

# PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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## NORTH CAROLINA RAILROADS VERSUS NORTH CAROLINA EDITORS—THE R. & D. R. R.

In the Raleigh correspondence of the *Wilmington Messenger*, we find the following paragraph, viz:

"The railway men are reticent to the last degree, and hate to see any mention of their affairs in the papers. The railway men in some cases keep scrap-books for clippings relative to their roads taken from newspapers. If an editor says anything against a road he is a marked man for a while. This custom obtains all over the country, but is comparatively new in North Carolina."

The editors of North Carolina, while abundantly able to stand alone against the sarsenic scrap-book brigade, will not thus be left by the people of the State, for the people cannot, except at the risk of all that "makes life worth living," be merely lookers on, while the enemy is driving in our skirmishers. The people of North Carolina, if they would save themselves from one of the most remorseless tyrannies on earth, must go into battle with hats off and sleeves up, burning up every bridge in the rear.

Shall the people rule the railway or the railway rule the people, is the issue, and surely no intelligent American citizen can hesitate in deciding upon which side of it he should be found.

We are delighted as one of the people to learn that the railway men keep scrap-books, and having always thought scrapping a good thing when judiciously done, we have on hand quite a supply of "mighty interesting reading" for railway men. No doubt they will do a brisk scrapping business during the next few years, but if they find business slack at any time for want of raw material, they need but hint the matter to "one of the people," and we guarantee that the *Forum* will furnish on short notice "job lots" without the slightest "advance on manufacturer's prices."

The railway scrap-book business as reported by the correspondent of *The Messenger*, deserves the denunciation of every editor and citizen of the State.

What reason can any corporation give for "hating to see any mention of their affairs in the papers," except this: Our deeds are evil, and we prefer the darkness which hides us from public view. Burglars and thieves have always hated moonshine and always will.

This devilish work is preparatory—it means proscriptio, and proscriptio means death to every editor who dares to lift his voice or push his pen against a tyranny as remorseless and insatiate as the grave. It means to muzzle the press, mislead the people, mount the throne and run the State in the interest of a corporation—it

means the subjugation of the Old North State to Railway Kings.

North Carolina is a very small dose, comparatively, for such throats to gulp, and that they are licking their lips for her now is unquestionable. In your issue of the 12th I find an article contributed by Charles F. Wilson, of Winston, N. C., in which he takes the position that the position of "one of the people" is too strong in regard to corporations in general and the Richmond & Danville in particular.

I welcome into the "People's Forum" this gallant champion of the Richmond & Danville "in particular," for as such he appears in the arena. We confess a feeling of kindness toward this gentleman, which, no doubt, he is, when considered as the Scotch say, "in the abstract," and we feel a regret that we cannot deal with his gentility, unmixed with, and undefiled by the Richmond & Danville in particular. The mixture is exceedingly unfortunate for Mr. Wilson, because his masters have imposed upon him the task of defending what must inevitably be the lost cause of injustice and oppression; and it is unfortunate for the R. & D. "in particular" in that the corporation has selected a champion who thinks he can cover up a multitude of sins by spreading over them some of the filiest tobacco-cloth rhetoric we have seen in many years.

The crossing at the Fries plantation was an obstruction of the highway, because loaded wagons going into town were compelled to travel another road. And any obstruction of the highway is a nuisance, and the R. & D. "in particular" put up the nuisance. That crossing was the dirtiest, muddiest fact that Mr. Wilson has ever run against, and it is not at all surprising that he gets "stuck in the mud," when he wiggles around it. Wagons have been running along that highway and the "Old Man Providence" has been raining on it from a time "whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary," but never till that powerful corporation "like a wounded snake, dragged its slow length" across the road, did a wagon stop. Mr. Wilson says (very truly, we doubt not), "I know something of that Brookstown road." There are multitudes of men who also know something of that Brookstown road, and this knowledge is the highest degree experimental, acquired by plodding "their weary way" along that road in summer's heat and winter's cold, till that powerful corporation reared its pile in the highway, and said *stick* and *stop*, and they stopped and struck.

Mr. Wilson acquired that something which he knows about that Brookstown road, probably, while sitting in his tent door, smoking a cigar and enjoying the breezes whispering among the pines. Our friend, the valorous defender of corporations and of the R. & D. "in particular," is too clever a gentleman not to know that distance lends quite as much enchantment to the view of the Brookstown road as it does to the Balsam mountain, and that as a witness he is possibly not as competent as other men. In this case the testimony of the teamster is more reliable than that of a topographer—even a topographical engineer of a powerful corporation. The Richmond and Danville has no doubt found some difficulty in running the sun, moon, stars and weather, but by no means greater than the world has found in getting an interested witness to see that which he has determined not to see.

Mr. Wilson says, "We labor under some grave misapprehensions relative to power and authority vested in a railway corporation. Possibly, will he not kindly lift this burden of misapprehension under which we labor? Will he not pity us who sit in darkness, and bring us the light? We beg leave to assure him that he shall be patiently and courteously heard. Let him rise to the "height of this great argument," and justify, if he can, the ways of Railway Kings, and he shall be heard to the end by at least

ONE OF THE PEOPLE.

## ENCOURAGING FROM ROWAN.

Craven, Rowan Co., N. C.,

Sept. 30, 1889.

Mr. Editor:—The name of our Alliance is "Hattershop," No. 1,389. We meet twice a month, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday at 2 p. m., and on Friday night before the second Sunday of each month at 7 a. m. Our members are very punctual and seem to be very much interested in Alliance work. We keep gaining some members, and some outsiders say that they must join and help on

with the battle, for if the victory is given up we will be in a worse condition than we ever were. All of the cotton ginner in the surrounding country belong to the Alliance and no one can have their cotton covered with jute bagging unless they furnish it themselves, and then some of the ginner say that they don't know whether they will put it on or not.

The Alliances are adopting resolutions not to sell a bushel of cotton seed unless they get 25 cents. We have been organized nearly one year and this one year's organization has brought about more love and fellowship towards one another than any thing else within five years' time. People seem more friendly, help each other more, and pay more attention to the sick than they ever did before. The right kind of an Alliance man will love an Alliance brother, it does not matter who he is, or if he has been his bitterest enemy heretofore. Then who will say that the Alliance is not a good thing? I count it next to my church. Any one who knows anything about the Alliance knows that it has already wrought a good work in our country and now is the time we have the hardest to do. But I would say stick to it; pay up your subscriptions to the business agency fund, and let us begin to reap more and greater benefits. He who would find fault with the Alliance let him first consider whether he has not derived some benefits therefrom; let him also consider whether he hasn't bought some things cheaper since the Alliance has been in operation and let him go to the cotton platform and see the cotton weighed (for the next three months) and see what covering it has, then let him consider why the cotton is nearer all covered with cotton bagging. It is to break down this trust business, and who will find fault with anything that is doing such a grand thing for his country?

Respectfully yours,  
J. A. LENZ.

## HOW TO MAKE FARMERS PROSPEROUS.

Mr. Editor:—I have been several years located in the Eastern part of North Carolina, and my occupation as a surveyor has given me good opportunities of noticing the quality of the soil, the mode of farming, etc., and from the many advantages that are offered in this part of the State, it seems to me there should be a much greater degree of prosperity.

The land is adapted to almost all kinds of crops, and the climate is one of the best in the world, so what more does a farmer want?

I have seen farming carried on in many parts of the world, but I am sorry to admit that it is carried on in the Eastern part of North Carolina in a most backward and unfarmer-like manner.

In the first place I will try and point out what seems to me to be the matter. The first thing is, the land is not ploughed deep enough, is not sufficiently drained, and the greatest want of all, there is no stock to make manure.

Without these three great factors no country can be prosperous any length of time.

The lands where there is a clay foundation should be ploughed at least ten inches deep with Oliver's chilled plough, or one equally good, in the fall or winter so that the winter frosts will pulverize the soil. The bad gases will then escape and many grubs will be destroyed.

In the spring the land should be again ploughed crosswise to the same depth as before. Then, if necessary, harrowed and properly cleaned of all weeds before planting or sowing. In the case of cotton and corn, the plant should be cultivated close up to the roots (after it is of sufficient size) to the depth of the plough furrows with a cultivator. The roots of the plant require air as well as the tops and it is only by loosening the soil well down that this can be gained. Deep cultivation holds the sap better in a dry year and drains the land better in a wet year.

As it is just now, the land is ploughed to a depth of from 3 to 4 inches and the seed sown on a hard bed. After the plant is up a bit a plough (if it can be called one) is run along the top of the ground and a little earth is thrown up to the plant, but the soil beneath is left uncultivated and as hard as ever. Of course the soil should be thrown up to the plant but it should be cultivated well down first.

How could a young child grow if it got hard food to eat when it was young and tender? The same with a

plant. How can a plant, when young and tender, push its way into the hard, uncultivated ground?

I maintain that a cultivator, if properly constructed, (the same as used in the turnip and potato fields in Scotland and England) will kill the grass better than a plough and do twice as much work in a day, besides it stirs up the soil where a plough, as is used here, merely turns over the top soil and covers up the grass and if it comes rain it grows again the same as ever.

Drainage.—Any system of drainage does good more or less, but the land can never be drained in the proper sense of the word by ditches, as is the only system adopted in this country. The only proper and paying way to drain land is to lay tiles under ground.

The first thing to consider in tile draining is to lay the pipes by the natural lay of the land. The drains should be cut to a depth of, say, 2 1/2 feet for clay or stiff soils and 3 feet for black soils, but the depth depends a great deal on the subsoil. The drains should be about 12 yards apart in the rows and the pipes from 2 to 3 inches in diameter. These small pipes should be led into outfall pipes of a diameter according to the area that is drained, and the outfall drains should lead to a canal or some proper outlet. If this plan is adopted the land will become porous and no surplus water will lie.

The heavy and stiff lands (which I consider the best) are rendered almost useless for the want of the drainage. A ditch will carry off the top surplus water but it will not drain the land.

The close tiles (which are made of burnt clay) are porous and have a certain suction that an open ditch has not which draws the water. When the land is water-slogged it runs together, and in dry weather turns perfectly compact like a stone. In wet weather it is like mortar and the roots of the plant rot for the want of air. And even although they do not rot the soil is cold and the plant becomes yellow and sickly.

I have seen lands produce double the crop the first year after this system of drainage without any extra manure. And I say that where it will not not pay with drains it cannot pay without them.

Farm Yard Manure.—The production of farm yard manure is the greatest factor of all in the production of crops.

After drainage and deep cultivation then if the manure is applied then there is no fear of the result and the damage from an excess of rain or dry weather is almost nothing.

In order that farm yard manure can be got we must have stock, and in order to feed stock we must grow food. So the first thing to consider is what can best be grown in this climate to feed stock. My opinion is that almost anything can be grown here. It is a great mistake to think that clover requires a rich or highly manured soil. What clover requires is a new soil and the stronger clay the better. Lime should be applied and it must be drained. Clover does not like a soft bed but the more compact the soil is the better. After it is well rooted a heavy roller should be run over it so as to press it well in. A flock of sheep run over it would answer the same purpose. In sowing down clover pastures, grasses should also be sown. The grass will act as a shelter for the clover in the hot weather.

When hay is wanted the first crop should be taken, and after it has grown up a bit again, cattle or sheep should be turned on it. In order to have the pastures fresh and clean the field or enclosures should be made small, not more than 8 to 10 acres, properly fenced, or more properly speaking, whatever quantity a man has he should divide it up in small divisions so as to enable him to shift the stock from one to the other, by this means he need never have his pasture eaten too close which in very dry, warm weather, is in danger of being burnt up.

Land left in pastures of this kind will become richer every year besides the stock will become in fine condition and fit for the Northern markets where good, paying prices can be obtained. Peas, beans, turnips, sweet potatoes, ensilage, etc., can be grown in any quantity and along with plenty of oats, wheat, rice straw and hay will enable a man to keep his stock all the winter in pens. Those cattle will make enough manure during the winter sufficient to pay for their feed and then you can apply, say, 20 tons to every acre of cotton and if the increase does not pay then there is no use trying any other way. Proper,

warm buildings must be erected for the stock, for a great deal depends on keeping stock warm and comfortable. A certain quantity of food must be taken by the animal to keep up the proper temperature of the body, the excess then goes to meat, etc. So the warmer the stock is kept the less food it takes to keep the stock in good condition; also the manure should not be exposed to the rain or weather.

When the vegetable matter in the soil is used up or destroyed the soil becomes useless for most crops, and this must be supplied in the shape of farm yard manure. I am perfectly convinced that any farmer, ploughing deep, draining the land and then applying a fair quantity of pure farm yard manure, say 10 to 20 tons per acre, will grow more cotton on one acre than they now do on four. Even taking the best crops into consideration and the expense will not be one-fourth. The three other acres he now plants in cotton should be in clover pastures and the rest of the land in whatever is most suitable for cattle feed; but if you keep cattle over winter there must be an extensive supply, of straw and hay both for feeding and bedding purposes. Of course the oats, turnips, etc., must all be well manured, otherwise will not be worth growing. I have seen 100 tons of turnips grown on one acre in Scotland, and I see no reason why that amount cannot be grown here where there is a much better climate and plenty of the ground quite as rich naturally. If there is a proper proportion of cattle kept then there will be plenty of manure for all crops. After a crop of turnips has been made they should be sufficiently manured so that oats or wheat, etc., sown after should not require any. By this means you will have a good crop of turnips, also a good crop of grain the year after. Although the farmer has plenty farm yard manure he should not neglect his composts; also he can apply certain artificial manures for certain crops that will pay, but it is like giving a drunken man a drink to make him feel good for a little time to give poor land, devoid of vegetable matter, artificial manures. It will only make the plant feel good for a little, then the reaction leaves the land poorer than ever and the plant worse than dead. Artificial manures can only act with profit where the land is rich in vegetable matter and lime.

I find that there is very little attention paid to the proper rotation in cropping, but it is of the utmost importance. No two crops of a kind should be grown on the same land in succession, and clover should in no case be sown on the same land until after a term of at least 8 years, but clover pastures should be left as long as convenient. I am inclined to think that Italian rye grass would suit this climate well and it makes excellent hay, but for pastures, red, white and Alsace clovers and timothy and cock's foot grass are the best for pasture, although many other kinds of grass may be very good.

With regard to the labor question. It would be much better for the hands to be engaged by the year, the hands to be paid at the end of every three months, but always a per centage kept in hand to ensure the fulfillment of the contract, the hands to work ten hours a day all the year through with an occasional holiday. Ten hours a day is quite sufficient for both man and teams and it has been proved that more work can be done in that time than by the sun to sun business, "so need no comment."

I make bold to say that the farmer does not work two-thirds of his time in this country. The time he now takes up in going to town, attending Alliance meeting and generally loafing, also the rainy days, he should be employed in digging drains, fencing, etc. He has simply not a moment to lose if he wants to make farming pay.

In order to adopt this system of farming, the farmer should begin small, especially if he is short of cash, but I say it is within the reach of the poorest farmer to adopt it, and he has no excuse for not doing it. The smallest farmer can sow one half acre of clover the first year, get, say two fair cows with calf to a good, blooded bull, the second year he will have two stirks and his cows with calf again; but he must increase his acreage of clover, etc., with his stock. In this way he will soon have a large stock at little or no expense. Tile makers would soon turn up if they were patronized, and tiles could be bought cheap as the proper kind of clay is in great abundance for making them right in your midst. When the hands are not busy, or in rainy days, an acre at a time can be drained, care

being taken to drain the most valuable land first so as to reap the advantage as soon as possible. In this way the drainage can be gradually done and the expense hardly known.

One of the greatest drawbacks to the improvement of the land is this miserable system of year to year.

The first thing a tenant does is to look around for the richest pieces of land or a place that the proprietor has possibly improved a bit, crops it for one year, takes all he can get out and put nothing in return. The year after the same process is repeated until the last heart's blood of the soil is sucked out.

The tenant is not to blame; he has no inducement to make any improvement as the next year he has gone to pastures new. He cannot have any farm yard manure or stock for it takes the year before for the stock to make the manure and as he removes to a new place every year he cannot take the manure with him and is of no use, leaving it for another to have the benefit at his expense. If there was, say, a ten year tenure then something might be done, but under the present system it only means ruination.

The rent should be fixed at so much per acre and not by a proportion of the crops as is now the case. It would be the means of making some tenants work harder for they know that the rent must be paid before they can have anything for themselves, besides they would have all the excess in a good year to themselves. As it is now they know that no matter what kind of a crop they make they will at least get their share, so do not care. And I would give no tenant a piece of land unless he was able to supply his own team and run himself for one year at least. If he cannot do this it would be better for him to work as a servant. If he has nothing he has to borrow and then is taken advantage of and at the end of the year he has nothing if he even comes out clear.

If the farmer goes on in the present system it is only a question of time when this fine country will not support itself. (In fact it hardly does so now.) I must say, a pretty pay for such a country to come to. How about all the baled hay, Western pork, etc., that we see coming in every day? Instead of being an export country (except for cotton) it is one of the best markets in America for Western hay and pork, etc.

The stock as at present is a drawback to the country. It requires more money expended on the fences to keep the few miserable animals out of the crops than all the stock is worth ten times over. Simply the stock is of no use, the manure is all lost in the woods and it takes them all the summer to make up in condition what they lose in the winter, so after a year they are just where they commenced.

I assert that stock farming combined with cotton and other crops can be made to pay better in this country than it does in the western part of America. Here we have a beautiful climate with plenty of good water, within easy reach of the Northern markets, and also to shipping ports to the old country which consumes so much of American beef every year, and is sure to increase its demand.

On the Western plains the stock die for the want of water in summer and freeze to death in the winter, and even after they are in fair condition they are poor and jaded before they reach the Eastern markets and bring small prices, whilst the cattle fed here can be put in the markets in two days at the most in fine, fresh condition and bring the top market prices.

I consider this part of the country one hundred years behind. They have no agricultural implements, no teams worth much or fit to do proper work, and the ideas of their grandfathers so impressed on their minds that it seems impossible to make them believe that the world is really on the move at all. The world is moving fast now and those that do not keep up with it are sure to be left so far behind that they will be left in the cold entirely.

With all the advantages this splendid country affords to farmers, I think it is a disgrace for it to be in such a condition, and I consider it a slur cast on the great giver of all things not to take advantage of all that is so bountifully offered us.

PAT MATTHEW.

Greenville, N. C.

No man will ever receive any knowledge more convicting than the fact that he is born.

The successful man is always the best informed in regard to the means by which he succeeded.