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THE



PROGRESSIVE



FARMER.

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THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE A paramount to ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER is the Official Organ of the North Carolina Farmers' State Alliance.

"I am standing now just behind the curtain, and in full glow of the coming sunset. Behind me are the shadows on the track, before me lies the dark valley and the river. When I mingle with its dark waters I want to cast one lingering look upon a country whose government is of the people, for the people, and by the people."—L. L. Folk, July 15th, 1890.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Of course, it remained for the Charlotte Observer, with the narrowness and bigotry of partisan prejudice, to attack the Raleigh Post because it sought to encourage a factory founded by the farmers. It remained for it to attack a non-partisan organization seeking to better the condition of the agricultural class. It owes an apology to its readers, and to the farmers. In the Sub Alliance to which this writer belongs the three great political parties are represented, and partisan politics is never mentioned.

In proportion to numbers the Observer's party is doubtless better represented in the matter of State Alliance officers than any other party.

The Observer is either wofully deceived or a malicious deceiver. Will it tell us which?

The Recorder of last week accuses us of "attempting to destroy its character." This is a weak, puny piece of misrepresentation, which we supposed to be beneath editor Bailey, for whom we have only the highest respect. We always supposed we had a right to differ with a man without being accused of villifying him. While differing with the Recorder, every reader of this paper will testify that we have simply given our reasons therefor, believing that editor Bailey wished to be on the right side. For our part we do not claim to be infallible, and we abuse no one for disagreeing with us, and do not say he is attempting to injure our influence, or destroy our character when he sees fit to give his reasons. As we said in our issue of Aug. 2 we admire the sentiment expressed by Marcus Aurelius: "If any man is able to show me that I do not think right, I will gladly change, for I seek the truth by which no man was ever injured." The writer has not had as much experience in the newspaper business as the Recorder editor, but we can tell him that the proper thing to do is to stick to argument and when beaten not to fall behind the baby plea—"you are trying to hurt my character."

The Wilmington Messenger too favors "soft soap" but it doesn't want too much "lie" in it. Referring to the tendency of the Democratic press to glory in "the numbers of voters who are returning to the Democratic party" without giving names or producing proof, it says:

"Every campaign the talk as reported in democratic newspapers is always favorable and from everywhere. But like some wars the deeds do not correspond with the pronouncements. The democrats get licked at the count. Let everybody be cautious and conservative this year in statements. Too much blow misleads all the way. The state in campaigns overruns with great orators, able statesmen, consummate masters in debate. Let us be moderate. The truth will not hurt, and if defeat comes it will not be so unbearable."

The Messenger is gloriously right. This writer, in 1894 and again in 1896, became considerably frightened at the reports of immense numbers of Populists returning to the Democratic fold. But it will be remembered that the election returns, to use a phrase coined by the "visiting statesman," "lowered the aspirations" of these dealers in fiction. And history repeats itself.

AGRICULTURE.

NEWS FROM JACKSON COUNTY

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

We are having rain, more or less every day and frequently during the night. This has been the case all through July, and up to the present in August.

It has been fine weather for improving corn crops that had been well cultivated; and we have probably never had a better prospect for corn in this part of the State than we have at present. Wheat threshing has been in slow progress among us during the last four or five weeks, and because of almost continuous rainy weather, a great many crops are yet not threshed.

We find that a great deal of wheat is injured in the stack by careless in putting it up, water having found its way toward the center of many of the stacks. Our pastures for cattle and horses have improved wonderfully since the rainy season began. Really we never have seen them looking finer than at present.

Quite a sad accident occurred near Webster last Monday. Some little children had gone out a little distance from the house to gather up some stove wood, and in an attempt to get some from the lower side of a large log that lay on a hillside, which was dislodged, rolling over and crushing one little girl, from the effects of which she died that night. Another little girl was caught by the log just as it lodged against a stump, but was released by the efforts of a young man, whose strength was so increased by excitement, that he slightly raised the log, a thing which two ordinary men could not do under cool circumstances.

The people up in this part of the State are not much excited, politically, yet; but if aspirants for office can have any effect, we will not stay as near zero, politically, as we have been during the summer.

A. J. LONG, SR.
Near Webster, N. C., Aug. 18, '98.

A SAMPLE OF MISSISSIPPI FARMERS' INSTITUTES.

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

BROOKHAVEN, Miss., Aug. 18, 1898.

Thinking you and your readers might be interested in a short account of some of the farmers' institutes I am attending in Mississippi, I concluded to give you the benefit of my experience.

I have been employed by the State Agricultural College to conduct these farmers' institutes throughout the State, assisted by the professors of the College and officers of the Experiment Station. My first institute was at the Patron's Camp grounds, near Lake. This place is known far and near as Lake Camp Grounds, and consists of a large enclosure that will seat 1,200 to 1,500 people, a hotel and about twenty-five cottages neatly whitewashed and ranging in size from one to four rooms.

These are owned and occupied through the camp season by citizens from the adjoining country.

The object of the camp is to have a good time rustivating and at the same time improve the mental man, as they have some literary exercises night and day. Many hundreds of people congregate here from all quarters and as their exercises are varied, most anyone can be pleased.

These buildings are nicely arranged in streets around the large pavilion.

I was struck with the way the grounds were lighted. All about over this large area platforms were constructed about four feet high; on these earth was laid about six inches deep. Then at night a big fire was built on each of these platforms, of the "fat pine knots" that abound in this section.

The grounds had a very picturesque appearance by this weird light. One could easily see all over the camp by these bright lights.

But I find I am taking up time describing the grounds and not saying much about the farmers' institute.

We landed there early in the morning and were heartily received by the board of managers and requested to hold a farmers' institute for the next two days, so as soon as we had put our "grips" in the hotel and brushed up a little, we proceeded at the ringing of the bell to the pavilion and set to work.

After discussing "Living at Home," the "Home Acre," "Strawberry Culture," and the "Home Dairy," for several hours, we adjourned for dinner.

After dinner we discussed "Commercial Dairying and the Raising of Forage Crops," especially the hairy vetch and the winter turf oat.

It was generally concluded after a

thorough discussion that these two crops sowed together in September and lightly grazed in early spring and then cut for hay about latter part of May would be a very valuable crop for anyone wishing a grain crop, hay crop and renovator at the same time. Prof. W. L. Hutchinson, Director of the Experiment Station, stated that he had a field that had been reseeded by the waste seeds of vetch and oats for five years, and that he had grown other crops on the same land during the summer which came off in time for the oats and vetch to take possession in the fall again. Thus three crops were grown on the same land each year and the land is actually getting better each year.

Next topic discussed was conservation of moisture in the soil, the controlling of surface water, etc. Under this head the Mangum terrace was discussed at length and I feel sure in predicting that another system of terracing has been added to that section, if not to the State.

That night we were entertained by music and recitation from the young people, which was, by the way, very fine. They believe in music at the camp, evidenced by the fact that a brass band was on hand at all of the exercises, besides the piano and violin music before mentioned.

The next morning was occupied by discussions on farm topics until 11 a. m., when a halt was called and it was announced that this hour had been allotted to a candidate for U. S. Congress who was present and ready to speak. Now something strange happened, at least to me, being a North Carolinian.

Some one in the crowd proposed to do away with the political speech for the present, at least, as they considered the discussion of farming more interesting and profitable. You may imagine my amazement at this announcement.

So the prospective representative, who by the way is one of the brightest men in the State, got up and requested that his appointment be moved up one day. So the agricultural discussion went on.

That evening we had a very creditable mule colt show in which twenty-one fine young mules participated. They were beauties and proved that the farmers around Lake believe in raising their own mules as well as hog and hominy.

When these mules are grown that number would about represent a carload. I asked several how much it cost them to raise a mule, and they agreed that situated as they were they could raise them for from \$25 to \$35, everything counted. Anyone will agree that this is better than sending to Kentucky for them.

After the mule show we had a horse and cattle exhibit and returned once more to the pavilion for further lectures on agriculture.

Late in the evening we jumped into our hack after bidding hasty farewells to our kind and indulgent listeners and hurried to the depot, feeling that we had had a pleasant time at Lake and that we hoped to repeat the pleasure at some future date. I am,

Respectfully yours,

B. IRBY.

DROUTH-PROOF CULTIVATION.

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

The drouth has already seriously injured crops in this section, with a good prospect for other injury. We cannot change the mode of cultivation this season; the plans commenced, must be carried to a finish. The serious effects of the drouth should, however, impress upon the necessity of a change to a system that is more nearly drouth-proof. Crops can, to a great extent, be rendered drouth-proof by deep and thorough tillage, in connection with a proper supply of humus.

In a contest for a premium, offered by an agricultural society, for the largest yield of corn, an acre of old field was given one of the contestants (they were all, as nearly as possible, given the same quality of land).

This acre was plowed and subsoiled, crossed and re-crossed, until it was thoroughly broken to the depth of 18 inches.

Five hundred light two-horse loads of muck, 50 loads of barn yard manure and 140 pounds of guano were then broadcasted and plowed in shallow. Corn was planted in drills, 8x7 inches, one grain. No re-planting nor thinning. The acre yielded 149 bushels and 2 quarts of corn, taking the first premium. The corn kept green to the

ground, and flourished throughout a spell of dry weather, while corn cultivated the usual way, having at least five times the distance, fired badly.

COW PEAS.

The proper fertilization of the soil should be the first object sought. With said view, prepare the land thoroughly, and then, unless you have surplus stable or other manure, apply from 35 to 600 pounds of acid phosphate and 400 to 600 pounds of kainit, broadcast per acre and plow in. The smaller quantity will produce fine results, but it is believed that the larger quantity, in connection with cow peas, will produce as good results as the above heavy fertilizing with muck, etc., and is far cheaper.

About June 1st lay off into drills 4 feet apart and plant peas, preferably the Wonderful or Clay. If the former, and you wish to raise peas for edible purposes, single stalks in the drill should not stand nearer than 2 feet. As an experiment, try some 4 feet. Cultivate thoroughly. I prefer drilling and cultivating to sowing, as a much ranker growth can be produced. When thoroughly ripe, say about the time of frost, turn under.

The land may lay until corn planting time, thus giving the vines good time to decompose.

If not practical to sow and subsoil before February 1st, at planting time lay off into 7 feet drills. Run a coultter or other suitable plow in the bottom of the drills and produce all the loose dirt possible at several times running. Then drop the corn, for 1 stalk, 12 inches apart. As an experiment, try some 6 and some 9 inches.

While the corn is small, bar it and run a coultter or other plow in the bottom of the furrows. The deep plowing (equivalent to subsoiling) may thus be continued to the middle of the rows.

About June 1st, plant peas in drills midway between the corn rows. Fertilize and cultivate thoroughly. Planted as aforesaid, very nearly a full crop each of corn and peas can be grown.

Peas are nitrogen gatherers and when properly stimulated and turned under, produce a perfect fertilizer, containing nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash, thus enriching the land more economically than can be done by any other mode. Clover, and all other plants of the legume family, possess similar fertilizing properties.

But thorough preparation of the soil, in connection with high fertilization, will not alone fill the bill. Constant and regular cultivation will be necessary to prevent damage from drouth.

For the benefit of both corn and peas, the ground should be properly stirred soon after every rain, until the corn is in early roasting ear, unless the peas vines sooner prevent.

At maturity turn the corn stalks and pea vines and follow with wheat and clover.

The stalks and vines will when rotted, provide the necessary humus, which will make the ground loose, and will also exert a wonderful influence in preventing damage from drouth.

But few, if any, farms can be found where a single acre is properly fertilized and cultivated. Try at least a few acres according to the above, and get into the road that leads to the abandonment of the old plan of unnecessary wear and tear. When you get fully installed into the new plan, labor will cease to be a task; it will be a pleasure.

Long Leaf, N. C.

BRYAN TYSON.

ROUTING.

A farmer doesn't need fresh air. He gets plenty of that on the farm. What he needs is a change of associations. He and his wife need an outing to take them from their never ending round of chores, to lift them out of the rut and broaden their minds.

A little outing at this time and of this sort costs so little that one will never miss it, while the amount of enjoyment he will get out of it, if he does it for enjoyment and not to criticize and whine, cannot be computed in cold cash. If you exhibit anything and fail to capture a premium, don't get mad and make a crank of yourself, but critically examine the premium articles and see if you can't beat them next year. The purpose of premiums is to encourage the production of the best and to stir up the spirit of competition.

If there is any time in the year when the farmer can take a little outing it is this month. Of course, the land must

be prepared for fall wheat; but unless one is trying to do more than he can this will not interfere with his outing. Nights are lengthening and growing cooler, and generally are just right for camping parties and jollification. Take a good supply of provisions along, and eat, laugh and be merry. Don't wear a stiff white shirt, choking collar and a heavy black suit, but wear something you can climb a tree or stand on your head in, if you want to. And if the ladies are wise they will not array themselves in purple and fine linen, but they will dress so as to feel thoroughly comfortable and fear neither dust nor a sprinkling of rain.—Fred Grundy, in Farm and Fireside.

MAKING SIRUP AND SUGAR.

A Valuable Talk on a Subject Which Interests Many Farmers

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

The season for grinding cane on the farm is nearly here. Bulletin No. 44 of Florida Station, tells all about planting, cultivating and harvesting the tropical sugar cane, and how to manufacture, preserve and market sirup and sugar from its juice. As much of this practice is equally applicable to sorghum juice, we give a rather full report of that portion of the experiments relating to manufacturing, preserving and marketing. We also append a digest of bulletin No. 39, of Delaware Station on experiments in developing sorghum as a source of sugar.

As to grinding the cane on the farm, the Florida bulletin emphasizes the vast superiority of the three-roller mill over the two-roller mill. It also emphasizes the great importance of constant watchfulness to see that the rollers are kept screwed tight together. Even with the three-roller mill tightly screwed, only three-fourths of the juice is squeezed out of the stalk, and the two-roller mill fails to get more than half of it.

The juice having been expressed from the cane, the first process in actual sirup making is at an end, and the next step is that of freeing the juice as largely as possible from foreign substances. In common farm practice this consists simply in straining it through a gunny sack as it comes from the mill. This, however, although desirable, only suffices to remove from the juice the small particles of cane that pass from the rollers. There remain many other foreign substances, the presence of which is detrimental to the quality of the sirup and the removal of which is indispensable to securing of the best product. Chief among these are coloring matters and the so-called non-sugar carbohydrates and albuminoid compounds. The method which has been universally recommended by the experiment stations for accomplishing this removal consists of sulphuring and liming the juice. The first process being to subject the juice, as it comes from the mill, to the action of sulphurous acid fumes obtained from the burning of sulphur in a furnace constructed for the purpose, and then the removal of sulphurous acid by defecation of the juice with milk of lime in a separate pan or boiler before the actual process of evaporation begins. That the method accomplishes the object sought and results in a superior quality of sirup there can be no question. That it is comparatively expensive, inconvenient and impractical for general domestic use is, however, equally true and is abundantly demonstrated by the fact that, though the method has been recommended by every publication issued by an experiment station treating of sirup making during the past decade, the method has not actually been adopted by one sirup maker in a hundred.

In view of these facts, a series of experiments was undertaken in the hope of devising a simple and practical means so inexpensive as to be within reach of all. The filtering materials tried included straw, hay, seed cotton, cotton lint, sand, shavings, excelsior, sawdust, ground excelsior, charcoal, fuller's earth and Spanish moss. The last material was so unquestionably superior to any other used that it was adopted as the best and most feasible article for the purpose, and was used exclusively after its advantages were demonstrated.

The method of use was as follows: Dry moss, such as can be obtained anywhere in the State of Florida, was carefully picked and freed from leaves, sticks and foreign matter and thoroughly washed. A tub, or half-barrel,

through the bottom of which a hole for the outlet pipe was bored, was taken and a piece of perforated tin was placed over this outlet on the inside of the bottom of the tub. The tub was then filled with the cleaned moss, which was packed as solidly as it could be crowded in by the weight of a man, until it was filled. It was then placed under the outlet gutter from the mill and the juice was conducted upon the moss in the center of the tub by a tin trough. This juice, therefore, sank by gravity through the entire thickness of moss till it found outlet through the pipe hole in the bottom through which, by means of a half inch iron pipe, it was conducted by gravity to the skimming pan. The passage of the juice through the moss not only freed it of all coarse and floating foreign particles but filtered out a very large proportion of the non-sugar contents and coloring matter so that the juice passing through the outlet pipe was nearly as clear and colorless as water. The only precaution necessary in using this method is, that the moss naturally occasionally becomes clogged and requires renewing once in two or three days of constant running, but in warm weather it was found that the juice adhering to the moss in the tub was liable to ferment over night and be sour in the morning, under which circumstances it is necessary to replenish the filter with fresh moss before beginning work each day.

A further step to insure a clear, pure sirup that will look well, taste good, keep well and sell, is to finish the sirup in a second pan or kettle—never finish it in the skimming pan. Have a finishing pan or kettle on a separate furnace alongside the skimming pan, with a space of five or six feet between them, so that one man can attend to both fires and both pans. Have the finishing pan enough lower than the skimming pan to draw the hot sirup through a pipe from the skimming pan to the finishing pan by means of a stop cock in the pipe.

Another purifying method tried with much success, was to use fullers earth in the skimming pan at the rate of one pound of earth to five gallons of juice. On bringing the juice to the boiling point, all the coloring matter and albuminous impurities ordinarily forming a scum on the surface, were immediately precipitated to the bottom of the pan, leaving a perfectly clear and almost transparent fluid behind, which is easily drawn off with a syphon or through an outlet pipe placed about one inch above the bottom of the pan. The cost of this method with fullers earth worth \$14 per ton is very slight, and the earth exists in large deposits in several parts of the State. So far as actual results are concerned, the sirup produced by this modification compares in every way favorably with that obtained by the simple skimming of the juice, but it does not possess advantages over the same. The method, therefore, possesses merit over, but is hardly yet to be recommended for general use except in cases of highly colored juices from which inferior sirup is produced by the other method.

The finishing process is the test of the operator's skill. A little carelessness here will be fatal. If the sirup is too thin or too thick it is defective, and if it is a little scorched both its looks and taste are very much injured. A very skillful man of much experience may be able to tell the proper density by the ropiness of the sirup, but the only sure test, and by far the best test is a saccharometer. This instrument costs very little, but the bulletin tells how to make one out of a bottle and a stick.

The trouble in marketing home made sirup at a remunerative price has arisen from its want of uniformity and stability, and also largely from its liability to ferment, or to granulate. All methods heretofore proposed to overcome this difficulty, including the sulphuring and liming, have rested upon the introduction of some remedy into the sirup to counteract the tendency to sour, rather than upon a removal of the cause of that tendency.

The Florida Station has experimented on methods to remove the cause of deterioration by thorough purification and classification by the above described methods, and it has secured a fair measure of success, its sirup made by these methods having remained in open vessels in a warm room for three months without the slightest evidence of fermenting or crystallizing into sugar, and it has actually been put upon the market and stood the test