

Grasses and Forage Plants.

Alsike Clover.

EDITOR CANADA FARMER:—Six years ago, I sowed five pounds of Alsike as an experiment, in a rather low spot in the middle of a field, the remainder of which was seeded down with Red Clover and Timothy. The summer turned out so dry and hot, that scarcely any of either grew, and the next winter killed, as I thought, the rest; so that, in the following spring, I put in a crop of oats with the cultivator, seeding down again the whole piece with a plentiful supply of Red Clover and Timothy.

Of course I thought that, under such John-Barley-Corn treatment, the Alsike would be dead. Not so, however; on the contrary, it has increased and multiplied until it now fills the ground in place of the Red, which is dead and gone long ago.

Three years ago I mixed twenty pounds of Alsike with fifty pounds of Red, and then added an equal bulk of Timothy. With this mixture I seeded down about fourteen acres. The first year I had a nice crop of Red Clover, with here and there a plant of Alsike and Timothy. The next year I had a crop of Alsike and Timothy, with a little Red. The result was so much in favor of Alsike, that I seeded seventy acres with it last spring, on the high land, mixed with Red, and on the low land with Timothy without any Red Clover. I should prefer Red on the high land, but it soon dies out, and I think "a live dog is better than a dead lion."

S. GOING.

Wolfe Island, Ont.

Mixture of Grass Seeds for Permanent Meadows.

EDITOR CANADA FARMER:—What mixture of grass seeds would you recommend for a piece of light sandy land, that has lam in common and then had a crop of potatoes, and a crop of roots taken from it. I intend to raise a crop of corn and clean it ready for seeding down next year.

YAWSHUR.

Brantford, Ont.

We should recommend the varieties and quantities following per acre, which are those advised by Flint, one of the best authorities on the subject:

Meadow Foxtail	1 lb.
Orchard Grass	6 "
Sweet scented Vernal Grass.....	1 "
Meadow Fescue.....	2 "
Red Top.....	2 "
Kentucky Blue Grass.....	4 "
Italian Rye Grass.....	4 "
Perennial Rye Grass.....	6 "
Timothy.....	3 "
Rough Stalked Meadow Grass.....	2 "
White Clover.....	5 "

This will be rather thicker seeding than most farmers would be willing to go to the expense of; but it is now an accepted fact that thick seeding increases the crop, and improves the quality of the grasses.

In England, more varieties are used. A recent writer recommends a mixture of the following varieties: Meadow Foxtail, Sweet Vernal, Crested Dogtail, Rough Cocksfoot, Hard Fescue, Meadow Fescue, Various-leaved Fescue, Sheep's Fescue, Red Fescue, Evergreen Rye-grass, Sutton's Perennial Rye-grass, Pacey's Perennial Rye-grass, Timothy, Smooth-stalked Meadow Grass, Rough-stalked Meadow Grass, Yellow Trefoil, Perennial White Clover, Perennial Red Clover, Alsike Clover.

These grasses have excellent qualities, all of them, and as they mature successively, they give, under good management, a permanent sward.

A CASE OF THICK SEEDING.—In the spring of 1872, says a *Maine Farmer* correspondent, I sowed six acres of land to oats and grass seed. The season was very dry and when I harvested the oats, there was no grass to be seen, although I put on sixty lbs. of clover, three pecks of timothy, one-half bushel red top and one-half bushel foul meadow grass; but, supposing that I should get no grass from that seeding, the next spring as soon as the knolls began to show themselves, I sowed on 43 lbs. clover, three pecks herd's grass, and about the first of Sept., mowed the most part of it, getting about one ton per acre. It was just beginning to throw out the heads and it was about the best seeded piece that I ever saw and I really believe that both seedings came and grew, it was so thick.

The Rough Stalked Meadow Grass, "[Poa Trivialis.]"

The grass of which an illustration is given on this page, is the Rough-stalked Meadow-grass, *Poa trivialis*. It has been known for some centuries in England as the Orchard grass. This is the best adapted of all grasses for succeeding in the shade, excelling in this respect even the Orchard grass, *Dactylis glomerata*, illustrated in our last issue.

It mixes well with Orchard grass for shaded situations, and is more productive when mixed with other grasses than when sown alone. It will not succeed in open lawns, where it is frequently cut, as it does not endure sunshine particularly well. The seed weighs about fifteen pounds



to the bushel. If sown alone, twelve pounds will be about the right quantity; but as it succeeds best when mixed with other varieties, it is seldom sown alone. It has fibrous roots. It does not start so early in the spring as some others of the same family, but it grows rapidly when the weather becomes warm.

Cattle are very fond of this grass, and will keep closely cropped those spots of the pastures where it grows.

The Rough-stalked Meadow grass closely resembles its ally, the Kentucky Blue grass, otherwise known as June grass or Smooth-stalk Meadow grass, and scientifically, *Poa pratensis*. The seeds of the two varieties may be known apart by the *Poa trivialis* being short, round and flat on the face, and smaller generally. The seeds of *Poa*

pratensis appear concave to their face, and are longer in proportion to their width. The grasses themselves are distinguishable by the rough sheaths and culms and fibrous roots of the *trivialis*; the *pratensis* having smooth sheaths and culms and creeping roots. The *trivialis* comes into flower nearly a month later than the *pratensis*.

Top-dressing Grass Lands.

The success or failure of farming operations depends largely upon the mode and time of applying manure. No matter how applied, manure never fails to benefit the soil, and rarely fails to benefit the growing crop. But it may be used so that it will do comparatively little good, either to soil or crop. In this section, most of the rotted manure from barnyards in the fall, is used as top-dressing on wheat. The "patchy" appearance of top-dressed wheat, however, results from an attempt to make a small quantity of manure produce a crop on poor soil. To have the best effect on wheat, manure should be applied on the surface some time before sowing, and thoroughly incorporated with the surface soil by frequent harrowing. But the best farmers in this section apply manure as a top-dressing for grass lands and young clover. To produce its best effect, clover should have as large a growth as possible. In a large growth, the long top roots strike down deeper, and not only loosen the subsoil, but bring up fertilizing mineral elements that have leached down during years of shallow culture. Even if the clover be cut for hay, the extra growth of roots leaves the land much richer than if no manure were used, and the entire crop ploughed under. A good plan is to apply all the finer and well-rotted portions of the manure to the young clover of this year's seeding. This will be washed down among the roots by winter snows and spring rains, and give the clover an early and vigorous start next season. Manures are much more apt to wash away on wheat fields than on clover, especially if the wheat has a small growth. This is one point which your able correspondent, Mr. Geddes, did not mention in his recent advice to a young farmer to top-dress wheat. While I agree that top-dressing wheat is generally beneficial, I think it still better to use the same amount of manure on clover. There is a temptation to apply the manure directly to wheat, for that is a crop which brings the money most readily. But if the land can be most benefited and after-crops largely increased by top-dressing clover, that is the best policy.

It is rare that several loads of "scrapings" cannot be found at this season in barn-yards. These should be drawn and spread on young clover. Even good, rich soil from the road-side will pay to draw, if not too far. The droppings of horses and cattle should also be knocked to pieces in clover and other pasture fields. There is a great advantage in this, even if the field is to be ploughed next summer. Gypsum (or plaster) should always be sown on surface manured land. It is a specific manure for clover, and though not always uniformly beneficial, generally does enough good to warrant the small expense of applying it.—*W. J. F., in New York Times.*

Best time for Seeding to Grass.

A Genesee Co., N. Y., correspondent of the *Live Stock Journal*, has the following on the time for seeding to grass and the way to do it:

For the grasses, we find fall seeding very much surer of a good "catch," than to sow in the spring. But we find it most practical in many cases, to seed without grain. A piece of lawn, or orchard, or some small lot that I want to seed down very nice, I would manure well in the spring, and plant with early potatoes. By working them thoroughly, this cleans the ground, mixes the manure well with the soil, and by harvesting potatoes early, I can cultivate and prepare a good seed-bed for grass by the 16th of August; from then to the 1st of September is our best time for seeding to grass alone, for then we are almost sure of a good "catch." The weeds seldom grow in the fall to choke the seed, and it gets so good a start as to insure a good crop for the next season.

I once sowed clover with orchard grass on the 20th of August, which did very well, and the next June I cut what the men called two and one-half tons to the acre. I never lost a seeding, or had a partial failure, sowing grass seed in the fall, on well prepared ground. But for large fields we generally seed with grain, and the fall growth is often so thrifty, that to avoid its choking, or checking the growth of the wheat, the farmer will sometimes sow the grass seed a month after sowing his wheat, and then have it stocky enough, though I prefer to sow grass seed about the time I put in the wheat.

I think for fall seeding it does not require as much seed to the acre, for then all the seed seems to grow. This fall, I sowed only four bushels of best timothy on twenty-eight acres, with grain put in about the 9th and 10th of September, which is now growing so thickly, that I fear I shall not get a catch of clover with it, though I shall sow it about twelve pounds to the acre, early in the spring.