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# THE PROGRESSIVE 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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No. 46

## THE NATIONAL FARMERS' ALLIANCE AND INDUSTRIAL UNION.

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### PAPERS.

The Progressive Farmer, Raleigh, N. C.  
The Southern Farmer, Raleigh, N. C.  
The Farmer, Raleigh, N. C.  
The People's Paper, Charlotte, N. C.  
The Vestibule, Concord, N. C.  
The Plow-Boy, Wadesboro, N. C.  
The 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 do so will be dropped from the list promptly. Our people can now see what papers are published in their interest.

## AGRICULTURE.

Look after the poor dumb brutes now and see that they are well housed and fed.

Chicory costs in Nebraska \$25 per acre, and averages six tons per acre, which commands \$10 per ton.

In the next four months one hundred and fifty three farmers' institutes will be held in the State of New York.

During the past fiscal year, the American farmers sold \$570,000,000 worth of products, a gain of \$17,000,000 over 1895.

Take advantage of the bad winter weather by reading all you can, and be sure that a good newspaper is among your collection of reading matter.

Nothing is lost that goes into the manure heap, especially if the manure is managed with a view to having it as valuable as possible before applying it to the soil.

The farmers still hold the balance of power in this country. Party prejudice, which is gradually disappearing, is all that stands in the way of making the balance of power effective.

The gift of so many carloads of apples to the poor of Boston shows that in benevolence the farmers are not at all behind other classes, so far as their means permit them to do as they would like to do.

Well ahead of the work; result, satisfaction. A week behind it; result, discouragement. But don't undertake at the start any more than you can reasonably expect to accomplish in good order.

We couldn't advise any man to go in debt for farm property now; as we do not see how he could possibly get out as long as the margins for profit remain as they are. In fact it isn't a very good time to go in debt for anything.

Soil climate and products combine to make the South the most desirable portion of the United States—in fact of the world. This fact is beginning to impress itself on home-seekers and is bound to bear fruit more and more each year.

## CRIMSON CLOVER.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

I believe that a crop of crimson clover, sown in August, can be grown and turned under in ample time to grow a crop of fall potatoes. In order to stimulate the clover, I suggest that 300 pounds of acid phosphate and 400 pounds of kainit be broadcast per acre and plowed under about three weeks before the clover seed is sown. Double this quantity can be safely used, but I consider the above (700 pounds) ample. I read of a party who tried crimson clover and it failed. He then applied 800 pounds of kainit per acre and re-sowed. This brought and held the clover "as thick as the hair on a dog's back."

The clover, when ripe, should be well turned. Better delay planting the potatoes for a few days than to turn it before ripe. Before planting the potatoes a disc harrow should be used to cut the seeds.

Clover, grown and turned as above, will enrich any land. This fertility can be largely increased by growing and turning an occasional crop of clover and cow peas, these crops to be grown under a proper system of rotation in connection with other crops.

All perfect fertilizers contain, as a basis of fertility, three elements, which are nitrogen, phosphorus and potash. Acid phosphate and kainit furnish respectively the needed phosphorus and potash. As a general thing, all plants, except those belonging to the legume family, such as clover, cow peas, beans, vetches and a few others, require nitrogen in the soil. Now clover, cow peas, etc., draw the needed nitrogen from the air and therefore do not require a direct application of nitrogen, such as nitrate of soda (Chili saltpetre). Hence by supplying two elements, the third, which is by far more costly than either of the other two, can virtually be produced, thus cheaply and practically preparing the soil for any crop that requires a perfect fertilizer.

Ollie, N. C.

BRYAN TYSON.

## EFFECTS OF MULCHING POTATOES.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

In the mountainous portions of Ecuador, South America, it is said that the finest potatoes of the world are grown. It is situated immediately under the equator and consequently the days and nights are about of equal length throughout the year, each being 12 hours long. As a result, the temperature never varies, it is said, more than five degrees over, nor under 80 degrees throughout the year. Said temperature is suitable for the potato and consequently it grows to great perfection, requiring ordinary cultivation only, but no mulching.

In the United States, especially in the middle and southern portions, the climate is much too warm for potatoes that are planted in early spring, as they mature in the midst of the summer's heat. But by mulching with wheat straw, leaves or other litter to a proper depth the temperature can be materially lowered and, as a result, the quantity and quality of the potatoes will be greatly improved. But even then our climate is much too warm.

In order to meet and overcome the above difficulties, the potatoes should be planted about the 20th of June and soon after they commence coming up they should be well mulched. The mulch will keep the ground cool and moist. The potatoes will mature in early fall, when the climate suits them. Potatoes grown thus are more inclined to be round and smooth than those planted early, and being of better quality they will doubtless command a higher price. As regards quantity, other things being equal, I believe that fall potatoes will yield from 50 to 100 per cent. more than those planted early.

To grow large potatoes, and as I believe to increase the yield also, they should have distance. I believe that 3 foot rows and 18 inches in the drill, thinned to 1 stalk, plenty close. The potatoes from seven single stalks that I grew filled a half bushel and right heaped up; these were fall potatoes, as we call them.

The sprouts that are pulled off, when the potatoes are thinned, do well if set out, but I did not experiment to see which did best, they or the stalks left attached to the old potatoes. Thinning to one stalk has been found by actual experiment to possess great advantages, but I have not space here for details. I have an idea that the old potato,

while rotting, gives needed nourishment to the stalk, but I have never tested the matter by experiment. This can easily be done by transplanting some of the plants pulled off and noting the result.

For seed I prefer large potatoes, so cut that each piece will contain several eyes, which should be thinned to one stalk, as aforesaid.

I tried to raise a second crop from new potatoes, but could not induce them to sprout, not even when placed on a hot bed. Potatoes require curing before they will sprout. Fall potatoes will keep in excellent condition, without sprouting, until the time for planting (June 20th) arrives. I therefore consider them far preferable to new potatoes for late planting.

Mulching is of great advantage to the Irish potato, but it is virtually death to the sweet potato, for the reason that the latter require a high temperature. For a similar reason, mulching will not answer for grape vines, especially far North. The mulching will delay the ripening of the fruit, thus causing it to be overtaken by frost.

A few private peach and apple trees can be mulched to great advantage. After the danger from spring frost has passed, the mulch should be removed, thus permitting the trees to bloom and bear fruit.

BRYAN TYSON.

## OBSERVE THE SMALL ECONOMIES.

No legitimate business can long with stand even a few minor wastes. Competition in all forms of legitimate business is always too sharp for this to be true. It is the observance of the small economies in any business that makes it prosperous. These things count for just as much in conducting the business of the farm as they do elsewhere. And this is why on some farms we always see evidence of thrift, while at a neighboring farm whose owner is laboring under exactly similar conditions there is every evidence of a continual uphill struggle for bread and butter. Economy is truly the watchword in every prosperous business.

The evils of unjust assessment of property for taxation—local, county and State—are growing. The older a State becomes the more unjustly do taxes bear on the farmer. This can only be remedied by State law. "Go for" your legislator.

## ROTATION OF CROPS.

An important detail of our work too little appreciated or studied is rotation of crops. We should inquire most carefully into the relations which certain crops sustain to each other, their adaptability to our lands, and the proper order in which they should succeed each other. Having these fundamental principles thoroughly fixed in our minds, and having planned an intelligent system of rotation, let us adhere to it rigidly and allow no matter of convenience or expediency to swerve us from a steady prosecution of the work. The cultivation of cotton at the South has been carried on under such methods as to prove very disastrous if not destructive to soils, says the Southern Cultivator.

A cotton crop removes certain elements from the soil and when this removal has been repeated year after year, and nothing or comparatively nothing returned to take the place of the fertility carried off, there has been a consequent falling off in the yield until it has reached a point where it does not pay the cost of production. Under these circumstances the plan heretofore has been to abandon these so-called "wornout" fields to the slow processes of natural restoration and seek other more fertile soils. That a judicious system of rotation combined with thorough preparation and cultivation, would be a much more expeditious and satisfactory method is already shown on many farms where diversified agriculture holds a place. The perfecting of any system of rotation is necessarily a work of time and patience, and although a succession of what may be called "graded" crops will undoubtedly remove a larger amount of nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash from the soil, the land will be kept in a higher state of productiveness than by the single crop system.

The cotton mills are coming South, iron mills, furniture factories, shoe factories, great works of all kinds. Just so soon as the country gets out of the clutches of the goldbugs, the Southern farmer will begin to enjoy prosperity of a substantial nature.

## MAKING THINGS SNUG FOR WINTER.

The merciful man is merciful to his beasts, and with winter's inclemencies comes the necessity for greater attention to their comfort. They need feed enough to keep up the internal heat, and shelter to protect them from the cold blasts and penetrating storms of the approaching winter season. Fortunately for the animals they do not have to depend wholly upon their owner's mercy or in some instances they would suffer severely. Self-interest reinforces and strengthens the claims of mercy, for there can be no profit without care. The flocks will not prosper if their fleeces are wet with cold rain and sleet; the cows will give no milk if they must arch their backs and cower beneath the rude winds of winter; the hogs and cattle will make gains only upon condition that their comfort is looked after; the horses can not at the same time shiver and maintain condition. Not only mercy, but interest prompts good care.

The farmer has another class of servants that need care and protection as well during the winter, but as they are inanimate it will not be inhuman to deny it. It will cause serious loss, however. Modern farming is very largely machine farming. Servants of steel and iron and wood are necessary to carry it on successfully, and they cost money and a good deal of it. Implements, though not alive have a period of usefulness which is their life, and which may be protracted or shortened by care or neglect. Their lives have been greatly shortened in the past by neglect until it has descended into a proverb that very few farm implements are ever worn out. They have been ruined by exposure, and have had to be replaced at large and very unnecessary cost. There is a change for the better in this respect, but there is still room for improvement, and like most other improvements it depends upon individual effort. To make it what it should be each farmer must safely house all his implements and farm machinery. Their bright parts should be protected by a good coat of tallow or axle grease, and they should be thoroughly cleaned before they are put by. It would be a wise idea, too, to make a memorandum of every repair needed by each implement. The owner knows all defects now, but will have forgotten some of them by next season, and this will cause delay at a time, perhaps, when it can be ill afforded. Take care of your servants if good service is to be expected of them.—Western Farm Journal.

## KEEP UP WITH YOUR WORK.

We should count on at least three working weeks in this month, but too often the business rein is entirely relaxed. Work which should be done now is deferred, and then is necessarily crowded into January, producing confusion and delay in the operations which properly belong to that month. Even in the rainy December days, when outdoor work is impossible, there is a certain amount of brain work to be done—of planning and arranging for another year. No man should be satisfied to remain at a standstill in his agricultural methods. Agriculture is essentially a progressive industry, and the farmer who would succeed must study methods which other men found profitable. He should be so impressed with the achievements of modern agriculture as to strive to appropriate them to his own use and profit. Numerous influences are combining to promote the business interests of the South, and most of all the farming interests, says the Southern Cultivator.

The farmer who watches the agricultural tide, and by progressive, systematic, enlightened methods prepares for it, will be the one who stands the best chance to catch it "at the flood," and to enter on a prosperous era. We spoke last month of the importance of breaking up our stiff clay lands; of loosening the subsoil in order to gather up and store away the winter rains; of turning into the land whatever vegetable growth remains on the surface; of gathering up all or as much as possible of the humus-making materials which accumulate on every farm; of covering the land, wherever it can be done, with some grain crop, rye more especially, to prevent washing, to furnish stock food during the winter, and when the residue is turned under in the spring to add something to the vegetable matter in the soil. These and kindred operations furnish ample

work for the bright days. When the rainy days set in we have an opportunity of reviewing our year's work, of critically looking into the methods which we have employed with the different crops, of rejecting those which have proved defective or unsatisfactory, and of seeking light from other sources to guide us to a more general success. In these days of agricultural literature, when experiment station bulletins, State and National, are spread broadcast over the land, when agricultural periodicals are so cheaply published, when the large weekly news papers as well as the country press have column after column devoted exclusively to agricultural subjects, there is scarcely a question in which the farmer is interested that is not more or less discussed and elucidated. Farmers who are disposed to read and study certainly have better opportunities than ever before for gaining all needed information. That they are appropriating and intelligently using these opportunities is evidenced by the improvement which is beginning to mark our agriculture. One fact alone is a sufficient illustration, the farmers, although the crop is short, have not been forced by the pressure of creditors to market their entire cotton crop prematurely. The present crop rests on the firm basis of more careful business methods, of ample home supplies and as a rule farmers have been able to exercise their choice as to the time of disposing of it.

## BENEFIT OF FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS.

It is the rule that the best institutes are held in localities where a Grange or farmers' club flourishes. This is a fact favorable to farmers' organizations. They not only awaken thought, but afford opportunity to learn to join in discussions. Comparatively few people can think clearly when on their feet before an audience, and for this reason are compelled to keep their seats when their ideas might be available to others, if expressed. Granges and clubs are educators in this respect, remarks the Northwestern Farmer, and are furnishing thousands of farmers who can state their views and urge their convictions upon others clearly and forcibly. If farmers' organizations did no other good, this would justify their existence.

## BEETS FOR STOCK FEED.

Will sugar beets be a good feed for hogs and milch cows?—H. W., Newton, N. C.

[Answered by F. E. Emery, Agriculturist, N. C. Experiment Station.]  
Yes, they are good, but owing to expense in growing and harvesting, they are not much used for that purpose. Sugar beets grow wholly underground and the leaves spread on the surface. They are considerably covered with fine roots which hold much dirt from moist soils and this should be washed off before feeding the roots, which is another expense.

There are varieties of stock beets called mangolds, or sometimes mangels, which grow mostly above the ground which are comparatively free from soil holding roots. These are more easily grown and harvested, though they do not contain so much sugar.

## PUBLIC SCHOOL AGRICULTURE.

F. D. Coburn, Secretary of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture, says: In an agricultural country like ours, where to such an extent all prosperity depends on agriculture, it seems to me especially appropriate that the youth of the country, whatever their future vocation may be, should be instructed in the elementary principles of agricultural science. The introduction of such studies into the common schools I regard as most desirable. Too many of our youths are being reared without any conception whatever that all our prosperity depends on a successful agriculture, and any proper education should make them acquainted with a fact so important, and aid them to a right respect for and right appreciation of a very fundamental principle of our civilization. Even if it had no direct value it would be worth all its cost if it did what would be so very desirable, namely, teach two thirds of the rising generation that the man who tills the soil is not less a man thereby, and is not necessarily a proper subject for their jests, alleged witticisms or commiseration.

Farm organizations should insist that the State teach the principles of agriculture in the common schools.

## SWINDLING WITH TOY HOUSES.

Here is the real estate man's story: "Talk about swindles; the best one I ever came across was down in the State at a town called Bingham, or something like that. The town isn't any good, and never will be, but, just the same, a fellow has been selling subdivisions lots. He got hold of a run-down farm lying at the edge of the town, and cut it up into lots. Then at one corner of the tract he built up a toy residence addition to the town. He laid out a little roadway about two feet wide, and stuck up little trees along each side of it. On this road he put up some houses, each one foot high. He put in a factory building that was nearly three feet high, and laid water pipes about the size of pipe stems. He had the whole thing photographed, and after the photographer had touched up the picture it indicated a beautiful driveway at least 60 feet wide, with big houses on either side of it. He took these photographs with him when he went on the road to sell the lots. He would say, 'Now, here is a picture of one corner of the subdivision. I have already built 20 houses out there. We have water pipes laid and the street is gravelled. Your lot is less than 600 feet from the corner of the factory building here.' You see he wanted to protect himself in case he was arrested for fraud. The photograph was genuine, and it was true, as he said, that water pipes were laid and houses built. Of course he did not take the trouble to explain that the houses were no larger than bird cages, and the street not much wider than a plow furrow. Well, he traded four of these lots to a farmer for a drove of young cattle. When that farmer went over to look at the lots he was the maddest man on earth. He had the real estate man arrested for perpetrating a fraud and, I believe they're fighting it out now. The man who sold the lots insists that he told the truth, and backed up his statements with a photograph."—Chicago Record.

## WHEAT AND WHEAT EXPORTS.

The exportation of grain is going on with unwonted activity and it is stated that all the grain capacity of the foreign steamers to sail from Atlantic ports between now and February 1st has been contracted ahead. Wheat, which recently rose in price in a manner so startling and so sudden as to put the trade in a flutter, and then dropped as suddenly because of the taking of speculative profits by those who had no confidence in the genuineness of the rise, again recovered nearly the whole of the loss, rising to 79¢ and again declined, closing 74¢ on the 5th of November and 78¢ for May, which latter had closed the day before at 81¢, a degree of fluctuation that shows how gambling speculation is using the grain for its own purposes. Now is a time when a good efficient anti-option law that would prevent all transactions that did not mean actual wheat and its delivery would be a blessing to the producer. While there is every prospect of a firm demand at even stronger prices than at present prevail, the gambling transactions enable the grain grower to get only the lowest range of a fluctuating market, for the grain buyer feels that he must make himself safe by paying no more than the lowest price to which wheat is likely to go in the course of its fluctuations. The gambler now buys for a rise and when one or two or three cents comes, realizes by throwing his gambling contracts on the market, which breaks under the wind offerings. The actual condition of wheat being a tendency to strong prices, it begins to recover and the gambler repeats the operation again and breaks it again, so that it never has a chance to reach a normal price based upon demand and supply. Every time it seeks to get up in response to demand, the gambler knocks it down by "wind" offerings. The gambler helps the work along by using the iniquitous system of insurance. He buys a cargo of real wheat at a price that will afford him a profit at the port of destination, and then sells the same amount of "wind," the effect of which is to depress the market. Then whether the price goes up or down is a matter of indifference to him, for if there is an unforeseen rise or fall, the gains and losses it caused on the two transactions are equal and wash each other out, while he makes the profit he originally contemplated safely and without any risk to himself.

Christmas comes but once a year. Some subscribers don't renew that often