

close connection with the soil as it possibly can be. With dibble planting there is often the tendency to leave a cavity at the bottom of the hole by the ground being imperfectly trodden, and the result is either that the cutting dies or that it is deficient in vigour the first year and may die the following winter. In treading the soil round the roots of the trees the heel and not the toe should always be applied. A man cannot possibly apply his weight when using the flat of his foot, and many a tree has died because it was trodden with the toe. Trees must be planted firmly.

CARE OF PLANTATIONS AFTER PLANTING.

After the trees are planted they should be cultivated at once, instead of waiting (as is often done) for the weeds to appear. After this, only about three or four cultivations and going through perhaps twice with the hoe to kill the weeds close to the trees will be necessary throughout the summer. The great thing in tree culture, as in all other kind of culture, is to get the work done at the *right time*, and many a time a great deal of work would have been saved if the farmer had not delayed cultivation and waited for the weeds. Many a man thinks his plantation splendid and proudly informs you he cultivated it three or four times, while, if he only knew it, his neighbour has his trees looking far better with no more work and perhaps less, simply because he cultivated to retain moisture, and did not wait for weeds to appear.

BLUE-JOINT OR COUCH GRASS AND SWEET GRASS.

On most soils, usually about six or seven weeks after breaking, the seams between the sods will be found full of blue-joint or sweet grass; and if the backsetting is delayed, the roots of these grasses never are killed, and in the following year patches of them will be seen growing vigorously all over the plantation. Then follows trouble for the owner, for grass and trees will not grow together; there is a fight for the mastery and the grass always comes off the victor. In many cases, even when backsetting is done, little pieces of grass roots manage to live over to the spring, and if not taken out in time give a lot of trouble.

By far the best way to meet this sort of difficulty is to watch for the little patches of grass while cultivating the first year after planting, and to dig the roots up with a fork there and then. The roots are seldom deep; blue-joint runs about four inches below the surface, while sweet grass is usually about seven or eight, and, when undertaken in time, the work does not take long. Many a plantation throughout the west is suffering to-day simply because the owner did not fork up these patches the first year after the trees were planted. Half a day's work with a fork will save many a day's labour afterwards. It is useless to think of getting rid of these weeds either with the hoe or cultivator. They are too deep and there is nothing for them but the fork or spade.

HOW BLUE-JOINT GRASS SPREADS.

A frequent vantage-ground from which blue-joint grass spreads in many plantations is from the opening furrow or breaking. In these furrows some sod is usually buried but not turned over. This sod never rots, and even when it is turned over in the backsetting, the work may be done so late that the sod does not get rotted and the grass roots are fresh and vigorous in the following spring. It will often pay well in such cases to take the stone-boat and remove such sod altogether and save further trouble.

When breaking for trees a much better plan is to begin on the outside of the piece and finish in the middle. The whole of the sod is thus turned over, and backsetting can be begun in the middle and finished on the outside.

Another source of danger arises from the spread of the grass from the sides of the plantation, especially when it is bordered by unbroken land. This is especially troublesome in narrow belts of four or five rows wide or less, for which unbroken land on each