



THE



PROGRESSIVE



FARMER.

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

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No. 1.

OUR FARMERS' CLUBS.

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

TRINITY CLUB.

Subject:—The Orchard.

February 5th, 1887.

D. M. Payne. A well selected orchard of choice fruit, embracing the earliest and latest varieties, and well attended is a desirable appendage to a farm, and adds value to it. It is common for the seller to say "there is a good orchard on the premises," to induce a sale. There is money, comfort and satisfaction in such. Having such a one you can market the fruit from the tree for half the year. The later varieties can be kept the balance of the year for market and home consumption.

An unkept orchard is unsightly, and the fruit from it is not so wholesome. Fruit from starved, and diseased trees ripens immaturity and is not as nourishing as when matured. The tendency of fruit on decayed trees is to ripen in a withered or perished condition, before it acquires that luscious, juicy stage so essential to render it palatable. Hence it has not the intrinsic value that it would have from trees well fed and kept. Just as a decayed limb on the human body will enfeeble the whole system will a decaying branch on a tree communicate its sickness to the fruit. Therefore to grow good and wholesome fruit we must keep strict vigilance over the trees. In the first place we must set them in a soil sufficiently strong to make a vigorous, healthy growth, that the fruit may fully develop. This pays in a threefold sense. The fruit is much better, the quantity correspondingly increased and the market value enhanced. The notion of setting a large area of poor land in orchard is the worst kind of economy. One acre of rich manured land is worth ten of such poor land in every view of the matter. Many nursery men have received the abusive vituperations of an exasperated husbandman just because he made a mistake in the locality of his orchard. The fault was in the latter and not in the tree dealer. Another great mistake common in this section is the failure of us to husband our fruit. Thousands of it are allowed to lay on the ground and rot, while it is of as much value as many of the grain crops. We ought by all means to save it in some form or other. Apples right now will bring \$1.50 per bushel. This is more than we can get for any of the leading grains raised in this section, and requires less labor and attention than the grain crop. The attention required for fruit trees can most of it be done in the winter season when the hands are not engaged on other crops.

The sanitary effects of fruit may be inferred from the position in which man was first placed after creation. He was put among fruit trees and enjoined to let one kind alone. Had he obeyed the accepted opinion is, he would have lived always. Through the instigation of the devil he disobeyed and the result is thorns, thistles, crab apples &c. This requires the toil and sweat of man to subdue, a just retribution, and in proportion as we fail to perform these requirements do we suffer. Therefore the devil is to blame for the bad fruit, and when a basket of it is set before us we may say "this is the work of his majesty."

Such thoughts as these ought to constrain us to prune, manure and dig about our fruit trees, that we may have better fruit than that produced through satanic influence. Were it not for our neglect in this matter, caused by the wiles of the old dragon at the beginning, we would have a waiver filled with good, nice, well developed fruit here to-day for us to sample, that would give us clear heads and honest hearts to consider this subject sensibly, and do

better in the future. Let us try to emulate the law of obedience and be men indeed as well as in His own image, and not subjects of the king of perdition, who would gladly press the bitterest cup to our lips and have us drink it to the dregs with a smile of approval playing on his infernal countenance.

J. H. Robbins. I propose to set an apple orchard of fifty trees this spring, and would be glad for the Club to inform me what varieties, and how many of each I must get. The various members of the club recommended the following viz: For early apples twelve Early Harvest. They grow perfect and large, ripen the last of June. They will bear shipping and command a good price. For summer four Horse Apple (yellow). For fall and winter six Baldwins—six Magnum Bonum—four Golden Russets—four Winter Pearmains—four Winesaps—four Kernal Seedlings—three Virginia Beauty and three Mattamuskeets.

A. Parker. I admit, that an orchard for family use is desirable for every farmer, but further than this they are not profitable for us in this section. If you have an orchard at all set it to itself. When set promiscuously about in the fields they are in the way of machinery such as the drill, horse rake, mowers and reapers, besides they are bad to plow among. As for peaches our markets are exceedingly unreliable. The budded peach trees are short lived, and uncertain bearers. They are almost worthless so far as I have tried them. For market purposes I prefer the small fruits; strawberries, cherries, plums &c.

E. H. Ingram. I have never taken the interest in an orchard that I should have done. I am satisfied there is more pay in an apple orchard than there is in the perishable small fruits, and peaches—living as we do remote from the great markets, especially if the orchard be properly attended to.

R. W. Reddeck. I have had but little difficulty in keeping apples during the winter. My plan of keeping is to put them in a heap inside of some building and pour dry sand as long as it will run among the apples, then cover thick with straw or hay, and after this cover with dirt sufficient to keep them from freezing. Be careful not to put in any decayed or bruised ones. I know a person who keeps from 500 to 1000 bushels a year this way. He is now selling at good prices.

J. J. White. I have my doubts about setting an orchard further than for family supplies. When I came in possession of my farm there was a fine peach orchard on it of budded fruit; and I have realized but two crops in sixteen years. I am sorry the orchard was ever set out. I have tried to take care of it until I became fully satisfied there was no money in it for me. Possibly the location or soil was the hindering cause, it being near the creek and not of sufficient elevation. I agree with you all that for family use it is all right and proper. I believe there is more money in apples than peaches. To keep them we must prepare for it.

Dr. D. Reid Parker. A well arranged and nicely kept orchard about the farm dwelling always attracts the eye of the stranger as he passes along the highway, and impresses him favorably with the place and the owner. The beautiful trees with their rich foliage, aromatic bloom or clustering fruits lend a charm to the scene which impels him to raise his hat—mentally at least—and say here lives a man with a soul in him! Every farmer hangs out his own sign emblazoned on houses, trees, field and stock, in characters easy to read even at a distance, and the measure of comfort is stamped on every thing and tells what manner of man lives there in spite of himself. If the orchard is scattered around promiscuously all over the place, here an old broken down peach tree with a few irregu-

lar live limbs and sprouts, there a few browsed and stunted apple trees, with broomsedge and poverty and laziness freely mixed in with other dead trees and galled slopes and gullies, you may know without any further inquiry that there is not a pretty woman on the premises, and that the men and boys are ugly and vulgar. It is contrary to "the eternal fitness of things" for it to be otherwise, as our surroundings and living will unmistakably show in our features and general make up. But take the home where the front yard is in good shape and nicely set in grass and evergreens and shade trees and vines and flowers, with a well selected orchard near by, laid out in regular straight rows in every direction, all substantially and neatly inclosed to itself, and all the dead limbs and sprouts kept trimmed off and the trees in good shape and thrifty, you may expect to find in such a home magazines, good books and papers and music and pretty girls, and good eating, and clever boys, thrift and happiness. You will never find a "bug in their butter-milk." Oh, that we could have all of our country homes brightened up by the hand of good cheer! Every farmer owes it to his family, his State and to future generations to plant trees and orchards and help beautify and better the world while he lives in it. In point of healthful living it pays to have an abundance of good fruit the year round. And I am told by professional nursery men that our section here is as well adapted to fruit growing and in as great variety as any part of the known world. And still our merchants and fruit dealers have to send abroad to get nearly all of the apples and canned fruits for their trade. Shame upon North Carolina that she will every year send out of the State thousands of dollars for these various things, while we could make all these ourselves just as well and keep this money at home.

Let us begin now, this spring, to renovate our old and run down orchards—dig up every dead and worthless tree—take out every root and burn them and reset with a well rooted young tree. It requires thorough and nice work to make young trees grow off well where these old ones have died, they easily take the same or similar diseases that killed the others. Renew all the soil about their roots and manure well—I am satisfied that apples will pay us better in this section than any other kind of fruit, considering that our facilities for marketing the more perishable fruits are not so favorable. There is always a ready sale for good apples from October to April and our farmers could make money out them if they would try. For home use every family should be well supplied with peaches, pears, grapes, cherries, strawberries and the small fruits generally and no farmer is doing his duty to his wife and children who fails to do this.

Fruit adds greatly to the table and helps out a scanty bill of fare, and their free use is healthful, civilizing and ennobling. The farmer that has not already an orchard I urge upon him the necessity of setting out one this Spring. Get the best and most suitable varieties, locate in a suitable place, prepare the land thoroughly, set the trees properly and see to it that they are well kept in every respect. Don't spend money in buying trees or waste labor in planting them unless you intend to care for them afterwards. A scabby, neglected orchard is a disgrace to any man. We are fortunate in this section in being convenient to first class nurseries, managed by honorable, good men, who understand their business and will do the right thing by their customers. Order your trees from them and don't deal with strangers who represent foreign nurseries and fancy prices. They will show you fine specimens of fruit put up in pretty jars and make most eloquent speeches and almost com-

pel you to give them an order. This neighborhood has been swindled more than once by these itinerant humbugs. Look out for them and when they drive up to your gate tell them to pass on! Every one of you who has a fruit tree or a grape vine should study its nature and requirements.

Get some good work on fruit culture and study it carefully. It will lighten your labor and give pleasure and profit besides. I sincerely hope that our to-day's face to face talks will bestir every one of us to greater efforts to have a good orchard. Suppose every farmer in this community was to renovate his old or set out new orchards this Spring, what a striking transformation would every where be apparent!

All this can be done without any very great outlay of money or very serious loss of time from other work, if we would only make an earnest effort. So mote it be.

D. M. PAYNE, Sec'y.

CEDAR GROVE CLUB.

FEBRUARY 12, 1887.

The club met in called session. The President in the chair.

Subject for discussion was: "How to Make Tobacco Culture Profitable."

T. F. Jones. First raise your own supplies: corn, wheat, oats and grass plenty for home consumption. Don't depend on Western smoke houses and corn cribs. Then spend your time if any on tobacco.

Sow seed from first to middle of February. Burn well and dig deep two or two and a half inches deep, rake, remove roots, &c., sow seed, rake lightly and pack. I sometimes use chemical fertilizer and sometimes manure. I find manure from hog pens to be the best for plant beds. I find it to be a difficult matter to raise plants without covering with cloth, besides plants may thus be forwarded two or three weeks. Close, fine, sandy soil for plants. Coarse sandy nor cloggy soil will do.

CULTURE.

I like to have plants ready to set by middle of May. I never set plants without a good season. I have found tobacco to be a failure on old land without the use of either stable or compost manure. I generally begin to prepare my land early in Spring by running furrows three feet apart and spreading manure in furrow. I then take a one horse Dixie and throw two furrows together over manure. About the time I am ready to set I throw two more furrows on my ridge, which finishes the middle. I then take a small bull tongue and run in center of ridge, being careful to not run deep enough to disturb manure. I then drop an even table-spoonful of some standard brand of chemical fertilizer about every three feet in drill and make hill on fertilizer (I expect to use very little fertilizer in future).

As soon as plants begin to start off, say in about two weeks after setting, scrape down with hoe. Always bear in mind tobacco and grass never do well together. I plow twice and sometimes three times.

Top from ten to twelve leaves on medium ground, very rich soil will bear more while thin not so many.

Be sure your tobacco is ripe when you cut. I never crowd tobacco in the barn. I put from eighteen to twenty-two sticks on an eighteen-foot tier. If tobacco is ripe, I prefer firing as soon as cut. Good ripe tobacco is easily managed, while I find if tobacco does not grow and ripen right you can never get it right in the barn. No rule can be given for curing tobacco. The treatment that will suit one lot will ruin another.

In curing as well as in culture, common sense and practice are two very important factors.

C. A. Phillips. To make the cultivation of tobacco pay, the first thing to be considered is the land, if it is adapted to the growth of

tobacco we can raise it to some advantage, provided we cultivate thoroughly and give it the proper attention, it must have attention from the plant bed to the salesroom or it will not pay.

Seven years ago I began the culture of tobacco. I commenced it on a small scale and find it pays the best. I planted one acre for which I received one hundred and seventy-five dollars. Since that time I have increased the number of acres and bought more fertilizers, worked harder and have never been able to attain such results. I have never sold a crop of tobacco under 12 1/2 cents from that up to 24 around, and have made the most of my home supplies. Never bought but five bushels of corn in my life and yet I have made but very little clear money. Every pound of tobacco that I have made cost me at least 10 cents per pound. My crop of last year has cost me 15 cents per pound.

Let us all make less tobacco and make it better and then we will be able to obtain better prices, and turn more of our time, labor and attention to grass and clover.

A. W. Bevel, the President, made a lengthy and interesting talk on the subject. He said there is a loose screw somewhere, when, in this grass country, it is necessary to import hay for our stock, &c.

Samuel Alspaugh. I raised a crop of tobacco some years ago. I planted six acres in tobacco and sold it at the barn for \$600. Since that I have made no money on tobacco. I shall not raise any more of it.

J. I. Craft. I recollect some twelve or fifteen years back there was in our neighborhood no tobacco raised. There was more corn, more hogs, more bacon. Everything in the way of home comforts was more plentiful than now. Since tobacco has been so extensively raised, I want to know how this is if tobacco is such source of profit.

J. I. CRAFT, Secretary.

BETHANIA FARMERS' CLUB.

BETHANIA, N. C., }
February 12, 1887. }

Agreeable to notice, a number of farmers met in Bethania on Saturday, February 12, 1887, to organize Farmers' Club.

On motion F. H. Cash was elected permanent President and J. F. Miller permanent Secretary.

It was moved and carried that this club be known as the Bethania Farmers' Club and act in harmony with the Forsyth County Farmers' Club. The club adopted a Constitution and By-Laws.

It was further moved and carried that another meeting be held on Saturday, February 26, 1887, at 1 o'clock p. m., for the purpose of increasing our membership. All farmers in surrounding country are invited to be present.

It was also moved and carried that the club discuss at its next meeting, "The benefits to be derived from a more thorough preparation of the soil for the reception of seeds."

It was then moved and carried that the proceedings of this meeting be sent for publication to THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER, Union Republican and Peoples' Press.

The Club then adjourned to again meet on day above mentioned.

J. F. MILLER, Sec'y.

The work of organizing clubs is progressing in Davie county. A meeting of the farmers in the vicinity of Bethel school house will be held on Saturday, 19th inst., to organize.

A Farmers' Club has been organized on the borders of Burke and Catawba. J. F. Click has been elected President, A. Cook, Vice President and W. B. Jones, Secretary and Treasurer.—Piedmont Press. (Concluded on fifth page.)