

Preparing the Land for Grass.

We are apt, very apt, to overlook the fact that land intended for grass should receive more thorough culture than any other, because for years while in grass, it has not the advantages of the plow and other implements to stir the soil, but must rest and pack and get more and more in a condition to keep out the air, and let in and pass off less readily the water. We should, therefore, thoroughly prepare the soil. Plow as deep as may be, and subsoil well; pulverize and enrich the land—enriching it will make it more loose and mellow, and keep it longer in that condition, as well as increase the yield. Such land will "catch" its seed, and if plentifully applied, will be certain under anything like favourable circumstances to form a thick set. A little top dressing, aided by the aftermath, which should never be fed close, will ensure good crops—two cuttings a year.

But let there be a cold, hard under-soil, and the seed put in in the usual way—little of it and on hard and reduced soil, without manure—what can be expected of it? Just what we see: light crops, getting lighter each year till it will hardly pay for harvesting. Such land, when the plow turns it down, will be found to be hard. The sod amounts to but little, whereas, in properly treated land it will yield from sixty to seventy loads of manure per acre. A mellow seed-bed, deeply-loosened soil well enriched, plenty of seed sown and sown as early as possible—are the points to be secured in putting down grass lands.—*Rural World.*

Hops.

Hops have advanced owing to the demand being better than the supply cast. The very wise action of hop growers not crowding their produce into market all together is helping them out of the slough of despond into which they were getting. We note that prices have advanced from 25 to 30 cents, so that now they are quoted at 30 to 35 cents for all good lots grown either east or west. Well's Circular complains of a very light supply in New York, and indicates that the produce of the crop both in this country and abroad has been very much over-rated. The accounts of the foreign market are yet mixed. The quantity is not so great nor the quality so high as expected. Prices in London range from three pounds sterling per cwt. to seven pounds, or from 15 cents per pound in our currency to 37 cents. It will be seen there is no margin for importation. We note that hops are quoted by the French reports as worth 120 to 125 francs at Poperinghe and 130 to 155 francs at Nancy, and 250 to 255 francs at Bischwiller per 50 kilogrammes. This would make hops range from 28 to 45 cents per pound in the continental markets. So that foreign hops do not look to us as likely to compete with the American in our own markets.—*Michigan Farmer.*

Facts in Soiling.—What to Sow and How to grow it.

Mr. George E. Waring, the excellent manager of Ogden Farm, at Newport, R. I., lays down the following for general principles:

1st. The earliest abundant food will be secured by the use of winter rye.

2d. The best and most abundant food for the latter summer and earlier autumn time will be secured by the use of Indian corn.

An experiment was made last year by the officers of the Agricultural College of Pennsylvania to determine the amount of food per acre. Seed was planted May 15, at the rate of seven bushels per acre, one-half drilled, in drills two and a half feet apart, the other sown broadcast. On the 20th of August began cutting, and on the drilled part gathered 34,000 pounds or 17-44 tons per acre.

Hungarian grass is a quickly turned food for cattle. On the same farm three pecks were sown per acre on the 21st of May. August 2—seventy-three days after planting—it was gathered and dried, making 5,804 pounds of excellent bright hay, which the horses and cattle ate with a relish, liking it fully as well as they did the clover.

Does it Pay to Raise Oats.

I do not wish to discourage farmers in raising oats for the market, as long as it will pay to do so; but I think that the facts in the case will show that it not only does not pay in this country, at the present prices, but that the balance will be against the farmer.

We will say that a man sows ten acres and that it yields 40 bushels per acre, which will be at least an average crop for this section.

We will suppose that the breaking of ten acres will cost.....\$10 00
 20 bushels of seed at 20 cents per bushel..... 4 00
 Sowing seed..... 1 00
 Harrowing 2 days..... 4 00
 Cutting at 75 cents per acre..... 7 50
 7 hands to bind and shock at \$1.50 per day.. 10 50
 Stacking 1 day, 2 waggons and 4 hands..... 12 00
 Threshing 400 bushels at 2½ cents per bushel.. 10 00
 8 hands to help thresh..... 12 00
 We will say that a man will haul to market one load of fifty bushels per day; it will therefore take him eight days to take it to market, which, at \$3.00 per day will amount to..... 24 00

Total.....\$95 00

It will be seen that nothing has been allowed for rent of land, board of hands, &c. We will say that he will get for his oats when delivered 20 cents per bushel, which is 7½ cents more than they are selling for here at this time. This will give \$80.00 against \$95.00 He will have the straw besides; but will this pay him the difference, \$15.00, rent of land, board of hands, &c.

I make no suggestions, but merely mention these facts so that farmers may think the matter over and plant such crops as will be likely to yield the largest returns.

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Shade or No Shade in Pastures.

Farmers have often, through the agricultural press and otherwise, been advised to plant trees in prairie pastures to make shade for stock. Now, if stock will put on more flesh in a pasture with shade than where there is none, then shade is desirable, otherwise, not so. Having for many years pastured where there was good shade, and for the past two seasons where there was none, and observed closely the habits of cattle and horses with regard to feeding, I have become satisfied that stock of any kind (except perhaps hogs) will thrive and do best where there is no shade at all, from the fact that without shade stock will feed several hours in the day that otherwise would be spent in the shade fighting flies. Let any one in doubt on this subject put horses and colts in pasture and allow them to run in and out of the stables as they choose. It will be found that they will quit their shelter scarcely at all between seven in the morning and five in the evening, and will grow poor on good pasture at this season of the year. On the other hand; if allowed no shade or shelter at all, they will thrive nearly as well in July and August as in May or October. The same will be found to apply to horned cattle and sheep, though, perhaps, the difference will not be so great. It may be considered cruel to deprive animals of so cheap an article as shade, but I think that they have a "good time" in pasture compared with our work teams, or the farmer himself, who works ten or twelve hours in the scorching sun, and knows but little, practically, about the comfort of shade.—*Prairie Farmer.*

The Scarcity of Farm Labour.

Farm work is suffering for lack of sufficient labourers. Not only is this true of Western New York, but of New England and the West. Our correspondence tells the same story from every locality; farm labour is scarce and wages high. Naturally we ask, in common with other farmers, why is this state of affairs? Why, if labour is so high, are prices of farm products produced by labour so low, comparatively? and is this condition of things likely to continue? There are considerations involved in these queries which are of great importance to the present and the future of the agricultural interest. The census shows that the population of towns is increasing in a more rapid ratio than that of the country, the consuming class faster than the producing, and the first thought would find in this the promise of remunerative prices for farm products.

To make farming largely profitable the farmer must bring more thought to his business. He must learn how to grow his crops most economically, and what are the most profitable uses for them. He must seek the best markets and take measures to lower rates of transportation. He must employ