

FARM NOTES

CARE OF THE HARNESS.

Everybody can see the importance of good harness, but very many do not take good care of their harness. Besides the fact that neglected harness wears out sooner than if kept in good condition, there is real danger in using it. Many a runaway could have been prevented if the harness had been kept in good condition.

When not in use, harness should be kept under shelter and should be greased regularly. Now that leather has advanced so much in price, there are more than the usual reasons for taking care of the harness.

Money to Burn.

The limit of profligate wastefulness has often been illustrated by the case of the spendthrift who lighted his cigars with ten-dollar bills. Yet in a recent trip through some of the best trucking sections of Florida, we saw the flames of burning money in many fields, being put into condition for winter crops. The phenomenal prosperity—of which we see less than we hear—could not account for such utter disregard of economy. Wealth actually earned in productive industry is never so intentionally dissipated.

The wastefulness to which we allude consisted in the general burning of dead summer grass in cultivated fields. No justification for such a course is possible. Inexcusable ignorance alone is responsible for the practice.

Suppose we take an actual case we recently saw. It was in Lake County, Florida. The soil was first-class truck land provided with overhead irrigation. As we passed it two mules attached to Dixie plows were furrowing for fertilizer. One of them had just been taken from a hay rake which still stood against the fence. On one side of the field was heaped a great pile of dead grass, just raked from the plowed soil. As we stopped to see what was going to happen next the owner scratched a match and demonstrated that he had money to burn. The whole great pile was in a blaze. In a few minutes only a small heap of smoking ashes remained to mark the place of his folly. These were not even gathered and broadcasted over a part of the field. They were left to the mercy of the winds and rains.

The old story was then repeated. Grass was a nuisance. It could not be turned under and was so in the way of the plows that it was removed by the quickest possible means—fire. As a matter of fact a little more summer cultivation—less haste to lay-by and that grass would never have been in the field and the plant food of which it was made would have remained in the soil from which it had been uselessly extracted. Or had its growth as summer cover to protect the soil from the effects of the burning sun been advisable it might easily have been returned to the soil from which it came. The two good mules taken from the little make-believe plows and hitched to a single real plow—either turn or disc—would have put that grass out of the way of all future cultivation. Moreover both soil and crops would have been greatly benefited. Had the grass really proved to be in the way—had it been used for bedding or litter for these same two mules, it would have been turned into extremely valuable fertilizer.

Money to burn! Let us see. This crop of grass raked up with many of its roots would probably have weighed a ton. This dry vegetation would have contained 5.4 pounds of phosphoric acid worth six cents per pound; 28.2 pounds of nitrogen worth twenty-two cents per pound, and 31 pounds of potash worth thirty cents per pound. On this basis, the material burned would have an actual market value of \$18.74. In other words, the actual plant food burned would have actually cost \$18.74 if returned to the soil in the shape of commercial fertilizer. Freight handling and other items would have actually increased the value of the material which went up in smoke to over twenty dollars.

Had the perpetrator of this sinful wastefulness known something of what he was really doing and saved the ashes from his burned money, he would have still thrown away in smoke \$6.20 in nitrogen, to be replaced in the form of nitrate of soda, cottonseed meal, dried blood or other nitrogenous fertilizer. Had he been told that he had money to burn he would have indignantly denied the assertion. Yet he really burned money without excuse or justification. Yet in that very county, among the very men among whom this case occurred, the constant theme of discussion is the great increase in cost of fertilizer and the impossibility of any present solution of the potash problem. They

are hard pressed to meet their inevitable fertilizer bills, yet they have money to burn.

Though we locate this particular occurrence in Florida, it would be easily duplicated in every section of the South with equal lack of justification, except, perhaps, where fire may be justified as protection against the boll weevil. Moreover, farmers are not the only people who seem to have money to burn. The condition is typical of our present national extravagance. The general complaint of the "high cost of living" is largely due to our inherent extravagance. We have money to burn and then complain when the fire scorches our own fingers.—Dun's Review.

Why Some Farmers Make Money.

It is often asked why one farmer is more successful than another when both seem to have equal opportunity for success. A study of the Johnston County, Missouri, management survey region with this point in mind has indicated that the reasons for a difference in the degree of success attained by the different farmers lies in the following points:

The first is a good sized business. A man must have enough land so that he can use his time and the time of his work stock and tools with the greatest efficiency. This means not less than 120 acres and not more than 500 acres for general conditions, the preferable size being between 200 and 400 acres.

The proper amount and distribution of capital. The investment should not vary widely from the average of the region—either in investment per acre or in the distribution of investment.

A farming system which furnishes a maximum amount of labor from which returns are realized either directly or indirectly, and which includes a minimum of labor from which no return is realized. Each workman on a farm should have provided for him not less than 160 days of productive labor, and each horse should have not less than 50 days of productive labor. Many farms run much below these figures.

The second essential is a business of high quality. The first point in this connection is crop yields. Yields should run from average to about one-fifth above the average for the region. The man who falls below the average in yields has an up-hill job.

Not only must crop yields be good, but on farms where some feeding is done the feeding operations must be efficient. All classes of live stock should return at least \$140 for every \$100 worth of feed consumed, if good wages are to be realized for a man's time. Some of the best feeders get much more than this. Some classes of stock can pay a profit by returning less than this, but in general this rate of return will give good wages and pay market price for the feed consumed.

A reasonable degree of diversity is also necessary for successfully operating a farm. Unless special or unusual conditions justify a highly specialized type of farming, a farm should have several sources of income to depend on. The cotton farmers of the South at the time the boll weevil appeared serves as a good illustration of the danger of having only one source of income. A man who is depending entirely on the sale of hogs is in bad shape if the cholera gets his hogs one year, but if a man has several sources he can lose one or perhaps two sources and still have some income. The most successful farms in the region studied had from three to seven or eight sources—probably three to six sources will give the best results.—O. R. Johnson, Missouri College.

The Farm Loan System.

The Federal farm loan board has completed the task of dividing the country into farm loan districts and designating the cities where farm loan banks will be established. The organization of the system will now be accelerated, and within a few months it should be at the full service of the farmers of the country.

The experience of European nations is sufficient evidence of the value of readily accessible rural credit based upon that most solid of all security, real estate. One of the most important underlying factors of Germany's strength is the thoroughly organized system of rural credits, which enables every farmer to develop his property to the utmost, thus utilizing the lands of the empire to the best possible advantage.

The general use of the rural credit system in the United States will work a wonderful transformation in

agriculture. The output will be immensely augmented, the acreage enlarged, the yield per acre increased and the standard of living on the farm greatly improved. The cost of living, so far as it relates to food-stuffs, should be reduced, without reducing the farmer's net income. The waste now so injurious to both producer and consumer will be eliminated to an appreciable extent.

By enabling farmers to mobilize their resources the farm loan system will make better business men of them. They will keep track of their income and outgo and will learn habits of thrift. It will be money in their pockets when they meet their obligations promptly, to see that crops are fitted to the soil, keep their implements in good trim and utilize surplus in feeding stock. Their neighbors will be their financial partners in the loan associations, and therefore every farmer will be put on his mettle to maintain a good reputation as a farmer and citizen.

The new system will not get under full headway at once. Farmers will be backward in some communities, perhaps suspicious of the "new-fangled" plan for providing him easily negotiated loans at low interest. But when they learn that the plan is their own, that they have in their own control their community association and that they are merely adopting a system which has been in successful operation in Europe for more than a century they will take advantage of the opportunity to improve their condition.—Washington Post.

The Value of a Good Name.

Along with the value of good soils, good seed, good livestock, and good farming methods, the young farmer who would achieve success must ever bear in mind the value of honor whose reputation for square dealing is known to all the countryside, has an asset of incalculable value.

Most of the world's business today is done on credit, or confidence in the ability and willingness to pay, and were credit abolished business of all kinds would of necessity largely stop. And just so it is with the young farmer struggling to get on in the world. Very frequently without capital of his own, if credit is denied him he labors at a sore disadvantage. He may need credit to buy, clear and drain land; to build a home; to buy improved livestock; but without capital and without credit these things must be gone without, and a possibly excellent farmer badly handicapped.

To all of our young men we would say, then, diligently as you cultivate your prize acre of corn, look even more carefully to your good name; fine and famous as your prize pig may be, strive ever that the fame of your good name may spread farther. Your crop may fail or your pig may die, and still the loss would not be irreparable; but once a young man's good name is gone something is lost that a whole life's work may never replace.

Make debts, if you need to in order to better your business, in order that you may become a better farmer; but when you give your promise, either verbally or in writing, make it an iron rule to let nothing on earth keep you from fulfilling it. The good name you will win will be more priceless than gold.—The Progressive Farmer.

Keep the Land From Washing.

No land can be made rich that is being washed and gullied by every heavy rain that comes. The first step toward improving the rolling lands of the South is to prevent their wasting, by washing or erosion.

The gently rolling lands that are not washed into gullies except by the heaviest rains and when bare of growing plants, may be saved or kept from washing away by a growing crop, or a cover crop, as it is generally called when grown largely for that purpose only. Such lands are held by sods or by pasture or meadow crops. Grain crops or those not requiring cultivation during their growth will also usually prevent the washing of such lands. But even these lands, or those having any appreciable slope, are likely to wash away if left bare during the winter season of heavy rainfall.

The steep or hilly lands and even those of moderate slope wash badly as a result of our heavy rainfall and the character of the soil, unless considerable care is taken to run the rows of drilled crops so as to prevent the collection of large quantities of water at one place, and unless terraces are made and crops are kept growing on the land all the time.

Many of our rolling Southern lands can only be held and washing and wasting prevented by the use of all the means known—terracing, cover crops, deep plowing, rotation of crops and the addition of large quantities of organic matter.—The Progressive Farmer.

Electrically-driven musical instrument makers will combine with electrical manufacturers, central stations and contractors in celebration of "American Electric Week," December 2nd-9th.

IF YOU MOVE.

If you move the coming month, it should not be necessary for you to lose a copy of The Herald. Do not send us word about changing your paper and do not depend on the postmaster or the mail carrier to change it for you. If not convenient for you to call at The Herald Office and tell us about it, then just write us a postal card saying: "Change my paper from..... R. F. D. No..... to..... R. F. D. No....." Be sure to give both your old and new post office and the number of your route.

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