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BY AUCTION

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COMMENCING AT 1 O'CLOCK, SHARP.

Thursday, May 23, '07

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.
Miscellaneous.

TROUBLE WITH PUMP.

We have a pump, which is giving considerable trouble. It is a wooden head, galvanized-iron pipe, brass cylinder, and galvanized-iron piston-rod. The trouble is in the piston-rod becoming detached from the plunger about every ten or twelve months. It is attached by a thread, which, when renewed, is soon eaten off again. Local experts say that where brass and iron come together and are reached by water, an action is set up with the result that the weaker metal is dissolved. The company have another explanation. They say it is caused by some foreign substance in the water.

R. B.

Ans.—Both ideas are probably correct in part, but it takes both of them together to make the "whole-truth." When two metals are placed in a solution of acid or some kind of salt, such as zinc sulphate, sal ammoniac, or common salt, and then connected by a wire an electric battery is formed, and a current of electricity flows from one metal to the other, and one of them is dissolved. The water in the well referred to probably contains some exciting salt ("foreign substance") and a local current of electricity is thus set up which results in the corrosion of the brass.

O. A. C., Guelph. WM. H. DAY.

LAND FOR ALFALFA—WIND-BREAK.

I am getting interested in this alfalfa plant from reading so much about it lately in your valuable paper. I do not know that my land is very suitable as it is nearly all quite flat. Have none of those clay hillsides you speak of as being a good place for alfalfa. We have about twenty acres of sandy land, which has pretty good natural drainage. How do you think it would do on such land, providing it was well fertilized? Does it kill out as easily as red clover if ice or water would lie on it in spring for any length of time? I am thinking of setting out a wind-break this summer. Have a lot of nice cedar quite handy; just about the right size for planting, but they are growing on a very wet, springy piece of land. Do you think they would be suitable for transplanting on to high land? Which would you prefer, white pine, spruce or cedar for a wind-break, quick growth, looks and everything considered?

J. A. A.

Ans.—1. While we recommend choosing for alfalfa land with a pretty good slope, where such is to be had, it by no means follows that no level land is suitable. Neither is soil of clayey texture necessary; some recommend sandy loam, although, in our experience, alfalfa is the surest success on clay. The prime essential is good surface and subsoil drainage, with good tilth, freedom from weeds and grass, and plenty of the mineral elements of fertility, viz., lime, potash, and phosphoric acid. On suitable soil, alfalfa is rather more hardy than clover, but on land where clover is inclined to winter kill, probably more trouble will be experienced with alfalfa than with red clover in this respect. Ice or standing water is fatal. By all means, try alfalfa on the field described. You will improve your chances of success by mixing well with the soil 30 bushels of lime and a good load of wood ashes per acre.

2. We are dubious about the success of cedars transplanted direct from wet to dry soil. If they could be taken up and set in a nursery plot, where the soil was intermediate between that where they are now growing and that where they are to be planted, and left there a year, in rows two feet apart, and a foot apart in the rows, it would acclimate them and also make the change of soil less sudden. We would advise doing this if the cedars are used. The ideal wind-break is Norway spruce. It seems to possess a peculiar faculty of shutting off the wind. The City Park Commissioner, of London, favors double rows of Norway spruce and Carolina poplar, the poplar and spruce being set alternately in each row. The poplars are fast-growers, and soon form a shelter, but may be removed when the spruce begin to be crowded. Cedar also makes a good wind-break, though hardly equal, in our estimation, to spruce. The objection to pine is its tendency to openness at the ground.

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