

PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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

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Agriculture.

LARGE VS. SMALL FARMS.

Rejoinder From Mr. Cates—He Defends the Position Which He Has Taken From the First.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.
To further advocate the methods of farming which have placed my native county among the first, if not the first, in the State in regard to practical farming and other matters, I will again write a short article for The Progressive Farmer. My friend, Mr. Cates, says he agrees with me in regard to raising two hales to the acre; and I am glad to tell him that the small farmers of Mecklenburg are securing larger yields per acre than the large land owners.

Mr. Cates certainly does not speak well for the fertility of his county when he says many of the small farmers are leaving their farms and going to the factories. But let us look at the reasons(?) he gives for their leaving. He says that a common cause exists for renter as well as the small land owner. (Right here, let me say that there are some men trying to farm who were not at all cut out for this occupation). As to the first two reasons he gives, I have nothing to say; they relate to the pecuniary condition of the individual. But he gives as his main reason the fact that they have to rely upon themselves for the planning, superintending, and the carrying on of the work. This, if true, is a great drawback. But, if the land-owning farmer is not capable of being relied upon to do these things, then indeed it is high time for him to sell out and go to the factory or some other sea port town "up Salt River."

I once heard a young farmer say to an older one who ran a two or three horse farm: "I could not make a living on a two-horse farm. I would starve. Just give me an eight or ten horse farm." This I suppose he has. At any rate I heard that this large farmer had gone to the small farmer this spring to buy improved cotton seed.

Again Mr. Cates informs us that this is a free country. Yes, we are free, and if we wish to remain so we must oppose these great centralizations of land which tends to landlordism, almost slavery and aristocracy and peasantry. Under Mr. Cates' plan who will be the aristocrat and who the peasant? Who the boss and who the subject? Who the landlord and who the renter?

Mr. Cates is right when he says that there is in this State land enough now almost deserted to more than double the agricultural output, if properly and economically cultivated. I don't know how it is in Alamance, but down here in Mecklenburg those terms "properly and economically cultivated" are synonymous with small farms. But where do we find this "almost deserted" land? Almost exclusively on the large farms. Near home there are several farms that were at one time, not far back, a part of one big farm. And the present owner of this once large farm now makes about as much clear as was formerly done on the whole plantation. And here are 14 or 15 different farms of an average of 65 acres, affording a home and good support for so many prosperous farmers. Don't you see the contrast? Are you ready to see the small farms all over the State bunched into a few farms? Do you think it would be best for our country, our land and our welfare to do this? Are you willing to sell your hundred acres to the large farmer and rent it back and work it according to the dictates of his conscience? Or perhaps you want to be the landlord, like some I have heard of; if so, be sure you are able to foot the bill.

Speaking of employing scientific men to superintend our farms, is not a theory of mine. It belongs to my friend Cates. I said let us be our own head man. If a man is not capable of superintending his own trade and work, then he is at the wrong door. Do the men of any

other occupation hire a scientific man to conduct their own affairs? No, they educate themselves for the vocation, whatever it may be. Why cannot the farmers do the same thing? You may say, "We cannot afford it for ourselves or our boys, or that President Winston has not the room: he should have to ask for more money for his college. Are there no other like schools? If not, has experience and observation become a thing of the past? Business colleges are to prepare those who have not had experience for practical work. The boy who is brought up in the bank does not need a business college education to make him fit to become cashier, if he is at all suitable for the place. To some extent an agricultural college is to the young farmer, what the business college is to the inexperienced young man seeking a position. They give in short the experience of others. We can by reading good agricultural papers, like The Progressive Farmer, by experience, and by close observation become our own scientific superintendent. The Farmers' Alliance is a good instrumentality by which we might help and benefit one another and I would be glad to see it reorganized all over the State.

I think the Alamance farmer is mistaken about the farm varying in size with his own confidence and ability of the man in charge to manage large affairs. It is all right to have self-confidence, but there are many who have no limit to their ability in their own estimation. To this fact is due a great many failures of would-be large farmers. I would like to hear from other farmers on this subject of small vs. large farms.

If ever Mr. Cates has occasion to go up the Statesville Railway from Charlotte I would be glad if he would stop at Huntersville and call. We will show him some fine small farms.

Yours for improvement,
W. A. McAULAY,
Mecklenburg Co., N. C.

If you keep The Progressive Farmer up to the present standard, put me down a life subscriber.—W. S. Mercer, Currituck Co., N. C.

THE FARM SIGN WORKS.

At the suggestion of The Farmers' Voice I mailed to one of my gateposts along the public road a sign made of a piece of pine plank three feet long and ten inches wide. On one side I painted with small brush and red paint the following announcements: "For sale—Ten one-year-old Jersey sows, twelve dozen Plymouth Rock eggs, and a lusty Hereford bull calf. Come in here." I felt a little abashed at first, perhaps thought it a little immodest to introduce such an innovation in my community, but I was determined to give the plan a trial even if it proved an utter failure. I knew it could do no harm.

The sign had been out but four days when I had seven visitors in quest of the stuff offered for sale. I made a satisfactory sale of the whole lot, and am ready to put up another sign to-day. I believe advertising of all kinds pays. It often is the case that we farmers do not see one another for weeks and weeks. This is especially true during the busy seasons. Hence it is that one may know nothing about what his neighbor has for sale. The sign board or farm advertisement is one way to let the public know what is for sale on the farm. With me it has proven an effective way.—M. L. C., Jackson Co., Ill.

AN EXPERIMENT WITH BROOM-CORN.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.
Two years ago, I planted, in a poor, sandy place in my garden, some broom-corn seed. I never plowed it, but went over it once with the hoe. It grew rapidly, and produced an abundant crop. There was only one row of it, about sixty feet long. I used no fertilizer. I got from it a sufficient amount to make a dozen or more brooms.

The broom-corn product is at a high price now, and there is a fine opportunity for some of our farmers to make "big money."

RICHARD H. LEWIS, M. D.,
Lancaster, N. C.

DIRECTIONS FOR GROWING AND FEEDING THE RAPE CROP.

How it is Done in Wisconsin.
Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

Be sure to order Dwarf Essex forage rape. If one asks for "rape seed" he may get Bird Seed rape, which is of no value for forage purposes. Many such mistakes have been made. Rape seed closely resembles turnip seed in appearance. The seed costs but little and can be obtained from any seedsman.

Rape may be sown with oats, barley or winter rye.

SEEDING WITH RYE.

If sown with winter rye, harrow the rye field in early spring, and sow about 2 pounds of rape seed per acre, harrowing lightly again after the seed has been sown. Such harrowing will usually be helpful to the rye crop.

SEEDING WITH OATS OR BARLEY.

Rape seed can be sown along with oats or barley, but if this is done the growth of rape is liable to become so rank, especially if the season is a wet one, that the plants will grow as tall as the oats or barley. When this happens trouble occurs at harvest time, owing to the green rape plants being out and bound in the oat or barley sheaves, causing them to rot under the bands.

It is best then to sow rape seed later than the grain is sown, so that the rape will not grow so rapidly. Eight or nine days after sowing the oats or barley, or when the young grain plants are three or four inches high, run a slant-tooth harrow over the field to loosen the soil. Then seed two or three pounds of rape and harrow lightly again. By seeding in this way the grain crop has so much the start of the rape plant, that the latter are kept small and spindling until after the grain is harvested. After harvest, the rape plants getting the benefits of sun and moisture, begin to grow, and in a good season, the field will soon be covered with green forage, which can be fed off as usual.

BROADCAST SEEDING.

Rape seed can be sown broadcast any time from April to August. For broadcast seeding, prepare the land as for oats, and sow three or four pounds of seed per acre, and harrow lightly. Land on which rape is sown broadcast should be comparatively free from weed seeds and in good condition generally.

DRILLING.

The best crop can be secured by growing the rape in drills, though this way is somewhat more expensive. Sow two or three pounds of seed per acre in drills wide enough to cultivate, planting just as one does for beets or rutabaga turnips. Rape plants do not need to be thinned like rutabagas or beets, but will grow thick in the row. About two cultivations are needed, by which time the rape plants will so shade the ground that weeds cannot grow.

FEEDING OFF RAPE.

The rape plant resembles a rutabaga run to top. Rape is ready for feeding from eight to ten weeks after seeding, or when the plants are fifteen inches high, and remains useful several weeks. After the leaves are once eaten off, if the weather is still warm, the plants will start new leaves, thus furnishing a second, and even a third crop. The nourishment of the rape plant is in the stems and leaves. Rape is highly relished by sheep, cattle and swine. Generally rape taints milk so that it cannot be used for dairy cows, although some dairymen have used it successfully. It cannot be cured into hay, or used in the silo; but must be fed off in the field, or cut and carried to stable or feed lot. Rape is ordinarily utilized by turning steers, young cattle, sheep or swine into the field where it grows, and letting them feed on the crop at pleasure. Stock being fed on rape should get grain additional if they are expected to fatten rapidly.

Cattle or sheep should never be turned into the rape field for the first time when hungry, or when the dew is on the plants. Fill up the cattle or sheep with feed and then turn into rape field on a dry day after the dew is off. Bloating may

occur if these conditions are not followed.

The rape crop was first prominently brought to the attention of Wisconsin farmers, through the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, which has grown the crop continuously since 1891. Our Station learned of its use through the Ontario Agricultural College, Canada. Rape is now extensively grown in Wisconsin and its use is rapidly spreading. It does not take the place of any other crop but is simply one more of value to the farm.

W. A. HENRY,
Director Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, Wis.

Study your soil and supply its needs. Plant such crops as are best adapted to the land and so diversify that you will always have a full supply of fruit, vegetables, syrup, sugar, meat, milk, butter, poultry and eggs. Have these things in abundance so that the farm and home market may be supplied.—J. A. Brewer, Bienville, La.

ARE YOU GOING TO BUILD?

In the following article, Wallace's Farmer calls attention to a valuable farm bulletin which has already been reviewed in The Progressive Farmer, and which can be obtained free upon application to "Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D. C." Says Editor Wallace:

Many of our farmers have been getting ahead the last year or two and will no doubt be thinking about new buildings or additions to the old ones. This matter of building houses and barns is one of greater importance than most farmers realize. The number of steps that the wife and daughter will take about the house is determined largely by the character of the house. It is possible to economize labor and save the wear and tear of the women folks and it is possible to build in such a way as to increase their labor very largely, all depending on the construction of the house. It is possible to build a house where the health of the family will be first class, doctors' visits scarce and their bills small; and again it is possible to build a house with the same outlay of money that will foreordain a sickly family, large doctors' bills and unusual mortality. It is possible to build a barn at a moderate expense where the labor of feeding and caring for the stock will be reduced to the minimum and also to expend the same amount of money where the labor and care of stock is brought up to the maximum.

Fortunately the Department of Agriculture tenders valuable suggestions and advice on this point. Any of our readers who are thinking of building this year or next will do well to write to Secretary Wilson, Washington, D. C., for Farmers' Bulletin No. 126, entitled "Practical Suggestions for Farm Buildings." This bulletin gives illustrations of cheap farm houses which can be added to without the additional expense and also the bill of materials for each. None of these will probably meet the wants of any reader, but the suggestions are valuable and as it can be had for the asking, why not at once request it by a letter and study it before building? There is an enormous amount of money thrown away not in building houses, but in building houses that are not adapted to the circumstances of the farmer.

Many farmers find their cattle and horses lousy, especially the calves and colts, in the spring time. To say that stock becomes poor and rough looking because of these pests, is to state a well known fact. A very simple, and in most places, easily procured remedy can be had to rid the stock of lice. Put as many of the outer twigs of red cedar as possible into a ten-gallon kettle. Fill the kettle with water and boil down to two gallons. When cool enough, remove the twigs and with a rag thoroughly wash every part of the animal's hair. It is seldom that a second washing is needed; if so, it should be done in eight or ten days after the first washing.—D. T. Stephenson, Pilot Knob, Ind.

HARRY FARMER'S TALKS.

XXV.
Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

Our crops are all planted, now cultivation has set in in earnest. Let every reader of The Progressive Farmer resolve that no crop shall lack cultivation this year. Keep the top of the ground stirred.

We have made it a rule for years to plow our cotton and corn every week until they are laid by. Cotton should be cultivated until the first bolls are matured. We could have made five dollars a day last year by cultivating our cotton longer. We carried a piece of corn through the severe August, 1900, drought by keeping the surface well stirred. Had it been worked the usual way we would have made nothing.

A farmer said that he had a colored tenant who could not see why next week was not just as good a time to plow his corn as this week. We are sorry to say that this negro is not by himself in believing in old-time methods.

We cannot have a set of rules that will apply to every season alike. Flat cultivation of Irish potatoes during a very wet spring like this has been very dry weather the balance of the growing season, our crops will be good.

The idea that the main object of cultivation is to kill the weeds and grass has been impressed upon the minds of our farmers for generations and the progressive farmer may go to the other extreme and try to cultivate his crops too frequently in a wet season and lose a great deal of labor. When the season is wet it is only necessary to cultivate enough to keep weeds and grass under.

Farmers will soon be chopping cotton. It is best to chop to a stand at first if the cotton is thrifty, but if it is small and does not grow, you had better leave it a little thicker for awhile.

The best remedy for cotton that is weak and won't grow is to work it. We have made it grow by running a plow very deeply close to the cotton. Something like a bull-tongue or cotton plow without wings or sweeps does the work nicely. Cotton on poor soil is often given too much distance.

Where the soil is rich and the cotton weed grows 4 to 6 feet high, it should have good distance. If you have raised cotton several years, it is easy to decide what distance to give it. This is about the usual rule here: land producing 800 pounds seed cotton, 1 stalk 12 inches in the row; 1,200 pounds, 18 inches; 1,500 pounds 24 inches—this when the rows are 3½ feet apart. Long limb cotton requires more distance than short limb or cluster cotton.

HARRY FARMER,
Columbus Co., N. C.

A few years ago I bought a few brood mares and a jack, and as long as I attended to it myself, I succeeded very well. I found the mules better than I could buy; they could do more work and stand the hardships better than the imported stock. I believe the small farmer can succeed better in this line than can the large one.—Col F. L. Maxwell, Madison Co., La.

SUNFLOWERS FOR POULTRY.

On this subject the Southern Cultivator gives this timely advice:

Have you planted that patch of rich ground to sunflower seed? If not, there should be no delay in preparing for a full crop of this valuable and inexpensive food for hens and other animals. The new mammoth Russian sunflower seed, which is a much larger seed, and contains more egg forming material than the common sunflower is the best kind to plant. Put in drills two feet apart and eight inches in the drill and when well started, thin out every other stalk. Then cut the side sprigs and throw all the force of the plant into one large head. Sunflowers can be grown everywhere on rich soil and it is yet to become one of the regular fattening foods, not only for hens, but for sheep, horses and neat stock. Grow a lot of sunflowers.

Live Stock.

BACK TO SHEEP.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

Many of us old farmers have come back to sheep after giving them up for a few years, convinced that there was no money in them, but sure now that there is really no good farming without sheep. I do not mean that we have given up other branches of farming to become sheepmen, but have gradually added a few more sheep to the flock each year until now most farmers are shepherds of pretty fair importance. There is no animal better suited to the general farmer's purposes than the sheep. Our early settlers raised a few sheep for their wool so that the home spinning could be carried on by the housewife during the long winter months. Sheep then were considered absolutely necessary and few ever thought of getting along without the flock.

It was after the home spinning went out of fashion, and costly machinery was erected to do all this work for the farmer, that sheep raising as a profession started in. Then a good many of us gave up nearly all other branches of farming and tried to get rich in raising wool. The flocks steadily increased in numbers and size, and of course the whole business was overdone. There came a time when there was a surplus of sheep wool, and many lost money. The reaction which followed set many against sheep, and there are some who cannot be induced to own a flock again because of their ill luck. Nevertheless, I feel convinced that we are all coming back to the sheep, not on a large scale, but as a necessary part of all good farming.

There is something attractive about a good flock of sheep on the farm, and every boy should be brought up so that he can have the care of such animals. He will learn much about them that in later life will benefit him. The flock of sheep will not only pay for themselves directly in their wool and mutton, but they will indirectly benefit the land and crops. They are of inestimable value in the clover and grass pastures, and even in the orchard where their little feet will press down the grass roots so the soil will cling better to them. Under proper handling it costs little to keep a small flock of sheep on the general farm, and they return enough to more than pay. The wool should more than pay good interest on the investment and something over in the shape of wages for the owner. Then the lambs and mutton, whether shipped to market or killed for home use, must count as clear gain.

W. E. EDWARDS.

THE BEST DISEASE PREVENTIVE.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

Not a little of the loss in cattle and sheep raising comes from diseases. Some times these do not kill, but they reduce the size of the animal and the quality of the meat and wool, so that the loss is almost as real as if death had come. In the case of poultry they cease to lay eggs, and become unprofitable, eating up more than they make. Sheep will some times when suffering from diseases of the skin produce such a small quantity and quality of wool that it brings merely nominal prices in the market, and swine and cattle suffering from any of the common diseases simple refuse to grow for weeks and months at a time. This loss through sickness and disease is some times so great that a grower might become almost bankrupt in one or two seasons, and yet not lose by actual death a single animal.

Naturally the question of combating disease and keeping it from the flock or herd is very important, and any of the contagious or infectious diseases that run through flocks of animals are dreaded with good reason. Immunity from these diseases comes through two simple methods of treatment. They are preventive rather than curative. The first step is to study the sanitary conditions of barn, pen, stables and fields where the animals are kept. See to it that these are all clean and sweet and free

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