Farmers' Column.

Give fools their gold & knaves their power
Let fortune's bubbles rise and fall;
Who sows a field or trains a flower,
Or plants a tree, is more than all.

Agricultural Notes.

When fowls are confined in limited quarters, construct the nests so that they may be in darkness, or at least in twilight. This is acknowledged to be a preventive of egg eating.

One of the signs of improved farming is the earliness with which the grass crop is secured. It was formerly left until late, often postponed till after the grain harvest, and then got in when not worth more than an equal weight of well-cured straw.

Those who grow orchard grass should remember that it is very early. It should be cut or eaten down before the seedstalk becomes hard. Thus treated it can be cut oftener than any other grass, and when well seeded on rich ground will make an astonishing amount of feed per acre.

June is the time to prepare for the turnip crop, although the seed may be put in either in this month or in July. Probably the best turnips grown are of the July planting. They are said to grow much smoother, and are better for cooking purposes, if grown upon sward land turned over only one or two weeks before they are sown.

A good sign of the times is the increasing tendency to feed green food to hogs. This unquestionably improves the quality of the meat, and the wider introduction of the practice would contribute much to the health of the swine of this country. The American system of feeding includes altogether too much of corn and heating foods.

Fowls that have a fair run will live in summer with a surprisingly small amount of feed. They will, however, do much more damage than the cost of feeding, and unless where they can destroy more grain than they eat, will not lay many eggs on this no-feeding plan. Better feed liberally, and then even fowls left to range for themselves will do little damage.

There is probably much less difference in the rainfall now than that which prevailed when the country was new. It seems more in wet seasons now because the ground is less porous and more runs off in streams. In dry seasons it seems less for the same reason. The tests made by careful measurement of the water fall show the average of five years to be almost exactly the same as twenty or fifty years ago.

A compact seed-bed is important for wheat, but it should be made by rains and previous rolling rather than by using the roller after the grain is sown. A slightly uneven surface will prevent much of the wheat from being winter-killed. Even lumps are not injurious, provided there is enough moisture in the soil to bring the wheat up. Wheat succeeds best on clayey soil, which is always lumpy at seeding time.

There is no way to increase fertility more cheaply than by sowing clover and grass seed. Run-down farms will usually be found to have suffered from neglect of sufficient seeding. It is by growing something and letting it decay on the soil that nature restores fertility in waste places. In grass land the crop can not be entirely removed, as the sod constitutes a large part of the growth and the part most important as a fertilizer.

The orchard should be supplied with all the manure the trees can appropriate, and the trees will then be vigorous, and will show it by a good growth of wood and handsome front. When the trees do not make a free growth of wood it is certain that they are in ill condition, and need the assistance of fertilizers and cultivation; probably, also, judicious pruning, cleaning the bark, and the destruction of worms and insects.

Wheat is a crop that thrives best in a cool, moist climate. If sown too early, especially if the soil be hot and dry, the plant spires up too quickly. Besides there is danger that the seed will be covered too deeply by the undue sinking of the drill wheels in the pulverized earth. With a moist seed bed the danger of too deep a covering is obviated. It is better to wait for a late seeding by the almanac than to put the seed in the ground before the heat of summer has gone out of it.

The fact that birds destroy great quantities of insects does not point conclusively in their favor until we learn what kinds they destroy. They are insects and insects, some of them doing almost immeasurable service to the farmer and fruit grower by destroying the enemies of his crop. There is more reasons for sparing an unknown insect than there is for sparing many of the birds with whose predatory habits we are unfortunately only too well acquainted.

In some parts of England turf is annually burned, and a dressing of the ashes applied to the wheat fields before sowing. This burned earth, with the ash from roots and other vegetable matter, makes a good fertilizer for wheat. Some American farmers have tried this turf ash with good results. It can be distributed quite readily in grain drills that have a fertilizer attachment, but for wheat it should not take the place of phosphate, but be used in connection therewith.

On sandy soils potash is nearly always in demand for crops, and in some form it is valuable on heavier land. Wood ashes can no longer be had cheaply as formerly, and in many places coal has so largely taken the place of wood that there is no home production of potash. If it has to be purchased, the muriate of potash, though costing more per ton, is cheaper than the common form of German potash salts, which only averages twenty to twenty-five per cent. of pure potash.

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