



THE



PROGRESSIVE



FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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No. 5.

Agricultural.

SWEET POTATOES IN CLAY SOIL.

For the Progressive Farmer.

With the same expense per acre, sweet potatoes at thirty cents per bushel, are more profitable than cotton at nine cents per pound. ***

BEDDING POTATOES.

Water is the great enemy of "bedded" potatoes. Excavate a pit one foot deep; fill the pit with cornstalks (laying all the same way) until the stalks are at least three inches above the level of the edge of the pit. Place on the cornstalks at least three inches of the strongest and best stable manure. If the manure is dry, dampen it, and then lay the potatoes (large ones) at least one inch apart. Cover with sand or loose earth. Do not cover more than half an inch deep. If "slips" are desired early the bed should be covered every night, and should be well protected against "hard" rains. Bedded the 10th of April, will give an abundance of slips by May 5th. * * *

CULTIVATION.

Two-thirds of the cultivation of potatoes should be done before the potatoes are "set out." The land should be well ploughed, and well harrowed—before being made into "ridges." Hog-pen manure is the best. Off-fertilizers, those containing a large per cent of potash, carbonate of lime, and a fair per cent of phosphoric acid, are best. Do not plant too close together; this is the cause of many failures. The after cultivation is so familiar to all that it need not be commented on.

KEEPING SWEET POTATOES.

More sweet potatoes are lost from heat than from cold. If a heavy frost should come before you have "dug" your potatoes, take "all hands" with hoes and cut the vines off at the surface of the ground, and cover with dirt, and the potatoes will be in no danger, unless the ground should freeze. After the potatoes are "dug" they should be placed in layers in houses and dried (that is, "cured"); about ten days, if the weather is favorable, is long enough.

POTATO HOUSE.

This is built of logs,—build seven feet high—then lay logs over the top, as if you were laying a floor; make the door in one end, and make three places in the logs on top to insert six-inch funnels (2½ feet long is sufficient), for ventilation; "daub" inside and outside, also on top with mortar, or mud, if you cannot do better, and then cover it with a good roof. The door should open on the outside, and should be made double, and filled with sawdust. It should be fastened with a chain so that it could be kept opened a few inches in favorable weather, for ventilation. Sand should be hauled in summer, and placed near the house in conical piles, and when you are satisfied that it is perfectly dry, place it in the house. In banking the potatoes, cover each layer with sand—two and a half inches on top is sufficient. The same sand can be used year after year. The writer has for many years followed this plan and has always had plenty of sweet potatoes.

ENDERLY NOTE BOOK.

THE SILO—HOW IT SUCCEEDS IN STOKES COUNTY.

[FOR THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.]

I put up my first ensilage in the Fall of 1883. I took the corn from the field just before the ears began to get hard. I used a Baldwin cut-cut and a Sandwich Horsepower. Cut it in three-fourth inch lengths. As I filled my silo, I had it well trampled down. After I got it full I weighted it down with rocks. I filled my silo in the month of

August and commenced to use it first of December. I put up that year sixty-seven two-horse loads of corn, and it fed 26 head of cattle all the Winter. I think it gave out in April. Last Fall I put up about the same amount in the same manner and at about the same time of year, except that I did not pack and tramp it. This caused me to lose about one-fourth of the ensilage. I found on opening it that all around the wall it had rotted and a vacant space existed large enough for a person to crawl around it, and the ensilage here was rotten, though inside of the bulk it was sweet and sound. On account of losing this amount, it has only fed 20 head of cattle from the first of December up to about this time. I feel sensibly the loss of it on account of my milk and butter supply running short, and of inferior quality. I have two silos made of rock and cement. Dimensions of each are twelve feet wide, fourteen feet long, and thirteen feet deep, built under ground. Have a drain pipe to carry of the water and keep it dry. I have never used but one of the silos because one of them will hold as much as I need to run me through the Winter, and in the Summer my habit has been to pasture my cattle. I have never tried anything but corn, except the first year I put in on top of the corn 7 loads of grass which made good ensilage. I am satisfied from my experience with it that grass, pea vines, weeds or anything that is green, if properly put up in a well-constructed silo, will pay. I have occasionally fed my horses on it; they like it and it is good as a change of food, though I do not think a horse could be kept fat on it if worked regularly.

Very respectfully,
W. A. LASH.

FIFTY YEARS WITH THE HONEY BEES.

For the Progressive Farmer.

Among my exploits with bees was one when a small lad, assisting my mother to hive a new swarm which had located rather high for convenience. Nearly the whole swarm was precipitated on my head, hat knocked off, severely stung, eyes closed. Years after had a swarm settle on my hat, neck and shoulders with no one to assist, took them off, and put them in a hive, receiving but one sting between two of my fingers, the bee being squeezed. Bees may be handled with impunity.

A swarm of bees consists of Queen (formerly called King) and workers, which are neuters, in, or during the fall and winter. In the Spring drones are reared (supposed to be males) which are destroyed by the workers in the latter part of Summer or in early fall. The income from a stock of bees varies in different localities according to management, from no income to one, two and sometimes three good swarms and no surplus honey to 100 pounds from the old stock, 25 to 50 pounds from the new ones, the value depending on the near market. Three to six hundred pounds have been reported in some of the Northern States and even eight hundred in California. While these last amounts may not be attainable in North Carolina, there is not the least doubt that money enough may be saved taking one year with another to pay our taxes, County and State, and it comes from such a source that it would not be missed. It costs nothing to feed the bees; no fencing to do, not much room needed, the outlay being merely for hives and a few stocks of bees. Italians are the best. The writer has frequently obtained from 50 to 100 pounds in a poor locality in Wake county, and he is certain the amount can be doubled in other localities. The care necessary can mostly be done at odd intervals, say before breakfast or at noon time, by the male laborers, or by ladies who may properly be proud of the luxury they add to the

table and the money they add to the purse.

Next article will be how to manage.
JOEL CURTIS.

THE AGRICULTURAL EDITOR.

Dyke Fortescue rambled into the office of a rural newspaper publisher in the interest of a small class of rural readers, and named *The Farmer's Friend and Cultivator's Companion*. The proprietor intended to be absent for two weeks, and Dyke undertook to hold the journal's head up stream until his return.

"You will receive some visitors, quite likely," said the proprietor. "Entertain 'em. Entertain 'em in a manner which will reflect credit upon the paper. They will want to talk stock, farming, horticulture, etc., you know. Give it to 'em strong."

Dyke bowed, borrowed a half-dollar, got a clean shave, a glass of beer and soon returned to face the music and edit the first agricultural journal with which he had ever been connected.

"I can feel that with my journalistic experience, it will be just fun to run an agricultural paper," said Dyke to himself.

At 2 o'clock p. m. the first visitor showed up at the door of the office, and Dyke cordially invited him inside. The farmer entered hesitatingly and remarked that he had expected to meet the proprietor, with whom he had an appointment to discuss ensilage.

"I am in charge of the journal," said Dyke.

"O, you are! Well, you seem to have a pretty clean office here."

"Yes," replied Dyke; "but about this ensilage. Ensilage is a pretty good breed, isn't it?"

"Breed!" exclaimed the farmer, "why—"

"I mean it's a sure crop; something you can rely—"

"Crop! Why, it isn't a crop at all."

"Yes, yes; I know it isn't a crop," said Dyke; perspiring until his collar began to melt away down the back of his neck, "but you can do better and cleaner work with a good sharp ensilage on stubby ground than—"

"Take it for a sulky plow, do you?"

"No, no, said Dyke. You don't seem to understand me. Now, if a farmer builds an ensilage on low ground—"

"Build an ensilage! You seem to have got the thing mixed up with some kind of a grainary."

"Pshaw, no," continued Dyke. "I must make myself plainer. You see the ensilage properly mixed with guano, and three parts hypophosphate of antimony, with the addition of a little bran and tankard, and the whole flavored with chloride of lime makes a top dressing for strawberry beds which—"

"Why, ensilage isn't any manure."

"No, certainly not," said Dyke. "I know it is not often used in that way. You don't catch my drift. When I said top dressing, I meant turkey dressing—stuffing you know—for Thanksgiving—"

"Great heavens, man! Ensilage isn't a human food!"

"No, not a human food exactly," said poor Dyke, grinning like an alms-house idiot, "it isn't a food at all in the true sense of the word. My plan has always been to lasso the hog with a trace-chain and after pinning his ears back with a clothes-pin, put the ensilage into his nose with a pair of tweezers."

"My goods lands! You don't use ensilage to ring hogs?"

"I never believed myself that it should be used for that purpose, but when you want to ring hens, or young calves to keep them from sucking—"

The farmer gravely shook his head.

"Did you ever try ensilage on the hired girl?" said Dyke desperately, and winking like a bat at 11:30 a. m. The farmer slowly arose, and

with some evidence of rheumatic twinges in his legs.

"Young man," he said solemnly, "you are far away from home, ain't you?"

"Yes," replied Dyke, dropping his eyes beneath the stern glances of the farmer. "In my ancestral halls in England, sad-eyed retainers wearily watch and wait for my return."

"Go home, young man, go home to your feudal castle, and while on your way across the rolling deep, muse on the fact that ensilage is simply canned food for live stock—put up expressly for use in a silo, which is nothing less than an airtight pit where cornstalks, grass, millet, clover, alfalfa and other green truck is preserved for winter use, as green and verdant as the sub-editor of *The Farmer's Friend and Cultivator's Companion*."

And Dyke Fortescue sighed as he remarked to himself: "There ain't so blamed much fun in running an agricultural paper as I thought."

TOBACCO AND COTTON RAISING.

Mr. D. C. Goodwin, of Rialto, gives us some facts with regard to his experience in tobacco and cotton raising during the past year. He planted eight acres in cotton and three in tobacco. He used guano with both crops and tended both with equal care and diligence. It was a bad year for cotton and he made only two bales. He carried the two bales to market and received considerably less than a hundred dollars for them. He carried about four hundred pounds of his tobacco to market and realized over \$140 for it clear of warehouse expenses. This was not his best tobacco, and if the remaining part of his crop sells in proportion to the first sale, he will get near a thousand dollars for his three acres of tobacco. About ten dollars per acre for his cotton and about \$300 per acre for his tobacco! —*Pittsboro Home*.

A LEVEL HEADED FARMER.

There is a man in Nash county, well known to us, and who now lives in the neighborhood of our old home, who has been keeping house 35 years, and he never has bought a pound of meat, or a peck of meal during that long period. He has bacon on hand which was put up 19 years ago, and there is not a bug or skipper on it. He has on hand now the wheat raised in 1884-85, and makes everything on his farm that is absolutely required for sustenance and comfort and happiness. Such a man is rich, and he is. —*Mirror*.

State Items.

—Collections in the 4th internal revenue district for the month of February aggregated \$54,498.88.—A few days ago a negro convict was killed on the railroad near Mt. Airy by an unexpected fall of earth.—More than three hundred convicts are daily at work on the Cape Fear & Yadkin Valley Railroad, between this place and Mt. Airy.—Governor Seales has pardoned Joshua Holloway, a white man, convicted seven years ago of manslaughter and sent to the penitentiary for twenty years.—Mad dogs are playing havoc with things in the northern part of Alamance. One passed through there a few days ago and bit 18 dogs and several sheep and calves.—Patrick White, a venerable citizen living near High Point, in this county, died on the 23rd ult. At his request his remains were buried under an apple tree near his residence.—Judge Clarke well sustains the reputation hitherto attained by him, at Alamance court this week, by imposing a fine of \$80.00 and 30 days imprisonment on a witness for coming on the stand

drunk.—Hurrah for Rutherford. The old county feels a deep and sincere pride in Mrs. Collins, 103 years of age, who spins all the day long on an old-fashioned wheel and walks all about, without needing any assistance.—Miss Liddie E. Forbis is the only surviving grand child of the memorable Capt. Forbis, of Guilford. She is now in the 70th year of her age, without father or mother, sister or brother, and says she can go out in the field and hoe corn row for row with any of the present generation.—German B. Guthrie, who lives near Gulf, Chatham county, is a remarkable man. He is now about 80 years old, never drank a drop of whisky or coffee, never swore, never loaded or shot a gun, never went fishing or hunting, and has never used tobacco in any form, and has been a member of the church for sixty years. He is a hearty, healthy-looking old gentleman, and is apparently good for many years yet.—*Greensboro Patriot*.

—There are nine Government distilleries within a radius of two miles in Davie county.—We regret to learn that the residence of Mr. J. M. Johnson, at Farmington, Davie county, with all its contents, was burned one day last week.—Mr. Frank Holder, of Vienna township, this county, is the possessor of a common house cat that caught and brought to the house during last summer and fall 35 rabbits, 2 weasels, together with quite a number of flying and ground squirrels, besides many rats, mice, birds, etc.

—Hawks are playing havoc with chickens in some sections and the crop of spring fowls will fall considerably short if the ravages continue. A good way to rid the country of these pests is for each neighbor or township to take up a subscription and offer a small bounty per head.—A little daughter of Mr. W. Carroll, of Stokes county, made a narrow and rather remarkable escape with her life a few days since. She was coming out of the house with a peggingawl in her hand, and falling from the threshold ran the entire length of awl into her forehead, causing considerable pain at the time, but fortunately with no serious result.—*Winston Union Republican*.

—In 1849, the best crop of tobacco raised in Granville county fetched \$6 per hundred average in the Clarksville, Va., market. It was much talked of. We remember well the sale, and B. F. Crews was the farmer who made the sale. Now, if the best farmer in that county cannot average \$60 per hundred pounds for his entire crop he will be dissatisfied. In fact, a crop year would enable the best half-dozen or dozen farmers to average probably \$80 per hundred. In the Oxford market in 1885, all grades of tobacco nearly averaged \$20 per hundred. Some of this in 1849 or 1850, would not have fetched more than \$1.50 per hundred, if so much.—*Wilington Star*.

—Allen W. Tomlinson, the first settler of Bush Hill, Randolph county, while out at his work some fifty years ago, cut a walking stick from a young growth sycamore and on returning to his house stuck the stick in the ground until he could get a drink of water from his spring. He forgot to take up the stick at the time and noticed shortly after that the buds were growing, and today it is a large tree some three feet through, seventy-five feet high and branches corresponding.—*Greensboro Patriot*.

—Col. J. Y. Bryce has made arrangements to introduce the "breakfast tea plant" in this city, and yesterday received a number of the plants from Washington. This plant is grown from imported seed, and is said to thrive well. Col. Bryce has two plants growing in his yard and flourishing finely.—*Charlotte Observer*.