

Professor Massey's Editorial Page.

The Southern Farmer's Needless Burdens.

ISSACHAR IS A STRONG ass crouching down between two burdens. And he saw that rest was good, and the land, that it was pleasant, and became a servant into tribute."

Henry Wallace, in Wallace's Farmer, makes this a text for a sermon on the burdens that the common people bear from accumulated and organized capital on the one hand and organized labor on the other. I want to use it to talk about education. The Southern farmer is Issachar. He knows that he has a pleasant land, but like a strong ass, he has been crouching beneath two burdens—the lack of education, and the tribute he pays to the Northern farmer for things a good agricultural education would show him how to raise for himself.



PROF. W. F. MASSEY.

I can well remember when four of us with a President opened the North Carolina A. & M. College in Raleigh, with one lone building standing on a barren hill covered with brickbats and rocks, where now the beautiful lawns and parade ground are. I remember, too, that at that time the farmers sent their sons there with the strict injunction that they were not to take the agricultural course, for there was nothing for them in farming. One man who owned a good farm, was living in an official position in town, and said to me that he wanted to send his sons to the college and wanted to know what course of study was best for them. I suggested the agricultural course. "No, thank you, they could get enough of that at home, but there is no money in farming."

Then we were watched by the other colleges with a rather jealous eye, and the farmers of the State apparently had no sympathy for our work. But the college lived and grew. The farm papers and the farmers' institutes educated the farmers and infused new ideas, and by degrees the intelligent farmers came to see that there was a need for education of the men who are to build up the waste places and redeem the lands of the South.

Now the Farmers' Union is the first of the farmers' organizations to really take an active interest in agricultural education. When a Farmers' Union, like the one in North Carolina last fall, puts up \$50 to pay my expenses there to have an institute, it is evidence of the new spirit that the Union has infused into the members of the organization. Issachar is feeling his oats, and is determined to stop paying tribute to the North.

And what is the way to shift his burdens? Education and efficient training in better methods, and compact social organization among farmers.

Issachar is a strong ass, but there is no need of his carrying needless burdens. Education will enlighten his mind and organization will give him power. The burden of poor farming is due to lack of knowledge of better methods, and the poor farming is the cause of the burden of the tribute to the Northern farmers. Education will clear him of the burdens, and organization will not only help him in business matters but will make a more sociable man of him.

The farmers of the Southern States have gotten new ideas in regard to the work of their colleges of agriculture, and in most of them the students in agriculture are outnumbering those in other courses. Issachar is gradually throwing off one burden that will enable him to throw off the other.

Any young man of energy and industry who loves the farm can now work his way through the North Carolina A. & M. College and probably any of the others. What is now most sorely needed is to make the Farmers' Union a force behind the rural schools, to compel the teaching of the elements of agriculture so that those who cannot go to college, but must go back to the farm from school, will go back with some of the new ideas. The Farmers' Union can be made the greatest help in this educational work of any organization in the South. This is a time in the affairs of the Southern farmer when the organization can do

the best of work, for there is a spirit abroad in the whole South to learn better farming.

Issachar has burdens enough without that of lack of education that causes him to pay tribute—burdens that the special interests have laid on us all, and which we hope the whole country will soon shake off. But the special burdens that the Issachar of the South is bearing, can be shaken off by education. Let every farmer see that his son has an education for his life work if he loves the farm and wants to stay there. Do not think that the farmer, of all professions, needs no education. He needs a broader one than the lawyer or the doctor, for the art of farming depends on so many of the sciences that a man need be expert in several of them. Let the Farmers' Union use its influence with the legislators to get the colleges all the help they need. For the legislators will always do what the farmers want if they know what they want.

Issachar may be strong but he has been an ass too long carrying needless burdens. Let us shake them off.

Notes on Recent Issues.

IN VIRGINIA last week I saw them "barring-off" corn, and like Mr. French, I would like to know why they do it. I suppose because everybody else does and their fathers did, for I saw them going through with the little plows where there was little or no grass. Looking from the train, I wished that I could stop and tell these men how much needless labor they were using, for the land was light and level and a weeder would have enabled them to run over so rapidly. And then, just as I was pitying the men who were barring-off, the train passed a field where I saw a man going over his corn with a weeder and another using a weeder across the sweet potato rows, and I thanked Heaven that the heaven is taking. The men who were using weeders I know are not going to use a turning plow in their fields, and ere long their neighbors will learn the advantage of the weeder. Then I saw three hands thinning cotton where a weeder had evidently been used across the rows, and again I felt thankful that some are finding out the better way and do not have to hoe off the crust around the cotton on high beds.

SOY BEANS OR COWPEAS.—Mr. Zeno Moore think that the soy bean beats the cowpea. Well, I have nothing to say against the soys, and am only too glad that men are taking more interest in legume forage. But I can get more feed on an acre from peas than from soys, if you leave out the hard stalks that are not eaten. But either peas or soys followed by crimson clover will enable a farmer to get rich, and make his land rich, if properly used.

SAVE PEAS FOR SEED.—The farmers who have grown no peas for seed and who think they can not afford to buy the seed should study what Dr. Butler says. The Southern farmer can not afford not to sow peas and feed them, and no Southern farmer need ever have to buy the seed, but should have them to sell regularly to the people northward who find it hard to mature them and to those down on the Gulf Coast where they do not seed well. The sugar planters of Louisiana always buy them and never fail to use them.

"REFLECTION ON THE SOUTH."—Mr. Poe is right in what he replies to the one who objected to what he thought was a reflection on the South. We need of all things to know wherein we are lacking and lagging behind other sections. The staff of The Progressive Farmer and Gazette are nearly all Southern-born, and even Dr. Butler, though not born in the South, has been so identified with Southern interests for so many years that he is a real Southerner and as anxious as are we who are native to the soil to help the Southern farmers to better and more profitable practices.

Personally, I have given my life to the work of Southern farm improvement and am fully acquainted with the farming of other sections and know that we need much in the South to put the farming where it should be. Let us get the Southern lands where there can be no "reflection" to tell what other folks are doing. It is no reflection on the South to say that we are behind-hand in many respects. The North never was desolated by armies nor robbed by carpet-baggers, and the South has had a hard road to travel, but she is "getting there," and I only wish that I could live to see her lead the whole country in farming, as she should.

But last year, I want to say, I saw gullies and

wasted hillsides in northern Ohio, and southern Illinois. Bad farming in the hill lands of southern Illinois has made poor, gullied hills from rich ones just as it has in the South, and I saw in Ohio where they had plowed straight up and down hill and there was a gully in every corn row.

What Farmers Want to Know.

IN THE FOLLOWING paragraphs, taken from letters written in answer to the inquiries of Progressive Farmer and Gazette readers, possibly you may find an answer to some question that you have been intending to ask:

Sow crimson clover in early September, and if the ground is dry, roll it after sowing. Clover of any sort will not do well on an acid soil. A good time to apply lime will be as soon as the peas are cut. Spread 25 bushels of freshly slacked lime per acre, and harrow in lightly.

You can sow rye at any time from September to Christmas. If you wish to improve the land and sow something in the cotton for a winter cover, you should sow crimson clover, 15 pounds of seed to an acre. If the cotton was well fertilized, you will not need to use any more, but if there was only a little fertilizer put in the furrow for cotton, you had better apply some acid phosphate between the cotton rows broadcast. Sow the clover after corn and cowpeas in September. That is, sow the seed among the peas. Then you will have the best thing for sweet potatoes next spring. Sow the clover seed, too, or rye, after peanut and sweet potatoes. It will probably be rather late for the clover, and rye will answer as a winter cover.

I am rather puzzled to know how the practice of applying a second dressing of fertilizer originated. The only thing that may have a good effect from dressing during the growth of the crop is the readily available nitrate of soda. This simply promotes more rapid growth, and in land where cotton makes a good strong "weed," I do not believe that it pays to use the nitrate.

For alfalfa, I would advise sowing peas, letting them mature and turning them under in early September. Then apply 30 bushels of freshly slacked lime per acre and harrow it in well. Give the peas a dressing of 400 pounds of acid phosphate and on sandy soils 50 pounds of muriate of potash per acre, and it will all be there for the alfalfa. Never sow alfalfa in spring, but always in September. Use 25 pounds of seed per acre.

The planting of the early potatoes that have been kept in cold storage is a perfect success, and will give as good, if not better, seed than the real second crop, and planted in July will make a larger crop and better for table use. I would plant them in a deep furrow and cover very lightly till they grow and then work the earth to them till level and would not hill at all as we do early potatoes, the object being at that season to retain moisture.

The "green brier" is really the tuberous-rooted smilax. The only thing to do is to keep the tops cut off and never allow them to make green leaves and the roots will finally die. I am fighting them in my garden, and this is the only way I know. It is useless to grub them out, for every cut root will sprout, but no plant can long survive if not allowed to make green leaves. Of course I pull out any that I can pull up, but it is seldom that you can pull them. Nothing will overcome them but constant cleaning off of every shoot that gets above ground.

It is believed that the continual application of acid phosphate brings about acid conditions in the soil that are unfavorable to legume crops and many others. Acid phosphate is made by mixing equal weights of sulphuric acid and pulverized rock. The crops take the phosphoric acid and the sulphuric acid is set free and at once unites with the lime in the soil, forming sulphate of lime, or plaster, which does not sweeten the soil as the lime carbonate does, and acid conditions are brought about by the robbing of the soil of lime carbonate. The remedy is, of course, to apply lime to sweeten the soil and bring about conditions favorable to the legumes.

Every untrained or mistrained child is a positive drawback to the future welfare of the State.