a good send off, a point of great importance to the young wheat plant. Brother Andrews, you must read and catch up with the times; this is a progressive age. To my mind it is a little strange that a man should condemn a thing without ever trying it. Did you ever use any fertilizers, Mr. Andrews? About 40 years ago I used one bag and another 3 years ago.

Didn't it pay you? Not one millionth part of a cent. W. G. Barbee.—Only a few men really think, and they shape the politics, control the parties and lead off in Agriculture. The best thing we small fellows can do is to follow the leadership of those who do know. Through the investigations of scientific men, farmers have been benefited untold thousands. With our lands worn and run down as they are, we must have some help in reclaiming outside of stable manure. And I am glad to know that this help is offered in commercial fertilizers when judiciously bought and used. Good beef steak is a good article of diet for a healthy stomach. I like it and it agrees with me, but shall I quit the use of it because some cadaverous glutton is killing himself on it?

D. M. PAYNE, Sec.

SPANISH GROVE CLUB.

Our club met on the 14th inst. Had a good turnout and much interest was manifested. Several speeches were made on the question "How shall we make home and farming interesting to the young?" The question was discussed at some length but all were anxious to have the same subject at some time in the future, when THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER shall have a report of what is said on the subject. At our next meeting we will discuss the matter of wheat raising, how to prepare the land &c. E. C. DULL, Sec.

RICHMOND COUNTY MOVING.

From a private letter we learn that already the out-growth of the meeting held by the Mountain Creek Farmers' Club, on the 19th, is the organization of three farmers' clubs. Let the good work go on until Richmond is thoroughly organized.

SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC.

A Farmers' Dinner Suggested.

VIENNA TOWNSHIP, Aug. 21, 1886.

ED. PROGRESSIVE FARMER:—On Saturday, 21st inst., the Olivet chapel, together with the Bethania Sunday school, gave a picnic at the first named place. Rev. P. Lineback, pastor of the above named congregations, was present, and, together with everybody else, certainly enjoyed the occasion. It was proof to the fact that somebody was doing his duty, to see that these Sunday schools were so well arranged, and so well conducted. The singing, by both schools, was excellent, and the pastor appeared as much at home singing with the little folks of the Sunday school, as when in the pulpit expounding the word of God.

And while we are talking about picnics, how would all the farmers' clubs in Forsyth county like to meet in Winston or some other suitable place in the county, and have a farmers' gathering, and a farmers' dinner? I hope to hear something in regard to that from other clubs. Speak out and let us hear from you. We have nice weather. The farmers are sowing oats and preparing land for wheat, attending to their tobacco, and cleaning out and arranging their barns for curing. And, by the way, tobacco is doing fine. The only complaint I hear is that it may be too late. Upland farms will make an average crop of corn, and so after all, we will have rations for the coming year. E. C. DULL.

—Mr. J. W. Nicholson, of this place, dug his Irish potato crop the other day. It was on a plot of land 15x30 feet—about 100th of an acre. He planted a peck of potatoes and after eating off the crop all summer, dug six bushels. This at the rate of 600 bushels to the acre, worth at a low price \$300.—There never was such an improvement in the crop prospects as there has been in the past three or four weeks. The general expectation now is that the cotton crop will far exceed last year's; where there was a good stand it could not do better than it is doing. As for the upland corn, one can almost hear it growing; wherever it has been worked it is magnificent; the crop is generally light on bottoms. Tobacco is not doing much good; it is not expected to make over half or thirds of a crop, and very little of this will be bright. But cotton and upland corn—don't talk!—Statesville Landmark.