The Newberry Herald and News.

ESTABLISHED 1865. NEWBERRY, S. C., TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1897. TWICE A WEEK, $1.50 A YEAR

SHALL WE FARM OR PLANT?

A farmer diversifies his crops and plans to produce, as far as practicable, all supplies necessary for maintaining his family and his stock, and utilizes spare moments in repairing and improving his property. At the same time he plans for a surplus production of all products of the farm and to have some product ready for market every month in the year. His plan is to produce for market not only much of a few things, but some of many things.

He surrounds his home with the small industries, such as the dairy, piggery, orchard, vineyard, garden, poultry yard and apiary, and if he has the water facilities, raises a head of water on some convenient stream, the lake supplying his table with fish in season and the water drives a ram which pumps the water to a tank near his house. From this it is distributed to the bath room and kitchen, to the mule lot, the garden and the flower yard. If no convenient steam supplies the water, a windmill pumps it to the tank. His house is in reality a home, supplied with comforts and conveniences for living. When a purchase is to be made from the neighboring store there is something to be sold to cover the cost. But there is little to be bought besides coffee, sugar, salt and clothing. The farm is in the broadest sense self-sustaining.

On this farm the waving grain, the well filled crib and smoke-house, the green pastures, the lowing herd, the bleating of the skipping lambs, the whicker of the prancing colt, the yelp of the turkey, the quack-quack of the goose and duck, the cackling of the prolific hen and the hum of the busy bee all furnish a blending of beauty and music which charms the eye and delights the ear of the true husbandman.

The farmer keeps accounts with his crops—can tell how much they cost and how much they pay over cost of production. He buys and sells for cash. He farms in the ground and neither in the moon nor on paper. He knows that figures will lie about farming. He does not prove on paper that since he can sell a greater value in cotton from an acre than he can of corn or wheat it is true policy to plant all cotton, but proves by results that diversification and rotation of crops is the true road to success. He buys and sells for cash, keeps account of receipts and expenditures and knows whether he is making or losing money. He, having cash always on hand, and having no bills to pay, is not forced to sell at a disadvantage. He buys in the cheapest and sells in the dearest markets.

Such is the life of the farmer; how is it with

THE PLANTER?

If he does not at first farm on a credit basis, he is soon driven to it, for the reason that, having but one money crop, which is sold in bulk at the end of the year, and having large purchases of supplies to make at intervals through the year to make the next crop, he "arranges" with some merchant to "run him," and instead of getting his supplies at the lowest cash prices, pays from ten to twenty per cent. more. Having unlimited credit at the store, he and each member of his family buys freely and often extravagantly. By the first of November an account much greater in amount than he realized confronts him, and the merchant having his own bills to meet, presses his creditors in turn.

To meet these liabilities, the planter must force his cotton upon a depressed market, and loses ten to fifteen per cent. of its value. He pays at the lowest estimate ten per cent. too much for his supplies, which he could grow twenty-five per cent. cheaper than he can buy, and sells his crop at a discount of ten per cent. He thus sacrifices the profits, which of right should be his. More than this, all of the small indrustries of the farm are neglected. He "has no time to bother with these small matters." All of his time is occupied with the money crops. "There is no money in these little things." No money in them? Is not a "dollar saved a dollar made?" His orchard is planted in cotton and plowed to death—the trees are root pruned and so starved that they bear no fruit. There is no vineyard; the scuppernong vines trail upon the ground, except where they clamber over a plum ticket. A few seedling peach trees supped by etuborer produce inferior, wormy peaches, the garden fence has blown down—all too busy with the cotton to mend it—and grass and weeds supply a pasture for the cow where vegetables should be growing for the family—strawberries have no place on the cotton farm, but are purchased from town. Turkeys and chickens eat too much corn—it is cheaper to buy them than to grow them on bought corn. A scrub cow or two we find tied in the fence corner or running in the pasture (?) which consists of an alder swamp and some gullied hill sides. White, tallowy butter adorns the table, and milk is too scarce to be served. Wife and daughter have dug over a bed in the yard and planted the seed of a few annuals bought at the store, and this constitutes the flower yard. Neither paint nor white-wash ornament the houses and fences—desolation marks the track of the "cottontot." His sons, disgusted, have sought clerkships in stores—his daughters are teaching to become independent and to get away from the mockery of home. Perhaps the farmer has employed one and she writes to her mother how charming is the home of the farmer, the house painted, the fences white-washed, the garden filled with fresh and tender vegetables, the orchard, vineyard and strawberry are yielding delicious fruits for the table—everything so cheerful and attractive. Another daughter is perhaps teaching in the family of the merchant to help papa pay a balance on his account. She is contented to escape the depressing influences of the desolate plantation.

THE VINEYARD.

Collect as many bones as possible for use under grape vines already planted or to be planted. Select standard varieties, such as Delaware, Concord, Ives, Perkins and Niagara for bunch grapes and scuppernong, Memory, Mish James and Thomas of the Southern fox-grape type or rotundifolia.

If you try others, use them only on an experimental scale until they establish their claims for recognition by their behavior. The standard varieties mentioned have proved their value and passed the experimental stage.

Prepare and fertilize the land very thoroughly for grapes, prune them judiciously and spray them with fungicides, commencing when the buds begin to swell, and annual crop of grapes is far more certain than is a crop of cotton. When the new vine is transplanted, cut back the new wood to two eyes or buds. After these are well established in growth in the spring, and are one foot long, remove the weaker after tieing the stronger to a stake. Next winter cut this back to within two feet of the ground and allow two canes to grow. Put up a trellis of two wires upon strong posts 16 feet apart. Train the two shoots in opposite directions on the bottom wire. If the shoots are especially vigorous allow them to bear one bunch of grapes each. At the end of the second year cut these shoots back, leaving two feet of each. The third year, train all shoots to the second wire, and allow each to bear fruit. At the end of the third year cut back all shoots to one eye each, except the two nearest the base of the canes. Train these in opposite directions on the top wire and cut back to within two feet of the point at which they reach the wire. Future pruning will consist in simply cutting back each shoot (current year's growth) to within one eye of its base. You can calculate the number of bunches of grapes the vine will bear each year by multiplying the number of eyes left by three. Each eye left under this, the spur system, which we have found most satisfactory, will produce a strong shoot and each shoot will bear three bunches of grapes. If two shoots start from the base of a spur, rub off the weaker early in spring before it has consumed much of the energy of the vine.

Fertilize the vineyard each year by sowing 300 pounds acid phosphate and 200 pounds kainit per acre and plant peas between the rows.

PLANT TREES.

The season for transplanting all trees except evergreens is now at hand. Do not postpone this duty until preparation and planting in the farm demand attention. The earlier the trees, whether for shade or fruit, are transplanted in our Southern latitude the better, if the ground is not frozen. Take them up with as little injury to the fibrous roots as possible. Do not let the roots freeze nor be dried in the sun. Prepare the soil well before transplanting, placing bones, well rotted manure and rich earth beneath and around the roots, Pack the soil firmly around the roots and leave the surface immediately around the collar of the tree a little lower than the general surface of the ground. This to secure a supply of moisture. Before planting cleanse the roots thoroughly—destroy any insects that are found upon them and cut off all bruised and broken roots.

No one should decline to plant trees because there may be some doubt of his living to enjoy the fruit or shade from them. The rate at which our forests are being destroyed emphasizes the importance of renewing them.

When our lands were cleared little thought was given to the possibility of a scarcity of timber in the near future, and yet in some sections even of the sparsely settled South timber is already scarce. On nearly every farm there are portions which should never have been cleared. It will show wisdom on the part of the owners of lands all over our country if they will go systematically to work planting the seed of our most valuable timber trees on portions of their lands specially prepared and set apart for that purpose. Plant the acorn of white oak and post oak. Plant hickorynuts and pecans. Plant walnuts and seed of black locust. Land owners, plant for your sons.

FARM CALENDAR.

Seed sowing should now be suspended until an open spell in January, when sowing oats may be resumed. Those sown in January should be of the rust-proof variety—sow at the rate of two bushels per acre. There are not more than half as many seed of this variety in a bushel as of the winter grazing or other clean grained varieties, and therefore twice as many bushels of the rust-proof are required to sow a given area. After the middle of February an early variety, such as the Burt, should be used. These sown in March will ripen with the rust-proof sown in the fall. If the fall sown are partially winter killed or a poor stand is occasioned by any other cause, replant with the Burt as follows: Sow enough seed to fill out the stand and harrow them in with any implement that will stir the surface enough to cover them. This stirring will not only not injure those growing, but will benefit them.

Speed the plow upon all stubble land which has any covering of vegetable matter except that of pea vines—leave the pea stubble for the last. The roots and vines of peas contain so much nitrogen that they decay very promptly, and hence need not be turned early. Crab and crow-foot grass decompose slowly, and hence should be turned early. Leave the land that is turned early, enough so that it will receive the maximum benefit from freezing.

Insect enemies which are hybernating in the soil will be exposed and destroyed in lands plowed in the early winter, the soil will be pulverized by frosts, and hence a better seed bed can be gotten in spring. Many spores of fungous diseases of plants will thus be destroyed.

Deepen the soil by bringing up an inch of the subsoil to be pulverized and incorporated with the soil. This can be safely and profitably done now, but will be injurious if turned up in spring.

Improve the farm during the winter by filling, plowing and scraping down the banks of gullies and planting Bermuda grass over them. Clear up swamps and ditch them. Put in pine poles or rock and cover them, making underdrains instead of open ditches. Repair roads, bridges and fences. Build more of the latter and keep more stock. Use some one of the wire cable fences, which stop all kinds of stock without risk of injury.

Gather wood, while other work is now pressing, in sufficient quantity to last until the crops are gathered next fall. More pastures are needed. Read the editorial in this issue on woodland pastures, and go to work preparing them to be ready for sowing in February or March.

INTELLIGENT DISTRIBUTION OF SEEDS, &C.

The bill introduced into Congress by Hon. A. C. Latimer, "Relating to the distribution of seeds, bulbs, &c.," should it become law, will secure a less wasteful and much more intelligent and judicious expenditure of the money appropriated for that purpose than will be possible under the present system.

We do not believe that an indiscriminate distribution of miscellaneous seeds was ever intended by the framers of the law.

We believe that the distribution was intended to be confined to the introduction of new seeds, plants, bulbs, &c., which promise to prove valuable additions to the list already in cultivation. By this means the production of the country could be materially increased, but we do not see the propriety or advantage of the Government entering into competition with vendors of common seed to be sent out by congressmen for electioneering purposes.

Under the present system, no intelligent discrimination is made in selecting seeds to be sent to different parts of our great country. Spring wheat is sent to Georgia and okra to Minnesota. Last spring sugar beet seed were sent out for experiment two months after they should have been planted. Those in charge of the experiment stations in the different States are supposed to know what plants are adapted, or likely to be adapted, to the different sections and soils of their respective States, and thus the indiscriminate distribution of seed and waste of money would be avoided.

They would know, also, the farmers in each section of the State who would take sufficient interest in the improvement of the agriculture of his section to make a careful and accurate test of seeds, plants or bulbs sent to them.

Many of the new and costly seeds, plants or bulbs would be carefully tested on the station grounds to ascertain their merits before making a general distribution of them.

The bill will be improved by leaving the matter of reports of tests made by the recipients of the seeds, &c., to the stations rather than requiring blanks for reports to be furnished by the Secretary of Agriculture.

The station officers, who have the immediate distribution of the seed, would know better how to get the reports. The stations would publish the results of the tests and thus not only the Secretary of Agriculture, but the general public, will receive information of the results. If these results proved to be of special value the Secretary of Agriculture could use his department machinery for a more general dissemination of the information.

While some good has been accomplished by the distribution of seed by the Department of Agriculture of the General Government, vast sums have been wasted and will continue to be wasted under the present system.

It is not contemplated by the Latimer bill to convert the experiment stations into seed farms, but to make them most valuable auxiliaries to the Department of Agriculture in promoting the interests of agriculture in the several States through the distribution of new and valuable seeds, &c.

WOODLAND PASTURES.

The enactment of the stock law was just and right, but land owners make a serious mistake in dispensing with fences on their farms. The waste products of the farm cannot be economically utilized without a reasonable amount of fencing.

If one third of every farm in the South was kept under fence either in permanent pastures or for the cultivation of crops to be entirely harvested by stock and especially by swine, farming would be more profitable.

We have been very successful in making pastures in the woods, by simply thinning out the trees, clearing away the underbrush and burning off the leaves and trash and then stirring the surface enough to cover the grass seed. There are millions of acres of land in the Southern States, now dead capital, which might be rendered profitable by being converted into woodland pastures.

In our climate stock, as well as the cultivated grasses, need shade to protect them from our summer suns. Now is the time to do the work of preparing for the grass which may be sown in February or March. Cut out the mature trees and the underbrush and leave the young healthy ones of species most valuable for timber. The trimming and cultivation will cause those that are left to grow more vigorously. If there are parts of the grove in which the shade is not very dense, Bermuda grass may be planted with the seeds of the cultivated grasses. Orchard grass, tall Meadow oat grass, Perennial Rye grass, clover and vetch will do well in the woodland pastures.

Such pastures are especially suited to sheep. The low price of cotton emphasizes the necessity of growing more stock.

IN THE ORCHARD.

Remove "suckers" from the base of trees and examine the bark for evidences of borers. It is said that the apple borer lives in the larva state three years and then bores into the heart of the tree to pupate. Scrape off the rough bark and search them out. "Suckers" are correctly named since they literally suck the life of the main stem. They should have been rubbed off as soon as they appeared last spring. Cut them now and rub off all new comers next spring. Remove with sharp knife, chisel, shears or saw all interfering limbs and all dead wood, as well as all surplus branches in the interior of the head. Rub the entrails of the rabbit on the bodies of small trees, or if these are not available the fresh blood or entrails of any other animal will answer.

If there are limbs of apple or pear trees killed by blight, cut them off down to healthy tissue and burn them. Disinfect the saw, knife or shears used on the blighted trees before using them on healthy specimens. It has been shown the healthy trees may be inoculated in this way.

Collect all twigs that have been cut off by the tree-girdler and burn them. They contain the larva of the destroyer. Top graft seedling trees or others which bear inferior fruit, with scions taken from the upper limbs of trees, have been known to yield good fruit. Never cut down or dig up a fruit tree because it bears inferior fruit, nor because it is unfruitful. Simply change the kind of fruit by top-grafting.

Give the apple and pear a liberal dressing of manure, acid phosphate and kainit, and the peach with the last two and plow them in two inches deep.

STAWBERRY CULTURE.

The Strawberry Specialist, which claims to be the only journal in the United States devoted exclusively to the strawberry, recommends very strongly the Brandywine variety for pollenizing the pistillate varieties. It says:

"Growers of pistillate varieties of strawberries cannot be too careful in getting really potent staminates to pollenize their blooms. The Brandywine has no equal as a pollenizer. It remains in heavy bloom for a very long period. Its blooms are heavily laden with exceedingly potent pollen."

In the same journal we find the following, which, according to our experience in the South, is not orthodox treatment. It may do for cold climates, but will force a heavy plant-growth here at the expense of fruitage. Unless stable manure has been thoroughly rotted, we prefer not to use it upon strawberry beds. It is less liable to injure the plants used as suggested than if worked into the soil, but we have had only adverse experience and observation upon its effects if used unfermented:

"Mix well and apply evenly over the beds, plants and all, at rate of 100 pounds muriate of potash and 200 pounds dissolved bone per acre. Over this scatter evenly over the whole field ten to twenty two-horse loads stable manure per acre.

"Where the application of stable manure is very heavy, it is best to defer putting most of it on till the ground begins to freeze hard. Part of it should also be drawn off before plants start growth in spring, and left in middles. But at least ten large loads, if not lumpy, can be safely used after October 1st, provided it is evenly distributed."

CORN SILAGE VS. CURED CORN FODDER.

The New Jersey Experiment Station made a very accurate comparative test of the value of equal quantities of corn, the whole plant, cut when the grain was well glazed as silage and dried and cut before being fed. The tests were both chemical and by practical feeding experiments in production of milk. The following conclusions are drawn from the results.

1. That the cost of harvesting, storing and preparing the dry matter contained in corn was greater in the form of silage than in the form of dried fodder.

2. That the changes that occur in the composition of silage were not such as to decrease its feeding value in a greater degree than those which occur in the process of curing corn fodder, and that the losses due to spoiling in the silo amounted to 4 per cent. of the total amount stored.

3. That for milk and butter production the feeding value of the dry matter of the silage was greater than that of the dried fodder corn. The yield of milk was 12.8 per cent. greater, and the yield of fat 10.4 per cent. greater.

4. Applying the results in a practical way, that is, to the actual amount of corn put into the silo, namely, 135 tons, it is shown that what did cost $134.64 to store and prepare in the form of silage would have cost in the form of dried fodder $123.72, or $10.92 less. Deducting from the amount put into the silo the 4 per cent. loss, it is found that there remained for feeding 73.120 pounds of dry matter, sufficient for one cow for 6,647 days, of for 30 cows 222 days. This, or its equivalent, was practically what was done with the silage, and with an actual average yield during the period of 17 pounds per cow per day, we have a total of 113,999 pounds of milk. If, as the experiment indicated, this yield of milk was 12.8 per cent. greater than could have been produced from the same dry matter in the form of dried fodder, there was a gain of 12.822 pounds of milk, which at 1½ cents per pound, which was the price which could have been received for the milk at wholesale—the milk was sold at retail—would have amounted to $1[illegible]2.33. Assuming that only one cent per pound could have been secured, which is probably nearer the actual price received from November to April in districts distant from the city, the increase would have amounted to $128.22; deducting from this the $10.92 representing the greater cost of storing the silage, and we have a difference on the basis of 1½ cents per pound of $181.41, and on the basis of 1 cent per pound, $117.30, which shows the increased value of the corn crop on twelve acres (nearly $10 per acre on the basis of 1 cent per pound), when fed in the form of silage, rather than in the form of dried fodder.

VARIETIES OF CITRUS FRUIT.

We have often heard it said that a fire benefits a city. It seems from the following that the freezing out of the orange groves in Florida will result in great improvement. In the first place many who had old groves of seedling oranges would not take the risk nor incur the temporary loss of fruit involved in budding improved fruit upon the old seedlings, but since these were cut down by the freeze and suckers have grown up around the old stumps each owner of such groves has sought the most desirable varieties with which to bud the scions. In our last issue we spoke of the fact that Mr. E. H. Hart, of Fed[illegible] Point, exhibited at the Ocala Exposition 56 varieties of oranges. In a letter just received from him he says:

"You scarcely do justice in crediting me with 56 varieties of oranges [illegible] Ocala Exposition, seeing that I showed about 80 sorts of citrus. Since that freeze I have so far collected this[illegible] distinct kinds, which are now growing on my place here, and I am continually adding to the number. Some of these are finer than any we formerly had when Florida regains her old position in citriculture her reputation for choice oranges and lemons will be higher than ever."

Labor Contracts

Should be very carefully made for next year in view of the low price of farm products, especially of the great Southern money crop cotton.