## The Farm.

### Clover Roots and Tops.

A writer in the Salem (Mass.) *Standard* relates an investigation made by him as to the comparative bulk of clover roots and tops, which will interest those who propose to use clover as a fertilizer, either by plowing under green, or as a hay crop and then by that amelioration of the soil which the roots are supposed to effect.—He says:

The value of clover turned under, or of clover sod, depends very much on the amount of vegetable matter contained therein. Some farmers have contended that the roots contain a large per cent. of vegetable matter when compared with the tops. To test this question fairly I went into a field of second crop of clover last summer, where the soil was deep, rich and loamy, with a subsoil of a like nature, so the roots could easily strike deep, and dug several stools of clover, with roots twelve inches long, tapering nearly to a point. The roots were washed carefully. The tops were measured in length (not height, for it was all lodged,) from two to three feet and over. The tops and roots were separated, and weighed in the proportion from five to one while green, and when well dried, the same. The clover, if then cut and cured, would have made 1¼ tons of hay to the acre, and as the roots were only as one to five of the tops, this would give only 500 pounds to the acre of dried roots; and as only one-eighth of this by weight is below the reach of the ordinary plow of five inches and the reach of the main body of the roots of our field crops, which is only 62½ pounds to the acre, we thus see the absurdity of the tap roots of the clover to much extent fertilzing the subsoil. The 62½ pounds below the five inches taken from the 500 pounds, the whole amount of roots, leaves but 437½ pounds of roots in the soil if dried. This estimate is for the largest growth of clover. Ordinary crops are much smaller, 320 pounds of dry roots in the soil above the depth of five inches, and 40 pounds below it, would be a fair estimate.

The first crop of clover on the land alluded to was very heavy—at least a ton to the acre more than the second crop—consequently the proportion of the roots to the tops was nine to one, provided the roots had not grown any with the growth of the second crop. It is, perhaps, about fair to suppose the clover stubbles, leaves, and hay left on the ground in gathering the crop is about equal in weight to that of the roots, or 500 pounds to the acre. This with the whole roots will make but 1,000 pounds, or half a ton to the acre of dry vegetable matter in the very best clover sod, exclusive of the humus, and while green, four times as much by weight.—Where the soil is already supplied with humus and other substances comprising a good soil, this half a ton of dry vegetable matter, or its equivalent, two tons of green matter, will, in an ordinary season, on good land, with good culture, insure seventy-five bushels of corn to the acre, or a crop of clover additional, twenty-five to thirty bushels of wheat.

### Keeping Horses on Clover Hay.

If clover is cut when in blossom, is cured without being bleached and dried to death in the sun and rain, and is stored in such a condition that it will not heat in the mow, or stack, the fodder will be of excellent quality for any sort of stock.—Touching this subject a writer in the *Country Gentleman* says: "Richard Montague, of Union Springs, N. Y., who drives the fastest horse of the place, informs us that he gives it no grain, but feeds it exclusively on clover hay, which he regards as richer food than any other kind of fodder. His horse has had no other food for the past two years. He takes care, however, to have his hay cured in the best manner, and not brown and dusty, as too frequently happens. The season for cutting is when in blossom.—He never allows the sun to shine on it more than half a day before putting it into cock; one whole day of drying would be too much. He leaves it in cock at least a week, opening the heaps two or three times, only an hour or two each time. Clover hay cured in this way, instead of being discolored and dusty, comes out in Winter fresh and green, and much resembles the condition of a box of raisins when opened. The animals devour all, and to use his own words, 'eat all the scattered leaves, and lick everything out of the manger, leaving it clean and glossy.' Everything depends on curing the hay properly."

The above though containing very important advice on the subject of curing clover hay, it will recur to every practical farmer that in attempting to leave clover hay in the cock to cure that in five cases out of every six it will be liable to be spoiled to a greater or less degree by rain. A cock of clover hay will take rain like a sponge, and once wet after being partially cured half its virtue is lost. The farmer who proposes to follow making hay of clover, to succeed in always having the best article must provide himself with a sufficient number of light canvas covers about three and a half or four feet square, with cords fastened to the corners and pegs to stick in the ground. This will secure the covers in their place and prove an effectual preventive against damage to the hay by rain. The gain in quality of the hay would much more than pay for the covers in one harvest.


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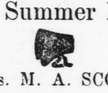
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