

# The Southern Farm Gazette

"You can tell by a man's farm whether he reads it or not."

*Under the Editorial and Business Management of*

**DR. TAIT BUTLER,**

**STARKVILLE, - - - - MISSISSIPPI.**

CLARENCE H. POE, - ASSOCIATE EDITOR AND MANAGER.  
 PROF. W. F. MASSEY, - - - - ASSOCIATE EDITOR.  
 ROBERT S. FOUNTAIN, - - - CHICAGO REPRESENTATIVE.

## OFFICES:

**RALEIGH, N. C. STARKVILLE, MISS.**

To either of which Communications regarding  
 Advertising or Subscriptions may be Addressed.

**CHICAGO OFFICE: 315 DEARBORN STREET.**

IF DATE ON YOUR LABEL IS NOT CHANGED WITHIN THREE WEEKS  
 AFTER YOU REMIT, PLEASE NOTIFY US AT ONCE.

ENTERED at Raleigh postoffice as second class mail matter.  
 LETTERS FOR PUBLICATION should be addressed to Stark-  
 ville, Mississippi.

## And After You Have Bought the Machine.

**A**FTER you have bought a weeder or a cultivator or a disc plow or a manure spreader or any other implement, the next thing to consider is how you are to get the most out of it. Good machinery costs money; and it is the poorest sort of economy to put a whole lot of money into a machine, and then fail to get the best service out of it. And to get the best service two things are absolutely essential.

### I.

#### You must know how to handle your machine.

When you buy an implement of any kind, have the different parts, the various adjustments and the best methods of handling explained to you until you are thoroughly familiar with them. Don't be satisfied until you are sure that if anything should go wrong you could tell what it was and have some idea what to do for it.

And be sure that you have at least a respectable idea of the work the implement was meant to do. We had some time ago a letter from a man who denounced all weeders as frauds and their manufacturers as swindlers in spite of the fact that the weeder is now universally recognized as one of the most profitable of all improved farm implements. We have known one or two other men to make the same sort of statement, but in each case they were men who expected the weeder to do the work of a harrow or a plow—work that it was never expected to do.

The men who have dumped improved machines of any kind to one side as unprofitable have almost invariably been men who did not know how to handle the machines, or who expected them to do work under impossible conditions.

Then again, when you turn your implements over to your help, explain the machines to them and keep an eye on both man and machine until you are satisfied that they are adjusted to each other.

It is often said that the negro cannot handle improved machinery; but it has often been demonstrated that he can. It is scarcely reasonable, however, to expect a negro who has never handled anything more complicated than a double-shovel to take a two-horse cultivator or a mowing machine out into the field and do good work with it without some instruction and some watching at first.

### II.

In the second place, take care of your implements. You know Professor Balner of the Colorado Agricultural College in a recent issue of our paper quoted a manufacturer as saying:

"If the farmer cared for his machinery as he should, there would be a need for us

to manufacture but one machine where we are now putting out two."

In other words, the farmers pay half their money for the machines and half for the privilege of neglecting them.

When anything about any implement gets out of adjustment, stop and fix it right then. Even if you are in a hurry it will save both time and money in the long run.

Oil is cheaper than either horse flesh or machinery; and whenever and wherever oil is needed, it should be freely used. It will enable the machine to do better work, to do it easier, to do more of it in a day, and to work more days.

Then keep the implements in out of the weather. When you get through with a tool put it under the shelter. This will get to be a habit directly, and such a habit will double the life of your implements.

## The Things You Should Remember.

**Y**OU may have learned a great many things from our last week's issue, for many of the problems in regard to the use of fertilizers and manures which seem to perplex Southern farmers most were, we think, plainly and practically treated. But what we hope you realized most deeply of all when you had read the paper were the broad general principles upon which any successful attempts to raise good crops and at the same time build up the fertility of the land must rest.

Let us go over these fundamental principles—these bed-rock facts—once more:

(1) To produce good crops you must have, first of all, a rich soil—one that contains liberal supplies of plant food and plenty of humus.

(2) The plant food in this soil must be in the right proportions to feed the crop you wish to grow; and you must know what your soil needs before you can use fertilizers intelligently.

(3) On land in good physical condition, well-drained, mellow, humus-filled, you can supply in the form of commercial fertilizers any of these elements of plant food which may be deficient, and make a handsome profit doing it.

(4) The elements to be supplied are nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash, the nitrogen, in general terms, developing the leaves and stalk of plants and the phosphoric acid and potash the fruit, seeds, etc.

(5) The nitrogen is the hardest to retain of these elements, the one most generally lacking, and while the most expensive, is at the same time the only one we can get for nothing. By the growing of the legumes, we can get all we need for most crops from the air without money and without price. Yet we spend millions of dollars buying nitrogen at 20 cents a pound!

(6) While commercial fertilizers can supply the food necessary for our crops they cannot furnish the humus to maintain such soil conditions as will render this food available for the use of plants. Therefore we must make green and stable manures our chief dependence in building up our soils, using the commercial fertilizers to supplement them and balance up the supplies of plant food for the various crops.

(7) Since every crop takes from the soil something which must be returned if the fertility of the land is to be maintained, it should be our aim to return as much as possible of this plant food to the soil. We can do this only by feeding our grains and roughage to live stock, carefully saving the manure and applying it in the most economical manner.

(8) To prevent waste of this manure we must protect it from heating or leaching, and must spread it on the land evenly and in a finely pulverized condition. The failure to do this means that we will have either increased fertilizer bills or poorer crops—probably both,—since manure is the corner-stone of good farming and its careful

conservation the first step toward the economical maintenance or upbuilding of soil fertility.

Whatever else you may or may not remember, keep these things in mind, for upon the fertility of your soil depends your profits in farming.

## Farm Work for February.

**I**F YOU failed to sow oats in the fall and wish to grow them, you should lose no time now in getting them in the ground as soon as the soil is in condition to plow well. Sow winter oats even now, for they will always do better in the South than the Northern spring oats.

But do not plow the land when too wet. If after corn, then a disking of the soil to make the surface fine will be better than plowing deeply. But run the disk or cutaway both ways to fine the surface effectually, and sow not less than two bushels per acre.

If land has a crop of crimson clover on it, as it should have, do not be in too great haste to turn it under. If for corn, I would let the clover ripen and dry before plowing it under. For cotton, plow it as soon as blooms show.

At every opportunity when the ground is dry enough, get out the manure and spread it with a manure spreader. There is hardly any loss when spread on the ground and let lie there, but there is a good deal of loss in the barn-yard. All that you can not spread at once, keep it tramped down in the stable, and never throw manure out in piles to heat.

A manure spreader makes but one handling of the manure, and is a great labor-saver. I have seen farmers haul out manure and fork it off in little piles all over the field to be spread later, making thus three handlings of the manure, which will not pay.

The land that is to go in corn is the place for the manure. It will make corn cheaply, and a crop of small grain after the corn, and peas after the small grain with some acid phosphate and potash, will give you the best possible chance for cotton.

See that all tools that will be needed in the working season, and all plows and machinery, are clean and in good order so that no time will be lost when work begins. I assume that none of the readers of *The Southern Farm Gazette* have allowed their mowers or binders to lie out doors all winter. Many farmers are very extravagant with machinery, and a machine let stay out in the weather and remain clogged with dirt will not last its proper life, and these things cost money and should be taken care of.

When you come to considering the implements needed on the farm, don't forget that the little conveniences about the house and barn are worth as much as the more expensive tools for the fields. Every farmer should have a kit of tools for doing the endless odd jobs that must be done on the farm. Such things as a hammer, hatchet, hand saw, brace and bits, jack and smoothing plane, wood and cold chisels, large and small punch, riveter, monkey-wrench, S wrench, file, pliers and grindstone are necessities on any well-regulated farm. There are other tools just as useful, perhaps, but these you certainly need.

Every *Gazette* reader who lives in the area infested by the boll weevil, or in territory that is likely to be infested, should send at once to the Department of Agriculture at Washington, D. C., for Farmers' Bulletin No. 344, "The Boll Weevil Problem," by W. D. Hunter. It is an exhaustive and practical treatise on the subject and will be of great value to every cotton farmer in the weevil territory who will read it and put its conclusions into practice.

If farmers were one-tenth as anxious to know about how to handle barnyard manures to best advantage as they are to know about fertilizer formulas, the lands of the South would soon be rich.

## A Thought for the Week.

The young man who has the courage and the ability to refuse to enter the crowded field of the so-called professions and to take to constructive industry is almost sure of an ample reward in earnings, in health, in opportunity to marry early, and to establish a home with reasonable freedom from worry.—Theodore Roosevelt.