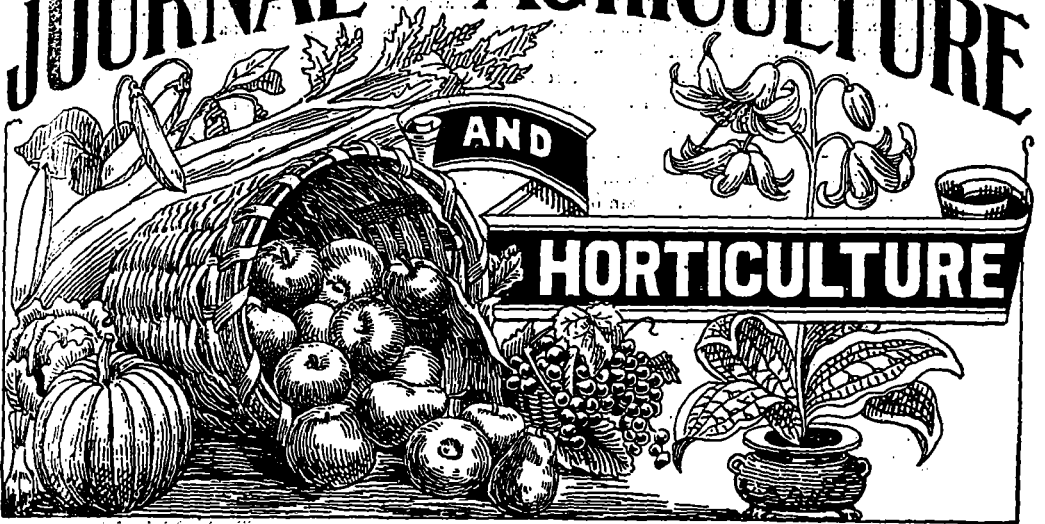


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JUNE 15th, 1898.

Notes by the Way.

On the 25th of May, at the request of Mon^s. C. F. Bouthillier, we paid a visit to his farm at Bleury, Ste-Thérèse, with a view to the discovery, if to discover it was possible, of the cause why, in some patches, the lucerne in the sandy enclosures near the château has completely lost plant.

The *alfalfa*; as the people in the States call lucerne; a word that signifies "the clover," the definite article in Arabic, *al*, denoting its super-excellence over other kinds of clover; was sown in the spring of 1897, after the utter destruction of the previous plant of the same crop; then in its fourth year; by the well-remembered most baneful frost of that terrible spring.

On visiting the lucerne-field, we were glad to find that the vacant spaces were neither so numerous nor so extensive as our friend's letter had led us to dread. In part, out of three arpents, or so, of the plant there could not have been more than a quarter of an arpent that had disappeared. On this, however, the lucerne had entirely vanished, with the exception of two or three plants, that were perfectly healthy, presenting the thriving appearance of the remainder of the piece.

As to the cause of this lost of plant, we may as well say at once, that we could arrive at no definite conclusion. We are inclined to think that there may exist some peculiarity in the soil of that part of the field that does not agree, as medical men say, with lucerne; there may have been some insect or grub, that preys upon the root; it cannot have been the *lodder* (*cuscuta*), for the reason that that net-like ravager of clover-fields does not arrive till later in the summer; or, lastly, and we say this hesitatingly, the too frequent repetition of the same plant may have rendered the land hostile to its growth, as in the case of red clover in England.

All we could do was to recommend M. Bouthillier to change the site of his lucerne-field as soon as possible. He proposed to cart 150 loads of clay to the arpent over the