

Questions and Answers. Miscellaneous.

To Repair Cement Trough.

One of your readers asks advice re repairing frost-cracked concrete trough. I beg to say that I have a tank (round) fourteen feet in diameter and five feet deep. Two years ago last winter (I had no top on it then) the frost put a crack up one side, and I mixed up a little clear cement and pasted it in and over the crack on the inside, and it is O. K. yet.

E. McCREIDIE.

Elgin Co., Ont.

Permanent Pasture.

A few weeks ago an enquiry was made regarding Prof. Zavitz's permanent pasture mixture. Your reply started a few thoughts and questions, and as a good motto is, "Turn on the light," perhaps you may be able to enlighten us further. On most of our farms, permanent pastures are to be discouraged. What is most needed is a short rotation, namely, grain seeded down to clover or other legume; hay one year; pasture, and then corn. With this practice, it is an easy matter to keep a farm clean, and in good condition to grow larger and better crops. However, there are exceptions to every rule. There are only two kinds of farmers who need a permanent pasture. The farmer who has accumulated a little pile of cash, and feels inclined to retire from the strenuous life of farming. How much better for a man in those circumstances to seed down his farm to a permanent pasture, and take in stock during the summer months, than to retire to town. The other farmer is one who has only a small bush on his place, and also a creek running across the farm. Shade and water are absolutely essential if dairy cows are to do their best as mortgage-lifters. So a man in those circumstances may use a permanent pasture. But for the ordinary farmer, a short rotation is the most profitable. Mr. Zavitz recommends a mixture of grasses and legumes, amongst which are alfalfa and red clover. Why these two in a permanent pasture? When criticizing this mixture, one is reminded of a young theological student who carefully prepared for his examinations. However, he was not prepared for one of the questions: "Criticize the acts of Moses," so he answered thus: "Forbid that I, a humble student, should criticize the greatest of men, Moses."

It is a well-known fact that alfalfa will not stand pasturing, especially when the land is wet. No one desires to keep stock off the pasture, unless it is perfectly dry. Alfalfa will not stand short cropping. During a dry time pastures will become short, so why put a plant in this mixture that is not adapted for pasturing?

While alfalfa is long-lived under certain circumstances, red clover is short-lived under any circumstances. It is only good for one or two years, and considering this fact, what good is it in a permanent pasture? Why not, instead of using alfalfa and red clover, use more of the other grasses that will stand the racket?

SUBURBANITE.

Ans.—Apart from discussing the place of permanent pastures on the farm, we may state the permanent-pasture mixture as advised in an answer to the question referred to has been successfully tried out on hundreds of farms. We all know that alfalfa does not do well on low, wet land, and such is stated in our answers to permanent-pasture queries, and where our correspondent states that his land is low and wet, we do not recommend sowing alfalfa, but increase such grasses as red top. Alfalfa is valuable in the drier pastures, as it comes on earlier than many of the grasses composing the mixture, and very often lasts in the pasture for many years. It also is valuable being a legume, to the soil. True, red clover is short-lived, but only small quantities of it are advised, and, like the alfalfa, it comes on more quickly than some grasses, and besides furnishes more than enough extra feed the next year after sowing to pay for the seed. Besides, if neither red clover nor alfalfa do well, there is in the mixture, if properly applied, enough other seed to ensure a catch. We would not do without the alfalfa and red clover on a high soil, and would put red clover in all mixtures.

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