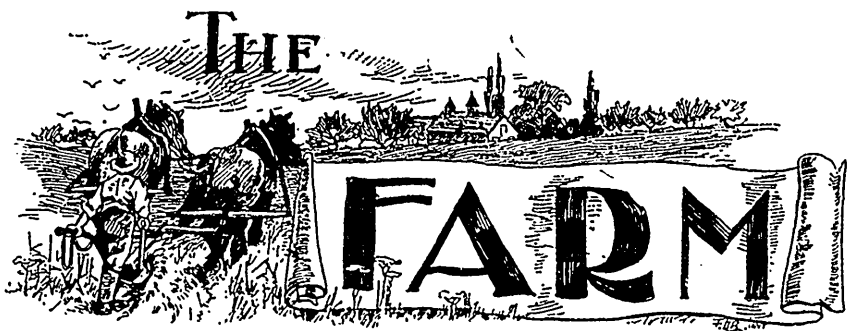




Grass Production.

We are happily situated in the eastern part of this continent in the matter of grasses. Sometimes we imagine that they grow but shyly, but if we lived for a time in the dry regions in our western possessions just east of the Rocky Mountains, or in the semi-arid regions of the United States, we should know better how to appreciate our grasses. Let our grasses grow in our estimation. We should grow more of them. We should not pasture them so closely. We should sow them in greater variety, and we should sow them more frequently.

Grasses will help our soils. They save them from washing away. They fill them with easily accessible plant food. They help them to retain moisture, and they improve their texture. They furnish an easy medium of turning plant life into money, as when animals graze they pick their own food. Grasses can be turned into money with the expenditure of but little labor. Our most valuable lands are our good grazing lands. Then let us value our grasses at their true worth, and let us try to increase them as we should.

Sowing Grass Seeds.

Some farmers will be in doubt this year again, as they have been in former years, as to the best time to sow their grass seeds, and also as to the best mode of doing this. No cast-iron rules can be laid down with reference to this work, for both the time and mode vary with varying conditions. In one instance it may be best to sow on the snow, in another when the ground is honeycombed, in another when the ground has become dry enough to sustain a harrow, and yet again it may be better to sow only on spring grain, allowing the seed to fall behind the grain and covering it with a roller. Every man must judge for himself as to the course that will be best for him. But some things may be said, probably, that will be helpful in forming such a judgment.

Sowing on the snow is usually more successful on clay or loam than on sandy land, as the latter does not crack open readily because of the presence of frost. And, for the same reason, sandy land is seldom found in a honeycombed condition. Seed sown on sandy land, therefore, will usually have a better chance when sown on winter grain and covered with the harrow. But this mode of sowing seeds is not always well adapted to clay lands, for in a wet spring a team cannot be driven on the land to cover the seed until the season is too far advanced.

On spring grain the "catch" of seed is, of course, sure in proportion to the early period at which it is sown, to the absence of stooling in the crop, to the fine tilth of the land at the time of sowing, to the early period at which the crop is removed, and to the character of the season. All of these conditions we can measurably control, except the latter. All things considered, barley is the best grain to sow grass seeds upon.

Renovating Pastures.

Can our pastures be profitably renovated without plowing them under? In some instances they can; in others they cannot. Various modes of renovating pastures have been proposed and also practised. But there is no method, probably, that is so universally applicable, or so potent, as that of top-dressing with farmyard manure, in conjunction with the sowing of additional seed when necessary. When an old pasture becomes sod bound, and, in consequence, does not throw up a vigorous growth, a good heavy top dressing of farmyard manure put upon it in the fresh form will so quicken and renew it that a vigorous growth will be secured the following season, and probably for two or three seasons. But where the grass roots have died from any cause, or where they are growing but thinly, it may be wise to sow some seed on them before applying the manure; usually, no more suitable seed can be sown than clover; that is to say, red clover on the high land and alsike on the low. If the seed