

well known to every farmer, and has proved particularly successful in the establishing of ryegrass and paspalum. Quite apart from the seed which may be shed, the manurial return from the hay has a very potent effect in raising the fertility, and this in turn tends to encourage the spread and development of the better species of pasture plants.

So far as the seeding aspect is concerned, however, it should be noted that the germination percentage of useful seed in hay cut at the proper time must be extremely low. When, owing to circumstances, the hay has been cut too late, the germination of the seed may be proportionately higher and may provide a very appreciable sowing. The trampling effect of the stock combined with the rise in the soil's fertility greatly assists in improving the strike, and tends to promote rapid development of the young plants.

While the practice of delaying the cutting of the hay for the sake of the

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seed cannot altogether be recommended, some farmers with ryegrass-paspalum swards have made it a practice to allow the ryegrass to ripen before cutting. By this time the young paspalum is making vigorous growth, and it is contended that the inclusion of this more than compensates for any deterioration of the ryegrass element, so that such hay not only possesses a high feeding value, but is also extremely useful for renovating the poorer areas. Whether or not this practice is desirable must obviously depend largely on the relative proportion of the ryegrass and the paspalum in the hay.

Leaving the Sowing To Nature

Under certain conditions a surface sowing can be efficiently applied by leaving the work to Nature alone. Where the sward is rather thin and the ground reasonably clean in a young pasture, excellent results are often obtained by lenient grazing, which permits the plants to produce considerable quantities of seed. This seed is

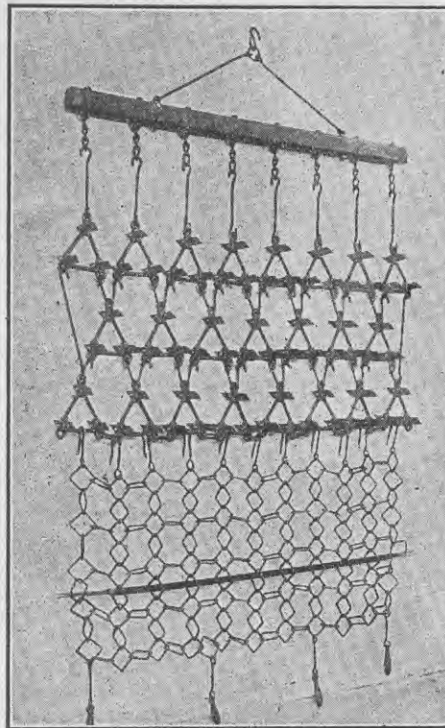
eventually shed, and readily germinates when conditions are suitable in the autumn, the shelter afforded by the rough growth of stems helping to prevent drying out and promoting speedy establishment.

This method is only to be recommended where conditions are favourable, however, and good results cannot be expected where the bulk of the seed falling is from weeds or the soil conditions are unsuited for the development of the young seeds. Needless to say, the subsequent management should be designed to encourage and establish the regeneration.

Choice of Methods

Just which of the above methods will prove most profitable must necessarily depend on the farm and on the farmer. On many farms, particularly if the area is large and the majority of the pastures poor, all these methods may usefully be employed. It must be emphasised, however, that no matter which method is adopted, the ultimate result will be largely decided by the topdressing practice and the subsequent management of the pasture.

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