

The Oxford Mercury.

Devoted to Agriculture, Commerce, Mechanism, Temperance, Politics, Education, Literature, Arts, Sciences, Tales, Anecdotes, &c. &c.

VOL. II.

OXFORD, N. C., SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1843.

N. Y.

TERMS.

THE OXFORD MERCURY

IS PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY
BY R. J. MITCHELL.

At Two Dollars and fifty cents per annum, if paid within six months after the time of subscribing, if not, three dollars will be charged.

No paper will hereafter be sent out of the county, unless the order for the same be accompanied with the cash.

No paper discontinued until all arrearages are paid, unless at the option of the publisher.

Persons forwarding six subscribers, with the amount for said numbers, shall receive one copy of our paper gratis.

A liberal per cent. will likewise be given to responsible individuals who will obtain subscribers to the Mercury, and become responsible for the subscription money.

ADVERTISEMENTS.—One dollar for every 14 lines, first insertion, and 25 cents for each succeeding insertion.

Court orders and judicial advertisements will be charged 25 per cent higher; but a deduction of 33 per cent. will be made from the regular prices, for advertisers by the year.

All letters to the Editors must come free of Postage to insure attention.

LIST OF LETTERS

REMAINING in the Post Office at Oxford, N. C., on the 1st of January, 1843, and if not taken out by the 1st of April, 1843, will be sent to the General Post Office as dead letters.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Andrew, Thomas | Hughes, Charles |
| Arrows, Bartlett | Hanks, George |
| Arrington, Willis | Jones, Robert |
| Anderson, Balin | Johanson, Wm. A. |
| Blotock, Thomas | Jones, Wm. |
| Butler, Thomas | Joiner, Dr. Noah |
| Bas, Wm. | Kittrell, Miss Martha A. |
| Balgett, Thomas E. | Koont, Miss Rhoda |
| Brent, John F. | Lemay, John C. |
| Bair, Radar | Lyon, Thomas B. |
| Ballock, James | Lewis, Charles H. |
| Berry, Asiel | Malen, Robert |
| Chandler, Lathbury | Milley, Charles |
| Chandler, David | Olds, Lewis P. |
| Cannals, Wyatt | Rawlins, Mrs. Mary E. |
| Cambell, Rev. Thos. | Roberts, William |
| Duty, Jas. R. | Strong, Joel |
| Dreke, Rev. C. | Somerhill, Elizabeth |
| Duty, Samnel R. | Stokes, Thomas |
| Stark, Alexander | Stephens, James C. |
| Honey, Squire | Tucker, Lathbury |
| Hornet, Dr. S. S. | Towns, Edmund |
| Persons calling for the above letters will please say they are advertised. | Wandyske, John |
| | Wardle, Abram |
| | Williams, William B. |
| | Winstow, George W. |
| | Wish, John |
| | Williamson, Joseph |
| | Wallingford, Miss E. |
| | Young, John |
| | Young, Miss Sarah |

JAS. C. COOPER, P. M.

January 7, 1842.

BELLEVEU Female SCHOOL.
This School is situated 3 miles west of Oxford, and is under the immediate charge of Mrs. L. A. Russell, assisted by Miss M. S. Mitchell, and will be open for the reception of pupils on Monday the 16th day of January, 1843.

PRICES OF TUITION PER SESSION OF FIVE MONTHS.

In Spelling, Reading, Writing, & Arithmetic,	\$5 00
English, Geography, Geometry, Philosophy, Physiology, Mineralogy, History, Rhetoric, Logic, Chemistry and Botany,	7 50
Latin,	10 00
Drawing and Painting,	5 00
Music on the Piano,	15 00
Ornamental Needle-Work no extra charge.	
Board \$5 per month.	

REFER TO

Hon. R. B. Gilman,
Dr. J. L. Wortham,
Jas. M. Wiggins, Esq.,
Oxford.

Dec. 17, 1842.

NOTICE.

In order to effect a speedy settlement of the estate of N. N. Southall, dec'd, as soon as possible, all persons owing the estate will please see the necessity of making immediate payment. Those not having paid by the 1st of December last, will be waited on *officially*, notwithstanding, but if, under other circumstances, it would afford an extreme pleasure to pay on their *personally*.

W. W. VASS, Administrator
of the Estate of N. N. Southall
Henderson, Nov. 25, 1842.

NOTICE.

I WOULD inform the Legatees and heirs of the late Temperance William, dec'd of Granville, that I am and have been for a long time ready to make settlement; and that after this notice, I shall no longer pay interest on those portions and legacies which are now in my hands.

AUGUSTIN HARRIS,
Administrator, with the will annexed.
Nov 3 1842

VALUABLE LANDS FOR SALE.

By virtue of a deed in Trust executed to the said William for the purposes therein specified, by Col. Wm. Henry Roberts and his wife Ann Eliza, (which deed has been duly registered in the Counties of Granville and Edgecomb) I shall sell to the highest bidder for cash, at the Court House in Tarborough, on THURSDAY, 2ND DAY OF FEBRUARY, next, all the right, title and interest of said Roberts and wife in and to

800 ACRES OF LAND,
more or less, (and interest being the life estate of Mrs. Ann Eliza Roberts, under the will of the late Gerahus Took) lying in Edgecomb County, on the waters of Tar River, adjoining the lands of Frederick Bell, Jos. Littlejohn, Peter Knight and others.

Also, at the Court House in Oxford, Granville Co. on Monday the 6th day of February, 350 Acres of Land, more or less, lying within half a mile of the Court House, a beautiful situation for a residence, convenient to the academy—being the land purchased by said Roberts and his wife from the estate of the late Gerahus Took, who wish to escape from the malaria of the lower country, having wholesome air and pure water in abundance.

ROBT. B. GILMAN, Trustee.
Oxford Dec. 24, 1842.

TOBACCO.

The following particulars on this most important subject, is taken from the January number of the "Southern Planter," and was prepared for the press in 1822, by Peter Minor, Esq. Our farmers will gather from it much useful and substantial knowledge which will serve them for years to come.

NOTES

On the Cultivation and Management of Tobacco from the Plant Bed to the Prize—according to the most approved practices in Albemarle and the adjacent counties in Virginia.

1st. OF THE CHOICE OF LAND FOR THE PLANT BEDS AND MODE OF PREPARING IT.

A rich virgin loam with a slight mixture of sand is ascertained to be the best soil for raising tobacco plants. Such spots are indicated by the growth of alder and hazle bushes in bottoms and on the margin of small streams, and if the situation has the command of water for irrigation it is on that account to be preferred—the spot being selected, the first operation is to burn it with a strong fire. For this purpose the growth of every kind is cut off, (not grubbed up,) and the whole surface raked very clean.—The burning should be done before Christmas, or as soon after as the weather will permit—and if done thus early it cannot be well too heavy, even bringing the soil to a hard cake. The wonderful fertility imparted to soil by fire, has of late years been clearly proved and developed by various experiments in this and other countries, but judging from long established practice, we suppose it is a fact that has been long known to tobacco planters—that this fertility is imparted by the fire and no way dependent upon the ashes left by the process is clearly proved from the fact, that the same results will ensue if the ashes are swept off entirely clean. Or take another piece of ground of equal quality, cover it with as much or more ashes, and prepare it in every respect sim-

ilar to that which is to be planted, and the bed must be irrigated by tracing a small stream of water around the edge of it. If not, it should be watered every day with a common watering pot, or pines dipped in water and shook over the bed until sufficient moisture is obtained.

Under a careful observation and management, the plants according to seasons have been favorable or not, well fit to transplant from the 15th of May to 10th of June. A planter thinks himself lucky if he can get his crop pitched by the 10th of June. After that, the seasons are uncertain from the heat of the weather, and the chances of success for a crop are precarious though it has been known to succeed when planted the middle of July.

Of the Preparation of the Land, and Cultivation of the Crop.

The best tobacco is made upon new or fresh land. It is rare to make more than three successive crops upon the same ground, of which the second is the best, the first and third being about equal. But this mode is common to make only two crops. After all the timber and brush removed, and the surface very cleanly raked, it is twice closely coultured, as deep as two horses or oxen can pull. After this, hand grubbing hoes pass regularly over the whole ground, and take up all the loose roots that have been broken by the coulters, which are heaped and burned, or removed. One and sometimes two more coulters are then given, and the same operation repeated with the grubbing hoes, which leaves the land in proper order to be killed—this is usually done in straight rows at the distance of three and a half feet apart, giving the same distance as near as the eye will permit the other way—in fresh land, that is to say, for the second and third crop, the line of the original rows, and even the fertility of each hill should be preserved. After passing the coulters two or three times between each row, the hills should be made the same place, the remains of the stalks

used with great advantage as an auxiliary to the hoe.

When the plants attain a proper size, which observation and experience will readily point out, they are to be primed and topped. The priming is merely stripping off four or five leaves at the bottom, leaving about a hand's breadth between the first leaf and the top of the hill. Topping is simply taking out the bud with the finger and thumb nails, leaving the necessary number of leaves, which in general is not more than eight, though the first topping may be to nine or ten leaves to make it ripen more uniformly, and bring the crop into the house more together. For the same reason, the late plants are not topped so many, falling from eight by degrees as the season expires, down to six and five. A little practice, and slight attention to the manner in which the leaves grow from the stalk, will soon enable a person to perform this operation with great dexterity and despatch, without counting the leaves. All that is requisite after this until the plant is fit to cut is to keep it from being eaten by the worms, and to pull off the suckers that grow out at the junction of the leaves to the stalk. These suckers put forth only twice at the leaves, but after that indefinitely and continually from the root, and it is thought injudicious ever to let them get more than a week old, for besides absorbing the nutriment necessary to push forward, and increase the size and thickness of the leaf, the breaking them off when of a large size, makes so great a wound as greatly to injure the after growth of the plant. In general about three months is requisite to perfect the growth of tobacco from planting to cutting.

Of the diseases and casualties to which it is subject, and its tendency to exhaust land. Tobacco is subject to diseases, and liable to be injured by more casualties and accidents than any other crop. That growing upon new or fresh high land is seldom injured by any other disease, than the *Stem-borer*, which is the cause of the *Stem-borer*, and is a great enemy to the crop. For this reason, it is not recommended to grow tobacco upon old land, particularly upon low flats, besides being more subject to spot, is liable to a disease we call the *Hollow Stalk*, which is an entire decay and rottenness of the inside or pith, terminating gradually in the decay and final dropping off of the leaves. This disease is sometimes produced by the wounds caused by pulling off overgrown suckers, thereby admitting too great an absorption of water into the stalk through the wound. In land not completely drained, the plants are sometimes apt to take a diminutive growth, sending forth numerous long narrow leaves, very thickly set on the stalk. This is called *Walloon tobacco*, and is good for nothing. As there is no cure for these diseases when they exist, we can only attend to their prevention. This will at once be pointed out by a knowledge of the cause, which is too much wet, and indicates the necessity of complete and thorough draining before the crop is planted. It may not be amiss here to mention, that tobacco is more injured than any other crop by ploughing or hosing the ground when it is too wet, and to express a general caution on that head.

The accidents by which tobacco is often injured and destroyed, are high winds, heavy beating rains, hail storms, and two kinds of worm, the ground or cut worm, and the large green horn worm. High winds, besides breaking off the leaves and thereby occasioning a great loss, are apt to turn them over. The plant unlike most others possesses no power to restore the leaves to their proper position, which must shortly and carefully be done by hand, otherwise the part inverted will gradually perish and moulder away. Those who have studied the anatomy of plants can tell us the cause of this, as well as, why nature has denied to tobacco the faculty of restoring its leaves to their proper position. The ground worm, the same which is sometimes so fatal to corn, is ascertained to be the Larva of the common black bug found in great numbers under wheat shocks, &c. This worm is seldom or never found in new land, but abounds in old or manured ground—and in some years I have seen them so numerous, as to have from forty to fifty taken out of one hill in a morning. The alternatives are either to abandon the crop, or to go over the ground every morning, when they can be found at or near the surface, and destroy them. The missing hills to be regularly replanted. The Horn Worm is produced from a large, clumsy, grey coloured fly commonly seen late in the evening sucking the flowers of the *Stramonium* or *Thorn apple*, commonly called the *James town weed*. The flies de-

and all other narcotic plants indiscriminately as Irish potatoes, tomatoes, &c. In twenty-four or thirty-six hours the eggs hatch a small worm which immediately begins to feed on the leaf and grows rapidly. Great care should be taken to destroy them while young. Turkeys and Guinea fowls are great auxiliaries in this business, but the evil might be greatly lessened if the flies were destroyed, which can easily be done in the night by a person walking over the ground with a torch and a light paddle. They will approach the light and can easily be killed.—In this way I have known a hundred killed in one field in the course of an hour.

Tobacco has been reproached as the cause of the general exhausted condition of our lands, of the slow paced improvement in the Virginia system of agriculture; in short as the bane of all good husbandry. This stigma, I am persuaded, in a great measure unmerited. It is true, that like Indian corn, from the frequent and high degree of tillage it requires throughout the summer, it exposes the ground to be washed by hard rains, and evaporated by the hot sun; but the plant in itself is less an exhauster than corn or wheat. A proof of this is to be found in the superior growth and perfection to which any crop will arrive when grown after tobacco than after any thing else, not excepting clover that has been ploughed in. Perhaps this may be accounted for from the facts, 1st. That the roots and stubble of tobacco left on the ground are more in quantity, and contain more of the essential qualities of manure than those of any other plant. 2d. The plant itself while growing feeds more from the atmosphere than any other; and 3rdly. It is not suffered to go to seed, the process in all vegetation which is supposed to make the greatest draft on the fertility of the earth. Neither is the culture of tobacco incompatible with a proper rotation of crops, and an improved system of husbandry, for we find as extensive and successful a system of tobacco culture as in any other section of the country.

PHILIDORE REDIVIVUS.

The Cafe de la Regence is the head quarters of the chess-club in Paris. The other day, several of the idlers in this cafe were collected around to watch the progress of a game between a first rate player and a young amateur. The game was an interesting one, and kept up on both sides with great spirit. After a series of brilliant and unforeseen moves, bold attacks, and prudent defences, the fortune of the day at length decided in favor of the young amateur, who, proud of his hard-won victory, was preparing to rise from the chess-table, when a strange gentleman came up, and challenged the conqueror to another game. The latter threw on the presumptuous stranger a glance of contempt, and with haughty condescension made him a sign to take his seat.

The game commenced and they both played in a most imposing manner and style, and the chances were in favor of his antagonist, when some one said, 'It wants five minutes to one.'

'And I leave at one o'clock, by the diligence, for Toulouse,' exclaimed the stranger.

'Do not put yourself at all out of the way on my account,' said the young gentleman. 'Go, Sir, let us leave the game; pray do not let me make you miss the diligence.' The gentleman looked at the chess-board, then at his watch.—'I have still five minutes—that is more than enough—it takes three minutes to go to the coach office of Lafite and Caillard—one to finish the game, only two moves to make, so that I have more time than I want.' Having said this, the unknown played his two moves, checked the young amateur in the very centre of his pieces, and then rising, he thus addressed him:—'I do not know, Sir, with whom I have had the honor of playing; but you, Sir, have had for an antagonist the Viscount de Lafite, who is seeking his conqueror throughout Europe, but has not yet found him.' Whereupon the worthy successor of the great L'abbé Lorrain made a profound bow to his astonished and confused antagonist, and walked off to the diligence.

A YANKEE IN CAPTIVITY.—The Brooklyn Star, states that a letter has recently been received in that city from Harvey Wrenchell, one of the persons captured with the Santa Fe expedition. He writes from Jalapa, Republic of Mexico, where he has spent a school with flattering success. Among his pupils, is the daughter of Santa Anna: she is about sixteen years old, and could not write her name when she commenced with