

**PROF. MASSEY'S  
Editorial Page.**

Prof. Massey will personally answer inquiries on Agricultural subjects sent by our readers.

## Secretary Wilson Says we Can Make Southern Farm Lands Worth \$100 an Acre.

Notable Message From Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson to our Progressive Farmer Readers—In Six or Seven Years by Stock Raising, Legume Growing and Good Farming Southern Farmers Can Make Their Farms Worth \$100 an Acre.

### Farm Work for April.

**T**HERE will certainly be no lack of work this month on the farm. In traveling recently through the South Atlantic States from Florida to Virginia I noticed that too much work has already been done. There is too much land in preparation for hoed crops, and far too much area prepared for cotton. It pains one to see the whole country apparently plowed and much of it bedded for cotton, with hardly a green winter cover crop anywhere.

I passed depot after depot piled high with sacks of fertilizers for these fields that are so hungry for humus-making material—fertilizers bought on credit and to be paid for out of the cotton crop.

But the mischief is again done, and I suppose that the majority of the cotton farmers will again dribble 200 pounds per acre of 2—8—2 fertilizer to get a crop of cotton, which belongs to the supply company after it is made. You can, at least, stop that 2—8—2, and either mix or buy a higher grade fertilizer and use it more liberally.

### CRIMSON CLOVER IS STORING UP NITROGEN NOW.

But there may be and certainly are exceptions to this general bareness of the farms, and the man who now has a crop of crimson clover on his land can let it bloom and turn it down with the certainty that the clover has given him twenty times the nitrogen that he would get in his little dribble of 2—8—2, and that only acid phosphate and potash will be needed to make more cotton than will be made by those who have long since bedded their old dead soil for cotton.

Turning under the clover well, prepare the soil finely, working in the acid phosphate and potash broadcast, for the roots of cotton and corn run far and wide across the rows. One of the best cotton growers in South Carolina told me some years ago that he put his manure down a furrow in the middles and only the fertilizer in the rows, and that the plants of cotton got the manure just at fruiting time. I would say put all on broadcast and let the roots be finding it all the time.

Then do not put the cottonseed in too deeply. If you use the smoothing harrow and the weeder as soon as a crust forms and after the cotton is up, you will have no sore shinned plants chafing against the crust; and with the weeder going crosswise the rows, you will have less chopping to do.

### STOP SO MUCH HAND WORK.

Now is the time to determine that you will not waste human labor by running plows four times in the rows, but will sit on the cultivator while a pair of mules works both sides of the row at once, doing it far better than any plow or sweep can do it.

With all the complaint about the scarcity of labor, the cotton farmers, as a rule, are using more human labor than is needed, because of the lack of the proper implements for saving the labor. Good large plows, good harrows, good two-horse cultivators, all save human labor, and mule power is far cheaper than a darkey at the end of a hoe.

### TWO COTTON FIELDS—A CONTRAST.

Then look to the seed you use both of cotton and corn. Do not plant cottonseed from a gin where all sorts of cotton are ginned and thus get a mixture of early and late, tall and bushy, and then think that you have some variety of improved cotton.

Last summer I saw a field of beautiful green cotton, every plant of the same uniform character and height, and right across the road was a field where the cotton had a yellow cast, was long-legged, short-legged, bushy and slim, and all sorts of character. The one field was from selected seed, grown by a man who feeds stock and has manure. The other was the old style cropper's cotton. One field promised over a bale per acre, while the other would be lucky to make a half a bale, but one had gained a little humus from the manure, while the other was planted with poor

**S**ECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE JAMES WILSON, who has just been reappointed by President Taft, has not only seen the usefulness of the Department double in the twelve rich years of his service as Secretary, but he has done especially notable work in the South. Perhaps no other section of the country, in fact, is getting quite so much from the Department now as the Cotton Belt. The South, too, appreciates this, and the South Carolina Farmers' Union and other agricultural organizations urged upon President Taft the importance of continuing Mr. Wilson in office—and not without effect, so it is generally believed. When in Washington City a few days ago Editor-in-Chief Poe, of *The Progressive Farmer*, called on the Secretary and found him deeply interested in all Southern questions.

"The Southern farmer," he declared, "is making very gratifying progress. He is going forward, and we are anxious to have the Department co-operate as fully as possible in the good work.

"About the biggest need of the South, in my opinion, is to get rid of the cattle tick so that there will be nothing in the way of stock raising. You can handle cattle more cheaply than we of the North. In the first place, you have so much milder winters; in my home State of Iowa, for example, there was seven inches of snow on the ground last week, and all the stock must be fed at so much heavier expense than in the South. Then there is your cottonseed, that magnificent cattle feed. Feed it to your cattle, and you will eventually take half your present acreage and grow more cotton than you now grow on the whole acreage.

"The Southern farmer should make it a rule never to let anybody get the nitrogen away from his farm. Let the lint alone be sold off, and wise farming will make and keep your lands fertile forever.

"The rolling lands of the South ought to grow more sheep. Put some woven wire 24 to 30 inches high around the pastures and not even dogs can bother them. And hogs, of course, can be grown with you everywhere: there should be plenty of them.

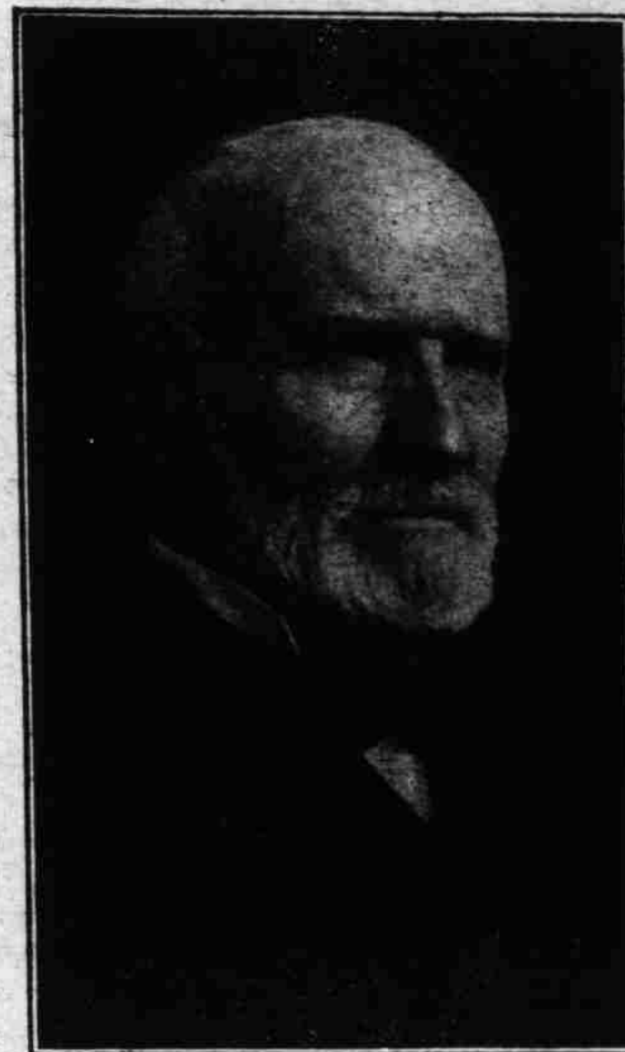
"Your cowpea is a great advantage, and should be much more largely utilized than it already is in building up the land. Better drainage also holds out much promise for the South. Tiling will give life to many an acre now sour, soggy and unprofitable. I should also like to see farmers give attention to utilizing rocky, steep or antillable lands of any kind in growing wood. Wood and lumber are bound to become increasingly valuable with the rapid exhaustion of our virgin forests, and few lines of endeavor will pay better than judicious forestry work. Put your abandoned fields to growing timber.

"Another phase of agricultural work in the South that interests me especially is the new interest in dairying. Wherever the people set about organizing a central dairy, the Department of Agriculture will send a man down to help about the building, buying the outfit and getting the work started. Our Dairy Division is at the service of your people.

"That the South ought to raise its own colts instead of sending to Missouri for mules goes without saying. Here, again, you can raise what you need far cheaper than we in the North. With your mild winters, longer growing seasons, and greater variety of crops, you can beat us every time.

"Yes, the South is making progress, and it has a great future—there is no doubt about it—and it is going to make astonishing progress in the next ten years. With proper attention to stock raising and legume growing you can bring up your lands to make two bales of cotton per acre, and wherever land will do that, every acre of it is easily worth \$100. That ought to be your aim.

"I believe it absolutely, and I have no hesitation in saying it: With good farming in six or seven years' time you can make your Southern lands worth \$100 an acre. It ought to be done, and the Department of Agriculture is here to co-operate with the Southern farmer in every possible way in bringing about that result."



seed, and on land merely galvanized with fertilizer.

Both soils were of the general type of red upland clay loam, but the field that had had manure was mellow and the soil worked fine, while the other, that had been bedded early, while the soil was too wet probably, was cloddy. The roots of the cotton could not get what plant food the clods contained, and the hot air penetrated into the soil and the crop suffered. The mellow bed retained the moisture, and the plants were green, while in the cloddy field they were yellow and shedding.

### MAKING GRAIN: OATS, CORN, AND WHEAT.

The corn field, too, should have had a sod to turn under, and if plenty of forage had been made and fed, there would be manure for the corn.

If you have a field of oats or wheat that does not grow off as well as you would wish, give it a dressing of 100 pounds per acre of nitrate of soda when the leaves are dry. Then follow the grain crop with peas and get feed to make manure.

### KEEP PLANTING IN THE GARDEN.

You should have started the garden ere this to get an early supply of vegetables. Any surplus of vegetables you may have can always be sold profitably in the nearest town or factory village. It pays well to treat the garden liberally. But do

not stop with a single planting in the spring. Keep up a succession of crops as fast as one falls. A few rows of snaps should be planted as soon as the previous planting is well up, and this kept up till late August will give you a constant supply.

Onion seed should have been sown earlier, but sets now planted will give you good ones. Succession cabbages can be set now and will make fine heads by June. Let the boys have a patch of cantaloupes, and let them have all they can make out of it.

### THE CHEAPEST WAY TO MAKE PORK.

You can raise hogs cheaply with plenty of green food and a series of three or four lots. Last fall you could have sown one lot in rape and one in crimson clover and in the spring after the rape is eaten you could put that lot in early peas, and after the clover is eaten, put that lot in sweet potatoes, in the meantime putting peas on a third lot later than the first patch and of a later variety. The pigs can go on the early peas soon after the clover is eaten, and by the time they have done this lot the later peas will be ready for them, and then the sweet potatoes, till time to harden them off on corn. Any one with a good stock of hogs can contrive a series of lots that will furnish feed in constant succession through the year, and can make cheap pork for home use and for those who buy "supplies."