

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. Miscellaneous.

PREPARING EXCAVATED SOIL FOR LAWN SEEDING.

A gentleman here, who, in digging a cellar under his house, put the earth on his lawn to level it up, now wishes to seed it down to grass. The earth is a gravelly clay, and is about 18 inches deep on the old sod. Would it be advisable to put manure on the soil, and work it well in, and then seed down? Would you be kind enough to suggest a treatment, and the best seed mixture for this soil?

Ans.—It would have been better to have stripped the surface soil off the lawn before adding the subsoil. It could have then been put back on top, and grass seed would have taken readily upon it. As it is, I think the best thing that can be done would be to top-dress the lawn with a few inches of good surface soil, and then seed down with a lawn-grass mixture made of equal parts, by weight, of Blue Grass, Red Top and White Dutch clover. This mixture should be used at the rate of one pound per square rod, and should be well raked into the soil and rolled, if the season is dry. I would not recommend the use of manure just before seeding down, unless the manure was thoroughly rotted, otherwise it would be likely to introduce many forms of weed seeds, which would probably start stronger than the lawn grass.

Another plan which might be adopted, if it is convenient to cover at once with surface soil, would be to give a heavy top-dressing of manure, and work it well into the soil, and keep the lawn cultivated this year, and seed down next year. This, of course, would keep it a year later in making the greensward.

O. A. C. H. L. HUTT.
IRON ROOFING AS LIGHTNING
PROTECTOR.

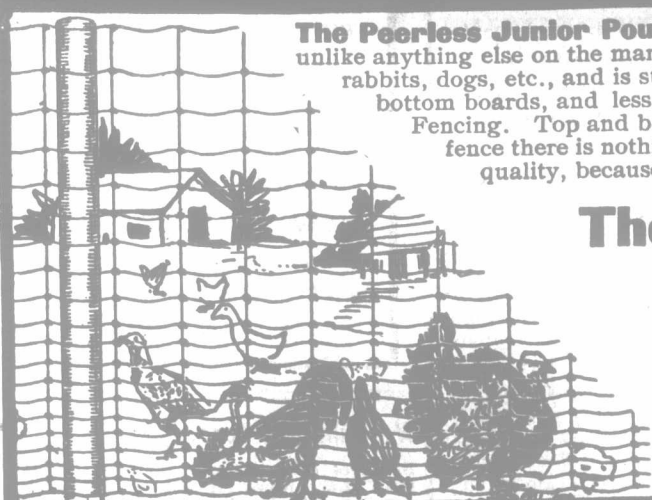
I noticed, some time ago, in your paper, a reply to an enquirer re corrugated-iron roofing. You said, I think, that it is the best lightning protection known. Now, I am fully persuaded that, for durability and looks and easy laying, it is A1; but how anybody can claim that it is lightning-proof is more than I can understand. I would be greatly pleased to have you explain, through your paper, how any kind of steel can ward off lightning.

WELL-SATISFIED READER.

Ans.—The reason that barns or other buildings are struck by lightning is that they furnish a better medium for the passage of electricity than the dry air through which it would otherwise have to pass in going from cloud to earth, or vice versa. Why barns, after being filled with new hay or grain, are especially liable to lightning stroke is, it is believed, on account of a column of moist, warm air constantly ascending from them, which is a much better conductor of electricity than the surrounding air. Wood, though a better conductor of electricity than air, is not at all good, hence the splitting and ignition which takes place when struck. Lightning protection is secured by furnishing a better medium through which the current may pass without damage; hence, the value of lightning-rods. Safety is secured, not by "warding off" as you suggest, but by conducting. The one absolutely lightning-proof building is the one entirely sheathed in sheet metal, as powder magazines are. A roof covered with sheet metal in any form is well protected if metallic connection with the damp earth is provided. By referring to our previous answer, you will notice that we said that was an essential condition for safety.

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