

**Grass For the Lawn.**

We will suppose that the spring plantings of trees have been made with open spaces reserved for the favorite games. Now the ground can be prepared for grass seed, for it need not be trampled over any more. If certain parts have become packed and hard, they should be dug or ploughed deeply again, then harrowed and raked perfectly smooth, and all stones, big or little, taken from the surface. The seed may now be sown, and it should be of thick, fine-growing varieties, such as are employed in Central Park and other pleasure grounds. Mr. Samuel Parsons, Jun., Superintendent of Central Park, writes me: "The best grass seeds for ordinary lawns are a mixture of red-top and Kentucky blue-grass, in equal parts, with perhaps a small amount of white clover. On very sandy ground I prefer the Kentucky blue-grass, as it is very hardy and vigorous under adverse circumstances. Having sown and raked in the seed very lightly, a great advantage will be gained in passing a lawn roller over the ground. I have succeeded well in getting a good 'catch' of grass by sowing the seed with oats, which were cut and cured as hay at the time the grain was what is termed 'in the milk.' The strong and quickly growing oats make the ground green in a few days and soon cover the soil, covering grass roots. Mr. Parsons says, 'I prefer to sow the grass seed alone. As soon as the grass begins to grow with some vigor, cut it off, for this tends to thicken it and produce the velvety effect that is so beautiful.' From the very first the lawn will need weeding. The ground contains seeds of strong-growing plants, such as dock, plantain, etc., which should be taken out as fast as they appear. To me, unless it takes more than its share of space, for I always miss these little earth stars when they are absent. They intensify the sunshiny shimmering on the lawn, making one smile involuntarily when seeing them. Moreover, they awaken pleasant memories, for a childhood in which dandelions had no part is a defective experience."

In late autumn the fallen leaves should be raked carefully away, as they tend to smother the grass if permitted to lie until spring. Now comes the chief opportunity of the year, in the form of a liberal top-dressing of manure from the stable. If this is spread evenly and not too thickly in November, and the coarser remains of it raked off early in April, the results will be astonishing. A deep emerald hue will be imparted to the grass, and the frequent cuttings required will soon produce a turf that yields to the foot like a Persian rug. If the stable manure can be composted and left till thoroughly decayed, fine, and friable, all the better. If stable manure can not be obtained, Mr. Parsons recommends Mapes's fertilizer for lawns.—*E. P. Roe, in Harper's Magazine for April.*

**Pruning.**

"One of our chief aims is to form an evenly balanced, open, symmetrical head, and this can often be accomplished better by a little watchfulness during the season of growth than at any other time. If for instance, two branches start so closely together that one or the other must be removed in the spring pruning, why let the superfluous one grow at all? It is just so much wasted effort. By rubbing off the pushing bud or tender shoot the strength of the tree is thrown into the branches that we wish to remain. Thus the eye and hand of the master become to the young tree what instruction, counsel and admonition are to a growing boy, with the difference that the tree is easily and certainly managed when taken in time.

Trees left to themselves tend to form too much wood, like the grape-vine. Of course fine fruit is impossible when the head of a tree is like a thicket. The growth of unchecked branches follows the terminal bud, thus producing long naked reaches of wood devoid of fruit spurs. Therefore the need of shortening in, so that side branches may be developed. When the reader remembers that every dormant bud in early spring is a possible branch, and that even the immature buds at the axil of the leaves in early summer can be forced into immediate growth by pinching back the leading shoot, he will see how entirely the young tree is under his control. These simple facts and principles are worth far more to the intelligent man than any number of arbitrary rules as to the pruning. Reason and observation soon guide his hand in summer, or his knife in March, the season when trees are usually trimmed.

Beyond shortening in leading branches and cutting out crossing and interfering boughs, so as to keep the head symmetrical and open to light and air, the cherry does not need very much pruning. If with the lapse of years it becomes necessary to take off large limbs from any fruit-tree, the authorities recommend early June as the best season for the operation.—*E. P. Roe, in Harper's Magazine for April.*

**Two College Stories.**

Some interesting situations have come up at Harvard apropos of the enforcement of "involuntary prayers." The other day a party of four young men, with dark hair and slightly aquiline noses, picked fellows among the students, waited upon the dean of the faculty and asked to be excused from chapel in the morning, on the ground that they were Jews and had religious scruples against attending Christian services. The good doctor knew the applying students by sight only, and, as he made a memorandum of their request, casually asked their names. After he had put them down, his tablet ran something like this: Solomon Isaac Lowe, Abram Greenbaumer, Moses J. Stern, Jacob Friedberger. It struck the conservator of moral discipline that it was a little extraordinary that he had not heard of this Hebrew quartet; so, though he granted them the required leave of absence from prayers, he looked into the matter, and found, of course, that this was only another expedient of godless youth to "cut chapel."

This reminds the historian of a story of his judicature. A young collegian of his acquaintance was called up for a reprimand before his college president. He had made up a concatenation of words to explain away the misdeemeanor for which he was reproved, but his statement had not the desired effect on the professor.

"Young man," said that worthy solemnly, "is it possible that you really expect me to believe such a lot of nonsense? Can you look me in the eye and repeat what you have been saying?"

The graceless youth looked up nonchalantly, and inquired: "Which eye, sir?"—*Boston Record.*

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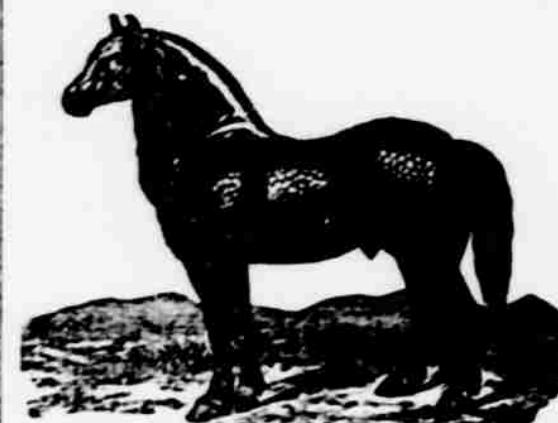
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