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ROGRESSIVE



FARMER.

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

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NATIONAL FARMERS' ALLIANCE AND INDUSTRIAL UNION.

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PAPERS.

Progressive Farmer, State Organ, Raleigh, N. C. Caucasian, Raleigh, N. C. Mercury, Hickory, N. C. Farmer, Whitakers, N. C. Star Home, Beaver Dam, N. C. The Populist, Lumberton, N. C. The People's Paper, Charlotte, N. C. The Citizen, Greensboro, N. C. The Flower, Salisbury, N. C. Carolina Watchman, Salisbury, N. C.

Each of the above-named papers are requested to keep the list standing on the first page and add others, provided they are duly elected. Any paper failing to advocate the Ocala platform will be dropped from the list promptly. Our people can now see what papers are published in their interest.

AGRICULTURE.

Don't cut down any more forest land. Improve the lands already in cultivation.

Do not waste the long winter evenings in that which yields neither pleasure nor profit.

We think our farmers bought too large a quantity of commercial fertilizers last spring.

A wheelbarrow on the farm is a treasure when needed, and is some times equal almost to another hired man.

The remedy is in giving more care to all the details of production and working for better markets in the smaller towns and cities.

Many good local markets are entirely overlooked in the mad rush of shipments to the larger cities. Near local markets are often best, study them well.

Of all classes of American citizens the farmers should be the most united. With identically the same interests there should be no divisions while helping to solve great questions.

The proper distribution of small fruits will not be complete until special refrigerator cars are placed on all lines from which sales can be made at any point, the same as meats at the present time.

Growers should understand that it costs just as much to pick, pack, transport and sell poor fruit as good; good fruit in a fair market is sure to pay well, while poor fruit in any market is almost certain to return a loss.

There is no business pursued by man for a livelihood which requires, in order to be successful, more thought, study and a more scientific education than that of farming in its various departments, yet it receives less, in the great majority of cases.

The "pin money" the women of Pennsylvania receive for their butter and eggs actually amounts to more than the combined products of the mines and oil wells of that State. If the yield from chicken farms, dairy and cheese factories be added, the excess will be six and a half million dollars.

COFFON GROWING IN THE SOUTH

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

We hear a great deal being said about concert of action among farmers for the purpose of decreasing the area planted in cotton this year, in order that a similar crop may not be put on the market of the world. But a little reflection will show the utter impossibility of effecting the desired purpose in this way. Human nature is very selfish, and if there was a prospect of a general agreement, there are thousands who would at once imagine that now was the time to plant heavily to take advantage of the prospective rise, and the whole thing would be defeated. There is no need for any concert of action, for the men who have been using three or four acres of land to grow a bale of cotton cannot grow it in this way any longer and live. Cotton as a sole crop is done forever, just as wheat as a sole crop is in the North. The man who makes anything from cotton here after must be a farmer, and not a mere planter, gambling on the chance of so much fertilizer giving him so much cotton. He must learn how to accumulate fertility in his soil, while getting increasing crops from it, and must learn the fact that the only way to rest land is to keep it at work between sale crops growing peas and crimson clover to feed stock for raising manure for the corn and cotton, so that the old-time practice of dribbling a little fertilizer in the furrow, for immediate effect, can be forever abandoned, and a generous broadcasting of the manure for the benefit of the soil take its place. Of course the change cannot be made all at once, but it behooves all farmers whose interests are in the cotton crop, and with whom as a matter of necessity the cotton crop must be the money crop, to begin to take measures to make it really a money crop, the surplus crop, but not the sole dependence for paying all the expenses of the farm.

The fact that land can be brought up to a high state of fertility by a proper rotation of crops, and the use of the cheaper forms of mineral fertilizers, phosphoric acid and potash, without the purchase of the expensive nitrogen has been abundantly proved, where the leguminous crops, like peas and clover, have been grown between the sale crops. Now is the time to begin to get our lands into such a proper rotation. The Southern field or cow pea will do more for the lands of the Southern coast plain than any plant yet discovered, as by its growth the farmer is enabled to get free from the air the nitrogen which is so costly when purchased in a commercial fertilizer. Cotton needs for its growth a well balanced fertilizer in which potash has a prominent place, with a proper percentage of the other elements of plant food to enable the plant to use the potash economically. On a land where no peas or other leguminous crop has been grown it will be necessary to use a complete fertilizer, but if we have previously grown a crop of peas or clover on the land by the aid of mineral fertilizers, there will be no need to buy the costly nitrogen for the cotton crop. But it will not do to assume that because clover will help the land in the matter of nitrogen, that it will keep the land permanently fertile. The peas themselves are greedy consumers of potash and phosphoric acid, and these being applied to them, they will get the rest.

Therefore if we want to start our land in the proper rotation for the growth of the cotton crop, it is essential that we start with the pea crop, and supply it with the essentials of its growth. Let us start them next spring and sow the peas broadcast, not less than a bushel per acre, and apply to them 300 pounds of acid phosphate and fifty pounds of muriate of potash, or 200 pounds of kainit per acre. This will give us a good growth of peas, the best use we can make of these peas will be to turn them into hay or ensilage for feeding cattle. Then in September run a cutaway harrow over the stubble and sow crimson clover at the rate of fifteen pounds per acre. This will grow during the winter, and can be plowed under in the spring for corn, and the same dose of fertilizer given it.

Among the corn plant peas, and as soon as the corn is off plow all under and sow the land in winter oats with peas for hay again, and plow the stubble for cotton the next season, fertilizing again with the same cheap fertilizers, and sow crimson clover all through the cotton at the last working, to be cut for hay in the spring and the land put in corn again. You will soon find that if you keep stock enough to use

up the forage you will grow that as long you will have home made manure enough to cover your corn field over broadcast, and finally you will need no artificial fertilizer except the dressing to promote the growth of the renovating crop of peas. The rotation is planned for the purpose of accumulating fertility for the cotton crop, and at the same time grow crops that will pay expenses and give a profit besides. I can point now to men on the sandy fields of the South who are practicing a similar plan, and who, while growing over a bale of cotton per acre, are making 60 to 75 bushels of oats per acre, 40 to 50 bushels of corn, keep well bred stock and have smoke-houses full of bacon, grown and cured as cheaply as the West or farmer can grow it. Their cotton, whatever the price, is a profit. W. F. MASSEY, N. C. Experiment Station.

It is generally a mistake for the farmer's boy to leave the farm, and in quite as many instances it is also a mistake for the old man to leave and move to town. It is a mistake for the boy to think he knows as much as his father. The latter may not be the more intelligent of the two, but he at least has the benefit of a great deal of experience that the boy has not acquired.

THE OTHER COTTON PRODUCERS

The continent of Europe takes three fourths of the cotton exported from India and is beginning to complain about the quality. The British Consul-General at Antwerp reports that Belgium took an annual average of 179,000 bales of India cotton for the five years from 1890 to 1894, but in 1895 took only 97,000 bales. He reported complaints from the continent outside of Belgium that the quality is deteriorating and that the cotton is marketed in bad condition. The Belgian imports of cotton from the United States in 1895 compared favorably with those of previous years. The Egyptian crop never can be increased very much on account of the narrow limits of the Nile Valley. Russian cotton is not a serious factor, and gives no indication that it will be; Indian cotton is at its best distinctly inferior to ours, and if it is now deteriorating the situation may be regarded with complacency by the planters of our Southern States. The Indian production of cotton has shown a downward tendency during the last few years, so that the decreased export is not accounted for by the increase of local manufacturing.—New York Journal of Commerce.

MAKING COUNTRY ROADS.

A report on road making from the Ontario Department of Agriculture contains the following good points: "Perfect drainage, first, of the foundation of the roadbed; secondly, of the road surface, are the points in road making on which too much stress cannot be laid. * * * Surface drainage is accomplished by open drains on each side of the grade, having sufficient capacity to drain not only the roadbed, but the land adjoining. With open drains and with tile drains make and maintain a free outlet to the nearest water course. A drain with an outlet is useless. In constructing a good road a dry foundation is the matter of first importance. * * * The graded portion of the road should be wide enough to accommodate the travel upon it, and not greater, the slope being uniform, not heaped in the center. The crown should be well above the overflow of storm water, and should have a grade sufficient to shed water readily to the open ditches on either side. Do not round it up so as to make the grade steep and dangerous, under the impression that better drainage will thereby be secured. Nor should it be so low as to allow water to stand upon it in depressions. Under ordinary circumstances one inch and a half to the foot is a proper grade; that is, a roadbed twenty six feet wide should be from thirteen to twenty inches higher at the center than at the side."

In any city or village many turnips can be sold to private families by near-by farmers if they will take the pains to call on people at their homes. It may seem slow work, but a wagon load goes off very quickly, especially if the farmer has besides the white varieties for early use some of the yellow turnips that will keep good until spring. There is often late in the season a market for the coarse rutabagas, which are then the only turnips that are in good condition to eat.

OIL-SOAKED COBS FOR KINDLING

Much of the danger of using kerosene oil for kindling fires would be avoided if corn cobs were handy to be dipped into the oil and used for kindling. The cobs will hold more oil than will wood, and if dry sticks are piled over the soaked cobs, they will quickly make a blaze, which is always needed on cold mornings to lift the volume of cold air that is always found in pipes and chimneys after the fire goes down. It is not best to dip more than one or two cobs into the oil. If all the kindling, especially that on top, is wet with oil, the fire will sometimes quickly burn off the oil, and then, without lifting the cold air, a dense volume of carbonic acid gas will settle down into the stove, making the starting of a fire worse than it was in the beginning.

THE PARCEL POST.

The French farmer can send his produce by mail in packages weighing 7 pounds or less to any part of that country for 12c, while in Germany the rate is only 6c for packages under 11 lbs. and 1c for every additional lb. English farmers are urging their post office department to enlarge the parcels post, and reduce rates so that they can mail their stuff direct to the consumer. The farmers also demand the introduction of the cash on delivery system, just as goods are now shipped by express in this country, to be paid for on receipt. The English railways have made a handsome success of their plan, introduced last year, of collecting small packages of produce at each station and delivering direct to the store or consumer, collecting the money and remitting it to the farmer, all for a moderate charge. All three of these reforms are much needed in the United States, and we have no doubt will be secured in time.—Farm and Home.

FARM NOTES.

Wheat and potatoes are the two products that can be grown and marketed without feeding upon the farm, and they can be made to form a part of the system of rotation, but the wheat straw should be carefully saved and used for bedding so far as can be done to an advantage.

For this reason better health and thrift can be maintained by allowing hogs, growing hogs especially, the range of a good pasture rather than to keep closely confined. While if proper care is taken a good variety can be supplied even when confined on majority of farms. This increases the work materially and they miss the exercise they secure when they can have a pasture. While clover makes a better pasture or green food for pigs, yet with plenty of grass and a light ration of grain or slop a rapid growth can be secured at comparatively a low cost, and this is an important item feeding pigs. With good pasturage there is little necessity for changing the dry ration, as they will be able to secure all the variety they need.—N. J. Shepard, in the Forum.

FALL PLOWING.

We have in former papers from time to time called attention to the importance of fall plowing on our heavy clay lands or on those with an under strata of stiff clay subsoil. We have also pointed out the importance of supplying vegetable material to these soils, in order to gain the full benefit of such fall plowing. But perhaps it will not be amies to refresh our minds as to the powerful influence which humus or decaying vegetable matter exercises on all characters of soils; also its office in perfecting, as it were, the work which proper fall plowing begins. In supplying land with humus from any source it should not be overlooked that in giving it this plant food we at the same time encourage chemical combinations with the locked up elements already in the land. On all clay soils, more particularly, there are mineral deposits of plant food, but they are in such form that growing plants cannot appropriate them. They are not soluble in water alone, and it becomes necessary that we supply some more powerful agent to accomplish the work of changing and dissolving them. The carbonic acid which is constantly being generated by decaying vegetable matter, is known to be an effective solvent of mineral substances, and becomes at once the factor to transform these otherwise unavailable deposits into such soluble elements that the plants can draw upon them for sustenance and development. Humus therefore

not only feeds the plant directly, but is the active agent by which we secure additional plant food supplies from surrounding conditions of the soil. Humus also has the direct mechanical effect of loosening stiff clay soils and enabling them to absorb gases and to absorb and hold a larger amount of moisture from rains and from the atmosphere. The stiffest land, if well supplied with humus, will rarely crust or bake even in the most protracted drouth. On sandy land humus has the opposite effect of holding together the too loose particles, and of preventing the escape of moisture. A porous soil filled with humus is also an eminent moisture absorbing as well as moisture holding soil.—Southern Cultivator.

Whenever phosphate is sown with grain, a part of the fertilizer is always appropriated by the clover seed sown with it. Clover is a lime plant, and it also needs the phosphoric acid that is so helpful to the wheat. The phosphate is especially valuable when applied to clover that is to produce a seed crop. Potash is also needed to make clover seed well, and should be applied in some form.

THE RECENT RISE IN WHEAT.

There may be a little extraordinary foreign demand for our wheat which exercises a little stimulating effect upon the American wheat market. But when we reflect that the foreign wheat harvest don't occur until next February, and then notice the capers our markets and newspapers have out recently, it looks very much as if the whole thing is gotten up to prove that the price of wheat and silver don't range together, says the Peninsula Trucker.

If it has been brought about, we need no further evidence to prove that the money power has the nation by the throat and can force the people and the government to do its every bidding, even to employing soldiers and native Hessians to assassinate peaceful citizens, providing the Executive head be in sympathy with the move.

There is far more danger of giving house plants too much rather than too little water in winter. During the short days and long nights, with very little sunlight on the soil, is hard to keep it at a temperature where the plants can grow vigorously. All the surplus water added lowers the temperature until it reaches a point where the plants barely exist without making any growth. If the soil has much vegetable matter, humic acid will be developed at a low temperature and this will poison the plant roots.

WHEAT AND PRICES.

Commenting on the outlook for wheat prices, Bradstreet's says: "There need be no fear that the price of wheat is likely to react and to remain at the lower levels which prevailed for so many months prior to recent advance of about twenty two cents per bushel.

"That there will be enough wheat to go around goes without saying, and it is entirely possible that the alleged shortage in Russia has been magnified and the prospect for a decreased yield in Argentina overdrawn. In fact, the London Miller estimates the total requirements of wheat importing countries at 22,000,000 bushels less than total export supplies of wheat in exporting countries—a pretty narrow margin, though on the right side.

"But when the most has been told with respect to the outlook for ample supplies of wheat, the fact remains that after four or five years of excessive output the yield fell away in 1895, and has declined again in 1896, this time more sharply; that supplies in importing countries have been allowed to run down, and, most important of all, that importing countries have been first to discover the outlook for reduced supplies and for higher prices themselves. The late 'boom' did not start in the United States, but in England. The London Economist concludes that wheat is likely to be higher rather than lower, and that there is a real deficit in the world's wheat crop. For the first time, perhaps, since 1879, America now seems to hold the key to the situation, for every bushel of wheat in the United States available for export will be wanted abroad."

Teacher—What is a straight line? Pupil—The picture of its own road, which each company prints in the rail road map.—Boston Transcript.

POULTRY YARD

SOME HEN STORIES.

At the recent meeting in Chicago of shippers of poultry and eggs and butter for the purpose of organizing a National Shippers' Association, pleasures were mixed with business. Between times they talked of their good friend, the hen, and of her sagacity and usefulness. Also of her brother, the rooster. The anecdotes served to show that the humble bird of commerce, if allowed to live her full average of five to seven years, would make her mark. She is endowed with intelligence and will do wonderful things, from laying 180 eggs in a year, once in a while laying two in a day, to foretelling the weather a day in advance. As a song bird she is not a success and no one could remember a case of a hen learning to sing. But Sam Prague, of Kokuk, told of a rooster that could vocalize with considerable success.

The bird was a Plymouth Rock, owned by E. I. Strawberry, an Iowa farmer. Sam went over to Eli's place one day to buy some poultry, and, going in at the front gate, heard weird strains of music behind the barn. He walked back to the source of harmony and as he rounded the corner of the barn saw Eli, sitting on a barrel and playing a fiddle. Perched on a nearby post was Dick, the rooster, crowing the words of "Marguerite" with startling plainness. Sam remained quiet and had the joy of hearing a fowl rendition of the "Lay on the Last Minstrel." Tears came to his eyes.

"Eli," he murmured, "I'll buy that rooster. I love music." "Sam," returned Eli, impressively, "Money can't get him. Anyway, he will not sing for anybody's accompaniment but mine."—Western Rural.

EGG AND SHELL FOOD.

It is well known that by a proper system of feeding we can supply every element of food that enters into the composition of an egg, says a writer in Northwestern Agriculturist. In considering this subject of feeding hens, two things must be remembered: First, the kind of food required, and second, the peculiar nature of the bird's stomach and digestive functions. The food must necessarily contain every element required to sustain the fowl in good health and to provide material for the production of eggs. The principal requirement of a hen a year old is carbonaceous matter for the sustenance of the animal heat, and nitrogenous substance for the support of the muscular system. These are provided sufficiently in grains, and if a hen was not expected to lay eggs on exclusive grain diet, furnished in moderate quantity, would supply all her needs. But eggs are made up of various substances in a concentrated form. They contain a large proportion of albumen and considerable fat and sulphur, while the shells are nearly all carbonate of lime. The feathers contain much sulphur, and these need also be provided for, so that to secure a liberal production of eggs all these substances must be furnished in the food, and in such a form that they can be easily digested, or they are worse than useless, as they must be injurious to health. Any food that is not digestible taxes the excretory organs to get rid of it, and this undue call upon them disturbs the balance of the system and produces disease.

The necessary requirements of an animal should be furnished in food substances and should not be given in crude form. Because a hen requires lime and sulphur it is not right that limestone, or stone lime, or crude sulphur should be given. The stone is not digestible, and the sulphur is laxative in its effect, and disturbs the bowels. Food rich in these substances should be given in at least sufficient quantity to supply the demands of the hen for at least one egg per two days. None of the common grains supply these elements in sufficient quantity, but some others to be produced quite easily are rich in them. Rape seed, which is easily grown, contains eight pounds of sulphur in one thousand pounds, and mustard seed has ten pounds of sulphur in the thousand. Hemp seed contains eleven pounds of lime in one thousand, and rape and mustard seed five to seven pounds, respectively. Lucerne leaves, dry, contain twenty-eight pounds of lime to the thousand, and white clover nineteen and one fourth pounds. Some of these grains are as cheap as wheat and are much more valuable for this use.—Farmers' Voice.