

Centre Farmer.

"PROGRESSIVE AGRICULTURE."

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CENTRE FARMER.

PUBLISHED BY THE CENTRE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

JOHN A. WOODWARD, Howard,
Prof. JNO. HAMILTON, State College,
B. F. SHAFFER, Walker,
Publishing Committee.

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THE CENTRE FARMER will be issued monthly, and is devoted exclusively to such subjects as have a direct bearing upon the interests of the farming community in general and the CENTRE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY in particular.

Terms Free, and Postage Prepaid.

To Advertisers.

The CENTRE FARMER will be published for six months, with a total of twenty six thousand copies, and distributed, through the mails, postage prepaid, to every farmer in the county, whose address can be obtained. The object of its publication is to advertise, and create a renewed interest in the County Agricultural Society, and its annual fair, and no pains will be spared to have it thoroughly circulated. This makes it a very desirable medium for that class of advertisers who desire specially to reach the farming community. We have still room for a limited number of advertisements which will be inserted at the following rates:

One eighth column.....	\$ 6 00
One fourth do	10 00
One half do	20 00
Whole do	40 00

Address,
CENTRE FARMER,
Howard, Centre Co., Pa.

—Our next Annual Fair will be held on the Society's grounds, at Bellefonte, on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, being the 3d, 4th, 5th and 6th days of October, 1876.

DR. E. GREENE'S

Liver Pills.

BEWARE OF COUNTERFEITS.

Dr. E. Greene's Liver Pills are always and only put up in OVAL boxes, not round—and have on the bottom of each and every box—the name of the Sole Agents and Manufacturers.

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See other advertisement in this paper.

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and Dealers in all kinds of

STOVES, TINWARE,

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Roofing & Spouting a Specialty.

ALL WORK GUARANTEED.

INTERIOR FENCES.

Prof. Hamilton's reply to the question,
"What is the best plan for Centre
County Farmers to pursue in
regard to fences, taking
the laws as they now
exist?"

The rapid consumption of our timber, making fencing material scarcer and more expensive year by year, and the spirit of improvement which is manifesting itself so largely among our farmers, combine to make the question of "fence or no fence" one of the most important which the Pennsylvania farmer is to-day called upon to decide. Appreciating its importance and believing that discussion is the only road by which the truth can be reached, the Centre County Agricultural Society requested Mr. JOHN HAMILTON, Professor of Agriculture at the Pennsylvania State College, to prepare and read at the April meeting a paper on the above question. Mr. HAMILTON brought to the execution of his task a clear head, large experience, and the laborious and painstaking habits which make him one of the leading spirits in the very efficient corps of instructors at the College, and read before the Society a paper replete with interest and instruction for every thoughtful farmer.

We cannot but believe that the free distribution of such carefully prepared articles throughout the county will prove of lasting benefit to farmers, and have secured Mr. HAMILTON'S paper for publication in the CENTRE FARMER.

Its great length and our limited space compel us to abridge it somewhat. We give below the first installment, and will continue it from month to month.

The best plan for Centre county farmers to pursue in reference to fences, taking the laws as they now exist, is a question about which there is little, if any, difference of opinion, if opinions are to be judged by appearances. If we go to the tops of some of our mountains and look down upon the broad valleys that lie beneath with their miles upon miles of fertile fields and their cultivated acres numbered by the thousand, no feature of the landscape is more likely to strike our eye or attract our attention, than the vast network of fences that covers the surface, dividing into all imaginable shapes and sizes, the territory that lies before us. Dotted here and there all over the view are the homes of the farmers; and their lands, embracing from one to two and sometimes three hundred acres, usually extending in all directions from the dwellings, are not only separated by fences from the property adjoining, but are themselves divided by interior partitions, until in

some instances the homes are so shut in from the highways, by gates and bars and barricades, and cut off from neighbors by fields and lots and pens and yards and similar enclosures, as to remind one of the Labyrinths of Ancient Crete.

If you go upon the farm and ask the owner why he thus barricades himself behind this *chevaux de frise* of fences, shutting out his friends, and repelling the social dispositions of his neighbors, he will, doubtless, with a look of pity for your simplicity, tell you that these are a necessary part of the equipment of every well regulated farm, and that no man would, for a moment, think of paying full price for land destitute of good substantial inside fences. This usually silences all discussion and the enquirer goes away and too often follows the teachings he has received.

Your committee, either from sheer contrariness or possibly from inability to see just why these statements, made so frequently by those who advocate the subdivision of their farms, should forever put the matter beyond dispute have appointed me to institute a search and see whether there may not be a better way than that practiced by farmers at the present time, and to bring before you here to-night the result of my investigations.

The question that they have proposed for answer, is, "What is the best plan for Centre county farmers to pursue in reference to fences, taking the laws as they now exist?"

This law, as it now stands, requires that farmers in Centre county shall fence against all animals running at large on the public roads, and against all animals in their neighbor's fields; or in other words, the law requires that fences along the highways shall be tight, high and in good repair, and that line fences shall be constructed and maintained at the mutual expense of individuals owning adjoining lands.

These then are, in brief, the conditions under which your committee ask their question. Without disputing the wisdom or justice of these enactments, I will confine myself to the discussion of the particular point submitted. "What is the best plan to be pursued with reference to fences, under these laws?" By best I suppose is meant, that plan which shall pay the largest percentage on the capital and labor employed, with the least injury to the land and trouble to the owner. And since the question implies that there are more plans than one that may be pursued, it would seem essential that some at least of the most generally accepted plans should be carefully considered and compared. I have thought it well to bring to the discussion of this subject those appliances and methods of calculation, that have been found useful and even necessary in other professions in life. Whilst it may be true that "guess work is the best when it hits right," yet mathematical precision will continue to be used in all enterprises where accuracy and close attention to details are essential to success. Far-

mers have a way of lumping things that is rather startling to men trained to arrive at conclusions by the slower process of reasoning, and accustomed to know just why they believe the things they do. Let the figures then tell the story, and inasmuch as we are wholly desirous of arriving at correct conclusions I ask that errors in calculation, if there are any, may be carefully observed so as to have them brought up for correction when the general discussion of this subject comes before us.

The plan most generally pursued by Centre county farmers to-day consists in the subdividing of farms into a number of fields containing from eight to ten, or twenty acres, and in raising upon these fields certain different crops, succeeding each other in a rotation occupying from four to seven years. The usual number, however, being five. The plan further consists, and this is the part with which we have specially to deal to night, in a system of pasturing stock upon the fields, which necessitates the separation of these divisions by means of interior fences to protect certain growing crops from the encroachments of the cattle. As these enclosures are erected, not through the requirements of law, but of the farmer's own accord and for his own special purposes of convenience and accommodation, they thus legitimately come within the scope of the inquiry presented for our consideration.

Since the best plan for a farmer to pursue with reference to his fences, must be the one by which the best results can be obtained with least expense; it becomes necessary in examining any system in comparison with others that first of all we shall ascertain what it costs. One panel of post fence eleven feet long and five rails high will cost one dollar and ten cents. Add the price of half a panel fifty-five cents and we have one dollar and sixty-five cents as the cost per rod.

Take about an average farm, rectangular in form and containing one hundred and eighty acres, being within a fraction of one hundred and ninety-six rods long by one hundred and forty-seven rods wide, divided into twelve fifteen acre fields forty-nine rods square, with a lane one hundred and ninety-six rods long, one half of its length to be thirty-three feet wide and the other half to be twenty feet in width. There will be one thousand and twenty-four rods of inside fence.

If you multiply this by \$1.65, the cost per rod, you will have a total of \$1689.60 as the first cost of the inside fences of this one hundred and eighty acre farm. This fence with ordinary care will have to be entirely renewed once every twenty years. In order to find its cost we must calculate compound interest on the principal invested. This first cost at compound interest for twenty years amounts to \$5418.77, which gives an average annual loss of \$270.93, in maintaining these inside fences.

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