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THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

Has the largest circulation of any family agricultural or political paper published between Richmond and Atlanta.

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

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Agriculture

ALL AROUND THE FARM.

EDITED BY BENJ. IRBY, RALEIGH, N. C.

Prof. Benj. Irby, late Professor of Agriculture, Agricultural and Mechanical College, Raleigh, has become a regular contributor to this department. All questions relating to the farm garden or orchard will be answered by Prof. Irby.

PROF. IRBY'S WEEKLY LETTER.

GROWING ENSILAGE.

It is no longer a question with dairymen and stockmen as to whether ensilage pays or not; but the question now is how to grow it in the cheapest, and handle it in the most economical way. What lands to plant, how to plant, what to fertilize with, and how to cultivate, what machinery to handle it with and how to feed it. These are the questions that now interest the progressive farmer, as he has long since decided that he must raise ensilage.

Any land that will make good corn will grow good ensilage if corn is planted. It might be remarked just here that corn has been found to be the best of all crops.

Some use sorghum, pearl millet, teosmote, pea vines, and anything that grows a large amount of stuff.

Corn seems to fill the bill best of all. Sorghum comes next.

A rich, mellow, loamy soil will grow the best crop and a good clay soil if properly worked will give fine returns. Apply manure broadcast and plow deep with a two horse plow in fall or winter, followed by a subsoil plow. Break again in spring about the first of May.

About June first run over the land with a Clark's cutaway harrow, leaving the land level. Lay off the rows and apply a fertilizer rich in nitrogen in the drills. Plant with a Centennial planter, as it does the best work, and saves seeds.

Plant in rows 4 feet apart and 1 foot in the drill, two grains to the hill. It is better to have two small stalks than one large one.

The land should be left level when planted. If it is a stiff clay run over the land with a smoothing harrow just before the crop comes up. This will break the crust and kill the fine grass and weeds. When the corn gets up three or four inches, run the smoothing harrow again, running across the rows as though you would tear the crop up. It will be found that but few stalks are injured and the land gets another good cultivation, as a double harrow will easily go over fifteen acres a day. In about one week more run around the ensilage with a single horse cultivator. Next with a double shovel, and lastly with a single horse cultivator. Try to break the crust after every rain, as it will do the crop good to cultivate it and keep the land from baking and tend to hold the moisture. Lay it by when about feet high. It pays to plant a variety suited for ensilage; like Virginia Ensilage, Mosby's Prolific, or Cock's Prolific.

With these you get a small stalk, two or three medium size ears, and if there happens to be a skip or poor stand it will send up shoots to fill the space.

Out when the ears are glazed, or just passing out of the doughy state. If the field is large it will pay to buy a corn harvester, but if it is small the most economical method is to cut by hand. Use a common weeding hoe with helve cut off to about two feet. Keep sharp and cut stalk about four inches above ground. Pile on every fourth row, laying the corn across the rows in nice even piles. Then it will be easier to handle afterwards.

Haul into the barn on a broad frame made for the purpose. In unloading, lay it off carefully, as it is much easier handled when not tangled.

Use an Ohio feed cutter and elevator and tramp the ensilage into the silo. Use no weights or covers for the silage, as the top will rot away, and this will soon form a covering.

Several styles of silos will be discussed later.

ORGANIZATION.

As soon as a farmer begins to get comfortably fixed on his farm, as soon as he has received a competence and can really for the first time enjoy life, he begins to talk of moving to town, and finally pulls up and goes. Once there he is soon lost sight of and disappears. While in the country he was well respected and perhaps a leader,

once in the town or city he is overlooked—becomes a cipher. Why should a farmer leave a country neighborhood with which he has become identified and interested?

The country society is not what it ought to be, and this dissatisfied farmer thinks he will find better by moving to town.

Now let him stay in his country home and go to work and help improve the condition of himself and brother farmers and make a better society right at home. Organize them, get better roads, better schools, better society, better facilities for doing business, do more business, encourage smaller farms and more intensive farming. Don't be selfish.

At a recent farmers' institute in New York, the question was asked, "which is best for the farmers' interest, the grange or farmers' club?"

Mr. Van Dresser said: "I believe the grange is one of the best organizations for the farmer—but if you don't have one—form a farmers' club. Be sure and have some sort of an organization. You will find it of great benefit to yourselves and your young people. We ought to use every means in our power to make our young people happy and contented on the farm. Take them to the grange, to the club and the institute. Just go along this line of progression and you will be surprised at the results that will ensue."

Mr. Litchard said: "The grange has one advantage over the club—it has a national organization to back it up. We have nine of them in Alleghany county, through which we have in eleven years saved \$45,000 in fire insurance premiums. All depends on the farmers, however. You might as well whistle against the wind as to attempt to start a grange or a club in some places. You can distinguish one of these townships as soon as you drive into it—no organization, poor school, no roads, no telephone; don't want anything that's going to cost a cent!"

Let us look at some of the advantages of organization. Where I live we have a lively grange of 105 members; it has existed for twenty five years and has just celebrated its quarter centennial with much eclat. This grange has kept its members from moving to town. It has accumulated property worth up in the thousands. It runs a very successful fair, that is a credit to any place. It buys and sells much of the home produce and supplies, ships clover seed to the same eastern granges that it buys buckwheat flour from; buys corn, flour and bran, etc., and saves on these articles many times the cost of maintaining the grange. This neighborhood encourages all kinds of legitimate enterprises and is alive and full of progress. In the home neighborhood of this grange started the county telephone system that is giving such general satisfaction with its 150 miles of wire and 125 phones. The two schools here reflect the enterprise generated; State normal graduates are employed by the year and each school has a fine library.

Talk about farmers moving to town for rest, social and intellectual companionship! Why, there is not a town in existence that will compare with the advantages that can be built up right at home as in the case above mentioned.

With a good organization for all lines of co operation, good schools, telephones, plenty of good reading, daily mails, good roads, no saloons, what on earth need a farmer move to town for?

If his neighborhood hasn't got these, the best use he can put his head and hands to is to work them up. The very labor of doing this will educate and give new and better ideas. The future of this country depends on the condition of the country homes. H. K. Smith, Putnam Co., Ill., in Farmers' Voice.

OUR FARM GARDEN.

Much is said and written about farmers having good vegetable and fruit gardens, intimating that it is an easy matter to grow and attend the same. Without doubt the farmer and his family need and deserve the very best of garden productions, but they have only a meagre chance for them. True, they have the land; some, but not all, have the manure and skill. The time required is frequently lacking. Just when the garden needs care some important field crop demands immediate

attention. This is given, and the garden is necessarily left over to the tender mercies of weeds or the women and children. Just when a man's labor is of the utmost importance, to secure even a fair crop of "peas," very few farmers have any desire to fuss in the garden, even if they have time and considering the result of average farm gardening, they are justified. It would be cheaper to buy the vegetables than to have wasted labor, manure and seed, as is often done.

The science of gardening, or fruit growing, is as distinct and far removed from farming as farming is from manufacturing. "Every man to his trade," that is, to follow the "bent of his inclinations." But many farmers are so situated as to be unable to get a supply of fresh vegetables every day and must grow them if they would have them at all. But ah, how many do without rather than to expend the time and trouble to have a garden, yet they could have some, even if not the best. It does not take so much trouble to have peas, lettuce, radishes, early potatoes, cabbages, tomatoes, etc., growing in connection with ordinary farmers' crops, even if they will not be ideal productions.

While planting early potatoes a few peas can be scattered along in the furrow, giving the harrowing when the peas show above ground. Instead of waiting for the potatoes to show, the peas then show the rows, making after cultivation simple. When setting out the rows of early cabbages alongside the potato patch, a few lettuce plants can be set between some of the cabbage and radish seed between the rest. When replanting corn a few early tomato plants set in the missing hills will actually pay more than the same hills in corn, the same cultivation doing for both. Such vegetable plants can now be had so cheaply from local gardeners or from advertisers that it really costs less than the seed and trouble in growing, to say nothing of the risk of poor seed cultivation. For instance, I bought 1,000 celery plants this year that cost \$1.35 delivered at my railroad station; plants that I could not grow and sell for three times the money, that were just as good as any I could grow. Every plant grew, and has matured for sale. Here is an idea that I know to be practical. In moderately thickly settled farming communities a good gardener can get a good trade and living by supplying farmers with vegetables, especially early ones, delivering them from house to house, and if he will take trade in eggs, butter, poultry, etc., it will eventually result in his doing all the gardening, besides turning an honest penny in merchandising. Regularity of delivery and strict honesty are required.—Practical Farmer.

PRACTICAL FARMERS.

A correspondent, who has received a sample copy, says Wallace's Farmer, writes us that the paper is well enough but he is a practical farmer and has no time to read when farm work commences, and therefore thinks he will not subscribe just now; that he does not believe much in book farming anyway. Another farmer drops in and says: "Our folks were not raised on the farm and we made a good many mistakes in beginning, but since we have been taking your advice on clover we have doubled our yield of grain per acre." This man would not think for a moment of doing without his favorite agricultural paper. Which of these men is the practical farmer?

We are greatly amused at the egotism of some men who call themselves practical farmers. They assume that they and their fathers before them too learned all that is known or can be learned with regard to the business which deals with more complex and difficult problems than any other business followed by mortal man, a business which is now engrossing time and talents of some of the very ablest men not only in this country, but in the civilized world. The men who have done the greatest service to agriculture are men who are willing to learn even from the man who prides himself as "practical" and needs no instructions. They are diligently groping after facts, principles, experimenting in every possible way, interrogating nature, and reporting truthfully what she says. Instead of being egotists they are humble inquirers after nature's methods and will spare no labor nor pains to find the truth. The so called "practical" farmer assumes that he and his father have found this out long ago and do not need the help of the experience and researches of other men which it is the province of the agricultural paper to give.

WHY HAVE FARMERS AND FARM PAPERS SO LITTLE INFLUENCE ON LEGISLATION?

At the meeting of the Farmers' Institute held at Shelby, Iowa, last month, Hon. H. M. Beyers, former speaker of the Iowa legislature, was asked to deliver an address on the subject of the influence of agriculturists and agricultural papers on legislation. He began by stating that had he been choosing subject, he would have made it, "Why have farmers and farm papers so little influence on legislation?" and that he would have discussed it as thus stated. He stated in brief that there were over 200,000 farmers—voters—in the State of Iowa; that, in fact, they constituted a majority of all the voters in the State; that their influence, if properly directed, would be all powerful in legislation, whereas, as a matter of fact, it was comparatively little; and that if one-half or one-fourth of them would agree on any one measure, there would be no question, whatever, of its enactment by the legislature. He stated further that farmers having elected a Senator or Representative assumed that their whole duty was done; that every other interest in the State was organized and represented in the lobbies of the legislature; that they aimed to head off any legislation that would affect their interests adversely, while the member was left unsupported by farmers and uninstructed with regard to their interests. He stated further that the farmer was about as likely to defeat in the coming election the man who had stood faithfully by his interests as he was to support him, and cited the instance of one representative in the last legislature who stood with undaunted courage and heroism that excited his utmost admiration for every measure that was just and right. The corporation interests told him plainly that if he did not keep quiet he would be defeated for nomination and the farmers would not stand by him. His reply was, in substance, that he would do his duty and take the consequences.

He took them and was defeated. Mr. Beyers suggested that if farmers would go on and perfect their farm organizations, discuss measures that affect their interests, advise their legislators through their farm paper as to what legislation they desire, there would be no difficulty in securing it. Mr. Beyers had a large audience, which gave him respectful attention. In talking with a number of farmers about the address the following day, one farmer made this significant: "Has it come to this, that having elected members of the General Assembly, we must follow them up and tell them how to vote?" The indictment made in this remark was a rather severe one—more severe, we think, than the facts in the case warrant. He is a very superior man who is thoroughly versed in the problems of legislation that affect the farm that he is able without the advice of farmers to know just how he should vote. The agricultural interests are like the Commandments, exceeding broad, and there should be some way of advising the legislator of the general sentiment of farmers on any given topic. We know of no way to do this more effectively than through the columns of a reliable farm paper. If the members of the legislature thoroughly understood that the agricultural paper of the State voiced the average sentiment of the farmers of that State on any given subject, farmers would have very little to complain of in the way of legislation. The agricultural paper is the bond of union, and the only bond of union that has yet been devised, or we believe can be, between the farmers, and hence it is and should be their exponent and mouthpiece—their watchman on the water tower.

One great reason, in our judgment, why farmers have so little influence in legislation and suffer as compared with other classes is because they do rally around and support to the extent they might an agricultural paper that is faithful to their interests and seeking on all occasions to promote them, not merely in the way of growing crops, but in securing legislation that will give them a price for these crops, and protect them from excessive taxation. The best day's work that any man can do on the farm this year is rallying his neighbors to the support by subscription to the agricultural paper that is faithful to his interests. No army, however large, can win a victory unless they follow their colors and stand by their leaders. There is no way in which farmers can secure defeat so readily and certainly as by

encouraging in any way the men, whether in the lobby or in the press who aim to assassinate the private character of the men who are standing unflinchingly by the farmers' interests. Until farmers cease to encourage this assassination of their friends they should not expect anything else than to have their own interests assassinated in legislation.—Wallace's Farmer.

FARM FACT AND FUN.

Cotton continues very low. There has been scarcely any change in price for the past two months. The Free Press thinks that a big crop will be grown in the South this year, which will keep the price low, and we advise the farmers of this section to all make their provisions at home. Grow plenty of grain and raise plenty of hogs, poultry, etc., and plant some tobacco and as little cotton as practicable.—Kinston Free Press.

Have you taken an inventory? Do you know just how much you own and owe? If you knew these facts a year ago, and ascertain them to-day, you will see at once how much you are ahead or behind on the year's work. How many farmers know this? How long could any mercantile business run that didn't take an inventory and find out just how it stood? The farmer needs to do this just as much as any business man. Don't let April go by without finding "just where you are at."—Farm and Home.

THE 1898 PLANTING.

It is very natural to infer that the tobacco planters of Virginia and the Carolinas will aim for at least a good sized crop this year. Firstly, because they have had much better returns from it than cotton or other crops, and then prices have kept up at a high average and advanced with heavy sales, though the quality has been nothing extra. There is, therefore, room for an improvement in quality, which of itself should be an inducement to higher prices and fully as good prices if the crop is not so fine, says Southern Tobaccoist.

In fact, low grades are highest and medium in strong demand. This is what has made the '97 crop a profitable one, rather than the higher prices heretofore in the finer but lighter weight grades. The fine and fancy cutter and wrapper, has a limited demand as well as price; there is about a fixed standard of both.

WHAT A NORTH CAROLINA FARMER CAN DO.

He can raise from 200 to 300 bushels of sweet potatoes or from 100 to 400 bushels of Irish potatoes to the acre, and for \$50 he can build a house that will keep them the year round.

He can plant one acre of artichokes and fatten 50 hogs on it; the hogs can do their own digging and waste nothing.

He can raise all kinds of stock 100 per cent cheaper than it can be done further north.

He will not have to fertilize his land to make it yield a good harvest, although here, as elsewhere, judicious fertilizing generally pays.

He can run a farm without a mortgage on it.

He can have vegetables on his table the year round.

He can plant one acre in cane and make 200 gallons of beautiful, clear syrup with no sorghum twang to it.

Bees require no attention further than taking what honey you wish.

Wet land, sown in red top, forms an everlasting meadow of the finest hay in the world.

One bale of cotton is the average yield, although one and a half bales per acre is not an uncommon crop.

One hundred peach trees can be planted to the acre, and three to five bushels of choice fruit per tree can be counted on after the third year.—Cotton Belt.

ROTATION OF CROPS.

Where our supply of manure is limited we must adopt a system to make it go farther and do more, which is a good plan if we have ever so much manure at our disposal. The crops to be used in our rotations must of course be governed by locality and soil, as well as climate. Here we generally begin with corn, which is preceded by a good top dressing of stable manure, if we have it; then comes potatoes or oats; the third year wheat, which is seeded to clover, which is mowed the fourth year, and, if very good, the fifth year.

This in its turn is plowed under the

following fall and corn planted. Manure should be thinly scattered on the clover during the winter months, although the common practice here is to top dress the wheat, but better results will follow light sprinkling over the clover, thereby enabling the farmer to get the most from his otherwise inadequate supply of stable fertilizer. This method will soon do away entirely with the expensive and wasteful application of commercial fertilizers on the average farm, a procedure that will sooner or later render the farmer indeed independent. We may set it down as an axiom that every acre of land should be self sustaining.

Mason Co., W. V.

HORTICULTURE.

Your fruit orchard may be fertilized with stable manure and planted with pumpkins, yellow globe beets, and red stock beets as profitable feed for young hogs. These will keep the weeds down, prevent the land from washing, and shade the ground; always have your orchard lands producing such protective and profitable crops.—Southern Fruit Grower.

VINES AND TRELLISES.

Many people are prevented from planting grape vines under the idea that the putting up of the trellis is a difficult and expensive thing to do. But the first year a light stake will be all that is required to train the single shoot to, and even the second year, when two or three bunches of grapes may be grown, the stalks will be all that is required. A trellis made by setting posts six feet apart and five feet high above the surface of the ground will accommodate a single vine. For supports, wires should be stretched between the posts, but the wires must not be left tight when cold weather comes on, as the contraction of the wire by cold will surely break them.—Ex.

A PLEA FOR HONEY.

A weary house mother exerts herself to put up rows on rows of jellies, jams and canned fruit, often in the extreme heat, when the same amount of time, more healthfully spent out of doors, would supply her family with a like quantity of sweets quite as wholesome and palatable to the average household, says Country Gentleman. Of course a variety is desirable and I would not do away with the time honored preserve closet, but its duties might well be diminished in quantity and supplemented with those which require no manipulation. Especially where there are children it is desirable to have a supply of natural sweets—honey and maple syrup—as it is noticeable that a child can eat much more freely of these than of candy or jams without ill effects.

ATTEND TO THE ORCHARD.

There are too many farmers who think that when an orchard is once planted all they have to do is simply to wait three or four years and then to pick the apples and take in the money. For such there is nothing but sure disappointment. The orchard must be cared for just as corn or anything else on the farm.

There is no farm complete without an orchard and all kinds of fruit, from the strawberry up to the apple, twelve months in the year. There is nothing so conducive to the health and happiness of a well regulated farm family as plenty of good, delicious fruit the year around.

Now, the orchard as an annex to the farm. I would say all, outside of family use, for a commercial purpose, plant only about six leading winter varieties, for they can be picked and cared for when other work on the farm is not pressing. For such an orchard take the most suitable ground on the farm, and the larger the orchard the cheaper and better it can be managed, and with more profit, because there is quite a decided advantage in a good-sized orchard.—Philip Lux.

WHEN YOU WRITE THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

About anything, please give us a list of your neighbors and friends who do not take THE FARMER, but who you think may possibly be induced to give it a trial. Give postoffice address of each one. Give us also the names and addresses of all of your neighbors who take farm or reform papers. Any person will do us a favor by complying with the above request. If you cannot renew your subscription now, kindly give the list of names, anyhow.