

## Grasses and Forage Plants.

### Orchard and Tall Meadow Grass.

Mr. W. F. Tallant, who is a man of some reputation in his own country, Montgomery, Va., thus writes on the above subjects to the *Albany Country Gentleman*:—On these two grasses the foundation of all farming should rest. As long as we have them, I do not think we should ever sow any other grasses, save possibly a little clover to mix with them, which will die out as the orchard or oat grass thickens. Orchard grass, with us, is ready to cut by the first week in June. It will grow more in one week (after cutting) than blue grass will in a month. It makes a larger aftermath, and makes it quicker, than any other grass I know of. Land will improve with a sod of orchard grass (or any other kind) on it, no matter how you treat it. It is the most profitable crop we can raise, as a general farm crop. I will try to give the reasons for my belief.

The first of June is generally the most convenient of all times for cutting hay—before wheat harvest and after planting. Timothy comes in so near wheat harvest that it is often left until that is over, when it is entirely too ripe. Orchard grass will grow more in one week than blue will in a month—I have Flunt's word for it, as well as my own experience. I have tried it on rich and poor land, and the aftermath has always been heavier (weighs more) than any other grass that I know of.

I have stated that land with a good sod on it will improve. I have never seen or heard of a sod of orchard grass that did not steadily improve, if not pastured. What I mean is, that a sod of orchard grass may be mown as often as you like, and everything removed from the ground; or it may be allowed to go to seed, and then the seed, and the grass under it, both removed, and yet the sod will continue (if all weeds are carefully kept out), to thicken, and produce more hay or seed, year by year. It is impossible for the grass to make more and more hay unless the ground is improving.

Within the last few years, several old fields have been broken up in my neighborhood, that have been neglected for twenty years or more, with cattle enough on them to eat up every blade of grass that ever got 2 inches above the ground. Blue grass sod formed over them, and so the fields remained. One of these fields brought 50 bushels of corn per acre, without manure of any kind. On the others the corn was also fine, but I do not know how much. These fields had certainly improved. That a field will improve faster when everything is mown from it than when everything is grazed from it, I know by my own experience, and any one may be convinced by trying two fields, side by side, a few years. I may mistake, but from all that I can see and learn, I am convinced that land which has a sod or grass on it will slowly but steadily improve. It will certainly not get poorer, no matter how often mown or how closely pastured.

I now come to my last statement—that orchard grass is the most profitable general farm crop we can raise. My system for its management is as follows: For hay, mow first week in June—a little sooner than most people mow. Mow again about Sept. 1. What grows after that I let stay on the ground as protection to the sod during the winter and for mulch the following summer. If I leave for seed, I cut the seed; then immediately cut the bottom for hay, leaving all that grows afterward on the ground, and never allow a hoof to be seen in my orchard grass fields. Cattle, instead of being the making of our farms, as most people imagine, are the ruin thereof. If people will keep cattle, let them soil. If I can help it, I never intend to allow another head of cattle to go out of my barn yard. Where land is worth \$50 an acre, no one can afford to keep cattle otherwise than by soiling. But to return to my orchard grass. The profit on good land is about as follows: You get one and one-half tons of hay at each cutting, making three tons per acre; with us hay is worth \$16 per ton; thus each acre brings \$45. The expense of cutting and stacking is 2.50 per ton, or 7.50 per acre, which leaves us \$37.50 per acre clear. The seed, with the hay cut immediately after, will probably

pay as well. What crop will pay so well, keep up the land, and give us as little trouble? In sowing for hay, I like to sow 2 bushels of orchard or oat grass, and one gallon of red clover. For seed, leave out the clover.

Tall meadow oat grass and orchard grass are very much alike in all respects save appearance. The oat grass, for hay, yields more, but is not quite as good in quality for seed; it makes more seed, but does not bring quite as much per bushel here. What I have said about orchard grass is equally true of tall meadow oat. I think the oat does best on poor land. Persons sowing orchard grass must not expect too large a crop the first year. Like many other grasses, it takes two or three years to come to perfection. I generally sow in March, but where the winters are not too severe, it is best to sow the last of August, or not later than the 10th of September.

### Stacking Corn-Fodder.

Considerable care is required to stack corn-fodder in such a manner as to prevent waste. It requires not only to be put up so that it is safe from the weather and the ravages of vermin, but that a part may be taken down for use without exposing the remainder to damage. In the ordinary stack the fodder is taken from the top, and when a part is removed for use the rest of the stack is left without covering. A stack built upon the ground immediately becomes the prey of innumerable rats and mice, by which it is not only cut up and destroyed to a large extent, but what is not directly destroyed is so soiled as to become almost unfit for use. Now that the value of the corn-fodder is becoming more widely recognized, means are to be taken to preserve it more



Elevated Stack for Corn-Fodder

effectively. In very rare cases is there room beneath the barn roof for it, and it is necessarily stacked out. As we have pointed out, the making of such stacks as can not be removed for use at one time is objectionable, as is also the plan of making a quantity of smaller stacks by which a much greater proportion is exposed to injury. A long stack, built in sections, which will contain the whole supply, is preferable to any other plan that we have tried. It may be built along the north side of the barn-yard, or any other exposed side, and made to serve as a valuable shelter. By setting posts in the ground, as shown in the engraving, and placing beams or poles upon them with a loose flooring of rails as a foundation, the double purpose may be served. The open bottom giving free access for air will tend to ventilate the stack, and if an opening be made, either by placing a few rails fastened together in the centre, or by placing the bundles a few inches apart in the centre, there will be no danger of the corn becoming mouldy. The posts should be dressed smoothly so that vermin can not mount them, and if they do succeed in gaining a temporary occupation it will be soon terminated if a cat is allowed to range around the premises. The space beneath such a stack may be made useful, instead of being a hiding-place for unclean beasts and for hens to lay where their eggs are lost. The stack is to be built so that the bundles of fodder do not bind length ways, and that it may be opened at one end and taken down piece-meal, as indeed it is put up. Each day's supply may then be thrown down and no part of the stack can be exposed long enough to become injured.—*American Agriculturist*.

## Implements of Husbandry.

### Take Care of Your Implements.

An intelligent farmer observed to us the other day that the amount of money he had annually to expend in purchasing new implements and repairing old ones was, to use his own phrase, "purely preposterous."

We questioned him for a few minutes and found his replies at once so candid and instructive that at the close we congratulated him on the smallness of his expenditure. He told us in the first place that whenever he was through ploughing, whatever the season, he left his plough sticking in the ground at the end of the last furrow, and there it lay until required again for use. Every plough about him, he informed us, remained in this manner out of doors all winter. The same with his harrows, scuffers, cultivators, drills, and even his mowers and reapers.

Now we know this to be a very common occurrence amongst many, we had almost said most of our farmers, and in view of the fact, instead of the expense being complained of as "preposterous" we hold that the complaint itself is utterly preposterous.

Leave a plough out under the weather for any length of time, and what will, what must be the result? Rain comes to-day and the woodwork is all swelled up—the joints literally bursting. To-morrow comes the sunshine which not only dries up the water absorbed but also corrodes and disfigures the woodwork to the inmost depth of absorption. Let this be repeated several times, and we soon have a rough, rickety, cracked affair, loose and creaking at every joint and in fact almost utterly useless. All the time too the atmosphere is rapidly oxidizing the parts exposed of the iron-work—eating deeper and deeper into it every hour. And if this is the case in spring, summer, and autumn, how much more are these injuries supplemented by the keen frosts of winter. Extend the reflection further to the larger area of the cultivator or reaper, and the injuries of course increase with the extent of surface exposed. Leading agriculturists, after long experience, assert that such a course of treatment shortens the duration of an implement by about one-half, that is to say, a reaper which would last ten years with this rough usage, would be good for twenty years if properly cared for. What then is the proper mode of treatment? It is very simple and entails but little extra trouble. Keep your implement constantly under cover when not in use, and if it happens to be wet or muddy, clean and dry it thoroughly. And again, when laying it by for the season, rub off the metal portions thoroughly and grease them; don't stint it, give them a good thick coat, and in the spring you will find your plough, mower, or whatever it is, nearly as sound and fresh as when new.

### Potato-Bug Catcher.

A novelty in shape of the above was shown at the last London Exhibition.

There was no opportunity at the time of testing it practically, and therefore we cannot say how well or ill it would perform its destined work, if indeed it would perform it at all. Still the thing looked feasible and the exhibitor declared it a most successful article.

It consists of two wooden handles, running by a wheel between them in front just like a hand-barrow. The axle of this wheel juts out beyond the shaft several inches to the right where a pinion is attached.

This pinion works into another fastened on the end of a shaft which extends backwards in the direction of the right handle but a considerable angle to it. Near the rear end of this shaft four fans are attached which revolve along with it, and just beneath the handle hangs a box in such a manner that the edges of the fans in revolving jut in very freely over its