

FARM AND GARDEN.



Suggestions for March Work.

The American Agriculturist for Mar. 1st gives seven columns of practical hints and directions concerning work to be done on the Farm, Garden, Orchard, etc., from which we extract the following:

Barley.—Skillful management is required to succeed with this crop. Fertilizer soils are required to produce a clear, thin-skinned, bright-colored sample, such as brings the best price in the market. A friable, clean, mellow, dry limestone clay-loam is perhaps the best soil, but some lighter soils, that are warm and rich, will produce good barley. The soil must be thoroughly worked, and free from weeds. Barley should always be drilled, and the seed placed in an even depth below the surface. There is no better crop with which to sow clover.

Oats will succeed upon soils where barley would fail. A rough sod and a moist soil will grow good oats; it is the best spring crop for a reclaimed swamp or a newly broken clayey meadow. Two-and-a-half bushels of seed, per acre, is light seeding; 3 bushels, if drilled, or 3 1/2, if broadcast, is sometimes sown with good results. The thick seeding yields a finer stalk, which makes a more desirable fodder than stouter straw.

Oats and Peas, sown together, produce a very nutritious fodder. The two crops together, upon one acre of good soil, will yield nearly if not quite, as much fodder as would an acre of each sown separately. We have sown two bushels of oats and six pecks of peas to the acre. If sown early, the fodder may be cut for selling cows or horses in May or June, and a succession for continuous use may be sown every two weeks until early in May. Roll the ground after sowing, so that the crop may be cut with a mower, which may easily be done, as the oats support the peas and prevent lodging.

Clover Seed may be sown upon the snow, or when a frost has hardened the surface. One great advantage of sowing upon the snow is, that a very even spread can be made, as the seed can readily be seen, and the foot marks remain as a guide for the next broadcast. The most inexperienced need make no lapse or misses. A good quantity of seed for each cast, is as much as can be held between the first and second fingers and the thumb. Walking at an easy gait, this will use up about 3 quarts of seed per acre. If the wind is blowing, walk so that it blows across the path; the effect is then equal both going and returning, but it is not so if it blows first on the face and then on the back.

Drains.—There is no better time than the present to dig drains. The January thaw, which was very general, has filled the low ground with water, and flowing water is the best possible leveling instrument. The narrower the drain is made, so that a man can work easily in it, the cheaper may the work be done. When water is flowing in the drain, lay the tiles from the head downwards. There is no danger then of obstructing the drainage.

The Cost of Draining can hardly ever be less than it now is. Labor is very low, and those who have improvements to make, and have the money, or see their way clearly to repay it, if borrowed, could have no better opportunity than the present.

Standing Water.—A very important work is to let off any water that accumulates upon the surface. This requires constant attention, and the use of the hoe or a shovel. Whether there is a crop in the ground or not, it is equally necessary to do this thoroughly, else the soil is soaked and dries very slowly. The amount lost through water remaining upon fields, would each year buy for every farmer who permits it, a good paper and more books than he could well study in a year.

Pigs.—The high price of pork has greatly stimulated the breeding of a good class of pigs. With the prevalent diseases, which now destroy so many hogs in the West, there will be a premium for good management. It is very clear that cleanliness, and a variety of healthful food, will prevent diseases. Make a good start now, with the young pigs. Provide warm, clean pens for the brood sows, as a beginning, and so arrange that they may have a clean pasture lot to run in; not a bare, muddy piece of waste ground, but a good piece of clover or grass, in which they may procure the bulk of their food. Breed only from thoroughbred boars; keep the best stock, and keep them healthful and growing.

Poultry.—Cleanse the poultry-houses and nest-boxes from lice. We have lined our poultry house with Johns' Asbestos roofing, at a cost of a few dollars only, and there is no fear of vermin of any kind in it hereafter. The smell of carbolic acid from the tar is very strong but not disagreeable, and will thoroughly disinfect the house. Provide a warm corner in the stable for the earliest brooding hens, and give extra care to the young chicks. March and April chicks will give a plenty of eggs next winter.

Noctuid.—While we often caution against trusting to untried novelties for a main crop, there is nothing more interesting than to test and compare these. One sometimes draws a real prize, but he must be prepared for some disappointments.

Ferrous Dress.—"Is dry sugar, or candy, as good as syrup to feed in spring to stimulate breeding?" Not nearly so good. I prefer that the syrup should be quite thin. Water is as essential as sugar for brood-rearing. Do not stimulate brood-rearing too early in the spring. Under no circumstances should they be started for this purpose while in winter quarters.

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