

Miscellaneous.

Do Farmers Read Enough.

Is it not true that many farmers read very little, hardly enough of the news of the day to keep posted in regard to the current events of our own country, to say nothing of the foreign news? Further, do they read that which pertains to their business? trying to improve the mind upon the great study of agriculture. This class do not seem to realize how much education and improvement of the mind have to do with farming. They count strong hands and muscle as the only requisites for successful farming. They depend altogether too much upon the weather and circumstances, and too little on skilful, intelligent management for success in their business. We know there are some who will say that this is not true—that many ignorant, unlearned men are quite as successful in tilling the soil as those who read. But we think we can point out some of the reasons to show that the same men could do better if more brain labor were applied in connection with the labor of the muscles. In the first place, mind is regarded as the measure of the man in every other profession; and all other business succeeds in proportion to the active knowledge and intelligence the man has who manages it. Why should it not be so with the farmer? Much as we value bone and muscle, brains are the most important. The body is but the tool, the mind is the hand that works it. It is to education and progress in the arts and sciences that all our enlightened and civilized countries owe their greatness. The barbarous have strength of body, and in many countries superior soil and climate to our own. Why has this country become great and prosperous except for its superior culture of the mind? Intelligence is strength, and whatever power or influence a people possess, must be developed through the intelligence of that people.

But, to apply it more practically to the business of farming, we would say that in no industrial pursuit in the improvement of the mind—education is the thing which pertains to the profession—more important. The desired culture and information can be gained mainly through reading. New and valuable ideas gained by reading and study will be as so much capital to him. A reader is generally a man of knowledge and culture, and he acts in proportion to his knowledge. We should read more agricultural books and papers, and if we can by reading ascertain a better way of doing any kind of farm-work, or make any advances whatever in theory or practice that would benefit us, we should be prepared at once to adopt it. If we have a farm of poor soil to be brought up to a certain standard, let us study the science of agriculture and the means best and most economically adapted to improve it as rapidly as possible. If we are the fortunate possessors of a soil rich in all the elements of fertility, it should be our constant aim and study to keep it so, and see that no injudicious system is pursued in its cultivation, and that its natural fertility remains unimpaired, but constantly improved. This applies also to every department of the business, whether it be in the cultivation of crops or the raising of stock.

A farmers library, books and papers, which are in the reach of everybody, will develop and improve the mind, so that farming will be done on correct business principles.—*New-England Homestead.*

To Make Farming a Success.

A great many people have an idea that farming is a branch of industry that requires but little judgment or experience; that all that is necessary is to plough and sow, reap and mow. That is, if a man does not know enough to get a living any other way, why let him farm it. This is a mistake. I think a man, to make a successful farmer, should like it, or prefer it to all other occupations, and then he will take pride in it, and everything connected with it. His ploughing will be done in season, and well done. He will remove the stones from his plough field; he will see that there is no cut and covering; if the plough runs out he will have the team back up and try again, and when it is time for sowing he will be ready. His ground will be thoroughly fitted; he will not be in such haste as to half do it, and then get half a crop. He will seed it to grass once in two or three years at least. He will want a good field roller to roll in his grain, for it saves time in harvest, and he will get better crops; for if it is a dry season it will stand brought better; the roller will pulverize all the lumps, and the grain will come up even. The careful farmer will watch over his farm as close as a careful merchant will over his stock of goods and fixtures. He will see that his stock of horses, cattle, sheep,

and so, are properly cared for, that they are not allowed to get old and worthless before he sells them. If he is following one particular branch of industry, and he should not be quite as successful in it for one season, as in some other branch, he will not be continually changing. For instance, if he is dairying, and the products should be low, while wool should bring a good price, he should not sell his dairy stock at a sacrifice and pay an exorbitant price for sheep. Or if his soil is best adapted to raising grain, and it should not bring a very remunerative price for one season, he should not have hastily change for something else. But he should make up his mind what particular branch of agriculture is best adapted to his soil and climate, and follow it. The competent farmer is the man who keeps himself informed as well as possible, as to the amount produced each year in his line of production; also the amount of receipts and shipments, and then govern his sales accordingly.

I often think that parents are to blame for so many failures in farming. They are too apt to desire their sons to follow the same avocation as their fathers before them. I think to try and make a farmer of a boy when he dislikes it, is a mistake. If a young man likes farming he will enter into it with zeal and determination to succeed, and nine times out of ten, he will. His farm and crops will show it. His buildings and surroundings will look as if he calculated to stay on the farm. He will set out fruit, shrubbery and shade-trees; in fact, all things that tend to make a home attractive and comfortable. While on the other hand if he dislikes it you will see that everything drags. Like the migratory birds he will soon give up farming and seek a home elsewhere.—*Cor. N. Y. Times.*

How to Judge of Marl.

The chief differences in marls are two. Some have a great deal more clay than others. This can be seen at once, and a marl that abounds in clay so as to have a dull, bluish color, and cake down when wet, is not worth carting great distances. On sandy lands, where clay is needed, such marls are more useful. But on a clayey soil the farmer should seek a marl that has a deep but green color, that grows mellow by exposure to the weather, and when a little of it is rubbed in the palm of the hand, gives a pale green paint. Some marls have a good deal, as much as ten or twelve pounds in a hundred, of lime; these generally are deficient in phosphorus. As lime can be had at from ten to fifteen cents a bushel, it will not pay to buy marl for the lime it contains. The constituents which make it valuable as a commercial manure are potash and phosphorus, and practically it is found that marls are judged and prized by the quantity of phosphoric acid they are found to contain.—*Etc.*

Farmers as Missionaries.

It is not so much the question now, as how fancy farming may be bettered, as is the important undertaking to raise the condition of common farming. Nineteen-twentieths of the husbandry of this country is on a very little higher plane than was the farming of thirty years ago. And it is to those, the great majority of producers, that the teachings of advanced practical farmers should be given. As a class it is to be feared they do not read agricultural papers. And it must be confessed we here meet with a difficulty in the beginning of our undertaking. But, here and there, they have neighbors who do read the papers, and can silently teach by example. Men are imitative, and some are ambitious. When they have facilities they will be apt to strive for better farming, especially when convinced it is for their profit. Those who do not see the use of underdraining may still do something to remove the surface water. If their cattle are suffered to wander unsheltered in winter something practical for bettering their condition might be suggested to their owners; or, better yet, examples of humanity can be set them. If the improvident farmer cannot be induced to shelter them otherwise, perhaps he might be made to see the folly of neglecting stock over winter by demonstrating to him that all his feed and labor are wasted; that the same cattle are no heavier in the spring, nor will they sell for more than five or six months before. If he be careless about saving and applying manure, perhaps he may be brought to see the benefits derived from clovering. And though it be unsightly and unsavory, and we cannot persuade him to remove the hog-pen from the roadside, he might be induced to make his pigs invaluable agents in working over soils and composts, thus adding to the heap and deodorizing the pen. There are a thousand ways in which

an intelligent, go-ahead farmer may encourage his thriftless neighbor to make improvements, and so add materially to the common good.

It is not to be expected of any missionary in this direction that he can educate or reform the last of the wayside farmer, whose yearly struggle it is to make his bread and pay taxes. Still a word might cause him to plant a few trees about the dwelling by way of ornament, and he might be encouraged to keep neater fence-rows. It might not be exactly proper, or delicate, to scold him for not getting a pump or building a wood-house. His father before him always had a wood-pile in front of the door, and the traditional well-sweep hung over the well. But a little lay-preaching in the cause of pity for dumb animals may work a revolution in their behalf—and they are numbered by millions—that would add to the material wealth of the country, and might well form a text for farmers' granges.—*J. B. A., in New York Times.*

The Receipts of my Farm.

A correspondent of the *Iowa Home* gives the following statement of the product of his farm in Iowa. He writes: I see in your notes from correspondence that a Pennsylvania man claims that twenty acres of land, at \$300 per acre, in Lancaster County, Penn., is more profitable than a section of Western land. I think he is badly mistaken. My farm is new, and, of course, not fully subdued; at least my crop was not as good as it would have been if the soil was better rotted. I had 160 acres in crops last year. Now, I will compare receipts with W. J. K., or any one else, if they show better than I can. I expect to learn how to beat him the coming season on land that, ready to crop, cost less than \$13 per acre. If I can show as good or better I think it proves that an acre in Iowa is worth as much as in Lancaster, or any other county land, for a man to use, while it cost less than one-tenth his lowest-priced land.

My receipts for 1873 were as follows:

9 acres barley, 240 bushels, \$1	\$240 00
20 acres Winter wheat, 287 bushels, \$1 05	301 65
35 acres Spring wheat, 600 bushels, thrashed, 87c	522 00
77 acres Spring wheat, 250 bushels, hard wheat, 87c	178 00
8 acres flax, estimated amount, 160 bushels, worth \$1 50	150 00
12 acres potatoes, sold \$325, and at least \$100 on hand	425 00
4 acres turnips and onions, sold \$75 worth	75 00
20 acres helix plants, 9 acres, sold \$1,100, as many on hand as sold, at least	2,200 00
Cattle sold	688 00
Hogs sold	800 00

Balance of ground in corn, which was fed to cattle and hogs, or will be stock on hand worth as much as a year ago, except cattle. I bought \$200 worth of corn. My stock of hogs is worth nearly or quite what cattle and hogs were last year, to commence on; but, to give a fair comparison, I will deduct \$275 from total amount for decrease of stock, \$200 for corn purchased. The balance was raised by three hands, with a few dollars' worth extra help until harvest. It cost more to harvest than to raise the crop. In addition to raising crop, we broke about forty acres new prairie, which should be put down as an increase of capital against decrease of stock.

Rest from Brain Work.

The Watchman and Reflector makes the following sensible remarks upon an important subject:

"Study out of school hours is once more receiving a little attention, but not half so much as it deserves. We protest against the practice as injurious to both the mind and the body of the pupil. The hours assigned for school-room duties are as many as health or propriety require; a child needs all the rest of the twenty-four for physical and mental health and growth. We do not want to see or hear of precocious children; we want no such hot-house pressure; and if, perchance, some boy or girl has an inclination to overwork, let it be checked instead of encouraged. This precocity seldom reaches mature life; the lamp burns brightly for a while, but soon exhausts itself. If parents and teachers would be content with a reasonable progress in studies—would think that a child's body is of some importance as well as the mind; would realize the power in the old quotation—*Sana mens in sana corpore*: 'a sound mind in a sound body'—they would be wise in their generation. There is a false pride in this matter that works only mischief."—*Farmer.*

A GRAND POULTRY EXHIBITION, under the auspices of the Central Illinois Poultry Association, was held recently at Jacksonville. The entries were very large, and the display of poultry is stated as surpassing anything of the kind, probably, ever held in Illinois.