

of soil. If the soil is shallow the grass will be affected by droughts and will be brown when it should be green, hence the importance of thorough preparation. The better the soil is prepared the better the grass will grow. When the ground chosen for the lawn has been staked out and all surface stones and rubbish removed, it should be given a heavy dressing of rotted manure, and if the soil is poor it might be possible to apply some loads of good soil with manure. There is no danger of making the soil too rich. When this is done the soil should be given a deep ploughing, and then be thoroughly pulverized. A scraper will probably be necessary to grade up the ground before the final harrowing. Now comes the time when the whole household can assist. In order that the lawn should be a creditable one the surface soil should be brought into as fine condition as possible. All stones should be removed, both small and great; the clumps of soil should be broken up, pieces of sod buried where the grass will not grow again, and all holes filled up with soil. For the best effect in front, there should be a continuous, gentle, downward slope from the house to the outer edge of the proposed lawn, and this can be obtained by a judicious use of the shovel, rake and eye. No pains should be spared to make the surface of the soil smooth. Paths, and if necessary, a roadway, may now be cut out, but as the edges will no doubt be trodden on before the lawn is formed, we should advise making them about a foot narrower than they will eventually be, so that they may be cut to a desired width when a good sward has been formed. The soil is now ready for the seed, and it may be said here that the earlier in the spring the seed is sown after the soil is in condition, the better the results will be. After all the preparatory work which has been done, the prospects of a good lawn should not be marred by sowing poor seed. A few cents extra for the best seed will be repaid many times over by the results. We should not advise buying lawn mixtures. The best lawn grass is Kentucky blue grass or June grass, and this is what should be bought. As it takes some time for a thick sod to form, weeds are liable to be troublesome at first, hence a little white clover is a good thing to sow with the grass seed. This will take the place of weeds and help to thicken up the lawn. There is no danger of using too much grass seed. Three bushels per acre of seed that has a high percentage of germinating power will make a good lawn, but double that quantity is often used. White clover may be mixed with the grass seed at the rate of about ten pounds per acre. If the lawn is to occupy, say, an area of 100 by 50 feet, it would only take about six or seven pounds of grass seed and about a pound of clover seed. It should be sown broadcast and then raked in. If the seed is sown early in the spring, the soil need not be rolled after seeding, but if there is danger of the soils drying out before the seed germinates, it should be rolled with a light roller to bring the moisture to the surface and hasten the germination of the seed. If there are children about it will be necessary to define the border of the lawn in some way at first. A wire is a good thing for this purpose, but if this cannot be obtained binding twine will answer the purpose. It is necessary to have something continuous, like wire or twine, as children easily forget, and a few stakes will not stop them. The grass seed will usually germinate in a few days and grow thriftily, but the grass should not be cut the first time until it is long enough to be cut with the scythe, as if cut too soon it may be injured by the sun or dragged out of the soil. Weeds should, however, be cut off with the scythe in order that the grass may get a good chance to thicken. In order to keep a lawn in good condition, one should have a lawn mower, for once a lawn is established it will be so much appreciated that there will be a pride in making it look well.

*Planting the Home Grounds.*—While it would probably not be possible in many cases to do all the necessary planting of trees, shrubs and vines the first season, a beginning should be made, even though it be with a vine or two or a few shrubs and trees. Sometimes planting is put off from year to year because it is thought that there will not be time to do all that is in our mind, whereas, if a beginning were made and a little done each year it would be surprising how soon there would be a change in the appearance of the home surroundings.