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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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PAPERS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Progressive Farmer, | Raleigh, N. C. |
| Caucasian, | Raleigh, N. C. |
| Marcury. | Hickory, N. C. |
| Sentinel, | Whitakers, N. C. |
| Our Home, | Beaver Dam, N. C. |
| The Populist, | Lumberton, N. C. |
| The People's Paper, | Charlotte, N. C. |
| The Vestibule, | Concord, N. C. |
| The Plow-Boy. | Wadesboro, 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.

The stable doors should swing outwards so that the animals can be more easily gotten out in case of fire.

A reduction of acreage, thorough cultivation and green manuring is the remedy of all remedies in most localities.

Ensilage, or any food with a pronounced odor, should not be fed just before milking. Milk readily absorbs odors.

The largest onion reported this year was on exhibition at Los Angeles, Cal. It was thirty six inches in circumference and weighed seven pounds.

Don't buy poor land. Profits are none too large on good soil. Land which is merely run down may be a bargain, but poor land is poor property.

It is said that if seed corn is soaked for twelve or fifteen hours in water containing Mayapple root, say half a gallon of the roots to ten gallons of water, moles will not eat the corn after planting.

Arrange to exchange seed corn and other seeds occasionally with other farmers. Such exchanges should be effected now, during leisure time in this and next month. If not done now it is not likely to be done at all.

Don't take it for granted all general agricultural teachings are intended for your conditions. Use judgment in applying directions to your circumstances. Study out the fact for yourself. Instruction is meant to be chewed, not swallowed.

Breeding up the poultry stock is just as important as the same process applied to the milking herd. There is a vast number of different breeds and of individuals of the same breed. Judicious selection and breeding will perform wonders.

The hired man should aim to make himself indispensable to his employer. The cheapest men are the most easily spared. An indispensable man will not long need to work for low wages, but the cheap man can be replaced in an hour, and will never be missed if he goes on a strike.

### COLD FACTS FROM A FREEZE.

Thoughtful people now agree that "the greatest freeze of '95" was a good thing for Florida—a blessing in disguise. It was a costly lesson, however. A hundred thousand citizens, more or less, paid $3,000,000 or $4,000 000 to find out that the "frost line" that had been recognized since the "cold winter of '32" was not permanent, and was likely to be changed, like railway time tables, without previous notice. They were taught that it was not good policy to put all their eggs in one basket, and that the single crop plan of farming was a failure. Many were discouraged and left the State. Those who had more courage and wisdom remained, and while they were resuscitating their frozen groves, they discovered that they could make $400 or $500 an acre by truck farming, by raising peas, beans, cabbages, cauliflower, lettuce, celery, onions, cucumbers, potatoes, strawberries and other fruits and vegetables for the Northern winter markets.

The demand for this sort of produce during the winter months is practically unlimited, and the prices unnaturally large. It costs no more to raise a bushel of potatoes in this warm, sandy soil in December than in July, yet they can be sold for $4 a bushel in December, and for only 40 cents in July. The supply of unseasonable vegetables formerly came from Bermuda and the Bahamas. "The great freeze" taught the farmers of Florida that they could have a monopoly from December to March, when the early crops of southern Georgia are ready for market.

So the wise ones stopped boasting about profits of $2,500 an acre from orange groves. They stopped telling the familiar story about "$1 a box for oranges on the plantation, twenty five boxes to the tree, and 100 trees to the acre—all clear gain," and began to plant and weed vegetables, which are not so profitable as oranges, but are reasonably certain of paying from $400 to $500 an acre net.

Down in the southern part of the State the cultivation of pineapples was found to be even more profitable, and somebody blundered upon the discovery that the best ones were grown under shelter. So all the pine fields are now covered with lattice work, just high enough for a tall man to walk under without stooping. This lattice is made of rough strips of pine, three inches wide, nailed three inches apart on rough scantling, and costs about $500 an acre. It not only furnishes perfect protection against all possible frosts, but the fruit thus protected from the heat of the sun is more juicy and of finer fibre than that grown in the open air. Industrious farmers are now raising 6,000 pineapples to the acre, and selling them on the plantations by the thousand at 25 cents apiece, while the shoots that are plucked from the plants are worth from $2 to $3 a dozen to those who are starting in the business.

Another industry that can be attributed to the "freeze," and is bound to be permanent and profitable, is the cultivation of Cuban tobacco. The scarcity and high prices caused by the revolution have given it a decided stimulus, for the tobacco plantations in Cuba have been very generally destroyed, and if the island should ever be at peace again it will require several years to get back to the magnitude and the quality of its former product.

Before the war of the rebellion, up in Gadsden county, bstween the Gulf and the Georgia line, where the people still hunt wild cats for sport, a good deal of tobacco was raised. At one time it was considered the finest of the country, and the average value of the crop was $400,000, but after the big plantations were broken up and worked on shares by negroes, who formerly worked them as slaves, tobacco cost too much labor and was abandoned, until H R Duval, President of the Florida Central, got seed from the celebrated Vuelto Abajo, district of Cuba, and distributed it free of charge to all the farmers who were willing to make the experiment. Many failed, as is always the case, but some are successful, and the result was the establishment of a factory at Quincy by a New York firm, to consume the local product, which is now the largest in the State, and this firm annually plants a large acreage on its own account.

After the "freeze" the public took up tobacco generally. Mr. Duval again sent to Cuba and not only got seed, which he distributed free, but also brought over a number of experienced planters, who worked up and down the line of his road, superintending the planting and instructing the farmers in the art of cultivation, for tobacco is a good deal like children—its value depends upon the manner in which it is brought up. Thus the industry has become general. Sumatra as well as Cuban seed has been introduced. With proper cultivation, it is claimed that crops from 600 to 1,000 pounds to the acre can raised anywhere in Florida, and there is a steady demand for it from the cigar factories in the State at from 25 to 80 cents a pound, according to the quality. It requires experience and a peculiar knack to raise good tobacco. There are some Cuban refugees down in this end of the State who produce a leaf that is rated as high as the best that comes from Havana, but the ordinary farmer doesn't seem to get the hang of it. There is plenty of Cuban labor to be had this year, and much is expected from the next crop.—Chicago Record.

### GROWING SUGAR BEETS.

The Ohio Experiment Station, in a newspaper bulletin in relation to the sugar beet, makes the suggestion that as the beet is a very valuable stock food, and is cultivated by many farmers for this purpose alone, the experience necessary to its successful cultivation may be secured by cultivating it for this use without loss even when no sugar factory is located in the neighborhood. Wherever there is a prospect of securing a beet sugar factory eventually, it would be wise for farmers to go to work and learn how to cultivate the beet, the crops being used for stock food until a market for the purpose of sugar making can be secured for it. One of the serious difficulties in the extension of the beet sugar industry is the large expenditure of capital necessary in establishing the plant, and the hesitation to make the investment in localities where producing an adequate supply of sugar beets of good quality has not been put to actual practical test. There is no doubt but that if a beet sugar company were looking for a location, and were hesitating between two different points, one at which the farmers had learned how to grow the sugar beet and had demonstrated their ability to grow it, even though it be only for the purpose of feeding stock, would secure the factory in preference to another location where the beet had not been grown.

### A NEW USE FOR ALFALFA.

Among the recent petty swindles with which those who live by their wits have sought to victimize the farmer has been the sale, at an exorbitant price per pound, of soy bean seed under the name of the "coffee berry." The fraud was detected almost at once, and the public was warned through the agricultural press, and now, while it is pretty generally known that the soy bean, when properly roasted, makes no mean substitute for coffee, no up to date farmer could be betrayed into the purchase of seed at any extravagant figure, or on any other basis than the admitted fact that the seed was soy bean seed. This cheap home grown supply for the breakfast table is now within easy reach of everybody who cares to try it.

Now comes Mayor Du Bois, of Denver, with the discovery that alfalfa, when properly picked and cured, is a splendid substitute supply for the tea table, "equal to the best in Japan." Those who have tried it say that its continuous use is a great benefit to the system, serving as a tonic and corrective of irregularities of various kinds, and maintaining a splendid condition of health without recourse to the doctor, all of which must, of course, be taken with some grains of allowance. Our annual imports of tea now amount to from $13,000,000 to $15 000,000 a year, and if alfalfa is a reasonably good substitute, it would be possible to keep the greater part of this money at home. If one could come to like soy beans and alfalfa for coffee and tea, it would be easy to reduce grocery bills very considerably.

The experiment of E E. Page, whose home is near Dixon, Ill., and who has engaged in the cultivation of ginseng, will be watched with interest. Mr. Page spent two years among "'seng diggers" of the South, and has a vast fund of information upon the subject which will aid him in his attempt to make the root succeed in this northern latitude. The seed is worth $2 an ounce, and an acre of good crop sells for $1,000.

### IMPROVED MAMMOTH WHITE FRENCH ARTICHOKE.

The yield is so enormous that one who has never seen them grow, can scarcely believe the quantity that can be grown on an acre. Those who have given them a thorough trial the past year report a yield of from 350 to 1,500 bushels to the acre.

CHEMICAL ANALYSIS OF ROOTS.

| Roots. | Flesh Formers | Fat Formers |
|---|---|---|
| White Turnips | 1 | 40 |
| Carrots | 6 | 65 |
| Parsnips | 9 | 79 |
| Mangolds | 4 | 102 |
| Sugar Beets | 9 | 136 |
| Artichokes | 10 | 188 |

Here let me quote part of an article written by Col. John Scott, of Iowa, to the Western Stock Journal. He is one of our progressive farmers, and after digging, measuring and weighing a part of his crop, found them to yield 900 bushels per acre, and says:

"This is but a medium yield, according to reports that seem truthful, and I do not doubt that as many as 1,500 or 2,000 bushels have been raised per acre."

He gives this table showing the chemical analysis of roots. Referring to this, he says: "Practically, however, as a food for swine, the chemical analysis tells but a part of the story. The nutrition in the artichoke is in the form of sugar in solution, and ready for use. If the hog is any judge of what is good for him, his sense can be taken when these roots are offered to him; he not only prefers the artichoke to all other roots, but will scarcely touch corn; and they do so well on them that my neighbor remarked, 'Artichokes beat anything for feed I ever saw.'" I can grow them ready for my hogs at 1½ to 2 cents per bushel.

Never allow a cross word or blow in the stable or anywhere. The horse or cow cannot be scolded or pounded without losing value. If the children or hired help have bad tempers and are cross to the animals, fire the hired help, and if the children refuse to do better, hire a kind man and put the children to work they like.

### CORN SMUT.

Recent experiments with corn smut, reported in Bulletin No. 62, of the Kansas Experiment Station, show that the loss in the weakened ears in smutted corn amounted to nearly 25 per cent. The total damage in any field will, of course, depend upon the proportion of smutted stalks, which is a very variable quantity. In the case of the experimental field, out of a total of 2 984 stalks taken as they run, 724 were more or less affected by smut, with losses in grain as stated. During three years over 200,000 corn plants have been examined by the station force, in about 500 fields. The time of most frequent attack was in June and July. Infection, however, may take place at any time during the growing season, it does not depend so much upon the season as on the stage of development of the plant. Infection may take place in any part of the plant where there is growing tissue, and at any time in its life, but scarcely ever before the plant has attained three feet in height. After the tissues harden, the smut cannot penetrate these, and consequently infection does not take place in the older parts of the plant, but only in the growing tissues. This growing condition is found in the young leaves when the first smut appears in the field, and later on mostly at the junction of the leaf and sheath. Then it appears in the flowers and young parts of the ear and tassel, while later in the season the only parts open to infection are the rudimentary ears which develop after the larger ear on the joint at the lower part of the stalk. The period of incubation between the infection and the appearing of the smut boils is about ten days. It is regarded as probable that the early infection comes from the spores of the previous year, which germinate on the ground at the first favorable weather, while the later and more abundant infections proceed from the new spores developed in the field early in the season Smut appears to be more abundant in dry seasons and in the drier localities. It is usually abundant, too, where the soil has been recently manured, and upon corn growing near stables and barnyards. Such patches often show a greatly increased percentage of smut. The fungus cannot be prevented by soaking the seed in fungicides as is the case with oat smut and the stinking smut of wheat, but since manure forms a favorable breeding ground, fresh manure should not be applied to corn ground, especially in damp soil, nor should corn be planted too close to the source of manure. It is thought that by proper care in this respect, and by burning as many of the smut boils as possible, the disease can probably be kept within limits, which will not cause more than 2 per cent. of damage. It seems scarcely practicable to do more than this, as the expense would be greater than the saving. To this we would only add that as as the early infection seems to come from spores of the previous year, which germinate on the ground, these earlier infections furnishing the new spores for the later and more severe attack, a rotation which would prevent corn from being grown on the same soil two years in succession would probably do much toward decreasing the losses.

The natural food for hogs in the state is grass, mast, roots and bulbs of plants. They never forget their rooting tendencies. Acting upon our knowledge of their fondness for these things we shall do well to now and then give them rations of potatoes, turnips, beets or artichokes during the winter season.

### THE FUTURE OF HAY FARMING

The desire to cultivate as much land as possible in order to get the most possible from it, has led to general neglect of meadow and pasture lands, says American Cultivator. Only when it was found that the soil had lost so much fertility that it would not pay for cultivating was it seeded down or left to grow up with such herbage, both weeds and grass, as nature provided.

The result is that most of the land now in grass is by that very fact discredited as being presumably fit for nothing else. Yet there is in all grass land a constant tendency to increase in fertility. It is so even when the land is left to grow up with weeds and bushes. These shelter the surface, hold the leaves that fall on the land from being blown away. The decomposition of these leaves gradually builds up soil, and to this must be added the excrement from animals fed on the herbage which the soil is still able to grow.

Usually when the improvement of grass land is determined upon the sod to be turned under and rot is regarded as an important part of the soil assets Improving the land as meadow or pasture by manuring it and still keeping it unplowed is hardly ever thought of. Yet as in most cases this grass land is, even with manure, not quite rich enough for profitable cropping, the experiment is worth trying of applying to it such manure as can be had and see what the increased grass or hay product will be worth.

This is done successfully in England. Why may it not be also in the older parts of this country? The demand for hay is generally good in all Eastern cities. Will it pay to fertilize grass so as to make the growing of hay profitable. If it will not pay to maintain fertility in grass land, the logical sequence is that all hay or grass taken from it helps to reduce fertility so that the soil will be worth nothing for the production of any kind of crop.

It is likely that in the future as in the past, most of the hay crop in this country will be produced in the years when the rotation between cultivated crops and grass requires that the land be seeded.

Our climate is not moist like that of England. Hence it cannot keep a good sod many years without plowing and re seeding. This also is so much the best for cultivated land that there need be no fear that the profits of cultivated crops will so lessen the amount of land in grass that there will not be hay enough to feed with grain and coarser fodder, nor that it will fail to be supplied at reasonable prices.

Peas, in common with all plants of the leguminous order, have the power to disintegrate air and utilize introgen for their own growth, and also to enrich the soil. But they need some fertility to start with, as it is only when the plants are grown large that the nodules appear on their roots, by means of which air in the soil is disintegrated. There is probably no better way of applying manure, unless it is to clover, than to use it for peas.

### WAVE OF PROSPERITY HAS REACHED MAINE.

Trout, tongue, salmon, whitefish or chubs taken in payment for subscriptions at this office. We have not yet decided to take any suckers or "horn pouts," but may be driven to it later on.—Ashland (Me.) Headlight.

## HORTICULTURE

### PURCHASING FRUIT TREES.

This is a subject which concerns every one who contemplates setting trees or plants this spring. One has only to let it be noised abroad that he is intending to buy and he is at once harrassed by any number of agents who represent firms of both known and unknown reputation.

If all agents were honest, and represented honest firms, it might do to patronize them occasionally, though one is only helping to pay the agent's salary or commission when he does. This is not saying that all agents and firms are dishonest, for there are many honest and reliable ones, says the Farmers' Voice.

Many times we think we have found an honest firm and placed an order with their agent, yet, after several years' tending and care of the trees, we find, on their fruiting, that some are inferior stock, or not true to name, or both.

I have in mind several of my friends who ventured into purchases which resulted similarly, one in particular who purchased, five years ago, 500 peach trees through an agent of a nursery supposed to be reliable, which the past season fruited nearly all white varieties, though none but yellow ones were ordered.

Although reliable firms guarantee their stock true to name and, in case a mistake is made, would make reparations, this does not begin to repay the planter for the loss of his time and use of the ground to grow more remunerative crops, to say nothing of the interest on the money invested. Then the stock is sometimes stunted, or have poor roots, which make them more uncertain to live.

Another thing to be thought of is the protection from the sun and wind which they usually receive from the agent when he delivers them, if he should happen to do so. Most of the agents care little further than to get their pay, and consequently are careless in handling the stock. They are apt to leave them in some place where the rays of the sun may strike them, and if the wind is blowing, that will be as injurious as the former.

Two years ago an agent received quite an order from this vicinity, and when the trees came they were all packed together in one box in good shape; but he separated each order, and placed them where they were exposed to a dry, hot wind, and there left them for each one who had ordered stock. Some of the trees came into my neighborhood, and I took particular notice of the results. Out of 200 trees which I noticed, less than 100 were alive in the fall. I think many could have been saved by the purchaser had he protected them on his way home with a damp blanket or some damp straw, and taken reasonable care in setting them out.

There are a number of reliable firms who sell directly to the grower, at less rates than through an agent, thereby saving the agent's salary. Where there is an honest, reliable nursery near, it is a good plan to go there and select what stock is wanted, using the nurseryman's judgment as to varieties, if one is new in the business. I have followed this plan for several years, and have never yet had reason to regret it.

Those who are not so situated should send for the catalogues of some of the nursery firms advertised in our leading farm journals, select what they want and order; or, if they are uncertain what varieties would do best in their vicinity, leave it to the judgment of the nurserymen, stating the soil, location and exposure, and he will seldom be disappointed in the results.

### FRANK LESLIE'S POPULAR MONTHLY FOR MARCH.

The widespread interest in the coming inaugural ceremonies at Washington gives timeliness and value to the article entitled "Ninety seven Years in the White House," which forms the leading feature of Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly for March. It is written by Joanna R. Nicholls, and is profusely illustrated with portraits and interior views reproduced from new photographs. Then there is a vigorous description of the great Lincoln Inauguration, by Hon. A. Oakey Hall, who was a participant in the ceremonies. This is illustrated with a reproduction of a sketch of the inauguration made at the time, and a picture of some of the costumes worn at the Inauguration Ball. There are many other interesting and important articles in this number, and some clever stories and poems.