

* The Farm. *

The Good Side of Late Snows.

Late snows are not very popular. It is quite a disappointment after Nature has put on a spring smile, and the roads have become dry, and the bluebird and robin have been seen, and we begin to think of putting in a few peas, to find some morning that there has been a revolution, and winter has upset our hopes and plans. But it is rather a generous trait to appear in defence of the accused and maligned, and especially so when disfavor is the result of misapprehension, as it certainly is in popular sentiment against light snows. Instead of being a sort of banditti, they are regular members of the corps of the seasons, and render very useful service. The old line of winter service seems to have been almost mustered out, or transferred to more distant points, and the typical winters of former times are rarely seen nowadays. Christmas is green, and January is bare. But when the vernal equinox approaches, and the conflict between the forces which are to dominate becomes more intense, then the late snows take the field, and though they are not available for sleigh-riding and pedestrianism, they are beneficial on more important lines. They are a protection to grass and grain and small fruits just at the time when the freezing and thawing process is most in vogue. The open winter does less harm in its earlier stages than it does when spring has made some advances, and the days are longer and the sun's rays stronger. And so the late snow's mantle, even if it does not last very long, is even for the time being a barrier to the adverse tendencies of sun and frost when in antagonism.

But, apart from this, there is a still more direct and efficient service rendered in the enriching qualities these snows possess. Snow is called the poor man's manure. Its action on the soil is beneficial, even if unaccompanied by other fertilizing agencies. Snow has a considerable quantity of nitrogen in its composition, which is a valuable ingredient in any soil, and the quantity is more largely contained in the snows which come late in the season. And so, while there is less poetry in these unwelcome visitors, they have their mission, and prove blessings in disguise to farm and garden.

They may also be utilized to the increased efficiency of the manure heap, and the virtues they secrete be stored away for future service. If the pile is stirred up and turned over while covered with snow its fertilizing agency, combining with the other material, will greatly increase its value. It is a good antidote to the fire fang, and the heat and moisture will soon reduce the most refractory elements in the pile to complete subjection. It is a good time to clean up around a place, gathering what dead leaves and other refuse may be accessible and at the same time soluble and working them in and over in continuous revolution. This will add bulk and volume to the mass, and the snows will hasten its decomposition. One will be surprised to find how quickly leaves and coarse matter will disintegrate under repetitions of this process, and how, by continuing it with sufficient frequency, the manure heap will be almost resolved into soil. We have tried the experiment on a small scale, with most satisfactory results.

We have been reminded of the expression of an old man whose services we frequently called into requisition in our early gardening experiences. His world was the garden, and he knew little else. He was expatiating one day on the merits of a manure heap which in his judgment met all essential conditions, and closed his encomiums by saying: "It's the prettiest stuff you ever see." His art standard had not been cultured, but from the point of view of utility there may be beauty in a manure heap and late snows may help develop it.—Ex.

Bluegrass Pasture.

Every farmer owning and working land should, if possible, have one field in bluegrass. Where the soil is suitable there is no grass that will maintain its hold on the soil like this. This kind of a pasture is slow coming to its prime, but, when once there, should not be allowed to decline or

fail. When a farmer starts to secure such a pasture on his farm he should consider it a permanent thing, and count that much land out of the rotation.

The field we now use for permanent pasture has not been ploughed for fifteen years. We allowed the bluegrass to come in naturally, and slow work it seemed at first. We kept sheep at that time, and they did not allow many patches to go to seed. And, more than this, the field always was the run for a part or all of the swine herd, and sometimes they would root up small plats. But when the sheep went off and the plats of bluegrass that had a hold were allowed to go to seed, the field sodded very rapidly. And, besides it has been our effort to strengthen this sod by feeding the hogs in such a way and with such foods that their droppings would improve the pasture.

Besides the droppings from the animals, liberal manure applications have been made. Last spring several loads of manure were scattered on the thick sod. A rich, rank growth sprang up, that was neglected by the stock during the summer. But when drouth came on, these places were the strong supply points in the field. And in fall, when frost held growth in check, and the grass was shorter on a greater part of the field, these rank places were less effected by the cold, and gave a large amount of feed late in the fall. During the late fall and winter the store stock that have the run of this field ate off this rank growth so that by spring will be eaten down even. We have found that there is much help to the grass and much profit in topdressing with manure. If uneven spreading or coarse manure smother out small spots, they soon come in with renewed strength.

In no case would we lose the benefit to be derived from a load of manure, on account of the neglect of the plat for a time over which it is scattered, by the stock. For there is always a time during the year when this rank growth becomes very acceptable to the animals.—(John M. Jamison, in Ohio Farmer.)

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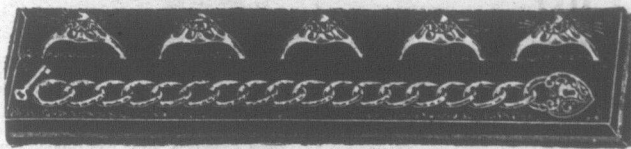
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