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[Courtesy of Reed-Allen Realty Co., Chicago, Ill.]

AN INTERESTING ALFALFA EXPERIENCE: A NEW WAY TO SEED.

Messrs. Editors: I note Mr. J. B. Norris's letter in your issue of June 11th in regard to seeding alfalfa.

After repeated failures, from various causes, I have at last succeeded in getting a fine yield of hay on a field never before seeded to alfalfa. After seeding a field with alfalfa alone last October, and which failed to make a stand, I had left over some alfalfa seed. Now near my residence was a long narrow strip of land badly infested with nut grass in which last spring I had set Keiffer pears. I grew a crop of sweet corn on it last year. After removing the crop I plowed and disked it thoroughly to kill down the nut grass which escaped the cultivation of the corn crop. I had given up ever getting rid of the nut grass and was ready to put anything on it to hide the pest. I seeded on this lot fifteen pounds alfalfa seed with six pounds of common red clover, trusting that one or the other, or both, would grow for a winter cover and hide the obnoxious nut grass.

Greatly to my surprise, by December 1st, I had a beautiful stand of alfalfa and clover, to all appearances the clover predominating. It remained green all winter, and this spring grew rapidly. On May 1st I cut a heavy crop about three-fourths clover; on June 5th the second cutting was ready and appeared to be about one-half alfalfa, since which last cutting it has started off finely and there is a larger proportion of alfalfa to be seen than before.

The clover averaged about twenty inches high and the alfalfa stood at least six inches higher. While the alfalfa is not quite thick enough for a permanent stand, it is very strong and healthy looking, already making eight to ten branches to the plant. Strange as it may appear, the nut grass at this date (June 15th) is not in evidence. The clover and alfalfa together is a heavy stand. Two crops have been cut, as I have indicated, and the third is coming on. The plot adjoining this

lot comprising nearly two acres seeded the same time to alfalfa alone, was a complete failure, only a few stalks standing here and there.

I have no positive reason why the plot seeded with clover should thrive, and the other fail absolutely. We can draw many conclusions, purely imaginative as to fact. My idea is that the clover

was a favorable nurse crop, sheltered the young alfalfa, assisted in the inoculation, smothered down weed and grass, kept the soil moist and generally aided and abetted in the growth of the alfalfa.

This fall (in September) I intend to seed a considerable acreage with alfalfa and clover, but shall use twenty pounds of alfalfa and five pounds of clover, seeding as before with a wheelbarrow grass seeder.

Why?

(1) I get a crop of hay by this method.

(2) If when the clover dies out and other grasses begin to run out the alfalfa, by plowing and reseeded wholly to alfalfa, I feel confident of getting a stand, for the alfalfa that has grown will no doubt inoculate the soil and afford congenial conditions of the new seeding.

(3) The plowing under of the clover and the alfalfa (if necessary) will certainly enrich the land in addition to the inoculation.

I trust that this experiment, though only in its embryo state, will prove successful and thus afford a surer means of establishing a stand of the greatest forage plant now known.

Before closing I wish to state that the plot seeded to alfalfa and clover had no fertilizer, manure or lime applied to it, all of which the field seeded to alfalfa alone was fully provided with.

The plot may be seen on my farm five miles from Portsmouth, Va., on the Western Branch.

WINDEMERE.

R. F. D. 2, Portsmouth, Va.

Painting the buildings, both the home building and barns, and the churches and school-houses as well—every farmer should resolve upon this as one of his tasks after crops are laid by. Consciously or unconsciously the neatly painted home will make its every occupant happier and brighter. Paint pays in money, beauty and in good cheer.

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