

Plantation Management, De Bow's xiv (February 1853): 177-8

The following rules for the instruction of overseers, and the *Management of Negroes*, are by Mr. St. Geo Cocke, one of the wealthiest and most intelligent planters of the old dominion. They are worthy of the note of planters everywhere:

PLANTATION MANAGEMENT. POLICE.

1st. It is strictly required of the manager that he rise at the dawn of day every morning; that he blow a horn for the assembling of the hands; require all hands to repair to a certain and fixed place in ten minutes after the blowing of the horn, 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 the foreman. The stable will generally be the most convenient place for the assembling of all hands after morning call.

2nd. 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.

3rd. Immediately after morning call, the manager will himself repair to the stable, together with the ploughmen, 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.

4th. As soon as the horse 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 fields to look after the hands; and he will remain with them as constantly as possible during every day.

5th. The sick should be visited not only every morning immediately after breakfast, but as 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.

6th. There will be stated hours for the negroes to breakfast and dine, and those hours must be regularly observed. Breakfast will be at eight o'clock, and dinner at one o'clock. There will be a woman to cook for the hands, and she must be required to serve the meals regularly at those hours. 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.

7th. 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.

8th. Comfortable and ample quarters will be provided for the negroes. Each family will have a separate room with fireplace, to be furnished with beds, bedsteads, and blankets, according to the size of the family; each room will, also, be furnished with a table, chairs, or benches, and chest for the clothes, a few tin plates and cans, a small iron pot for cooking, &c.

9th. The clothing to be furnished each year will be as follows: --

To each man and boy, 1 woolen coat, 1 pair do. pants, 1 pair of do. socks, 1 shirt, 1 pair of shoes, 1 wool hat, and a blanket every second year, to be given 15th of November. 1 shirt, 1 pair of cotton pants, 1 straw hat, 1 pair of shoes, to be given 1st of June.

To each woman and girl, 1 woolen frock, and to those who work in the field 1 woolen cape, 1 cotton shift, 1 pair stockings, 1 pair shoes, 1 cotton head handkerchief, 1 summer suit of frock and shift, a blanket every second year, and to women with more than one child, 2 blankets every second year.

To children under 10 years of age, 1 winter and summer suit each.

10th. Provisions will be issued weekly as follows:

Field Hands . To each man, three and a half pounds bacon, and one and a half pecks meal. To each woman, girl and boy, two and a half pounds bacon, and one peck meal.

InDoor Hands. To each man and boy, two pounds bacon, and one peck corn meal. To each woman and girl, two pounds bacon, and one peck corn meal. To each child over two years and under ten years, one pound bacon, and half a peck of corn meal.

To the above will be added milk, buttermilk, and molasses, at intervals, and at all times vegetables, and fresh meat occasionally.

11th. As much of the clothing must be made on the plantation as possible, wool and cotton should be grown in sufficient quantities for this purpose, and the women having young children be required to spin and weave the same, and the managers' wives will be expected to give particular attention to this department, so essential to economical management.

12th. A vegetable or kitchen garden will be established and well cultivated, so that there may be, at all seasons, an abundance of wholesome and nutritious vegetables for the negroes, such as cabbages, potatoes, turnips, beets, peas, beans, pumpkins, &c.

13th. A horn will be sounded every night at nine o'clock, after every negro will be required to be at his quarters, and to retire to rest, and that this rule may be strictly enforced, the manager will frequently, but at irregular and unexpected hours of the night, visit the quarters and see that all are present, or punish absentees.

14th. Each manager will do well to organize in his neighborhood, whenever practicable, patrol parties, in order to detect and punish irregularities of the negroes, which are generally committed at night. But lest any patrol party visit his plantation without apprising him of their intention, he will order the negroes to report to him every such visit, and he will promptly, upon receiving such report, join the patrol party and see that they strictly conform to the law whilst on this plantation, and abstain from committing any abuse.