

PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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

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Agriculture.

HARRY L. MER'S TALKS.

XXXIV.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

We may touch the ladies by this talk, but if we say something which will benefit the families who suffer more or less every year from the scourge of fever, we shall not complain.

The best of authorities tell us that malaria, typhoid and other fevers, etc., are taken into the system by drinking water. During very rainy weather the soil gets full of water and that makes the well very full and the water often colored with clay or mud and bad to drink. Perhaps this same water has soaked or filtered through from some sloop hole near the kitchen, or perhaps a hole near the well where chickens, ducks, geese or may be pigs have wallowed, causing a very unpleasant odor to rise. (We have seen such places so bad thousands of earth worms could be dug out of the soil surrounding the hole.) This is a very good place to breed fever germs and soon after drinking such water, we need not be surprised to see some of the family down with fever. The doctor is sent for in haste, and when he comes he advises the well people to drink boiled water. Do you know what his reason is for wanting you to drink boiled water? It is to kill the fever germs.

The best thing to do is not to use such well water, but have a pump or artesian well so that it will be impossible to get any surface water. Of course, these cost a great deal, but nothing like a doctor's bill, not to say a word about the suffering and time lost in work caused by bad water. If you cannot get a pump or artesian well, then boil your water, if it is like that described above. Keep all around the well perfectly clean, and be sure that you bank up the ground around the curb so that all the surface water will run off. Then do not have a sink around the kitchen, but throw the water in different places. It may be more work or trouble, but health is a great thing, and the old saying that "an ounce of preventive is worth more than a pound of cure," is illustrated in nothing plainer than in preserving health.

If you live near a swamp or other place where you are likely to have malaria, always take something before stirring out; a drink of coffee, tea or hot water will be helpful. Anything to fill the stomach so that it will not be empty is a good way to keep the fever off.

Another thing is almost sure to affect those who try it—getting wet to the knees in the dew of morning and wearing the wet shoes and socks until they dry on the feet. This is sure to produce headache and often times bring on fever. If you are compelled to go in the dew, and there are few who work on the farm that can avoid it, use rubber boots or change your shoes and socks; this is easily done with no great inconvenience.

We would advise every family to keep some good medicine on hand which will act on the liver. We knew a farmer who raised a large family and never had any use for a doctor, but kept some "liver" medicine, and when any of the family got sick a dose of the medicine was given, which restored them to health. Of course, this was an exceptional case.

We hope no one will think that we are opposing the doctor. Of all the professional men in the world there are none which do more charitable work than the country doctor.

Everything in and around the kitchen should be carefully cleaned and exposed to the sunshine often. We have been in some kitchens where scraps of vegetables and other things were left to decay and thus make a hotbed for many diseases.

HARRY L. MER.
Columbus Co., N. C.

Brownleigh (visiting friends in the country): I don't often get such a good supper.
Johnnie (son of host): Neither do we.

NEWS OF THE FARMING WORLD.

Our Washington Correspondent Tells What Progress is Being Made in the Various Sections of the Country.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

According to information received here, the damage caused to the crops by the recent hot weather and droughts in the West has been greatly exaggerated, probably with a view to speculation. Assistant Secretary Taylor, of the Treasury Department, who has just returned from a trip through the middle West, says that the crops in that section are really still in excellent condition. "Besides personal observation," he said, "I have talked with friends, including a great many reliable and closely observing railroad men, upon the crop conditions in the GREAT WEST. Railroad men make an especial point of keeping thoroughly posted on crop conditions, and their testimony on the subject may therefore be accepted as entirely reliable. They say the reports from Kansas and Nebraska concerning the damage done by the drought have been magnified. There is every prospect for unusually large crops all over the West, notwithstanding unfavorable weather conditions. In Minnesota, the great wheat crop is in excellent condition. Oats, barley, rye, potatoes and hay are also in good shape and the crops of these products for the year will largely excel those of last year, both in quality and quantity."

The officials of the Interior Department take little stock in the success of the alleged plans for evading the purpose of the government to put the lands in

THE RECENTLY OPENED RESERVATION in Oklahoma into the hands of bona fide settlers. One of the latest of these alleged plans is to have the lucky man who has drawn a homestead sell out his claim by having an understanding with a purchaser by which the farmer will throw up his claim and allow the latter to settle on his land before his act is known to any one else, thereby giving him an opportunity to secure the quarter section under the homestead law. Any attempt to sell a homestead before final proof is made will result in an investigation by the Department and will probably result in the purchaser securing a law suit rather than a farm for his money. The homesteads will be turned over to the lucky men who draw them only for their own settlement, and any act that gives evidence of speculation in these lands will be promptly investigated. The efforts of the Department to eliminate speculation for this transaction, which involves giving away 15,000 good farms for bona fide settlement has so far met general approval, and every effort will be made to carry out the purposes of the Department in spite of any ingenious device that may be resorted to on the part of those who are the beneficiaries of this land distribution. Meanwhile, extraordinary tales are told of the fertility of the lands in question. For instance, a real estate man, who proposes to locate there, has this to say: "Corn? Say, Kiowa corn is a wonder. You can hear it groan any night from growing pains. The sound of these groans at midnight, mingled with the coyote howls, makes a strange chorus that frightens the tenderfoot at first. It did me. The Indian on my place lost a promising son last year. The young buck was on a ladder that leaned against a stalk about 25 feet from the ground. He was lowering a medium sized ear of corn with a rope, when he fell and broke his neck!"

The Treasury Department has in preparation a circular letter to customs officers throughout the United States directing them to absolutely refuse entry to all hides of meat cattle from wherever shipped when not accompanied by a regular consular certificate showing that they are dry salted, arsenic or lime cured, or have been thoroughly disinfected according to the sulfur formula prescribed by the Treasury Department and embodied in the circular. The only exception to be made is in the case of abattoir hides shipped from Norway, Sweden or England, where the slaughtering is done.

TRUCK FARMING IN THE UNITED STATES has grown up within the last forty years and has now reached such a state of perfection that such a thing as a particular season for any kind of vegetables in the principal markets is at this time practically unknown, and it is now possible to draw upon the different sections of the country and receive at any season of the year nearly all the standard varieties of vegetables. In the late autumn and early spring, Florida, and the Southern States furnish the supply for Northern markets, until the advancing season (which moves northward at the rate of about fifteen miles a day) matures the crops through the Eastern and Central States; these States supply the midsummer and autumn markets until the frosts of winter once more compel a return to the South, where a fresh crop is at the command of the market.

On account of the growing importance of the subject, the Agricultural Department is preparing to publish an exhaustive report by Edward G. Wards, Jr., and Edward S. Holmes, Jr., on the transportation of fruits and vegetables in the United States. Many of the improved facilities which have been adopted by the freight departments of our railroads are directly attributable to the handling of perishable agricultural products. Routes have been shortened, through schedules adopted, motive power increased, and by the use of ventilation, refrigeration, speed, and quick delivery, the railroads are enabled to place the truck in the Northern markets in as good condition as when it left the Southern farm, even when it necessitates a journey of many hundreds of miles.

A. B. MARRIOTT.
Washington, D. C.

Oh, yes, we can have a dual purpose cow all right and one that will be quite a good milker and afterwards make good beef. But here is what we cannot have, to-wit, the very best for milk and beef in the same animal. A cow cannot make milk and beef, both from the same food and do both in the best possible manner. Really, all that is meant by a dual purpose cow, is one that will milk pretty well and make pretty good beef also.—Farm and Ranch.

SECOND CROPS.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

The value of second crops is not always limited to the actual money returns therefrom. A good many second crops, such as cow peas in particular, add greatly to the fertility of the soil. Other crops, while not actually adding any great amount to the soil, tend to keep the mechanical conditions of the soil in good shape, and improve the tilth, keeping down weeds at the same time. It is very rarely that our soils require rest, going fallow as it were for a season. This is rather an old mistaken idea, very much as that concerning absolute rest for man. We believe now that the best rest for man is a change of work or occupation, which then becomes play and actual pleasure. So with our soils, they need change, change of crops, and activity. It is far better to let the soil be producing some light crop that will add to its mechanical condition than to permit weeds to overrun it. To produce these latter is just as hard work for the soil as to yield a crop of valuable grains or vegetables.

Unless one has a distinct money-making crop in view he should always consider this in preparing for second crops. Let it be understood that second crops pay, even if nothing is sold therefrom. If one can in the second crop secure nearly all the feeding material needed for the stock, a gain is made that will amply repay all outlay of time and strength. A good many will reason that work expended in this way during the busy season of the year will not pay, but anything that tends toward good farming and the improvement of the soil. In plant-

ing a second crop, far less work is required than some imagine. The land is already in good tilth, and all that is required in cases is merely a slight surface harrowing and the planting of the seed. Nature will then do the rest. Surely no crop can be obtained with such a minimum of outlay as this at any other season of the year.

Cow peas in many respects make an ideal second crop because they grow rapidly and produce great quantities to the acre, furnishing rich, nourishing food for the cattle, and adding considerably to the soil in the shape of green fertilizers. Any quick-growing crop that will accomplish the same purposes should be tried as a second crop, and wherever the plants thrive they should be carefully cultivated. Good careful economy and foresight should make it possible to secure a second crop on one or more fields each summer, and the returns from this should go a long way toward feeding the cattle throughout the fall and part of the winter.

WILLIAM CONWAY.

All who are able to have lamp light at all, and that should include everyone in this day, should have a lantern. When the occupants of the farmstead come home too late to secure the night's supply of wood, water, etc., by daylight; or when a racket at night portends something wrong in horse stalls or hen house, what a boon a good lantern is. And what another good thing is the prudence to have an established, safe and convenient place in the stable for the lantern to occupy while doing chores, and to have this understood by everyone concerned. It should be kept where stock cannot possibly knock it down and set the barn on fire; where no man, however tall, will butt his head against it when raising up from stooping work. Then do not use a poor grade of oil to torment you with a bad light and danger.—G. W. Killough, Wichita, Kansas.

A TIMELY FARM SUGGESTION.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

Owing to short corn crops, farmers should provide for feeding their stock next spring, and save buying so much corn at a high price. With this in view, sow a mixture of rye and crimson clover. Sow about the last of September on good land well prepared; for instructions drop a card to T. W. Wood & Sons, Richmond, Va., for August catalogue. By April you can begin to mow the rye when only six or eight inches high, then the rye and clover will come together, and you will have a crop, beautiful, bountiful and nutritious. This will last until your red clover comes, and have enough of it to do until your oats come. Sow enough oats to tide you over to corn. If you say oats don't pay, mix half oats and half wheat and sow it, well fertilized. This will make a fine feed. This is my plan for next year. It will save buying so much high-priced corn next spring.

These patches should be highly manured and may be planted in corn or potatoes. O. T. EDWARDS.
Chatham Co., N. C.

I gather apples before too ripe, as over ripeness is the first step towards decay. Sort into four qualities. First, those showing signs of decay, for immediate use, drying or feeding. Second, those with a dark or shriveled bloom end, as these will be the next to decay, and are put by themselves. Third, the ones, of the finest appearance and green bloom end. These will keep fairly well, but not so well as the fourth class, which differ from these, only that they are not so far advanced in ripeness, owing to later blooming, or other cause, and are not generally so large or highly colored. Store in cellar of even temperature, until they have gone through a sweat and are the temperature of the cellar. Now, wipe them one by one, and place in bins about six inches deep. A few for extra late may be had by wrapping the fourth-class in paper, and packing in barrels with layers of dry sand.—J. N. Smith.

ALFALFA A MONEY MAKER IN THE SOUTH.

Mr. F. J. Merriam, whose letter on turnip raising appeared in last week's Progressive Farmer, writes an exchange regarding alfalfa as follows: A successful grower of alfalfa is W. S. Holman, of Clark Co., Ga. During the past 10 years he has out 42 crops of alfalfa hay. He gets four to five cuttings each year, according to the season, and says that an acre of good alfalfa will net an average of \$60 each year. The great value of this plant as a forage crop is now well known in many sections.

The land for alfalfa should be naturally well drained, for this plant does not enjoy wet feet, and will not do well on poor soil. A good, strong, porous clay subsoil seems to suit it nicely. By heavy manuring for some previous crop, such as vegetables, the soil can be gotten in good condition. It must be thoroughly prepared before the seed is sown by breaking deeply and working down with outaway, smoothing harrow and roller, until a fine, firm seed bed is formed, such as will hold moisture and give the young plants a good start. Use plenty of seed, not less than 20 pounds per acre. Sow it both ways so as to be sure to have it even, and harrow it in with a light harrow, something that will not cover the seed over an inch deep. If the weather is dry, it is a good plan to roll afterward. The best time for seeding in our locality is March or October. Mr. Holman sowed his in March, but he said on the whole he thought the fall was preferable. The young alfalfa then has a better chance to start ahead of the grass, which is troublesome in the spring. If the land is made rich at first, after-fertilizing is not necessary. In 10 years Mr. Holman has not used a pound of fertilizer on the field. Alfalfa is a great boon to stock feeders, especially dairymen. I shall plant two acres this fall.

Farmers have made great advancement in the last thirty-five years, but considering the importance of their calling, the money invested, the hard labor performed and the vast wealth which through them has been brought to our land, I ask, have they succeeded, comparatively speaking as they should have done, if they were not confronted with many disadvantages? There are several reasons for these conditions: Not a few dishonest men have been, and are yet, in our law-making bodies.

Very many of our State and National legislators know but little of the great calling of the American farmer and could not legislate for the farmer if they would. We should not wonder at their failures in this line, for it is with them largely as it would be with us should we undertake to attend to their affairs. Farmers and those directly connected with them, comprise 75 to 80 per cent. of the population and can do in our land just what they wish if they employ the means at hand. If they will not do this, they should cease their grumbling. The way to succeed is by organization, co-operative education and work.—P. B. Ewan.

VALUE OF THE CORN STALK CROP.

This crop, which has largely been suffered to go waste is estimated to be worth annually about nine hundred million dollars (\$900,000,000).

Think of this, Southern farmers. This crop of stalks is worth about three times as much as our cotton crop. We do not mean to say that your individual corn stalk crop is worth three times as much as your individual cotton crop. Perhaps it is not. But the invention and use of shredders may add that much to the value of farm products.

Are you getting your share of this great sum of created value?

Nine hundred millions of dollars? Have you a shredder? Are you still pulling fodder? If you have pulled your fodder your stalks are still worth saving and shredding.—Southern Cultivator.

Live Stock.

SHEEP IN THE SOUTH.

IX.

Early Pasture—Break in Fibre—The Loss—Sheep Folds for all Year—Keep Every Sheep at Its Best—Clean, Dry, Safe Quarters—Land Plaster—Sheep as Scavengers—In the Cotton Belt—Vigilance the Price of Success.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer. Our 50 ewes are now supposed to have been brought to end of spring months, shorn and with a lot of good lambs by their side, so the summer comes next. The change from exclusively dry feed of winter, should be gradual. If the range is large enough it is well to let them on it every day from the time they can get anything green in the spring, but it is scarcely economy to do so if the sheep are a high grade flock that have been well fed and are in good condition. If they are turned out to graze where they can only secure half enough green food to keep up good condition, they will not consume an additional amount of dry food to keep up condition; so the change requires some thought and care that they may not scour and fall away in flesh, which is not only a detriment to the animal, but seriously to the wool, causing a "break" in the fibre; that is, each fibre of wool begins to grow out weakened and shrunken in size until the sheep regains improved condition.

Wool so grown is much injured for making good cloth. The best wool of any grade or class is grown by sheep that are constantly kept healthy and in good condition. Then, also, constant good condition means highest product of wool. A fall of five or twenty pounds of flesh per head means a waste of feed to bring the flock up again, also a loss of one-fourth to one pound of wool per head, or from five to twenty-five cents per head and likely loss of lambs and some old ones.

This loss in condition is as likely to occur in the spring in change from dry to green food as in the fall from green to dry food; though not generally so much thought about because "summer is here and the sheep will get along anyway." It is costly mismanagement. A violent change from dry feed to an unlimited supply of green feed is a cruelty to the animal as well as a loss to the owner.

It will pay to have the ewes and lambs, in fact all the sheep, come in and lie at night in their barn and get some bran or other mill feed, cotton seed meal and some nice dry hay. They will often eat some of the latter as an antedote for an overloaded stomach of green stuff. It pays to have some rye out quite green before the seed hardens, or oats out the same way, and feed the sheep a little every night or during long rainy days.

Because sheep can live out of doors in summer, day and night through all kinds of storms, by no means makes it most profitable to have them do so. If sheep are kindly cared for they will want to come in to their fold every night and get some salt mixture and a little feed, and they should have learned that it is a comfortable safe place. Then it is convenient for the owner, shepherd or person in charge to see them at least twice a day, to note whether every one of the flock is not only "getting along all right," but that each one is doing the best that can be done with it.

Finally, if there was no other reason for folding the sheep at night, even during summer, it will pay to do so for the manure thus secured to be properly used as a fertilizer; about which more will be said again.

It must not be understood that any part of the sheep folds are to be kept in a filthy condition. They must be kept dry and clean, not necessarily by scraping and sweeping, but by bedding sufficiently with straw, refuse hay, leaves or saw dust, and daily sprinkle of land plaster. The application of land plaster should never be omitted, winter or summer, because it pays as a retainer of nitrates in the fertilizer, as well as an absorber of am-

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