

Agricultural Department

How Rich Land Should Be

This is a common question, and it means much more than is usually supposed. The answer is clear. Land should be just rich enough to grow the best crops. What is over this is a loss in the interest and the manurial properties that escape, as nitrogen, the best of them, will there many more crops on such soil. But therefore be too rich, more than others, like corn, the grasses and foreign crops in general. Not so with the grains, which may be too stout, so as to lodge, or grow, as they are apt to, more straw in proportion than berry. Yet the grains (wheat) in particular will bear considerable enrichment—much more than they get. After learning by test what kind of manure the land wants—and the manure of the farm usually answers the purpose—the application becomes only a matter of quantity and the gauge may be maintained by a proper rotation, using, if enough can be made (which can with proper management), only farmyard manure, and what the farm furnishes in its green crops, etc. It thus becomes an easy matter to push the crops as desired. The question arises, to what extent they shall be pushed and not leave too large a surplus in the land. As I said before, just enough to grow the best crops, as land may be too rich or too poor to realize profits. This always leaves a portion in the soil, enough to give the necessary balance and texture. This is not a very large amount. For instance, a poor soil that barely pays expenses, when a good coat of manure, properly applied, so that the top ground where the roots are gets the benefit of it, will pay all expenses, including the manure, with something over besides, depending on how cheap the manure was obtained, while the land has still some left of the application, which is the commencement of improvement, making, with the same amount of manure in the second crop, a better yield, which is still further improvement in the land. Here is profit from the crop, and increased value of the land. At this rate, it does not take many years to bring up the land to a high state of fertility. But is this advisable? Evidently not, as it leaves too much unused enrichment in the soil. The course is to use manure enough to grow the most profitable crops, and no more. This is economy. It still keeps the soil in a good mechanical condition, with small waste of the nitrates, the crop taking up what is needed, leaving to the soil its share, kept up, not exceeded, by what excess in application is demanded to supply the waste. In this way less manure and more benefit will result. It is a fine way of farming, bringing up the land with comparatively little outlay, and at the same time realizing large yields with increased profit through the economical use of the manure. The economical land thus becomes an object of interest. It is the true means of renovating our New England farms, with their admirable markets for all kinds of produce, and adapted to mixed husbandry. With an advantage derived from keeping manure at the surface so as to get its full benefit before it disappears in the depths of the soil, and get it at once, realizing thus an additional saving, with a corresponding reduction in the expense (amount of manure and the labor of handling it, a new era in farming has dawned which is slowly but surely revolutionizing the old wasteful method of burying beyond restoration. It now only needs care in sowing and in properly applying. But much—indeed all—depending upon the manner in which this is done. To put the manure in heaps, and leave it for a time, is a two-fold loss—a loss of labor and the strength of the manure—and if left for a long time, the loss of manure will be great, and its strength will be unevenly distributed, some places, where the heaps were, getting too much, the rest not enough. Let it be remembered that it is manure, the coarse material of the farm, on which the profit of the land depends, and that it accordingly requires careful management, so as to avoid waste, not only in the stable around the farm, but in the field (using and protection), but on the field, in the application and the amount given. F. G.

Educational Department

Teachers' Preparation

From the discussions at the meetings of the Teachers' Association for the last three years, and from the complaints in various parts of the county, it is very easy to arrive at the conclusion that the present system of preparing teachers is defective. It is true that there is a large number of well qualified, earnest teachers, still it is also well known that there is also a large number of poorly prepared teachers, who hold, or have held certificates to teach. We believe it to be just to the hundreds of children in our country, that the Superintendent should by every possible means endeavor to ascertain the very best of the large numbers desiring to teach and add to the number of those having certificates until the schools of the county can be supplied. Obviously this will cut off a large number of aspirants for the teacher's position, and many of them worthy young men and women. To these we wish to say a word: while it may be a great disappointment to you that you cannot teach, still you should remember that justice demands that the good of the county should stand paramount to every thing else. It is for the benefit of the children and not of the teacher that the schools are kept open. The best thing for you to do is to prepare yourselves. The best preparation is to go to some thorough, well organized school and remain until you are prepared. In such a school you will acquire knowledge and discipline, but from observation you learn how a school should be conducted, and how to properly instruct a class. From the drills of the Teachers' Association you learn much of theory and methods. But many are not able to go away from school and have no school in their vicinity which they can attend with profit. These would advise to procure good text books, two or three on each subject, and get them at greatly reduced rates by sending direct to the publishers, and study by yourselves. Use every help you can get. By all means attend the Yearly County Institute. That ought to be a model school in session for two weeks. We trust it will be hereafter. If you are earnest and have ability enough to make a teacher you will succeed. If you have problems you do not understand, or desire information on any subject, any of the older teachers of the county will only need care in saying and in properly applying. But much—indeed all—depending upon the manner in which this is done. To put the manure in heaps, and leave it for a time, is a two-fold loss—a loss of labor and the strength of the manure—and if left for a long time, the loss of manure will be great, and its strength will be unevenly distributed, some places, where the heaps were, getting too much, the rest not enough. Let it be remembered that it is manure, the coarse material of the farm, on which the profit of the land depends, and that it accordingly requires careful management, so as to avoid waste, not only in the stable around the farm, but in the field (using and protection), but on the field, in the application and the amount given. F. G.

Medical Electricity

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