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# The American November

By W. F. Massey in Practical Farmer.

"No sun, no moon,  
No morn, no noon,  
November!"

That was written in England, the land of fogs and winter darkness. But in our sunny country, in almost every section of it, November is usually a sunny month, even where the frost comes heavily. Out on the brown plains of Nebraska, while the nights may be sharp and frosty, the days are apt to be radiantly beautiful. The hay is in the stacks and the wide corn fields are brown with the wastefulness of our careless improvidence of abundance. The railway companies are now looking after their snow fences and the farmers on the windy prairies are banking up their houses to keep the frost out of the cellars but the sunshine is everywhere and the haze of the Indian summer hangs over the prairies like the foreman of clouds and blizzards while the whirl of the prairie chickens is in the air. In the wooded East the chestnuts have fallen and the crack of the rifle tells of the squirrel shooting while over the brown fields the setters range and the Bob Whites see no rest. But the sun shines there too and winter comes by stealthy steps. Southward the golden sun of the Carolinas lights up the last picking of the cotton, and the negro tenant is hauling his bale of rent cotton to the warehouse. The compresses are being put on the snowy fleece in shape for loading on the ships and cars, and only towards the last of the month does Jack Frost play much havoc. The leaves are falling from sheer ripeness and not from frost, and the hunters of the North are down after the Bob Whites, and the test tournament of high priced dogs is at hand. On the Carolina uplands many a farmer has his entire taxes paid by Northern sportsmen for the shooting privileges on his land, and the birds are protected from the pot hunters. In the forests of the South the great American game bird, the wild turkey, is still abundant, and baffles the skill of an ordinary hunter, while in the dense swamps and swamps near the Southern coast the black bear still finds a secure hiding place and cannot be entirely exterminated. And over all the country the American sunshine rules from the tangled hammocks of Florida to New England. From the Carolinas the tea roses still make the glory of the garden with colors far deeper than the Spring flowers, while the chrysanthemums are allowed to riot in an abundance of flowers totally different from the great cabbage-headed things the florists are so fond of. The forest is still gay with the festoon of the wild smilax covering the trees with tinted leaves and clusters of berries. And over the whole land smiling plenty reigns. Then as the glory of November fades in the North, and the dark days come with blizzards and sleighing, the harvest of the Winter sunshine comes in the South with the fleeing refugees from New England, and there the golden sun keeps up shining all the Winter through.

**FARMERS' INSTITUTES.**

A Southern friend objects to the statement in "Crop Growing and Crop Feeding" that Farmers' Institutes have been one of the greatest means for the uplifting of the agriculture of the country, and suggests that the agricultural press had been a greater influence. We had no idea of depreciating the influence of the press by any means, and there is no doubt that with the reading class of farmers the press has been the greatest of all influences. But it must not be overlooked that in the States where the Farmers' Institutes have been best organized and conducted they do reach a class which the farm papers have never been able to reach and they have been the greatest influence in getting the farmers who do not read the papers to do so. Wherever the Institutes are fostered as they should be by the State Legislatures they have been the greatest help to the farm papers ever had, and through their influence the farm papers are going into homes where they never went before the Institutes waked up the people and caused more reading to be done. In States like Wisconsin the dairy farmers never would have gotten such a hold on the dairymen but for the practical teaching and illustrations of dairy work in the Institutes. In the State where my friend lives he has doubtless seen little effect from Farmers' Institutes, and there are a few of the Southern States where much in this line. Outside of North and South Carolina we know of no organized efforts in the South for Institutes south of Maryland and Virginia, and even in these States the Institutes are not so widespread to the extent they should be and need. Anyone who attended the meeting of the National Society of Farmers' Institute Workers held in Washington last November would have realized what a part they are getting to be in some of the States like Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, New York and Pennsylvania. The admirable report read there by our Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture would have been an eye-opener to thousands here in Pennsylvania, and the Commissioner of Agriculture of one of the Southern States said to the writer: "After hearing that report, I am ashamed to look to report from my State." Yes, the farm papers are a power for good, and we have to do our part in making at least one of them a greater power in this respect, but the farm papers, as well as the farmers themselves, will feel the uplifting influence of the Institutes where they are carried on in a thorough manner, and the State Legislatures wake up to their

duty in this respect. With the exception of Maryland we do not know of a Southern State that makes an appropriation for Institutes. The Colleges of Agriculture and the Experiment Stations are doing what they can in this way by furnishing lecturers, but even they find down in Mississippi probably has seen little of what properly supported and organized Institutes can do. In one State we know the Institute Director makes a point of having specimen copies of all the leading agricultural papers for distribution among the farmers attending his Institutes, and thus many get to reading papers who formerly did not. If every Institute followed this plan the farm papers would become a still greater power in the land, and they would owe it to the Institutes.

**HOME MIXING OF FERTILIZERS.**

A correspondent sends us a slip from the American Fertilizer, in which is quoted a statement from the Florida Station in regard to the importance of the materials used being finely pulverized for the best effect, and winds up with the remark: "Such being the case, the farmer with his sand screen, shovel and barn floor is at a great disadvantage in attempting to mix raw materials." Not a bit of it. The criticism refers only to the manufacturers of the raw materials. If these are reduced to the proper fineness the mixing can be made just as effectively with the sand screen, shovel and barn floor as with the most elaborate mixing machine. The factories use the machines because they can mix large quantities more cheaply, but for all practical purposes, if the materials are what they should be, the mixing on the farm is just as good as in the factory. In fact, it has been shown by analyses at the Stations that the factory-mixed goods were of a considerably varied nature in different parts of the same bag. On the same slip is a quotation from the French chemist, Ville, saying that "Each filament of the roots must be able to absorb at the same time all the substances that enter into its composition and this result cannot be attained unless the mixture is homogenous." They might have quoted authority more highly considered by scientific men than Ville. But it is evident that with any practical mixture of fertilizers such a state of affairs is an impossibility from the fact that no matter how well a fertilizer may be mixed, it is practically impossible to get it to all the rootlets of a plant, and it is well known that plants differ as to their ability to take up the different forms of plant food when presented to them in the best shape. The home mixing practice has gotten too firm a hold on the practical farmers of the country for anyone to check it, and the results from home-made goods are uniformly as good and often better than from factory mixtures that cost more money. With the best materials a farmer can prepare any mixture he may wish to use in any proportion of the ingredients, and can with confidence expect as good results, at least, as though he had paid for the mixing by someone else. If one prefers to use the fertilizer mixed for him, and is willing to pay the extra cost there is no doubt that the manufacturers will give good results. But if he is studying economy and is willing to take the labor of the mixing, he can make as good fertilizer for less money than the manufacturers are willing to supply them for.

**ROTATION.**

W. M. Parker, of High Point, N. C., says that he is a young farmer and anxious to improve. He says that he notices that we generally advise a three year rotation of corn, oats and peas, wheat and peas, followed by crimson clover in winter before planting corn again. He finds that on his land, which is a gray soil, and not the usual upland red land, that oats are more satisfactory. He wants to know if it will not be as well to follow corn with wheat, as he can grow 20 bushels of wheat per acre. Our young friend writes a letter rather too long to quote in full, but the gist of it is whether a four year rotation would not be better for him and make less push and hurry at certain seasons. Yes, we are of the opinion that in your case it would be better. Thus you can follow corn with wheat, and wheat with peas the same season, wheat after the peas and clover after this wheat for one year and then back to corn. This will give a clover sod to manure and turn for corn, and the large amount of forage and straw and corn will enable you soon to cover the whole corn land and you will need no fertilizer but acid phosphate on the wheat with perhaps a little potash, since the gray soil needs potash more than the red.

**BERMUDA GRASS.**

H. W. Whitnett, Chadburn, N. C., writes that having failed to get a good Bermuda grass sod from planting cuttings, he procured seed. His soil was well prepared except one strip. Seed was sown about the first of July and in August he had a Bermuda sod on the moist part of the hard and poorly prepared strip, but none on the higher and dryer soil. He comes to the conclusion that the seed at 65 cents per pound, or even \$1, it does not pay to use the roots. That may be early enough to sow the seed there, and that it is not safe to get it in too deep. He proposes to seed a piece of land to rye and rape and pasture. (Continued on Third Page.)

# GOOD ROADS.

SOME ARGUMENTS FOR THE USE OF WIDE-TIRED VEHICLES.

The use of wide tires is one of the most important connected with the good roads movement, both in the making of the road-bed and preserving it while being used. Good roads can never be a permanent success in this country until wide tires have come into general use. In some of the European countries tires as wide as six inches are used, and by having the front axle shorter than the rear, the load passing over the road gives 24 inches of road roller surface all the time. Especially would this device prove of value on the newly made sand-clay roads which are now being built with so much success in our eastern and middle counties. The constant rutting of these new roads by narrow tired wagon wheels breaks up the surface of the road-bed and opens the way for holes and cracks which soon become deep enough to need repairing. The use of wide tires would furnish a constant rolling and packing of the surface, which is necessary to render it smooth and uniform. Legislation has been resorted to in a number of States compelling the use of wide tires on all vehicles, and providing a substantial punishment for all violators of the law. Every State should pass a law making the use of wide tires compulsory.

To change at once to wide tires would no doubt be a hardship on some owners of vehicles, but this is a point that can be worked out and adjusted so that the expense will not be burdensome. Vehicle owners should be educated to see that it is to their interests to have wide tires, as the use of them makes fewer repairs necessary, thus reducing the expense of maintenance, and besides enables larger loads to be hauled with the same number of horses.

In this connection the following report made at the New York State Convention by the standing committee is of interest: "Your committee would call your attention to the fact that it is worse than useless to create expensive and valuable highways to have them only cut to pieces by the use of narrow tires as now used for the hauling of heavy loads in this State. When you have got a good thing it costs money, and you must take care of it, and change your methods to help maintain it. Wide tires are of the greatest value in preserving ordinary dirt roads. We would, therefore, recommend the passage of State wide-tires law, simple in its requirements, positive in its enforcements, and going into operation two years from this date, in order to permit every wagon user ample time to adapt its tires to the new law in the interest of road maintenance."

## GASTON COUNTY GOOD ROADS.

The following interesting facts from Gaston county show the progress now being made in road improvement in that live locality.

The public roads in Gaston are worked by free and hired labor, superintended by supervisors in each township. Each supervisor has a supply of tools, including a road plow. In Cherryville township the plow is pulled by a 20-horse power traction engine. The County Commissioners are contemplating buying engines for all the townships. Horses for plows cost of \$8 per day. The engine is furnished by individuals for the same money and does 50 per cent. more work. The engine and plow require four men and a mule to operate them, an engine driver, a plow tender, a man to fire and uncouple at turning points, and a man to haul wood and water for the boiler.

The county convicts are employed in making macadam roads exclusively. Three guards and a superintendent work and care for about forty men. The whole system in the county is under the supervision of a competent and enthusiastic superintendent of roads, Mr. W. P. Edleman.

"Mud" is the enemy that this nation should fight until its isolated communities become one united and prosperous people with the happy means of mingling in times of peace and massing in times of war.

"Mud" is a present, living, national issue, affecting the happiness of all classes and ages everywhere. Its extermination would be one far-reaching, perpetual victory for peace and prosperity. Mud costs the nation more, annually, than all other drains upon its resources combined. It breeds isolation and ignorance, poverty and pellition.

The roads have been "worked" long enough. They should now be improved.

The best thing that farmers can lay up for a rainy day is a good road.

## SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR DRAINAGE OF OUR PUBLIC ROADS.

Where the road is built on a grade some provision should be made to prevent the wash of the gutters into great, deep gullies. This can be done by paving the bottoms and sides of the gutters with brick, river rocks or field stones. In order to make the flow in such ditches as small as possible it is advisable to construct outlets into the adjacent fields of to lay underground pipes or tile drains with openings into ditches at frequent intervals.

The size of the side drains should depend upon the character of the soil and the amount of water they are expected to carry. If possible they should be located

three feet from the edge of the travelled roadway, so that if the latter is fourteen feet wide there will be twenty feet of clear space between ditcher.

## Cotton as a Forage Plant.

(R. J. Redding, in Atlanta Constitution.)

On reading the caption of this article some may perhaps expect an article discussing the expediency of planting cotton as a forage crop. Not so, however, but only a few remarks in regard to the use that may be made of the belated, or "second growth," that seems to be more luxuriant than for several years. In the drought-stricken sections of Georgia and other States the cotton plants, at this writing, are full of blooms and green foliage, the result of the seasonable weather of September and October. I have received several letters asking for my opinion as to the proper disposition to make of this unwanted late growth. Several inquirers wished to know if it were not advisable to at once plow under the entire stalks, under the apprehension that the land would be injured by this "sapping." To these I have replied that there is no danger of injury to the land as a result of this unusual growth. On the contrary, the effect would be actually beneficial. Whatever may be taken from the soil by the plants must necessarily be returned to the soil whenever the plants shall be beaten down and plowed under as usual. Moreover, in making this growth, the plants draw largely on the atmosphere; in fact, more largely than on the soil. Hence when the plants are plowed under the soil will be richer by the total amount of plant food elements they have taken from the air. A soil is never injured by growing a crop, whether of grass, cotton, corn, oats or other plants—provided the crop be returned to the soil. In other words, the mere growing of the plants does not injure, provided the plants be returned to the soil. As a matter of fact, this is nature's method of building up and increasing the productivity of the soil. Wild plants of many kinds, briars, bushes, grasses, legumes, broom sedge, etc., spring up spontaneously, grow, mature and die; thus returning to the soil what they took from it and a good deal more that they took from the air. This process, going on from year to year and generation to generation, constantly improves the character and productivity of the soil. When the land is cleared of its forest growth and with it the wild plants of various kinds, and is planted in cultivated crops, and the product of these crops is removed from the soil, the process of deterioration takes the place of the natural process of amelioration and improvement. Here is where the skill of the intelligent farmer finds play, in the endeavor to reap the valuable products of his cultivated crops from the soil and at the same time restore to the soil, in the form of manure and waste products, the elements removed in the crops.

So, then, the growing of any crop or plant that never never, of itself, hurts the soil. If the crop be returned to the soil the latter will certainly be benefited. This returning to the soil may be in the form of manure from the animals consuming the crop, or by turning under the crop as it stands in the field, or by permitting the crop to fall to the ground as it does in the natural way.

But to return to the forage value of the late growth of the cotton plants. Chemical analysis shows that the cotton plant, especially the leaves and stems, is quite a nutritious food for animals. Analysis made at various stages of the growth of the plant show that the plant contains more nutriment when in the flowering stage than either before or after that stage. Cattle and horses, however, are good judges of food and by their verdict it is pretty safe to abide. Every farmer knows that horses and cattle are fond of the growing cotton plants.

At the Georgia Experiment Station we have cut the upper portions of the plants from several acres and cured them just as pea vines or other forage plants are cured. Cattle eat the same greedily and with evident relish, and good results in milk and butter have followed. Of course the oil and tough main stems of the plants are rejected, but all of the later grown stem and branches, especially the leaves, are eaten clean.

To one inquirer I wrote advising that cattle be turned into the cotton fields and be permitted to gather for themselves. Where convenient this is the better way to utilize this unusual food. By this plan the labor of gathering will be saved, and to a large extent the labor of handling and returning the manure.

## Shipments of Tobacco.

(Special to News and Observer.)

Winston-Salem, N. C., Nov. 23.—The shipments of manufactured tobacco this month aggregated 1,662,265 pounds. The stamp sales, or revenue collections, were \$110,254.82. The leaf sales were 4,674,553 pounds, for which farmers received \$419,562.57, an average of 10 1/2 cents per pound. The sales for October and November aggregated 9,739,553 pounds, which brought \$1,061,682.21.

Saturday was the last day to pay taxes to the city, county and State, and the city tax collector and the sheriff did a rushing business yesterday.

# The Poultry Industry.

(Harvie Jordan, in Atlanta Journal.)

Notwithstanding that the old speckled hen is looked upon by the average Southern farmer as an insignificant factor, she is nevertheless one of the most important and valuable products of American agriculture. Southern farmers as a rule have never yet learned the art of turning their attention to the development of the smaller and apparently insignificant resources of their farms; they have not, therefore, fully learned the meaning and value of thrift. The farmers of the South, being the owners of such large landed estates, and there being so much more land than can be closely cultivated in small farms by reason of the absence of population comparatively, they have always wanted things in a big way, so much so that the diversified resources of the country have largely remained in an undeveloped state.

## Fattening Hogs

I have always insisted that the neglect of the farmer to produce a full supply of pork, bacon and lard is among the least excusable of his shortcomings and omissions. It does not appear to be sound advice to urge upon a farmer the duty and expediency of producing everything that he needs and that his soil will produce. Yet that is the stereotyped insistence of many public speakers and writers, forgetful of the fact that when a farmer undertakes to "produce everything" that he needs he violates the well known law of specialization which is observed in all well ordered lines of industry.

But a farmer should produce his "hog and hominy" the food necessary for his work animals, food for his fattening animals, his beef, milk, butter, vegetables, fruit, pork and bacon.

Now is the time to push the fattening of the hogs intended for bacon. The weather is now pleasantly cool and not too cold for profitable feeding. One bushel of corn fed in November will produce more pork than five bushels fed in January. I do not mean to insist, or to intimate, that the fattening should be done with corn. The remark applies to any kind of food. No feed makes fatter pork than corn, but there are other foods that do equally well and are much cheaper to produce. Among these are peanuts and sweet potatoes, cowpeas and chufas. What I wish to insist upon is that the hogs for fattening should have all that they will eat—all that they can be induced to eat. There is no economy in stinting the food, whatever it may be. If a farmer has just so much food available for each head of hogs, and no more, the shorter the time in which they are permitted to consume it the greater will be the gain in flesh and fat. If a farmer has one bushel of corn for each hog, and nothing else, it would be better to give it in three regular feeds per day as fast as the animals will consume it without waste, and then butcher it, than to endeavor to stretch the bushel over twelve periods.

## AN EASY BUSINESS.

The business of raising fowls for profit is not a hard one, neither is it complicated. Ordinarily where chickens have the run of the premises they require but little attention. Of course it is a business of minor details, and that very fact makes it objectionable to the average farmer. Good houses are essential, they have to be properly located and kept clean. Nice nests have to be put in every two or three months, and during the breeding season the old hens and little chicks must have care and attention. But these minor details are essential in all lines of business. They may be overlooked to a certain extent in field crops, but the penalty will be exacted sooner or later.

## Some Good Farming

Ma. Editor: Allow me space in your Agricultural Department to write up a little crop that has been raised and sold in Wilkes township on the land that was the old home place of the Tuckers in Raleigh. This land was in cultivation when the great merchants of the family were boys, and lived on the farm, and was cultivated after they left the farm until about 12 or fifteen years ago. Then it was allowed to grow up in old field pines, which were cut down last November by S. E. Shadwick, a Granville man, who I think is one of the best tobacco growers I ever knew. Broke the land in November; broke it in February then bedded it up in April, rows three and a half feet apart, patted hills three feet apart. The amount of horse raised manure was from one-horse stable only. Guano 800 pounds; cotton seed meal 160 pounds; acid 175 pounds per acre, all distributed in water furrows and two furrows thrown on it. Set out plants on the fifth day of May finished on 7th; plowed tobacco twice, worked with hoe twice. Commenced curing on the 9th of July, and finished on the 6th of September. Sold the entire crop without grading to peddlers at Raleigh at \$37.28, there being 7,415 pounds on six acres. Now, Mr. Editor and readers, this looks like exaggeration, but several of his neighbors know the above to be true.—J. R. Barnes in Smithfield Herald.

## Some Good Farming

Mr. W. A. Boykin, of near Princeton, called in to see us Monday and renewed his subscription for another year. Mr. Boykin is one of our successful farmers who believe that the best way to farm is to plant few acres, manure heavily and cultivate well.

This year he planted five acres in tobacco and four in cotton and sold the crop for \$300. He sold the tobacco crop at home for \$768.

He manured the five acres in tobacco as follows: Hauled in 100 loads of woods mold and dirt per acre and broadcasted it; put 25 bushels of cotton-seed broadcast on two acres; ploughed in well. Early in March he laid off his rows and put 20 bushels stable manure per acre in drill, also 400 pounds acid per acre. Just before he was ready to set out his plants he opened the rows and put in 500 pounds standard fertilizer per acre, with above named results.