

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

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AGRICULTURE

HOW ONE MAN HAS IMPROVED A WORN-OUT FARM.

In Twelve Years the Present Owner has Made it Pay for Itself and He has Increased Production Sixfold.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

In response to the invitation in your issue of July 22 for a discussion of the subject, "How to Improve a Worn-out Farm," I will give the result of an experiment in that line that has come under my observation.

About twelve years ago, when "Peg leg" Williams was hauling negroes from Eastern North Carolina to the Mississippi Delta by the carload, an old "sandhill" farm, worn out in the truest sense of the word, found itself without a tenant. This farm contained about 120 acres, thirty of which were woodland. Of the cleared land, there were about thirty acres of what is known as pocoson, most of which had been turned out and allowed to grow up in broomsedge, bushes and running briars till two strong mules could scarcely pull a one-horse Dixie plow in it. The rest of this pocoson land had been planted in rice for several years and had gotten so it would not grow anything else. So only sixty acres were left upon which anything could be made to grow, and some of this was very light sandy soil covered with sassafras bushes, the other being of a sandy loam.

To improve such a farm would seem a task almost impossible of accomplishment. Nevertheless, within these twelve years it has been made "to pay for itself" by its present owner, and has been improved till it produce six or eight times as much as when he took it in hand.

The method followed was careful preparation of the soil for planting, careful cultivation of crops, with systematic rotation of the same when possible, no one crop being planted on the same field more than two years in succession.

This farm is in the trucking section and considerable truck has been planted, but of late years only strawberries and asparagus have been grown.

The cowpea has been planted after all small grain and always in the corn, either on top of the rows, between the hills of corn, or in the middle of the rows when made wide enough, or both when seed are plentiful.

This season's production of this farm will be between \$2,000 and \$2,500. The following is a summary of crops grown, number of acres planted and value of produce (prices estimated at what they will probably be at the time when produce is ready for market):

Twelve acres in wheat and oats followed half by peas broadcast for hay, half by peas and peanuts in drill for seed and hogs, total value estimated at \$350; 3½ acres in strawberries, \$750; 1 acre in sweet potatoes, \$60; 2½ acres in asparagus, \$85; 1 acre in watermelons, \$55; 20 acres in cotton (lint and seed), \$700; 35 acres in corn (grain and fodder), \$400. Total, \$2,400.

(Note.—Twelve acres of the corn was on reclaimed pocoson land. Lime was used on this to counteract acidity or sourness.)

Tobacco and cantaloupes will probably be planted next season and a still further diversification of crops inaugurated.

ROBT. S. TAYLOR.

Duplin Co., N. C.

Cotton Crop and Prices.

It is at this writing (August 28), too early to estimate the cotton crop for 1902 with any degree of accuracy. The next twenty days may greatly change the situation. But the crop is sufficiently advanced to settle a few things. There will not be a very large crop. No "bumper crop" is now possible.

In many places the cotton has stopped growing and is opening rapidly from two to three weeks earlier than the normal time. This always means a short crop, when these conditions prevail. Other large areas have bloomed to the top. The weed is only moderately well-developed anywhere, except a few forward spots. Over large areas it is very small. Numerous insects and diseases are doing damage in various localities.

On the other hand, the supply of American cotton on hand is very short. But for the premature opening of the present crop, many factories would have been compelled to shut down. All the cotton we can make this season will be needed to supply the world's demand for the next twelve months.

This should cause the price to be good. And it will have this effect if our farmers do not rush their cotton into market.

If no cotton was sold before the

20th of October, cotton would bring 12 cents.

Why should any farmer sell before that time? Surely you can live that long without your cotton money. If you owe debts, your creditors can afford to wait that long. Your credit is not injured by holding the cotton. It will be good while you have the price advances. The more you get for your cotton the more debts you can pay. Then why be in a hurry to sell? Why not hold and get that for yours?

Why should cotton drop suddenly down from 9 to 7½ cents? The cotton goods have not dropped in price that way. It is speculation pure and simple. They, the speculators, think you will be silly enough to sell at that figure and they will buy it as cheap as you will sell.

The time has come when you can have something to say about the price of cotton. Sell slow and you will get more for it.—Dr. J. B. Hunicutt, in Southern Cultivator.

Raising Pork Cheaply.

A Wake County farmer, sending a new subscription to The Progressive Farmer, writes:

"I should like to tell your readers of my plan for hog-raising; since I have tried it I have bought no meat but have sold some every year. I have about one hundred mulberry trees in a two-acre lot. About November 1st I sow it in rye for the pigs to graze on in the spring, and it is excellent for this purpose. The mulberries come on about the middle of May and last till the last of July. At that time the hogs are fat, and your work is to hold what they have gained. If you let them go back, it is all loss. I have a field of rye to keep them on till I get something better. I hope this will help some reader of The Progressive Farmer."

A mere extension of the present school term with the present course of study will not meet the needs of the children. The lines of development in the South must be both agricultural and mechanical. Our people must bring a trained brain and a trained hand to the daily labor. Education should be a means not of escaping labor, but of making it more effective.—Exchange.

Fools learn nothing from wise men, but wise men learn much from fools.—Lavater.

Harry Farmer's Talks.

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Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

We are glad to note the success our farmers are having with tobacco this year. The sales at the warehouse at Whiteville are large and the farmers go away with smiles on their faces. Tobacco is paying three times the profit that cotton does.

GROWING TOBACCO.

There are large areas all over the eastern part of North Carolina that will produce fine tobacco. But it must be borne in mind that to do well with tobacco requires experience in curing it. Our farmers tried it a few years ago and lost money, because they knew nothing about managing the barn. The tobacco land should have cow peas planted between the hills of tobacco about the time the crop is laid by so that they can take the land as soon as leaves are stripped off. We would dig up the tobacco stalks so that they would not draw on the land. By this plan the land would improve, at the same time yielding two crops a year. The heavy application of commercial fertilizer would make a nice crop of peas.

SEND THE CHILDREN TO SCHOOL.

We must remind our farmers that the crop of children should be gotten in shape to attend the schools which will soon open. Make all needed preparation in time so that the cultivation will not be interrupted by other work. We know it is hard some times to keep them in school when labor is scarce and there is so much work to do, but we owe them an education and we should not fail to meet this sacred obligation. It may make the difference between freedom and slavery in years to come.

SOW OATS.

It is not too soon to sow oats. The Winter Gray or Turf oat should be sown early. We are surprised that farmers do not sow more of them. They will stand the cold equal to wheat and will out yield any other kind. The straw is not so coarse as the rust proof and spring oat thus stock eat it better. If you sow them early it will only require about three fourths the seed per acre as other kinds. The seed will cost a little more than the old varieties but you will save in the quantity required to the acre which really makes them cheaper. A bushel and a half will give more oats than two bushels of other kinds. They can be had of some of The Progressive Farmer's advertisers. The D. L. Gore Co., of Wilmington, can supply them.

HARRY FARMER