

HOW TO HAVE A BEAUTIFUL LAWN

Begin Now Getting Land in Shape for Seeding Next Fall, Using Blue, Bent, Fescue, and Rye Grasses—In Large Part of the South, However, Be Reconciled to Bermuda—Use the Lawn Mower Anyhow

By W. C. Coker

A PERFECT lawn, as understood in our Northern and Middle states, Great Britain, and Europe generally, is a dense, homogeneous, evergreen carpet, composed of a single species of grass. Only in rare circumstances can such an ideal be fully attained, and it cannot be even approximated without good soil, water in dry periods, and constant care against the encroachment of weeds. As we are seriously handicapped by long, hot dry summers, the ownership of a good lawn in the South will never be easy, and will always be the evidence of intelligence and care.

The factors that are necessary to the making of a good lawn are:

- (1) A rich and well drained soil;
- (2) The right grass or grasses;
- (3) Water;
- (4) Care, that is, the removal of weeds, frequent mowings, top dressings, etc.

As we usually neglect all of these essential factors, it is not hard to explain our failure.

Preparation and Fertilization of Soil

TO THOSE who are willing to give their lawns the proper start and subsequent care, we suggest the following procedure; see that the soil is well-drained and all rocks, stumps, and trash are removed, and if the surface is irregular with ridges and sinks, a drag should be used to produce a perfectly level surface, or even slope. Give the area a heavy application of stable manure in the spring, at the rate of fifty two-horse wagon loads to the acre, and turn under deeply; put on a heavy application of water-slaked lime or of ground limestone, at the rate of about three tons to the acre, and harrow repeatedly with a cutaway harrow; continue this harrowing every two or three weeks during the summer. About September 15 to the first of October, add ground bone or cottonseed meal at the rate of 1,000 pounds to the acre, and harrow again, following the cutaway with a tooth harrow. After this give a finishing touch by raking by hand with a fine-tooth rake. When this is done sow, at the rate of 100 pounds per acre, a mixture of equal parts of Kentucky bluegrass, creeping bent grass, sheep fescue, and perennial rye grass, and cover with a compact cedar brush, or by raking again by hand. The rye grass will grow rapidly and will give a good effect the first winter before the other slower growing grasses make much show. The bluegrass, if adapted to the situation, will grow stronger and denser each year, while the rye grass will pretty much all disappear after two or three years. The fescue and bent grass are added in expectation that they will establish themselves in certain spots to which the bluegrass is not adapted. Neither is so good for lawns as bluegrass, and where the conditions are just right for the lat-

ter the fescue and bent grasses may be omitted.

Care of the Lawn the First Season

IN EARLY spring when the ground is not too wet run a roller over the lawn, and begin to use a mower as soon as the grass is high enough to cut. The rye grass will need cutting once or twice during the late fall. Look out for moles, and kill them. Water frequently during the first summer, and take out the weeds by hand. In October give another top-dressing of cottonseed meal or bone meal; look out for thin and poor spots, and sow more seed after scratching the surface with a rake, giving extra fertilization to these places. This will give the lawn a start. Its successful continuance will require an equal amount of attention and care.

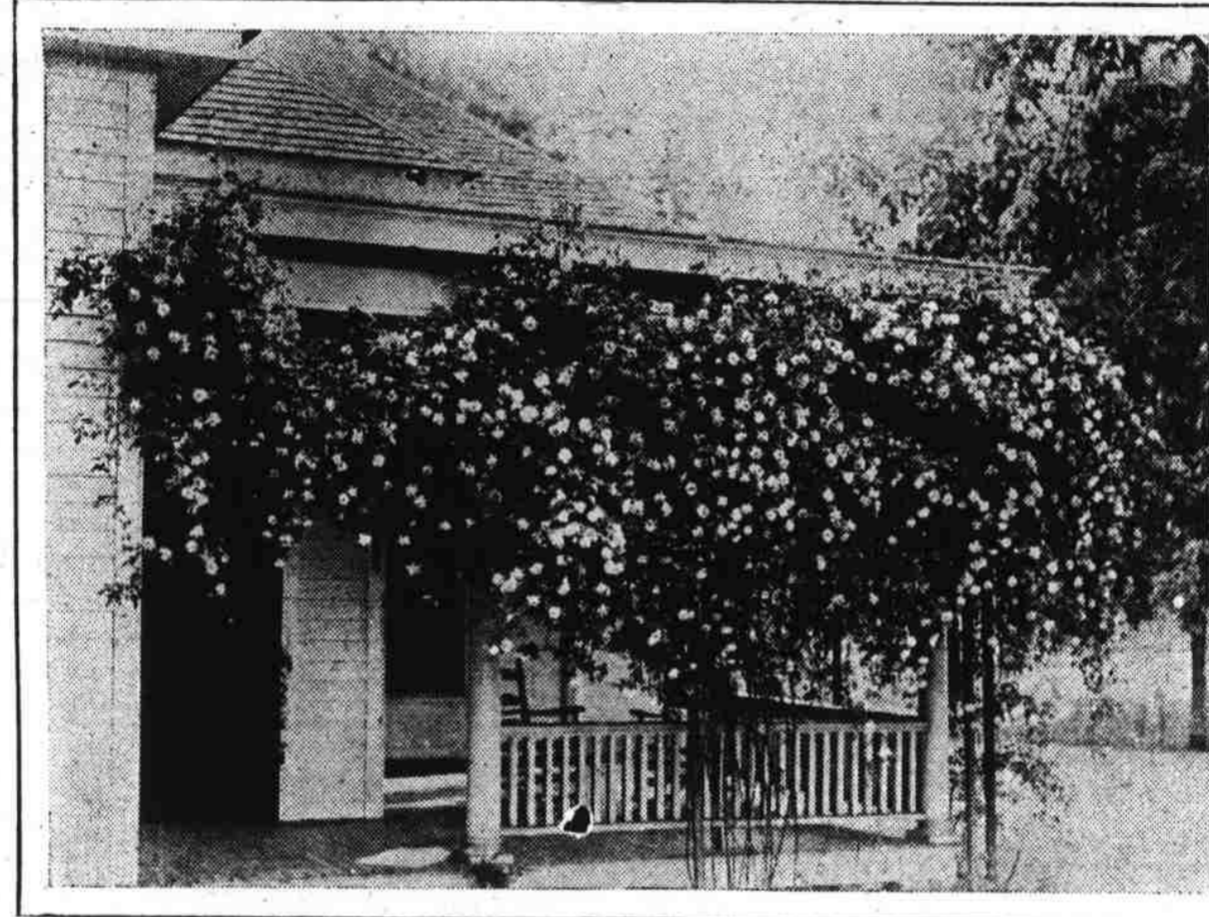
In watering the lawn do not sprinkle lightly every day, but water

to loosen up the bulbs with a long narrow mattock and lift each clump as it appears. It is also claimed that onions can be killed by squirting a half teaspoonful of crude carbolic acid down into the center of each clump with an oil can.

Dandelions are not the pest with us that they are in the North, but they become somewhat troublesome near the northern limit of our range. They should be removed with the sharp corner of a hoe, as should also the plantains and smut grass.

Bermuda Best Solution in Large Part of South

BERMUDA grass as a weed is of such a nature as to warrant special remark. Bermuda is a sun-loving plant, and in shaded lawns will not cause much trouble. But in open sunny-lawns in the South it is the exception when Bermuda does not enter and gain the mastery. In such a case the wise man will accept the decree of fate, and console himself with the thought that Bermuda will give a sod that for firmness, evenness, and duration cannot be surpassed in the South. Furthermore it has the exceedingly great advantage of not requiring water.



USING A CLIMBING ROSE TO GOOD EFFECT

thoroughly every four or five days. In large lawns it is a good plan to water a part every day, getting all over in four or five days. The amount of water necessary varies of course with soil, shade, and season, and must be determined by watching the grass.

Combating Lawn Weeds

THE worst lawn weeds are the perennial ones, certain of which are constantly appearing even in the best kept lawns. They must be watched for, and kept out by hand. The worst through nearly all of our territory are lance-leaved plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), smut grass (*Sporobolus indicus*), and the clovers. Locally, wild onions and nut grass are pestiferous.

The nut grass is almost ineradicable, and when it is thoroughly established one should proceed with the lawn exactly as if it were not present.

Onions, while very tenacious, can and should be removed. One way is

to loosen up the bulbs with a long narrow mattock and lift each clump as it appears. It is also claimed that onions can be killed by squirting a half teaspoonful of crude carbolic acid down into the center of each clump with an oil can. Dandelions are not the pest with us that they are in the North, but they become somewhat troublesome near the northern limit of our range. They should be removed with the sharp corner of a hoe, as should also the plantains and smut grass. Bermuda grass as a weed is of such a nature as to warrant special remark. Bermuda is a sun-loving plant, and in shaded lawns will not cause much trouble. But in open sunny-lawns in the South it is the exception when Bermuda does not enter and gain the mastery. In such a case the wise man will accept the decree of fate, and console himself with the thought that Bermuda will give a sod that for firmness, evenness, and duration cannot be surpassed in the South. Furthermore it has the exceedingly great advantage of not requiring water.

If You Can't Sow Special Seed, Just Mow What You Have

A WORD finally to those who think that any kind of lawn is too complicated or expensive an undertaking

for them. If you can afford a lawn mower (and one small pig will pay for it) you will have the one thing needful to improve the appearance of your home 100 per cent. Simply get rid of the sprouts and big weeds and run the mower over whatever comes. The spontaneous summer grasses, even if mixed to some extent with weeds, will soon give you a pretty, green expanse that you will be proud of when you think of the disreputable patch of smut-grass and dogfennel that you used to call your front yard. When you see this great improvement already made you will not be quite satisfied until you take down that old sagging fence and plant a hedge in its place.

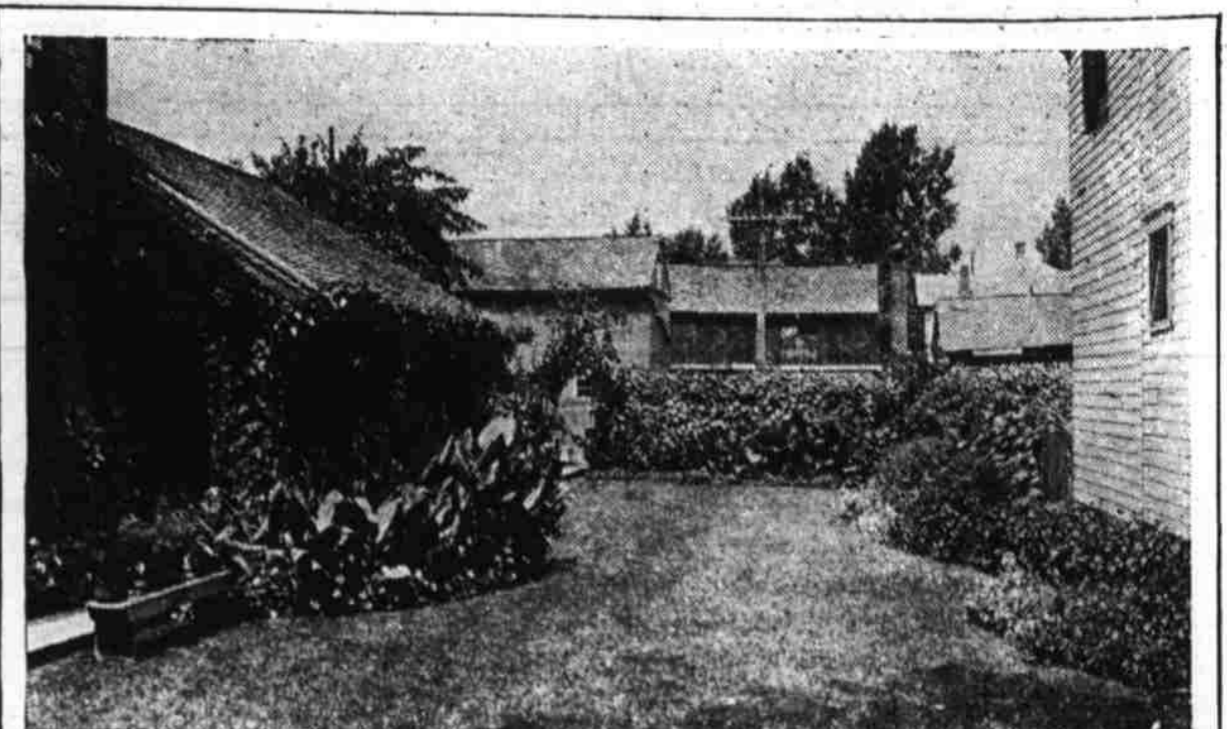
Then, as you grow in grace and in love of beauty, you will add shrubs to the corners and about the house, shape up the walks and keep them hoed, and screen the unsightly places with evergreen privets or mock orange (*Prunus carolinianus*, not osage orange, which is not evergreen). There will be joy in your heart at these transformations, and when, some day, you realize that the neighbors are trying to follow your example, your full reward will appear.

KEEP STRAY ANIMALS OUT FROM UNDER THE HOUSE

A Wall of Stones, Planks or Lattice-work Will Serve the Purpose Well, and Add Greatly to the Looks of the Place

ONE of the things that will help the looks of a house and that can be done at small cost is to plank or wall up the space from the ground to the sills underneath the house. This will add greatly to the appearance of the house and at the same time will make it more comfortable and a more sanitary place in which to live. On farms where rock is plentiful this space can be walled in with them. It will take several loads for the average house, and of course much hard work, but when completed will add much to the permanence of the house, and when viewed from the road or from the yard will give a pleasing effect. If rock is not available, it can be done very quickly and cheaply with plank or lattice, as nearly every farmer has a few plank lying around. Even old weather-beaten boards will do better than nothing, and will make a remarkable improvement in the appearance of the place.

The leaving open of this space underneath houses is one of the most noticeable and unsightly things which a person sees as he drives along the country roads. When pigs and chickens are kept and are allowed to run loose they are certain to be under the house even though they have a pen or house of their own. Now it requires much extra work to keep this space under the house clean when there is nothing to keep out the stray animals and chickens. And if not cleaned out it will soon become very filthy. This can be avoided by cleaning out once for all, seeing that water cannot run in, and planking up with board or walling up with brick or rock. MRS. W. C. WOOTEN.



BEAUTIFYING A BACK YARD—THE PICTURES TELL THE STORY