

Open Letters.

A New and Valuable Forage Plant.

SIR,—There is another most marvellous forage, dry feed and fertilizing plant which is grown largely in the south, of which I have never seen mention in your valuable paper, and which I believe is well adapted to the central and northern parts as well as to the south. After the Florida velvet bean and the cow pea in the south, this is next in general value as an all-round green or dry feed and fertilizer. I refer to what is known as the "Beggar Weed," the botanical name of which is "Desmodium."

From its name you must not infer that it is a noxious weed, but on the contrary there is nothing grown in the nature of grass or forage of any kind that is eaten in its green or dry state by all stock on the farm with more relish and greediness than this.

The seed in appearance resembles that of clover, and is about the same in size, and it will require for seeding purposes ten to twelve pounds to the acre. To grow a crop successfully, first fit your ground nicely early in spring, harrowing down well before sowing, so that seed may be scattered evenly, thus getting a good even stand on the ground, after which sow your seed broadcast, then harrow again, covering well. If your seed takes nicely, your field will soon take on a beautiful green, as it is an exceedingly rapid grower. Or, another way, you can sow seed in with your oat crop and harrow, or may sow broadcast in corn and cover at last plowing. The latter plan will do as well if wanted for pasture, but if to be cut up for dry feed the other plan is better.

If you want to use your growing crop for pasture, I would not turn on until growth is nearly waist high and after heading process sets in, as at that stage the lateral stems are well developed with leaves and seed formation. If you wish to cut the crop to cure as a dry feed, I would cut it a little before it reaches the stage above described, as by so doing you can, in five or six weeks time, cut another crop from the same ground from new growth offshoots from the original plants, as usually after the second crop is cut a sufficient growth is made to afford you an excellent fall pasture.

To cut this crop you can use a scythe or mower as you like, as in its new and tender state it cuts as easily as timothy or other grass. To cure it, treat it the same as other hay. Should you wish to use the crop to enrich the land, you can turn the second growth under for fertilizer, which may be done in fall or spring as you like. If you want to secure a seed crop, cut growth first time when about thirty inches high, at which stage it makes an excellent dry feed, after which do not disturb it again until it has attained its full growth of from five to eight feet, and matured its seed. If your crop is a good one, it will stand so thick on the ground that you can scarcely walk through it and will reach away above your head.

After the ripened seed is secured in the fall, the dry leaves by this time having fallen off may be

turned under, together with dry stalks, all of which will make you a most valuable fertilizer.

In the south a fair crop may be secured the second and often the third year with re-seeding, but this plan I would not advise in the colder sections, for fear of winter kill.

While this plant is a grand success in Florida and the other Southern states, I do not regard it at all as tropical, and believe it will thrive and do well where other forage crops will grow. It being such a wonderful success in the South, and so valuable for all purposes, I think that farmers everywhere will make no mistake by giving it a trial.

If further information is wanted by your readers if they will enclose stamp I will cheerfully reply.

CAPT. E. A. WILSON.

Fraudulent Packing.

In my letter, which you published last month, there is one expression the printer made which sounds quite unconnected, "of course a brand is a brand by law" was written "of course a barrel is a barrel by law." The letter was not intended for the press, but as you have used it perhaps you will give me not only space to correct the error but also to give the cause of its being written, viz:

I bought a barrel of apples: the barrel was labeled "Snows." When opened they showed poor sample of Ribston Pippins. After about two gallons were removed they turned into Holland Pippins, and a very bad sample at that. There was not a really sound apple in the barrel, and to add to the trouble they were re-packed apples sold by the Fruit Auction Company of this city. We have no trouble about coal oil, why should we have about fruit? G. H. FAWCETT.

Fraudulent Packing.

SIR,—I enclose you some newspaper cuttings about apple packing. In addition to old boots and kindling wood we have found turnips and pumpkins. Now, how to put a stop to this is the thing to get at. We are of opinion that it can only be done by having every barrel so marked that it can be traced to the place and to the man who packed it, and make him liable for the damage. This could be done by securely tacking a card on the end of the barrel giving the full address of the grower, number of lot, township and county, also the name of the packer if packed by any other than the grower. This same rule could be applied to packages in baskets, such as plants, berries, etc., by tying the label to the package. We think fruit growers and dealers in fruit should urge on the government the desirability of passing a law to in some way meet these cases.

We should be pleased to see the rules of the Ontario Fruit Growers Association for grading fruit.

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