

THE GROWING CROPS.

Reports Made to the Department of Agriculture by its Special Correspondents.

The State Department of Agriculture has received and tabulated the April 1st reports of its special correspondents. These returns cover every county in the State and over one-half the townships.

AREA IN WHEAT AND OATS. Estimates based upon these reports show that the area in wheat last year crossed three per cent. over the area of 1886. The condition is reported at 4 per cent. better than at the same time last year, but 5 per cent. below an average crop.

It is estimated that 42 per cent. of the oat crop was sown in the fall, and seventy-four of the correspondents report the early sowing in better condition than that sown in the spring, while one hundred and thirty-seven consider the latter crop the most promising.

The correspondents estimate that only about 3 per cent. of the wheat crop was drilled, the balance of the crop that was drilled in the spring, with very few exceptions, show that the condition of the grain sown broadcast is much better than the small proportion that was drilled. It is estimated that 16 per cent. of the wheat crop was winter killed.

CONDITION OF HORSES AND OTHER WORK ANIMALS IS REPORTED AT 7 PER CENT. BELOW THE AVERAGE OF THIS SEASON OF THE YEAR, DUE ENTIRELY TO THE DEFICIENCY OF GRAIN PRODUCED BY THE SMALL CROPS OF 1886.

The condition of cattle, sheep and hogs is fully up to an average, but there is some complaint of cholera among hogs, but this does not appear to have been as prevalent as in previous years. A few cases of glanders have been reported, but the spread of the disease has been checked by the action of the Department and the owners of the stock in destroying the afflicted animals.

FARM SUPPLIES. The reports indicate that the amount of farm supplies purchased will not be less than in 1886, owing to the partial failure of the crop last year, but the correspondents reply that labor is "good," fifty as "indifferent," and ten as "bad."

Only twenty-eight correspondents report a scarcity of labor, owing to the partial failure of the crop last year, but the correspondents reply that labor is "good," fifty as "indifferent," and ten as "bad."

COMMERCIAL FERTILIZERS. From November 1, 1885, to April 1, 1886, the sales of commercial fertilizers in South Carolina amount to 104,331 tons, for the same period in 1885 the sales have been 91,975 tons, showing a decrease the present season of 13,356 tons. The sales are also 18,428 tons over 1884-85, showing for the past two years a steady decline in the consumption of commercial fertilizers by the farmers of the State.

THE CORN ON HAND. The correspondents report that about 5 per cent. of last year's cotton crop was in the hands of the farmers on the 1st of April. This amounts to about 25,000 bales.

FRUIT, ETC. Fruit, garden produce, and early planted corn have been injured by the recent frosts and freezes, but it was too early, at the date of the reports, April 1, to furnish an estimate of the amount of damage inflicted.

REMARKS. While these reports do not make as favorable an estimate of the season as there are some facts contained in them that should encourage the farmers. The area in wheat has been increased. The condition of both wheat and oats is higher than at the same time last year. A smaller proportion of the crop was winter killed than in 1886. Horses and other work animals are in fair condition for farm work. There has been no increase in the amount of food supplies purchased, notwithstanding last year's small crops, and there has been an increase in the amount of commercial fertilizers purchased in value of about \$800,000.

With very few exceptions the reports to the Department are of a cheerful character, and they indicate a determination among the farmers to derive success this year, which they will win with favorable.

When to Plant Seeds. It is a common notion that the temperature of the soil and the soil itself are of little indication of the time for planting the different varieties of farm and garden seeds. Many farmers will not plant corn or cotton until, in their judgment, the soil is "warm enough" to germinate the seed. That this is not an unerring guide may be easily demonstrated by the experience of any one who has kept a diary and observed closely. It is quite true that corn, cotton, and other seeds will germinate and come up if the temperature of the soil continues, after planting, below the proper degree of warmth for the germination and growth of the particular seed. But ordinary observation shows that in our changeable climate the temperature of the soil on one day is no guarantee of what it will be three or four days thereafter. The conditions of planting may be all right at the time of planting and be all wrong at the time of germination. It is more important that the soil should be at least twelve or fourteen days to come up, and cotton seed from five to ten days. Hence, the weather may be all that could be desired for several days after planting the seed and then turn cold, and the seed will not come up. It is more important that the soil should be at least twelve or fourteen days to come up, and cotton seed from five to ten days. Hence, the weather may be all that could be desired for several days after planting the seed and then turn cold, and the seed will not come up.

White Clover Among Strawberries.

Some of the readers of the Southern Cultivator may have discovered that there is nothing in the shape of natural growth so destructive to the strawberry plant as white clover. It is much more rampant some years than others, but it is always the great pestiferous obstacle to the growth and culture of this delicious berry. This may not be the case in other strawberry regions, but in the section of central Virginia, it is especially so. This clover, like all others, is a tap-rooted growth. It crowds, hugs and starts the strawberry plants to a ruinous extent. Clover roots, as well as strawberry roots, grow in mild winter weather. This clover and all biennial weeds and grasses may be weeded out to advantage in winter when the ground is not frozen, but it is tedious work.

Now what is the remedy? Hand-weeding is almost impracticable; it may be gouged and torn away, but its long, tough root often runs to some depth, and the work is tiresome and will not pay. The best remedy, however, for small lots or for garden culture is to plant in hills, two plants in a hill, hills suitable distance apart. The cultivator can manage them in this position, and not only white clover, but blue grass and all other pests can be eradicated with comparative ease, and the berries will be larger and of better quality.

J. Fryz, Keswick, Va.

A Successful Dairyman.

Does dairy-farming pay? Does anything but cotton-growing pay? asks the Sparta (Ga.) Ishmaelite, and then adds: Let us see: Since the first day of January, 1887, Mr. W. J. Northern has sold 100 pounds of Jersey butter and four hundred and thirty pounds of milk worth of stock. Now let some man who holds that the only ready-money crop of this country is cotton—that cotton-growing offers the surest guarantee of money-making—take his pencil and see if he can do so much profit, out of a year of toil and anxiety in the cotton-field. By that as it may, it does look as if Mr. Northern was making his Jerseys pay. If this be true of him, why may not others succeed at the same business? Cotton has been good, but kings are sometimes deposed, and it is not always a wise subject that sides with the king in the days of revolution.

"That Pale Woman." At one of the villages on our coast, there are a good many rough fishermen. There are a good number of churches and ministers there, and the men in their way, but in long they could not, they have given it up. The Church said, "We have rung our bell, engaged our quartette choir, and if you do not come, we cannot help it."

"You wicked man said, 'Who is going to drive you to the pale woman?'" "You are; you have been swearing to my salvation."

The man trembled, and said, "I will knock down the man that swears. Nobody shall swear while you are here. My name is John, and I will be here, 'You stop that; there is an angel here.' In a few days she took a little cabinet organ, hired a hall, opened the doors and windows, and the rough men gathered around. She touched the keys, and began to sing. 'What a friend we have in Jesus.' Before she had finished, tears were in eyes unaccustomed to weep. In a little while she had a church, and had need for a minister, and they are doing great things there, and never have been a day but for that pale woman.—Dr. Bates in Service for Jesus.

"Come down here to go out on the Lansing train," she said to Officer Button at the third street depot yesterday morning, as she held a satchel in one hand and an umbrella in the other.

"Yes—train goes in thirteen minutes."

"How are the stoves in the cars?" "Perfectly safe, ma'am. All the cars on that road can roll over twice and not take fire."

"Perfectly safe?" "Entirely so."

"Don't the rails ever spread on that road?" "Never."

"Is it about collisions?" "They don't have any."

"Any chance for some other train to run into the rear end of ours?" "Not a bit."

"Oh, I'm not sure but I will take risks and I know you can't understand that if anything does happen by what I said killed my old man won't take a cent less than \$2,000, and mebbe he'll want the burial expenses to boot."

Cut Flowers.

It is a pleasant thing to have a vase or two of fresh flowers to brighten up the farmer's table and living room all summer. Many kinds of flowers are better for outdoor decoration are not suitable for cutting, but all those that are good for bouquets are equally effective in the yard, and the good wife should bear this in mind when making her selection. The following are the best for cutting among perennials, gladioli, peonies, narcissus, the blue hollyhock, lily of the valley, spring iris, and bleeding heart all fine early. Then day lilies and the fine double ranunculus. These are followed by pinked geraniums, double feverfew, larkspurs and lilies-leaved oreganus. In midsummer come the pink spirea, and lily-tweed and many irises and lilies. Autumn brings the showy grasses, the best flowers being the Japanese anemone. And then there are hosts of annuals that come from seed and bloom the first year. The taller stalks and camellia-flowered balsams, candy tuft, Drummond's oreganus, and single double geraniums are better for cutting. In Dakota and other extreme Northern sections, wheat, corn and vegetables are planted in May, as soon as the ground has thawed to a depth sufficient to permit of sowing, and the soil having been deeply broken the preceding fall, and it often occurs that the seeds so planted are up and growing while the deep subsoil is still hard-frozen to the depth of many inches.

A BANK OF BILLIONS.

The Fabulous Wealth of the Bank of France—Historical Sketch of a Stupendous Financial Institution.

A few evenings ago, says the Baronesse Salvador, I attended a most interesting lecture on the history of the Bank of France, where few foreigners are ever admitted. It was given by M. Magnin, governor of the Bank of France, on the occasion of the eighth-seventy anniversary of the institution. During the evening I gathered much information, and as I have never been published, my American friends may find a few notes of value. After many trials and failures, the great Bank of France was born in the nineteenth century. In the beginning its capital was 30,000,000 francs, represented by 30,000 shares of 1,000 francs each, and its shareholders were Napoleon Bonaparte, Lucien Bonaparte, Hortense de Beauharnais, Cambaceres, Duroc and others less noted. Its temporary home was the Hotel Massieu, in the Place des Victoires. In 1807 its capital was increased to 182,500,000 francs. Many special laws have been enacted giving privileges to this bank until December 31, 1875, privileges reserved after that date. The building occupied by the Bank of France at the present time has great importance. It is an irregular quadrilateral building, surrounded by the Rue Croix des Petits Champs, de la Trinité, Banneville and Radier. The public has entire confidence in the bank, and to merit this confidence great precautions have been taken to render private as well as public property safe. The fire brigade, composed of men who once belonged to the regiment of Paris, has apartments in the building; under one roof are placed two immense reservoirs, and sixty armories contain lances ready to throw jets of water. Aside from the firemen no watchmen are employed. The Hotel de la Trinité, occupied by the Bank of France, was built in 1835, after the designs of Francois Mansard. The building is generally known under the name of Hotel de Toulouse, because it was bought in 1715 by Louis Alexandre de Bourbon, Comte de Toulouse, second son of Louis XIV. and Mme. de Montespan. The Duc de Ponthieu, who was the son of the Comte de Toulouse, embellished the hotel and gave it its name. When he died in 1738, the building was declared national property, and the national printing house was installed. In 1808 the Emperor made it the property of the bank for 2,000,000 francs, but it was in 1811 that the Duc de Ponthieu, second son of Louis XIV. and Mme. de Montespan, the Duc de Ponthieu, who was the son of the Comte de Toulouse, embellished the hotel and gave it its name.

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A WESTERN THORROW.

The Story of a Western Highwayman and a Mountain Lion.

An amusing story comes to us from the far West. For a long time an outlaw, named Roach the Terror, had been the scourge of the mountain districts of Idaho, and last month he lay dead and prostrated to rob one Bivens, a wealthy gentleman who was traveling through the Territory on a mining business. While the two were thus employed—the one in robbing and the other in being robbed—they suddenly became aware of the approach of a mountain lion, one of those stealthy, cruel creatures that inhabit and lay waste the fastnesses of the Rocky Mountain region. Roach immediately dropped his booty and skinned up a tree as nimbly as he ever could; for the other man, he didn't stop to pick up his property—he followed Roach up the tree with marked alacrity. The lion, flapping his tail savagely, flexing his hideous fangs and rolling his glassy eyeballs suggestively, looked up at the two men in the tree and prepared to join them.

"Have you a pistol?" asked Roach the Terror.

"No," said Bivens, the traveler, "but in my belt I carry a knife fourteen inches long."

"Then," suggested the Terror, "suppose you stick the knife into that varmint when he reaches out for us."

"Yes, but if I leave the knife in the lion," said Bivens, "and if he falls with my protection, have I from you? No! I'll keep the knife and let you shoot the critter with your pistol."

"Yes, but supposing I do shoot him," said Roach, "what protection have I against your knife when my pistol is empty?"

"While the lion was coming up the tree with alarming rapidity. He seemed to grow three feet every way as he advanced foot by foot.

"Unless we can come to a compromise," said Roach, "the varmint will eat us both. I'll agree to this: You stab him and I'll shoot him—at any rate, either we folks or that critter has got to die."

"That's so," said Bivens, "and I accept the compromise."

So when the lion got within range, Roach threw his knife at it and Bivens reached down and drove his knife clean up to the hilt in the monster's breast.

The lion fell to the ground with a bullet hole in his head, eleven inches of steel in his lung, and when Bivens descended from the tree, they could not be other than friends. Each was indebted to the other for his life. They resolved not to separate, and now they are working for the same business together in the Idaho fastnesses.

LABOR SENT FROM THE SOUTH.

One Hundred and Ten Negroes from This Section May Become the Cause of Some Trouble.

(From the New York Sun.)

B. J. Coyle, of Washington, has the contract for building the canal system of the North Orange, and on Saturday he secured 110 negroes from North Carolina and Virginia. They were brought on by three agents of a labor bureau, and were sent to the States, each man, they made all sorts of representations to secure them, promising many of them \$18 a month and board, and others \$15 per day. Coyle could not pay them the wages promised, and he was obliged to send them back to the States. He made a list of the names of the men, and sent them to the States, each man, they made all sorts of representations to secure them, promising many of them \$18 a month and board, and others \$15 per day. Coyle could not pay them the wages promised, and he was obliged to send them back to the States.

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SCIENTIFIC HOAXES.

How Some Scientists Dressed Up Parts of the Mastodon in a Fanciful Manner.

The great lesson which Currier taught the world was, that many races of animals were entirely extinct, and that nature's chain of existence had not one but many missing links. From his recognition of that fact the science of paleontology may be said to date. But the cautious nature of the mastodon was so fascinating an absurdity to be so easily killed, and it continued to appear at intervals. As late as 1835 we find a New England medical professor writing: "It was an unquestionable fact that the mastodon still lived, and even yet cannot be considered entirely extinct among the unlearned. The dictum that the 'superstitions of one age are but the confirmations of preceding ages' receives ample confirmation in the history of this subject. Not long ago that 1846 mastodon skeleton was exhibited in New Orleans as that of a giant. The cranium was made of raw hide, fantastic wooden teeth were fitted in the jaws, all missing parts were made of wood, and the whole was raised upon the hind legs. It completely conveyed the notion of a 'colossal diabolical giant,' and was no doubt responsible for many nightmares."

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