

## Professor Massey's Editorial Page.

### How John Crakore Fooled His Neighbors.

**H**AVE TOLD how our friend, John Cracker, after visiting his relatives in the North who called themselves Crakore, adopted the same name and became John Crakore.

But John did not stop there. He bought two good blocky mares, and plows and implements to suit the team. He subscribed to The Progressive Farmer and Gazette and studied improved methods of farming.

The old house got a coat of paint and a broad porch, and he laid off a lawn around it and seeded it to grass and planted trees around it, and flowering shrubbery, made a pretty drive to the front door and a side road to the barn, and the old place soon began to look home-like.

His wife and daughters got catalogs and bought flower seeds and bulbs, and delighted in planting them. John got a full-blooded Jersey bull, and purchased a pure-bred boar and used these to breed up his common stock.

John's neighbors watched all these things closely and at the store on Saturday afternoons John was discussed, and the general opinion was that John was on the road to the county home. He was getting to be a "book farmer," and book farming did not pay in the South, they knew very well.

But when these men who had no cows went to the store to buy butter, they were told that they could get Mrs. Crakore's butter for 30 cents a pound and not a cent less, and the store-keeper said he had quit selling the oleomargarine they had been getting for butter.

John had a fine lot of half-bred pigs, and his neighbors had to buy some pigs in the spring, and John got \$5 each for his as soon as weaned, and would not sell many at that price.

Then, when they saw John driving his mares to a smooth road, his corn and cotton they said that John had gone clean crazy and was going to ruin his crop. But John kept on with harrow and weeder, and the weather turned rainy, but between showers he got over the land and broke the crust rapidly while his neighbors were getting hopelessly in the grass.

Then when they were trying with single plows to cover up the grass, John mounted his riding cultivator with his two mares hitched to it, and went over his crops in less than half the time his neighbors took, and did better work.

His neighbor, Jim Mulekin, came over one Sunday afternoon and was astonished to see that John's cotton and corn were perfectly clean and thriving. "Why," said he, "the grass in my cotton is almost as high as the cotton. I am just waiting till the rain stops so that I can go into it with a turning plow and cover the grass up."

"You need not have had the grass there," said John, "if you had used the harrow and weeder when it started, and then had a two-horse cultivator to get over rapidly between the rains."

"But I ain't got but one mule," said Jim. "And you will lose enough on your cotton crop to have paid for two more mules," said John. "I have found out that horse power is cheaper than man power, and that there is profit in farming if it is done right. Are you going to sow peas in your corn, Jim?"

"Sow peas, and they sellin' at \$2.50 a bushel? I reckon not. Can't afford it."

"I can not afford not to do it," said John, "but I have plenty of peas and would not take \$2.50 a bushel for them so long as I can find a vacant place for them."

"Fact is," said Jim, "I don't see how I am to pay for the fertilizer I bought, and it growin' grass instid of cotton."

"What did you buy," said John. "Why, I bought the regular 2-8-2 that I have always bought, and they charged me \$25 a ton for it, and that was the cheapest they had, and I used 200 pounds an acre on the cotton."

"Perhaps the lowest priced, but not the cheapest," said John. "I did not buy any ammonia, but mixed acid phosphate and potash, about 10-5, on the crimson clover last fall, and this spring I added only acid phosphate for the cotton, for the clover is giving me all the weed I want, and on

the clover and cotton I have used 500 pounds of fertilizer an acre that did not cost me much more than your 200 pounds, for I bought for cash."

"Bought for cash!" said Jim. "Whar in the world did you git cash in the spring?"

"Been selling you fellows butter at 30 cents a pound all winter, and pigs in the spring, and I fattened two steers and sold them to the butcher. Sold some corn, too, and oats, and a lot of late potatoes and sweet potatoes, and all the help I need I can get cheap, for the darkeys know they will get their pay Saturday night, and when my cotton is made it will belong to me, for I do not owe anything at the store. The store is always owing me, and the chickens and eggs my wife raises buy all the clothes she and the children wear."

"Then directly my winter oats will be coming in, and I shall have a good crop to sell. In fact, Jim, since I went up the country and saw how those farmers there do, I have gone to farming, too, and we can beat those people up-country, for we can make as much corn and oats and wheat as they can, and have the cotton for a surplus crop."

"Well, John, we had all about concluded you were gittin' so extravagant that you were on the road to the poor-house, and the fact is, you are gittin' the start on us fellows, and after the crap is laid by, them mares of yours are going to have colts, and next thing, you'll be a four-horse farmer."

"I am going to have all the horse power I need, and hope to have some to sell, and my heifer calves will make better cows than the old ones, and I shall sell my bull and get another one not akin to them, and shall, before long, have cows nearly full-blooded. In the same way I shall breed up my hogs, and as soon as I get the land to make more grass, I shall have some sheep."

"I was as poor as you, Jim, and it only takes a little use of brains to get out of the one-mule class and go to farming. Cotton is a wonderfully profitable crop where one farms, for actually I expect to get over a bale an acre this year, and I will have made a good living out of the other things I raise, and my cotton I can put under cover and sell when the price is best, while you have got to sell in the fall at any old price he-

"Well, John, I am goin' to tell these things to the fellows out at the store, and I rather think we'll wake up."

### The Legume Special

**T**HE GREATEST evidence of the wave of improvement in farm methods and practice in the South is shown by the attention being paid to the legume crops, especially to cowpeas and crimson clover. When, more than twenty years ago, I began a crusade for the cowpea it was rare to see a field of peas, except in the corn fields. The Southern farmers hardly seemed to realize what a bonanza they had in the pea, which they and their fathers and grandfathers had been planting in a sort of haphazard way for generations. Then peas were picked and flailed out and sold for 50 to 75 cents a bushel. Now a hundred acres are grown where one was grown twenty years ago, and such a demand has sprung up all over the country for the seed that peas are seldom lower than two dollars a bushel, and generally higher. It is a curious instance of an immense increase of production attended by a higher price for the product. Now, a farmer can mow and cure his pea hay at the proper stage, and the seed will ripen and can be threshed from the hay and cleaned by the Koger machine at rate of half a bushel of clean peas a minute, and the hay left in fine shape for feeding. Twenty years ago a Legume Special would hardly have attracted the attention of the farmers. But the paper and the institutes have made the farmers acquainted with the important role the legumes play in the improvement of the soil, and the farmers are finding out their value.

Nine years ago I came from Raleigh to Salisbury, Maryland, to speak at a farmers' institute. I told the farmers that I had ridden that day all the way up from Cape Charles, nearly 100 miles, and my eyes had been pained by the sight of the bare land in winter where the corn and truck crops had been grown the previous summer, and I told them of what we were doing in North Carolina with crimson clover, and what could be done with it here on their sandy soil. Now, I

look out the window as I write and see broad fields of this clover. And what is more surprising, right across the road from where I am writing the land rises into a sandy ridge. It is deep sand, probably six or eight feet to the hard clay. And yet, on that sand ridge to-day, is a sod of bluegrass that Kentucky can not beat. What has done it? Some little manure and fertilizer, some clover and a little lime; and now, where the grass was left uncut last summer among some old apple trees, the grass will tangle one's feet in walking through it. This sod has been unbroken for years and will not be broken.

All over over the upper South such a sod could be had if the farmers will but take the trouble to get it. This is well shown by the sod that covers the campus at the A. & M. College at Raleigh, where one crop of peas turned under over twenty years ago enabled us to get a sod. With such a sod as that I see from my windows, one could have a permanent pasture that would last a lifetime and improve if given a little bone meal annually and a little lime once in six or seven years.

And the way to get grass is to use peas and crimson clover to improve the soil. With a good permanent pasture, well kept, one would never have to graze his cultivated fields, and would only have to fence the pasture. Of course, in most parts of the South, Bermuda will be the summer pasture, and mixed with Texas bluegrass, there would be a winter pasture, too.

With the legumes for forage and a permanent pasture, the live stock industry would be easy, and this is the greatest need of the South to-day.

### Comments and Suggestions.

**I** AM CHEERFULLY writing personal replies to letters from the subscribers to The Progressive Farmer and Gazette, but I do not propose to do this for men who do not take the paper. If you are a subscriber, say so when you send a query. Otherwise, I shall expect a dollar for the reply, and you had as well send the dollar to the paper for a year's subscription. I cannot spend time and labor writing letters for a two-cent stamp to people who will not take the paper.

**COMMISSION MERCHANTS.**—Mr. R. E. Hanley, business manager of the League of Commission Merchants, Buffalo, N. Y., writes, asking why, in a recent article in The Progressive Farmer and Gazette, I "should proceed to condemn all commission merchants?" The fact is, that I did not condemn all commission merchants at all, but only warned the shippers against the rascally ones, and said that the best way to market produce is the way we are doing here on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia, by organizing produce exchanges. I have no quarrel with honorable men in the commission business, and am glad to get the printed list of the members of the League of Commission Merchants, who have organized for self-protection against rogues. I am also heartily in favor of the growers organizing for their own protection and advantage. The League is, doubtless, a good thing for those who have to ship direct to commission merchants, and it will protect the shippers. But the exchanges have proven their value and have come here as a permanent thing. Where there are large numbers of growers shipping, an exchange is the best thing to handle the crops. But where one is located so that an exchange is not practicable, then consult the agents of the League before shipping and find out who are to be trusted.

**NUT GRASS.**—The only way to kill nut grass is not to let it show a leaf above ground. This means constant cleaning off, for it will be up next day, but if constantly prevented from making green leaves the roots will die. Nut grass spreads more from seed than from the roots, and being neglected late in the season, it firms the soil with seed, and nothing but constant vigilance will eradicate it. I have just made a garden here from a piece of land that is full of it, and I am going to do just what I advise; clean up every shoot every day. Nothing short of this will answer. Geese penned on the spots will keep it down, it is said, but I have never tried them.

The best way to rest land is to keep it busy between sale crops growing something that will feed stock and feed the land at the same time—the legume crops.