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THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY, is the motto of The Progressive Farmer, and upon this platform it shall rise or fall. Serving no master, ruled by no faction, circumscribed by no selfish or narrow policy, its aim will be to foster and promote the best interests of the whole people of the State. It will be true to the instincts, traditions and history of the Anglo-Saxon race. On all matters relating specially to the great interests it represents, it will speak with no uncertain voice, but will fearlessly the right defend and impartially the wrong condemn. From Col. Polk's Salutatory, Feb. 10, 1886.

RENEWALS—The date opposite your name on your paper, or wrapper, shows to what time your subscription is paid. Thus 1 Jan. '00 shows that payment has been received up to Jan. 1, 1900; Jan. '01 to Jan. 1, 1901, and so on. Two weeks are required after money is received before date, which answers for a receipt, can be changed. If not properly changed within two weeks after money is sent notify us.

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Editorial.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Mr. R. H. Battle has been selected to deliver the address at the unveiling of the Vance monument in this city next July. No better selection could be made. Mr. Battle was Private Secretary to Vance during his term as Governor, and was ever after in close touch with the great North Carolinian.

The monthly bulletin issued by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, by a recent act of Congress, has been classed as second-class mail matter, paying one cent a pound. It now goes third-class, eight cents a pound. The bulletin has been greatly improved of late and should go into the homes of all reading farmers of the State.

The House Committee on Agriculture fixed today, 29th, for taking a final vote on oleomargarine legislation, at which time it will be decided whether the Grout bill or the substitute measure will be reported to the House. It is getting very late in the season now, and it is more than possible that the oleo men will stave off all legislation against their interests until the next session of Congress.

On page 8 of last week's Progressive Farmer, an item was republished from Farm and Ranch, which should have been accompanied by the following explanation: The Government can tax the colored oleomargarine any amount necessary to become practical prohibition of coloring, but it is declared to be unconstitutional to prohibit the manufacture, or to force it to be colored some distinguishing color. We have heard of coloring it pink for about fourteen years, and this would put an effectual stoppage to the fraud, as has been proven in Europe but our Constitution does not allow it.

The verdict of coroner's jury as to the Cumcock disaster, made public 26th, is as follows: "We, the jurors summoned by the coroner, have investigated the Cumcock Coal Mine disaster and find that these 21 men came to their deaths by the explosion of gas and the after damp, but how the fire originated we cannot say." The law provides that "all the mines in the State shall be inspected as often as possible," but as no appropriation has ever been made for this purpose, the statute is a dead letter. It appears that the legislature intended this as a part of the duties of the Commissioner of Labor, but he has never so regarded it. The next legislature should give this their attention. In the Cumcock mine alone sixty five lives have been lost within less than five years. This is too grave a matter to be passed over lightly.

WHY NOT?

At Fall River, Massachusetts, a number of mill operatives have organized a company for the manufacture of cotton goods, to be known as the American Cotton Manufacturing Company, with a capital of \$1,000,000, par value of shares \$100, to be taken exclusively by operatives. It will have no capitalist at its head, but will be conducted by labor in the office as well as in the spinning and weaving. The experiment will be watched with much interest. Now, why cannot our cotton farmers organize a cotton growers' co-operative cotton factory, as The Progressive Farmer has been advocating for some months, and share the profits of manufacturing as well as of growing? Or are cotton mill operatives more alert and progressive than cotton farmers?

The question of calling a Constitutional convention to frame a new constitution to eliminate the negro vote was passed upon by the people of Virginia, Thursday, 24th. A very light vote was cast, the advocates of the Constitution winning by a small majority.

HITS THE MARK.

The effort to boom Governor Jarvis and other out-of-date politicians for the presidency of the State University met a warm reception at the hands of the Statesville Landmark last week. We quote this refreshingly bold paragraph: "No man who has the interest of the University or the educational interest of the State sincerely at heart would suggest a politician, and especially an old and worn-out politician, for this important position. It would be better to close the doors of the University at once than to have it die of the dry rot, which it would most certainly do under such management. The man who is placed at the head of the University should be, first, a teacher—a young, vigorous and progressive man, not an old fossil looking for a job." As Uncle Tom would say, "Ain't it de truth?"

THE COMMENCEMENTS.

The commencement season is now at its height. Our schools and colleges were never better attended or more prosperous than during the scholastic year just closing. Throughout the State are evidences of a great educational awakening.

The commencement exercises of the A. & M. College occur this week, closing the most prosperous year in the history of the College. It is announced that it is President Winston's purpose to develop the institution along purely industrial lines, and "to cut it off from all competition with other institutions of learning in North Carolina. Hereafter this college will not receive as students young men desiring merely general education without industrial and technical training."

Oxford Seminary celebrated its fiftieth anniversary a few days ago. President Hobgood is justly proud of his success with this fine old institution. As has been truly said, "The school does not break with its past, but strives to add to rather than take away from the work done by these men of the past." For the past five years the increase in the boarding patronage has been at the rate of 20 per cent. a year, so that the school has more than doubled in the last five years. During the season just closed various improvements have been made.

Peace Institute, of this city, ended a successful session last week. Prof. Edwin Mims, of Trinity College, delivered the commencement address.

Whitsett Institute is steadily growing in popularity. This year there were 27 graduates.

The 98th commencement of Salem Female Academy was attended by a host of friends of this old and justly popular institution. There were 40 graduates in this year's class. The school has had a prosperous year with between 300 and 400 in attendance.

A splendid high school is being built up at Cary by Prof. E. L. Middleton.

One of our best known academies in the State is Buie's Creek. It has had a remarkably rapid, but healthy and substantial growth. The Principal, Prof. J. A. Campbell, is a born teacher.

Other commencements will be referred to next week.

Truth is the most valuable thing we have. Let us economize it.—Mark Twain.

THIS WEEK'S PAPER.

"The Croatan Indians" on page 4 deals with some historical facts that should be familiar to every North Carolinian. The article is long, but well worth the space, we think. Truth is indeed stranger than fiction.

"The Philosophy of Mixing Feeds" should be read by every farmer. Prof. Soule's "Calf Feeding" and Mr. Liles' speech make excellent reading. North Carolina has room for more manufacturing enterprises, but our agricultural future is bright. "About Cows," contributed by Prof. Emery on an exchange, deserves the attention of every cow owner in North Carolina. This article should do good.

By boiling down carefully we have brought within a few columns' space all the new and important provisions of our much-discussed election law. No other paper in the State has ever attempted a complete summary of its provisions. If interested, preserve this copy of the paper.

Three very gratifying facts are clearly set forth in the annual report of the North Carolina Bureau of Labor and Printing, just issued. First, our steady progress along manufacturing lines. Twenty-five cotton mills are now in course of construction. Second, the decreasing number of children employed in factories. Third, the steady growth of the compulsory election idea. All save 86 of the 360 farmers and all save 41 of the 331 persons connected with factories whose views were asked, declared in favor of compulsory education. Verily, "the world do move."

THE GROUT BILL SUBSTITUTE.

This is a measure proposed to kill time. It is understood that congress is to adjourn early in June. If by any other sort of delays than those already exhausted a vote can be staved off, oleomargarine manufacturers can continue the fraud of making their stuff up to be sold to unsuspecting people for butter.

The Grout Bill simply proposed to take off the two cents a pound tax now imposed on oleo, and put on a one-fourth of a cent tax on all uncolored oleo, but to put a tax of ten cents a pound on oleo colored to imitate butter. All experience with it goes to show that so colored, it is sold to people for butter, and this Grout bill is one of the steps in making manufacturers put the food products up for what they are, and to prevent frauds in selling the same.

By the Grout bill uncolored oleo is relieved of 700 per cent. of the tax it pays now. But the trouble is that colored and sold for butter it retails for nearly the price of good butter, while uncolored, so it cannot be used to deceive. It must be sold for what it is—on its own merits. Few people will buy colorless neutral fat to eat as butter. They would about as lief eat lard and the makers know it and are struggling for the millions of dollars there is in being allowed to continue to humbug people who buy their wares for butter, crowding real butter out of the market.

The animal fats now used in oleo making can return to their old use as cheap Chicago wheel grease and even then the farmers and cattlemen and cottonseed oil men will continue to get just as much for their products as now. It, perhaps, could be shown that these things brought more than now before oleo was made to masquerade as their friend.

The cottonseed oil man from Charlotte, N. C., who talked before the Committee for the oleo men, supposed oleo contained 25 to 40 per cent of cottonseed oil. He must have been a disgusted man after going to Washington to make a fight for the fraud on consumers and dairymen to find himself also one of the victims of the oleo combine. Similar misrepresentation caused swine and cattle and sheep breeders to take sides against honest dealing with food consumers and the dairy men. We believe a man must feel chagrined at such treatment and re-adjust his position to the right even if the fraud article does use a little of his product.

The people will continue to use it if they wish to use oleomargarine as such and that is what the oleo men continuously contend. The facts are they want the profits to be made out of cheating buyers of butter and they are playing a desperate game to gain time and prevent a vote at this session on the Grout bill. Whether they can do so in the face of a large majority is yet to be seen—we hope not. The substitute they know cannot stand a minute except to parley away time on. F. E. E.

RUSKIN'S DREAM.

If every page of "Sesame and Lilies" by the lamented John Ruskin were dry and dull except the following paragraphs setting forth the folly of wars and wealth-seeking, the book would still be worth reading. As a parable the quotation is magnificent and almost without an equal in the whole range of literature. The extracts below are from his lecture "The Mystery of Life" delivered at Dublin in 1868—one of the lectures composing the famous "Sesame and Lilies." Mr. Ruskin said:

"Though I am no poet, I have dreams sometimes: I dreamed I was at a child's May-day party, in which every means of entertainment had been provided for them, by a wise and kind host. It was in a stately house, with beautiful gardens attached to it; and the children had been set free in the rooms and gardens, with no care whatever but how to pass their afternoon rejoicingly. They did not, indeed, know much about what was to happen next day; and some of them, I thought, were a little frightened because there was some chance of their being sent to a new school where there were examinations; but they kept the thoughts of that out of their heads as well as they could, and resolved to enjoy themselves. The house, I said, was in a beautiful garden, and in the garden were all kinds of flowers; sweet grassy banks for rest; and smooth lawns for play; and pleasant streams and woods; and rocky places for climbing. And the children were happy for a little while, but presently they separated themselves into parties; and then each party declared it would have a piece of garden for its own, and that none of the others should have anything to do with that piece. Next, they quarreled violently as to which pieces they should have; and at last the boys took up the thing, as boys should do, "practically," and fought in the flower-beds till there was hardly a flower left standing. Then they trampled down each other's bits of garden out of spite; and the girls cried till they could cry no more; and so they all lay down at last breathless in the ruin, and waited for the time when they were to be taken home in the evening.

"Meanwhile the children in the house had been making themselves happy also in their manner. For them, there had been provided every kind of indoors pleasure: there was music for them to dance to; and the library was open, with all manner of amusing books; and there was a museum full of the most curious shells, and animals, and birds; and there was a workshop, with lathes and carpenters' tools, for the ingenious boys; and there were pretty fantastic dresses, for the girls to dress in; and there were microscopes and kaleidoscopes, and whatever toys a child could fancy; and a table in the dining-room, loaded with everything nice to eat.

"But, in the midst of all this, it struck two or three of the more "practical" children, that they would like some of the brass-headed nails that studded the chairs; and so they set to work to pull them out. Presently, the others, who were reading, or looking at shells, took a fancy to do the like; and in a little while all the children, nearly, were spraining their fingers in pulling out brass-headed nails. With all that they could pull out, they were not satisfied; and then, everybody wanted some of somebody else's. And at last the really "practical" and "sensible" ones declared that nothing was of any consequence that afternoon, except to get plenty of brass-headed nails; and that the books, and the cakes, and the microscopes were of no use at all in themselves, but only, if they could be exchanged for nail-heads. And, at last, they began to fight for nail-heads, as the others fought for the bits of garden. Only here and there, a despised one shrank away in a corner, and tried to get a little quiet with a book, in the midst of noise; but all the "practical" ones thought of nothing else but counting nail-heads all the afternoon—even though they knew they would not be allowed to carry so much as one brass knob away with them. But no; it was—"Who has most nails? I have a hundred and you have fifty;" or, "You have a thousand and I have two. I must have as many as you before I leave the house, or I cannot possibly go home in peace." At last, they made so much noise that I awoke, and thought to myself, "What a false dream that is, of children!" The child is the father of the man; and wiser. Children never do such foolish things. Only men do."

BELGIAN HARES.

The New York Sun recently concluded an article on the above subject with this advice:

"New South Wales has spent millions of dollars in keeping down the rabbit pest. Let America beware of the hare."

The editor of the Raleigh Post, commenting on the article, said:

"It was the English hare that almost ruined New South Wales, and which cost so much to get under control. Whether the Belgian species has any predominating merits, enough to justify their introduction into this country, we do not know. It would be well for Professor Hege to give the readers of the Post fuller information on the subject."

We call some of the really pithy points from Prof. Hege's two-column reply (which, by the way, is clipped from different sources and all pertains to booming the animal, rather than to giving any real information in regard to possible danger from the multiplication of stray specimens.)

"Stock in hands of breeders has only increased fast enough to supply demands of 'the trade' in breeding stock." This shows why the pelage and racy form is kept foremost in the extracts and the blocky forms discouraged. The fancier holds the species in control thus far.

"The time seems to be close at hand, if not already here, when the marketable qualities should be recognized and the unquestioned demand which they would meet when the public became aware of their merit as a table delicacy, provided for." These italics are ours, but we have friends of epicurean tastes who bear out the idea in recommending these rodents.

"The Belgian hare is said to have originated in Belgium," etc. Probably a variety of the European hare (Lepus timidus) therefore not distinct from the English hare, but differing in varietal points from the breeding in the hands of fanciers.

"The English standard for weight is about eight pounds, which could, in this more favorable climate, be made more, say nine pounds, without sacrificing other valuable points." "They are hardy, and few are born that will not with ordinary care and attention be reared to maturity." \* \* They are usually prolific, producing from six to ten young at a litter, and will breed from six to eight times a year. \* \* They will live in woods or warrens when turned down for breeding at six or eight months old, if some protection is given them from the inclemencies of our seasons; thus in two or three generations they become acclimated and require no further attention. For those who breed for profit there are two courses open; one is to keep all the stock until fit for exhibition, or for sale at fancy figures; the other is to market at from four to six months of age. In either case the methods are so similar as to require no special explanations. \* \* The doe has visited the buck and is placed in the hutch where she is to rear her prospective family, which is expected in thirty days from her visit to the buck.

"In two or three weeks the young will be moving about the hutch; from now until they are weaned is the critical time in their existence. With the food and care recommended they will prosper. When about two months old they should be taken from the doe and allowed to run on the rabbitry floor; the doe being started for another family. \* \* All diseases of the rabbit are caused by improper housing, care or feeding, and the cure is affected in nearly every case without the administration of drugs."

Now a word of comment on these assertions.

The first statement about "stock in hands of breeders" is not so reassuring to the fears of the agriculturist as it might be, but we have other evidence that the fecundity of hares is generally overstated. See in notes above that thirty days of gestation are followed, accidents excepted, by about sixty days of suckling for each family. This points to three months and four litters per year under favorable conditions. Loss of young, failure to breed, loses time. Hence not over four litters can be counted on by the careful, active fancier.

If other evidence as to climate is true (and we believe it correct), Belgian hares may become acclimated in two or three generations. But must we not also believe that while our fancier who provides the

best of shelter and food may be able to keep his does breeding the year round when a few have escaped they will find food conditions less easy and the inclemency of our winters destructive to the late-born young, so three litters at most can be counted on when they do escape. We believe it is perfectly natural that they should escape, and when they do, that the species will survive. Then it will become a question of how much more rapid their increase will be over destructive agencies as to whether they become an expensive nuisance.

There are many common weeds in our fields which were once cultivated house plants. Most of these are natives of Europe. They have become naturalized to our harm. The house sparrow (Passer domesticus) commonly known as English sparrow, is an ever-present, expensive, and troublesome example of bird importation. No hare can drive out native hares to the hurtful extent that our native birds have been driven away by this sparrow, however. They can only displace native species and be more troublesome than the native because of their having been in domestication and acquired the habit of living close to men.

These animals are looked upon as a dangerous introduction. It does not necessarily follow that because the Belgian hare is not of the same species as the so-called Australian rabbit that it cannot become dangerous to agricultural, horticultural, and forestry interests if it is turned loose and thrives in freedom in America. The assurances of fanciers as to hardness and prolificacy are assurances, less positive of course, that they can maintain themselves in freedom in our climate. If they have not done so yet, in the North, it would only be necessary for them to be started in and overrun the South and to spread Northward when better acclimated.

It was not only New South Wales and Australia which suffered from the rabbit pest (Lepus cuniculus), Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Chief of Division of Ornithology and Mammalogy, reprinted in Report of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, 1886, a report of Consul-General Morgan in Consular Reports for December of that year showing some effects of the imported rabbits in Australia and New Zealand. In one year Victoria appropriated 10,000 pounds, New South Wales 74,000 pounds, and South Australia 30,000 pounds, amounting to \$57,000 to suppress rabbits.

In Victoria 20,000,000 acres were infested and 4,000,000 skins were exported in 1883. In 1881 over 500,000 acres of sheep runs were abandoned in New Zealand on account of rabbits and the estimated annual loss from them in exports was set at \$2,500,000. It was estimated that more than 180,000,000 rabbits were killed there in three years.

We have native rabbits and hares enough for all common purposes. The common American hare (Lepus americanus) is eaten when captured from the wild state. Suppose this hare were as carefully cultivated as its European congener, would it not become as dainty a dish for an epicure? But this animal is very destructive to the agriculturist over the whole territory in which they are found.

We will not enumerate cases of damages. We will, however, suggest if anyone wishes to acquire great riches from rabbit farming, he snare a few native specimens and learn to handle them as common stock. They will cost less than the fancy imported animals, and we would like to have a report on comparative table merit of Americanus with Belgian hare after the former has been stall-fed for two or three generations. If he is a benefactor to his race "that makes two blades of grass grow where only one grow only one grew before," what shall we say of the man who can prove L. Americanus the equal of the Belgian aristocrat and bring cheaper meat to the farmer's family and the factory hordes of the future?

Why may we not as well make an effort to cultivate this little animal, and turn his destructive gnawing to better use and make the cultivated part of the species pay enough to partly offset the annual damages done to crops and fruit trees by those still in the natural state?

Every source of wholesome cheap food should be investigated and this present question of raising hares may grow into one of the industries of the coming century. F. E. E.