

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

(Title Registered in Patent Office.)

A FARM AND HOME WEEKLY FOR THE CAROLINAS, VIRGINIA, TENNESSEE, AND GEORGIA.

Vol. XXIV. No. 5.

RALEIGH, N. C., MARCH 11, 1909.

Weekly: \$1 a Year.



More Profitable Cotton as a Guide Post to "\$500 More a Year"

HERE is a cotton field which made over two bales to the acre—the kind of a cotton field thousands of our readers have often dreamed about and longed for, only to conclude at last that longing was vain and that such cotton fields were only to be found in dreams.

Longing is, of course, vain when unaccompanied by earnest and persistent effort; but fields that make two bales to the acre may be made a reality in a hundred cases to each single instance now to be found. Such yields do not come as the result of chance or of any startlingly new method of doing things. They are the result of close attention to all the details of the established essentials of good farming. This particular cotton crop grew after crimson clover, was from carefully selected seed, was liberally and yet cheaply fertilized—as no nitrogen was bought for it—and was cultivated thoroughly and economically. It is quite likely that it cost less to the acre than many crops making not one third as much, simply because the first requirement for a good crop—a rich, properly managed soil—was there, and because the growing of the crop was done in an up-to-date manner.



[Courtesy I. W. Mitchell]

The man who makes crops like this will not need to go into hysterics or bankruptcy next fall, whatever the price of cotton may be. We believe in good prices for cotton, and we believe with all our hearts in co-operative efforts by the farmers to secure good prices; but just so long as the farmers depend upon the cotton crop to supply them with all the necessities of life so long will they be at the mercy of the cotton buyers and the speculators. All the organizations and resolutions and speeches in the world cannot take the place of economic independence. The time to control cotton prices is not next fall but now. Besides, as is said on our next page, what we as farmers are primarily interested in is not prices but profits. There is more money in selling cotton that cost six cents at ten cents than in selling cotton that cost nine cents at twelve cents. The thing that each one of us needs to do this spring is to arrange to grow his cotton at the lowest possible cost and to have it his own when it is made. To do the first we must regard the essentials of good farming we have so often stressed before, (1) good soil, properly prepared, (2) good seed, (3) rational fertilization, (4) thorough and economical cultivation. To make our crops our own we must grow more of our bread and meat, our fruits and vegetables, more of our own stock and more feed for them.

While we are doing this we may be at the same time improving our soils so that we can each year grow cotton at a comparatively smaller cost and each year be financially stronger and so more able to control the price of our product.

We want, of course, to prepare our land in the best manner, to plant the best seed, and to reduce the expense and increase the efficiency of our cultivation by using better tools and more horsepower; but we must at the same time prepare to raise more of our home supplies and to build up our soil by the growing of legumes and the feeding of stock.

Cotton is, as Professor Massey says, the best money crop in the world, and the South might grow it for a thousand years and both her soils and her people grow richer all the time. This will not be the case, however, while it takes three acres to produce one bale of cotton; while we cultivate our crops with one-horse plows; while we spend millions of dollars for nitrogen which we might get from the air; while we send our cottonseed meal abroad and buy, not only our stock and feed for them, but our own daily food; while we are at each season's end waiting for the sale of our crop to pay for the fertilizers which we put on it, the stock and machinery that worked it, and the clothes we wore out and the food we ate while making it.

