

# THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER AND SOUTHERN FARM GAZETTE

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## Larger and Cleaner Fields Reduce the Cost of Crop Production.

THAT, UNTIL THEY substitute improved machinery and better work stock for the inefficient implements and small mules they now use in their farming operations, it is going to cost Southern farmers more than it should to make their crops, we have stressed again and again in the last few years. The man who breaks his land with a one-horse plow and cultivates his crop with a double-shovel and a hoe simply must produce his cotton or corn at a greater cost than the man who plows the same kind of land with two or three horses and cultivates it with a weeder and a two-horse cultivator. Improved machinery is a necessity if crops are to be most economically produced.

But there is another thing to consider. Much of our land here in the South is cut up with ditches and terraces and patches of uncultivated land, or is broken up with stumps and bushes and little clumps of worthless trees, until the use of any of the larger and heavier farm implements is made difficult if not impossible. To use machinery economically, it is necessary to have fields of reasonable size and to have these fields free from obstructions. A disk plow, a grain drill, a weeder, a mowing machine cannot do good work or cheap work among a lot of stumps or between clumps of bushes.

Nor is there any necessity for having such fields. In our series of drainage articles we have pointed out one way to get rid of many of the open ditches and uncultivated patches that now break up the fields. Terraces could, with proper plowing, often be done away with and nearly always made low and flat so that they could be worked over. The wide, shallow surface ditch which teams can cross is not in the

way and really gives better drainage than the deep and narrow ditch which makes turning necessary. Stumps and bushes—well, if they do any good, we have never noticed it, and they cost the farmer far more than he is likely ever to imagine. This winter, instead of the farmer and his hands and tenants remaining idle, let them get to work and clean up the fields, if there are any of these hindrances to good cultivation present, and thus prepare for better work and cheaper crops next year. Let the man who has land to rent demand that the tenant help get it in shape to cultivate next year, guaranteeing payment for the work out of the crop. The landlord often has to "carry" the renter anyway; why not let him do a little carrying? It will be to the advantage of all concerned.

At any rate, let the farmer get rid of the stumps and ditches and little strips of uncultivated land. Until he does this, as we said in the beginning, his crops are going to cost him more than they should.



THE KIND OF FIELDS YOU SHOULD HAVE.

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ONE OF THE BEST AND CHEAPEST WAYS TO GET RID OF THE STUMPS.