
RULES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF A SOUTHERN ESTATE.*

OVERSEERS.—1. On the first of each year, or whenever a new overseer takes charge of a plantation, he must make out a *full, perfect, and accurate* list, or inventory, of all the property of every kind upon the plantation, and file a copy of the same with the agent. This inventory is to be considered as the receipt of the overseer for all the property mentioned in it, and for which he *must* account, when discharged or leaving, and before being paid his salary. The agent will examine these inventories and certify to their accuracy, and file them in the office.

2. Quarterly inventories of the stock and implements must be made out; not from the old ones, but by seeing and inspecting every article as written down. The daily record must be written up, and every page of their plantation book appropriated to its particular head. The record of marriages, births, and deaths, with the physician's visits, must be accurately and rigidly kept. The quantity of clothing, supplies, and farming implements received by each overseer, for the plantation he manages, must be entered in his book.

The cotton picked by each hand, every day during the season, must be set down in its proper place.

3. Every article of supply for each plantation must be given out by the agent, and a correct account kept of the same, and charged to the plantation receiving it. The overseers must enter in their books the articles received, so as to check the general record book.

No overseer, employee, or any person else, will be permitted to alter, change, or deviate from my plans, arrangements, and instructions, here expressed, without my consent and approbation.

* As enforced by Joseph A. S. Acklen, of Louisiana.

No buildings of *any kind* are to be erected or changed without my consent.

4. No overseer or employee must keep, rear, or have on any of my places any negro, or stock of any kind, without special permission.

No person employed on my estate must trade, traffic, or sell any thing belonging to the estate without permission.

It is very much the custom of overseers to trade in horses, and to be frequently changing them; this I will not permit, and if an overseer is allowed to retain a horse at all, he must use *him exclusively*, and for purposes connected with his business; and whenever this rule is violated, the overseer may consider himself discharged, and must leave as soon as settled with.

5. If any overseer is found absenting himself from his plantation, or riding about the country, to the neglect of his business, must be promptly discharged.

No overseer, or other person will be permitted to retain any of my negroes, except those mentioned, in or about his house, for his own purposes.

No overseer will be suffered to entertain company, or receive visits, except the occasional visit of a friend or relative, and these must be limited.

6. No man should attempt to manage negroes, who is not perfectly firm and fearless; and who, moreover, has not entire control of his temper.

Punishment must never be cruel or abusive, for it is absolutely mean and unmanly to whip a negro from mere passion and malice, and any man who can do so, is utterly unfit to have control of negroes; and if ever any of my negroes are cruelly or inhumanly treated, bruised, maimed, or otherwise injured, the overseer is to be forthwith and promptly dismissed.

No overseer will be allowed to kill stock of any kind, without permission, for it is mine, and if wanted or needed, it is due to me to ask for it.

Sending any of my negroes on errands, or giving, or sending any article belonging to me from any of my places, lending horses or any tool or implement without permission, ensures a dismissal.

My negroes are all permitted to come to me or my agent with their complaints, and in no instance *shall* they be punished for so doing; and in my absence, I enjoin it upon my agent to attend to their complaints, and examine them, and if they have been cruelly or inhumanly treated, the overseer *must be at once discharged*.

Each overseer, on each plantation, must give his personal attention to the stables and stock, and see that the stables are kept in good order, and the stock of all kinds well cared for.

It is part of the contract and duty of the overseer, to see that the horses and mules are properly fed and rubbed, that their stables are clean and well littered; when harnessed and at work, to see that their gearing all fits and does not gall them, recollecting that these animals, though dumb, can feel as well as persons. Animals are much easier managed with kindness than otherwise, and all of my stock of every kind must be particularly attended to. Let the stock-men know that they are watched and held responsible for negligence.

See that the milch cows are driven home night and morning, and properly cared for, with feed and salt. Every place has milch cows sufficient to furnish milk for all the negroes on that place.

Every night before going to bed write up your diary, and think over what is to be done next day, and make a memorandum of it on your slate.

Rise early, and never let the negroes find you in bed of a morning, unless sick. See, in person, that they are all put regularly to their work. After rising, do not idle about, but go directly to the business of the day. If any of the negroes have been reported sick, without delay see what ails them, and that proper medicine and attendance are given.

Wherever the negroes are working it is your duty to be with them, in order to direct and encourage them, and have their work properly done.

See that the negroes are regularly fed, and that their food is wholesome, nutritious, and well cooked, and that they keep themselves clean. At least once in every week, visit each of their houses, and see that they have been swept out and cleaned; examine their bedding, &c., and see that they have been well aired, their clothes mended, and everything attended to which conduces to their comfort and happiness.

Do not permit the houses or fences or gates, to get out of order, and when needing repairs, have it attended to without delay. Keep your wagons, carts, and implements used in planting, always repaired and ready for use, and have them always put under a shed, out of the weather.

Recollect that while in my employ your time is not your own; I pay for it, and shall consider any neglect of my business as so much unjustly taken out of my pocket. If persons call to see you, inform them that you have business to attend to for another, and they must excuse you from those polite courtesies, which might be accorded were you differently circumstanced.

Every overseer must attend exclusively to his own plantation, and for the future will be paid off, when he absents himself for any length of time, say a week or more, without the

permission of myself or agent; and he will not be suffered to hire any one to supervise or take charge of his business, even when permitted to be absent, but the necessary deduction will be taken from his salary.

Foremen, cooks, nurses, stock-tenders, wagoners, &c., appointed or selected by me, are not to be changed, except with my permission. They are not exempt from punishment for imprudence, disobedience, negligence, or misdemeanors, or any of the offences for which the other negroes are punishable.

My gardens, pleasure-grounds, and the domestic establishment, with the servants and all appertaining to this department, are to be free from the control or interference of the overseers.

No overseer will be permitted to have chicken-houses, have patches of ground or gardens for his special use, or to erect or build stables, pens, or other houses for his horse, nor be suffered to have any other than the regular hostler to attend his horse.

The grounds I appropriate for vegetables, and the houses I erect, must answer all his purposes, and he is not to take any field hand to attend to any business for himself.

Every person employed by me, on any of my plantations, must make up his mind to rigidly obey these instructions, and to carry out all my orders, written or verbal, willingly and cheerfully, or to leave on the shortest notice.

(To be concluded in our next.)

RULES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF A SOUTHERN ESTATE.*

(CONCLUDED.)

The object of all punishment should be—1st, for correction, to deter the offender from a repetition of an offence; and, 2d, for example to all others, showing them if they offend, they will likewise receive certain punishment. It is the *certainty*, more than the *severity*, of punishment that prevents crime. Never fail, therefore, to notice the breach of an established rule, and be equally unfailing in punishing the offender justly, according to the nature and circumstances of the offence. Never inflict punishment when in a passion, nor threaten it; but wait until perfectly cool, and until it can be done rather with sorrow than in anger.

Feel, and show that you feel, a kind and considerate regard for the negroes under your control. Never cruelly punish them, nor overwork them, or otherwise abuse them, but seek to render their situation as comfortable and contented as possible; see that their necessities be supplied, that their food and clothing be good and sufficient, their houses comfortable, and be kind and attentive to them in sickness and in old age.

The preservation of the health of the negroes, and the care of them when sick, will require your best attention; and to be ignorant of the best mode of discharging your duties in these particulars, is to be unfit for the responsible station you hold.

To preserve the health of the negroes, they must be well fed and clothed, and comfortably quartered. They should not be unduly exposed to wet and cold; to avoid which, suitable work should be provided within doors for bad weather. Pregnant women should be exempted from any thing but the lightest labor for several months before and after confinement; mothers be allowed time to attend to their infants until weaned. Cleanliness should be required of all in their clothing, houses, and yards; and the children should have a nurse—an experienced old woman—to look after and provide for them; and further, nothing can so much contribute to the good health of the negroes, as the strict enforcement of the system of discipline and police hereinafter prescribed.

It is strictly required of the manager, that he rise at the dawn of day every morning; that he ring a bell for the assembling of the hands; require all hands to repair to a certain and fixed place, in twenty minutes after the ringing of the bell, and there himself see that all are present, or notice absentees; after which the hands will receive their orders, and be started to their work under charge of their foreman.

* As enforced by Joseph Acklen, of Louisiana.

All sick negroes will be required to report to the manager at morning call, either in person, if able to do so, or through others, when themselves confined to the house.

Immediately after morning call, the manager will himself repair to the stable, together with the plowmen, and see to the proper feeding, cleaning, and gearing of the horses. He will also see to the proper feeding and care of the stock at the farm yard.

As soon as the horses and stock have been fed and otherwise attended to, the manager will take his breakfast; and immediately after, he will visit and prescribe for the sick, and then repair to the field to look after the hands, and he will remain with them as constantly as possible during every day.

The sick should be visited, not only every morning immediately after breakfast, but at such other times of the day and night as cases may require; suitable medicine, diet, and other treatment be prescribed, to be administered by the nurse, or, in more critical cases, the physician should be sent for. An intelligent and otherwise suitable woman will be appointed as a nurse upon each plantation, who will administer medicine and otherwise attend upon the sick.

There will be stated hours for the negroes to breakfast and dine, and those hours must be regularly observed. The manager will frequently inspect the meals as they are brought by the cook, see that they have been properly prepared, and that vegetables be at all times served with the meat and bread.

The manager will, every Sunday morning after breakfast, visit and inspect every quarter; see that the houses and yards are kept clean and in order, and that the families are dressed in clean clothes.

No negro shall marry another off, or not belonging to, the estate, without the consent of the owner. No negro on the estate will be permitted to marry a free negro. Men who have wives on different plantations from the one they are on, may visit their wives once during the week.

All running about at night is strictly prohibited, and any negro found out of his or her quarter after the last bell, without permission or good reason, must be punished.

No negro not belonging to the estate, must be permitted to come among and be with my negroes, without special permission.

No negro preachers but my own will be permitted to preach or remain on any of my places.

The regularly appointed minister for my places must preach on Sundays during daylight, or quit.

The negroes must not be suffered to continue their night meetings beyond ten o'clock.

They are all to be dealt with fairly and equally in their general supplies.

THE NEGROES.—The most entire submission and obedience is required on the part of every negro. If a negro resists when corrected, every other negro man present must assist in arresting him.

No negro will be allowed to use ardent spirits or have the same about his house.

Stealing, lying, adultery, fornication, profane language, fighting, and quarreling must be invariably punished.

No negro must leave the *estate* without a written permission from the manager, agent, or owner.

No negro shall trade, traffic, or barter with any flat or trading boat, without special written permission.

No negro will be allowed to raise stock of any kind.

No negro will be allowed to ride the horses, mules, or colts on the place, without permission; and the habit of riding about on Sundays and at night must be discontinued.

The negroes are required to remain on their respective plantations during the week, unless permitted to be absent, or to see the owner or agent. On Sundays they may visit the various plantations, but must first obtain leave of the overseer.

The negroes may occasionally have fresh meat, but the overseer must first notify the owner, if present, or the agent, of his wish to kill some of the stock for the negroes.

The negroes must be *certainly* punished for abusing the stock, losing their implements of work, leaving gates open, or defacing, breaking, or otherwise injuring the fences or houses on the plantation. By strictly and rigidly adhering to this rule, they will soon be careful and particular.

The negroes will not be permitted (and it is here particularly enjoined on the overseers not to suffer them) to have barrels, ashes, and chicken-coops, or trash, or filth of any kind under or about their houses. The quarters must be cleaned every week.

The negroes must *all* rise at the ringing of the first bell in the morning, and retire when the last bell rings at night, and not leave their houses after that hour, unless on business or called.

Women, when in-doors on account of pregnancy or convalescing from sickness, must spin or sew.

The men must work in the gardens or about the stables, until able to go to the field.

Every negro will be required, when he is done using a farming implement, to show it to the overseer, and then deposit it in the tool-house.

PUNISHMENT.—Whipping is the only punishment that will be permitted, except keeping the disobedient on their plantations. Whipping must never be cruel or severe, but may be repeated at proper intervals, until the most entire submission is obtained.

I object to having the skin cut, or my negroes marked in any way by the lash; and, with proper care, this can always be avoided. I will most certainly discharge any overseer for striking any of my negroes with a club or the butt of his whip, or in any way injuring one of my negroes. My negroes are not to be abused or injured in any way; and, at the same time, they must be kept under strict discipline, which can be accomplished by talking to them, and punishing moderately, but promptly and certainly. The rules and regulations in regard to the negroes, stock, implements, etc., must be read to the negroes every three months by the managers on the various places.

STOCK.—It is a practice too general to take little or no care of stock of any kind; and it is owing to this fact that the cattle, sheep and hogs, upon most plantations, have come to be of no sort of profit. This state of things must be altered, and special care must be taken to improve the stock of all kinds; and, as this business, like every other, should have its rules, some of these are here suggested:

1. Of the Horses—Clean, dry and well ventilated stables are essentially necessary, in order to keep horses in health and good order. The dung, urine and litter should be cleaned out every day and fresh straw supplied for beds. The food should be sound and abundant. The horses should be *regularly* watered and fed, and as regularly curried and rubbed, and their feet and legs washed and kept sound. The stables should be securely locked at night, both to prevent the horses being rode at night, and also to prevent their being robbed of their food—things more often done than is generally suspected.

The team of horses upon every place furnishes the chief *motive power*; if, then, the team be in low condition, or otherwise out of order, all operations must drag and be behind hand, and illy performed; besides, horses in bad order are twice as subject to disease and death as when fat and in health, besides being a disgrace to any manager, and an eye-sore to their owner.

It is also necessary that the gear should be kept in good order, well oiled and otherwise ready for use. It must, therefore, be well taken care of, repaired, cleaned, and greased, whenever necessary. Train or fish oil will keep off the rats, and is best for the preservation of the leather.

In order to establish a strict responsibility among the plow-

men for the care of the horses and gear, the teams will be divided, and certain specified horses and gear given in charge to each plowman, who will be held accountable for the same.

A curry-comb will be provided for each pair of horses.

The plowmen must not be allowed to gall their horses, or to split their mouths with the bits, as is so generally done, to the lasting injury and disfigurement of the horses; and severe punishment must be used if necessary, to prevent such gross abuse. The teams should never be actually at work over ten hours a day; the balance of the time should be given to rest, feeding, and careful attendance at the stable. As much work can be done in ten hours, if the horses are in order, as in twelve or fourteen, worked in the ordinary slow and out-of-heart style.

The horses must be fed, and are growing older every day; keep them at work, also, every day, (Sundays and rainy days excepted,) when the land is too wet to plow, hauling may be done, so as to keep the teams always at work. By observing this rule, the plowing and hauling will always be well ahead; less team will cultivate a given amount of crop, and with more ease, than a larger team, half-kept and half-worked, after the ordinary manner.

IMPLEMENTS.—The rule of having a place for every thing and keeping every thing in its place, must be strictly enforced in regard to wagons, carts, plows, hoes, gear, and all other plantation implements.

Besides keeping all implements in their proper places and to their proper uses, they must at all times be kept in order for use. And to effect this, as soon as any thing is broken or otherwise out of order, let it be carried forthwith to the carpenter's or smith's shop and put in order, and thence returned to its proper place in the tool-room or shed; and let it not be left, as is often done, out of place and out of order until the very moment it is wanted for use; and these things, when not in use, must be kept under the shelter.

In order to establish some accountability amongst the negroes for the care and preservation of the implements, there must be a special assignment of certain implements to each negro; from the wagon and gear, carts, yokes, etc., down to the smaller tools, such as hoes, axes, etc., and such smaller tools as cannot readily be distinguished the one from the other of the same sort, will be marked (either upon the iron or the wood) with the first letter of the name of the negro to whom they have been assigned, and a written list of the assignment will be kept, and the hands will be required to use each his own tools, and no others, and be held responsible for their preservation, and for returning them to their proper places.

DITCHES, FENCES, TURNROWS, &c.—Upon good drainage mainly depends the successful cultivation of these places, and I enjoin it particularly on each overseer to keep his ditches well worked and clean, and open, so that the water may pass off freely, and without obstruction. The ditches should be worked and kept in order with the cultivation of the crop.

The fences must be kept in good repair and clean, and free from undergrowth and briars. Nothing adds more to the looks of well cultivated lands than clean turnrows and good fences, well trimmed. I want these matters well attended to, and the sloughs and bayous all cut down and kept clean. They are the natural drains of the land, and where the sides are sloping, they answer in place of ditches, and will gradually fill up.

IN-DOOR WORK IN BAD WEATHER.—When the hands cannot work out, they must clean up the stables, mend and grease their gear, and sharpen and put in order their implements, clean up the quarters, pile the manure, etc.; the cribs, ox lots, and stables require much work to keep them in good order, and when the weather is rainy or bad, they can do this work, and I desire it to be particularly attended to.