

# THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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## Fewer Acres in Cotton—More Cotton to the Acre.

**T**HIS, to our thinking, should be the slogan for cotton growers this year—or any other year for that matter.

The folly of an excessively large crop has been repeatedly pointed out and is now generally recognized. Yet these excessive crops are planted every few years and low prices follow. These, in turn, are followed by strenuous efforts to reduce the acreage; and whenever the acreage is reduced, or a bad crop year comes, and the price goes a little above normal there is another general rush to plant every available acre to cotton.

We said last week that the only way to make the cotton crop a steadily profitable crop, would be to change Southern farming from the single "sale-crop" basis to the basis of a system of diversified farming in which livestock, food crops, feed crops and soil-building crops should all be given their proper places. This we believe with all our heart; and if any reader has not laid out his farming to conform to a systematic rotation which considers first the fertility of his soil, he should begin this spring to work out such a rotation.

This is the rational way permanently to reduce the cotton acreage to a reasonable size and to insure reasonable crops from the land planted. As a step in this direction many farmers will do well to consider and to act upon what Mr. J. A. Wade says on page 5 of this issue. It is hard to find words fitly to describe the suicidal folly of planting to cotton, year after year, 12,000,000 acres of land that cannot reasonably be expected to produce a profitable crop. Let us implore every reader of The Progressive Farmer who has been guilty of this folly in the past to see that his part of it ends this very year.

Plant to cotton this year only land that will give you a paying crop. It only makes you poorer to tend those low-producing acres.

Then, on the land you plant use every effort to make a good yield. There is no reason ever to expect cotton prices high enough to make the average yield profitable. It is folly to say that instruction in cotton growing is not needed. Good farming—yes, respectable farming—would double the average yield; and as long as 30,000,000 acres of land is tended to produce the crop that should grow on 15,000,000 acres, the cotton farmer is going to be in poor shape to fight the battle for a scientific marketing system. What the farmer wants is not so much higher prices as larger profits, and his first duty is to make his crop at a reasonable cost. To do this he must, first, stop wasting labor on fields that cannot pay and, second, make the fields he does tend produce their crops at as low cost as possible. When he does this, some profit will be assured; and he will soon be in a position to finance his own cotton crop and to help fix the price for it.



COTTON ON DYNAMITED LAND—FARM OF R. E. RYAN, CULLMAN, ALA.

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