

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

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A GOOD START FOR THE CROPS AS A GUIDE POST TO "\$500 MORE A YEAR."



Courtesy the Avery Company.

DOESN'T this look like farming? The cultivation of two rows at one trip across the field means something accomplished in a day. The work is well done, too, the soil thoroughly stirred and pulverized on the surface, and left smooth and fine behind the cultivator to retain the soil moisture and make the most favorable condition for the growth of the young plants. We may not all be able to drive three mules and cultivate two rows at a time--some of us cannot yet drive two mules and cultivate one row--but we believe the time is rapidly coming when the one-horse cultivator will be regarded as entirely out of date, and when the man who goes to cultivate his corn or his cotton with a turning plow will be regarded as hopelessly unprogressive. The time to use a turning plow is in the first preparation of the soil, and immediately after the plow should come the harrows. We have heard it said that there are "farmers" in the South who actually do not own a harrow! Is it any wonder that our average yields are low when the young plants are expected to start in hard, dry, baked, rough or cloddy soil, unretentive of moisture and so holding locked up and unattainable the food the young plants should have?

"Brethren, these things ought not so to be." No crop should be planted until the soil has been made mellow and fine. It will pay in practically every case to delay the planting for one more working of the soil, if it is not already in good condition. The crop will grow enough faster to make up for the delay.

Then after the crop has been planted it is sheer shiftlessness to wait until the grass and weeds have such a start that it requires a turning plow to handle them. The harrow and the weeder should be used instead, and they should be used often enough to keep a dust mulch on the surface of the soil. On all land that is well drained (and all cultivated lands should be well drained) the cultivation that will leave the soil level and reduce the first two or three inches of it to a fine powder is the ideal cultivation. With a deep, loose, humus-filled feeding-ground for the plants below this dust covering, the crops will grow and thrive through any drouth we of the South are at all likely to have. Start the crop right and the battle is half won.