

THE TEST OF THE NATIONAL WELFARE IS THE INTELLIGENCE AND PROSPERITY OF THE FARMER.

Every farmer in his annual experience discovers something of value. Write it and send it to the Agricultural Editor of the Centre Democrat, Belleville, Pa., that other farmers may have the benefit of it. Let communications be timely, and be sure that they are brief and well pointed.

Pennsylvania Crops and Live Stock for 1880.

The forthcoming annual report of Secretary Edge, of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Agriculture, will show the following as the acreage, yield and value of the crops of the State during the past season:

Table with 3 columns: Crop, Yield, Value. Includes entries for Wheat, Corn, Potatoes, etc.

The average annual value of the same crops during the past ten years has been \$110,930,000. The total acreage has increased from 5,980,000 acres in 1871 to 7,200,000 in 1880, the increase being mainly in the lumber and ore counties, and very slight in the southern and eastern portions of the State.

The number and value of the live stock of the State are given as follows:

Table with 3 columns: Animal, Number, Value. Includes entries for Horses, Cows, Sheep, etc.

The total cost of the fences of the State is estimated at \$175,000,000, and hence we may infer that it requires \$1.75 worth of fence to protect \$1.11 worth of crops from 85 cents worth of stock—a powerful argument in favor of soiling. During the past ten years there has been a gradual increase in the number of cows, sheep and swine, and a decrease in the number of oxen and other cattle.

Shivering With Cold.

Cows do not require more than an hour or two of exercise out-of-doors in extreme cold days, and are much better off in the warm stable chewing the cud of comfort and quietness. Many farmers turn their stock out in the yard early in the morning to nibble and tread under their feet cornstalks during the day, with their backs rounded like an arch, shivering with cold, having pure ice water to drink, and the weather at zero. Half the fodder they devour by treading under foot in the yard would keep the cows in better condition if it was cut and crushed by machinery and steamed or scalded, sprinkled with meal and fed to them warm in a stable with a temperature of forty degrees, or higher, if possible. The extra milk the cows would give, and the manure they would make over and above the chilling system, would more than pay the expense of cutting and steaming the fodder and hay.

Soiling.

The truth of it is that with soiling there is a good deal of work, labor, thought and care needed; also the best kind of stock and of labor-saving appliances, and one must make a first-class product, or he simply throws away his work. For if a person takes a brick and spends a whole day in trying to grind and polish it, he has after all a worthless brick for his pains; but let him take a piece of beautiful marble, and grind and polish that, and he will have something of value which he can sell to pay for the labor he has expended on it. So it will never pay to keep a poor, unproductive cow, or make poor butter to sell at 15 to 20 cents a pound, under a system of agriculture which requires a largely increased amount of capital and labor.

Accumulation of Manure in Stables.

A large mass of dung, unless frozen or kept near the freezing point, will undergo decomposition, and gives off, beside steam, ammonia, and other gases. These tend to soften and injure the hoofs of animals, and especially horses, that may be forced to stand continually on the accumulation of dung. These gases cause inflammation of the eyes, and injure the general health, interfere with the digestion, and reduce the vigor of the animal. There should be no mass of manure in any stable where horses are kept. A clean floor and pure air are requisite for the best health of the animals.

The dust bath is nature's renovator, and it is as necessary for cleaning the feathers of fowls from vermin and promoting the secretions of the skin from impurities as a water or vapor bath is to the human family.

WINTER is the time to thoroughly repair all tools, ploughs, reaping machines, cultivators and the like.

The Husbandman.

Blessed among men to be whose honest toil receives its garden from the fruitful land; Who sees his golden harvest in the morning soil; Who earns his bread with honest heart and hand; Though not for him the Roll of Fame be spread, Though not for him the senseless world's applause, Yet is he greater, when the truth is said, Than those who, making man's, pervert God's laws.

I often stand and gaze upon the throng Who seek to climb the treacherous heights of Fame; Where cold ambition stings its eyes to wrong, And feels triumph dulle the sense of shame; And feel how happier, better were my fate, Had I but led a simple farmer's life, Far from the world's destruction and the hate Which was against the true in all its strife.

Let them that lead the humble lot— To nature grateful for her bounteous store, Deeking with all her bounteous gifts the lot— These sweet contentments ask for nothing more; Make them the world's truest and the world's most true, Your hearts the center of your every plan, Your fields the object of your every scheme, Your honest pride to be a husbandman.

About Managing Raw Soil.

Although it is known that raw soil, brought up to the surface in large quantities, is hurtful to the crop upon it, yet to what extent, and especially with the different kinds of soil, is not so well understood. More or less immediate harm is the result. And yet, to make use of this undersoil is a benefit, in that it deepens the tillable land, affording a chance for the better extension of the roots and for circulation of air, developing, also, new available fertility, which is so much gain, but which, in its original state, is of little use, and, when compared with the upper aerated and worked soil, is a damage, as it lessens the crop, the degree of which is dependent upon the amount brought up. If the plow runs deep, so as to bury the upper soil, bringing up the other to form in its place the seed-bed, and for slight-rooting plants to get their nourishment from, there will be a failure in clay soil, or where there is less chance for air to circulate or water to pass through—in other words, in a hard or dense soil, which is also, in general, a cold soil.

Where there is free ventilation and good drainage, as in sand and among the shales, there is little difference between the upper and the lower soils. Indeed, we often find it the case that to plow deep is an advantage; not alone for the reason that the undersoil is well aerated and warmed, but the fertility in such soil gradually works down, there being a lack of clay or absorbent to hold it. Hence the lower soil becomes enriched—sometimes richer than the upper—suggesting the remedy at once—light and frequent, rather than large and less frequent, applications of manure, which, of course, is to be kept as much as possible at the surface, every rain lowering it in the soil, and a wet season, or a few drenching rains, washing it out, so that only the deep-rooting plants, like the clovers, and notably lucerne, get the benefit below. The small creeping blue grass, timothy and others, show the deprivation of nutriment by a stunted growth and bleached appearance, similar to the effect of a drouth which, occurring after the rains, speedily puts an end to the grass. This is well known in sandy districts. When the rains are light, keeping the surface moist without washing down, the best result follows. This was the case in this section in the summers of 1877 and 1878. With sufficient manure (at the surface) the growth was rapid and maturity early.

Raw soil, therefore, concerns us very little in land of a leachy character. The great care to be exercised in this respect is in all hard or densely-packed undersoils. Such land is usually given shallow culture, which excludes from successful cultivation most of the deep-rooting plants, such as corn, root crops, berries of all kinds, trees and shrubs, the grape, and, in extremely dry and wet weather, all the crops that the farmer raises. It is only by the plentiful use of manure, and care in cultivation, that the land can be made to pay, and then not satisfactorily. The evil—raw soil—is too near the surface. To bring up this soil is worse; to bury deeply the surface soil, is to spoil all for years till the elements have had their action upon it, aided by the plow. Then there will be a decided improvement for the better, and with continued deep culture, a permanent character will be given. The plowing is to be continued deep, or the sub-soil plow is to aid, to be used whenever the land is tilled, when neither too wet or too hard, so as to break in lumps, leaving hollow places.

But it is better, instead of inverting a large body of soil, which will lie years without benefit, to bring up a little at a time, each plowing deepening the tillable soil, till the depth wanted is reached. This is the acknowledged best practice, as it admits of crops being grown right along without diminution, and after the first year or two increasing in yield. The plowing should be done in the fall, so as to have the raw soil in a thin layer, exposed to the frost. A coat of manure should be given, so as to have the layer of wild soil between the good ground below and the manure above, with the frost and the elements operating, and with the spring cultivation, making a seed bed that seldom fails to be satisfactory.

The most critical time in a shepherd's experience is in getting his flock ready for winter. I find that it pays to give the lambs, yearlings and breeding ewes some corn after the 20th of October, one-half an ear per head on the start, and gradually increasing the amount as the grass grows poorer. I usually feed in flocks of 200 or 300, being careful that each is well graded as to strength and condition. The keystone of success in the whole matter is to keep your flock young, fed well and bred with good judgment. If it does not pay to keep them well, it does not pay to keep them at all. I expect every sheep on my place to eat two and a half bushels of corn between fall and spring, as well as what they can consume.

Good tillage, with a dozen two-horse loads of good yard manure per acre, will give good wheat if you only drill three pecks of wheat per acre. It is not merely for laying on fat that oil meal is valuable, but also in the increase of the fertilizing qualities of the manure pile.

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