

THE PEOPLE'S FORUM

These columns are dedicated to the people for the discussion of public questions or the diffusion of general information. Articles must be limited to 300 words and name of writer must accompany articles. Sectarian, Partisan or Personal Criticism is prohibited. Opinions expressed here are the expressions of the writers only, and not of the Tidings.

Possibilities of Sweet Clover.

To the Editor: Recently articles have appeared in the papers of the valley and in current magazines commenting on the possibilities of sweet clover as a forage and hay crop. The writer believes that more attention should be given this crop. Inasmuch as most of the accounts so far printed have been based on experiments and trials outside the state, some statements of local trials of this crop together with a brief statement of the habits and peculiarities of the plant may be valuable.

Sweet clover is a legume or nitrogen gatherer closely akin to alfalfa. In fact, it is the only legume that cross-inoculates with alfalfa. Being a nitrogen gatherer, it enriches the soil on which it grows in nitrogen and humus, and its great root system improves the soil by aerating and subsoiling.

Three kinds of sweet clover are common in this country: The ordinary biennial white sweet clover, which is usually meant when sweet clover is mentioned; the biennial yellow sweet clover, similar to the white variety except in color of blossom; and the annual yellow species, which is not generally recommended for forage purposes. The white sweet clover is most common in the Rogue River Valley, growing along Bear creek and other streams, in public roads, on the granite hills, on the sticky soils, and in fact anywhere that vegetation can make a foothold.

The bitter taste of the foliage of this plant and the tendency of its stems to become woody as the plant matures have caused sweet clover to be deemed of little value as anything but a bee plant, and this opinion has been confirmed, apparently, by the fact that stock do not eat it readily when other and more familiar forage is available. But the high protein content of sweet clover (13.3 per cent for sweet clover hay, according to Henry's "Feeds and Feeding"),

almost the same as alfalfa, and the discovery that stock when once induced to partake of sweet clover soon acquire a strong taste for it, has finally resulted in a complete reversal of opinion in the middle west and in sections where it was once legislated against it is now recommended by agricultural colleges and sown by hard-headed, practical farmers.

Sweet clover is commonly sown in the spring either with or without a nurse crop. The biennial varieties during their first season make a growth of from 18 to 30 inches and in addition store up in a very large root reserve plant food for a rapid and vigorous growth early the following spring. During the second season it makes a rapid stalky growth, attaining when uncut a height of 5 to 12 feet and dying after it matures seed. When cut for hay the number of cuttings in the first and second years depend so much on the soil and moisture conditions that no advance estimates of much value can be made. It is certain, however, that sweet clover is one of the most drought resistant of plants and probably would produce fair crops where alfalfa would fail.

The wonderful adaptability of this crop to various conditions gives promise that it has great possibilities in this valley on our rough hill lands that are now nonproductive. It will grow on almost any soil and make a fair crop (the writer has seen plants thriving, during the early part of the season at least, in the mortar of a brick wall several feet above the ground). It can be sown with comparatively little preparation of the soil. It is reported to reseed itself readily even though cut for hay by missing part of every third swath and allowing these plants to mature seed. It has a very high food value and does not bloat sheep and cattle to any extent like alfalfa. It will stand pasturing and under favorable conditions will cut heavy hay crops. At

the Utah Agricultural Experiment Station sweet clover made more than double the yield of any of the clovers with which it was compared. (Farmers' Bulletin 485.) At the Ontario Experiment Station over 30 tons of green feed per acre were obtained in a single season. (Farmers' Bulletin 485.) It is not difficult to eradicate from cultivated fields or meadows, but thrives persistently in waste places. It produces seed abundantly and the seed has a high value, being quoted at from \$19 to \$28 per hundred, by reference to several seed catalogues.

During the past year trials have been made at "Green Acres" to determine the palatability of this plant for all classes of stock. Green sweet clover on repeated occasions has been cut and offered to horses and hogs and invariably has been eaten with apparent relish. Sweet clover cut for hay even when too mature to make first-class hay was relished by cattle and sheep, all but the coarse stems being consumed. This stock was all fed regularly on alfalfa pasture or alfalfa hay and no attempt was made to "starve the stock to sweet clover."

Mr. D. W. Beebe of Central Point told the writer that a load of sweet clover hay placed in the corral as worthless came to be so much to the liking of his cows that they would run to it when the corral gate was opened.

Mr. M. M. Tucker of Ashland sowed two small experimental plots of sweet clover on heavy upland soil last March. One of these plots, about one-eighth acre, supplied pasture for seven lambs all summer. The other plot was used for sheep pasture and to some extent for milch cows. Mr. Tucker assured the writer that his stock ate the sweet clover readily though accustomed to alfalfa, and that the cows really seemed to prefer the sweet clover to alfalfa when given their choice of pastures. No objectionable flavor was noticed in the milk. Mr. Tucker is confident that sweet clover is a valuable crop for this country.

A good many farmers in the valley will sow sweet clover experimentally next spring. At "Green Acres" sweet clover will be given a thorough trial to determine its value as compared with alfalfa. A few acres will be sown on irrigated land formerly in alfalfa and some will be sown on unirrigated upland for a comparison with dry-land alfalfa. There seems

little doubt that this valley might resume its position as a livestock producer to the profit of everyone if advantage were taken of the adaptability of sweet clover to all soils, and our lands at present unproductive converted into sweet clover pastures.

The U. S. Bureau of Plant Industry, Washington, D. C., has published a 40-page bulletin on sweet clover, and the Ohio Experiment Station, Wooster, Ohio, has issued an even more elaborate publication, and as these sources of information are more authoritative and complete than any newspaper or magazine article can well be, any one considering sowing sweet clover should possess himself of one or the other of these bulletins. The more so as there are some special points to be given attention in seeding and handling this crop—such as treatment of hard-shelled non-germinable seed, proper preparation of the seed bed (too fine a seed bed seems to work against best results), curing the hay, reseeding, inducing stock to eat it, etc.

The statements herein are all made either on authority of the bulletins named above or on the writer's own experience. If this latter stimulates some interest in sweet clover to the ultimate benefit of the live stock industry in the Rogue River Valley its purpose will have been gained.

Yours truly,

RALPH W. ELDEN.

"Green Acres," Central Point, Ore.

Despondency Due to Indigestion.

It is not at all surprising that persons who have indigestion become discouraged and despondent. Here are a few words of hope and cheer for them by Mrs. Blanche Bowers, Indiana, Pa.: "For years my digestion was so poor that I could only eat the lightest foods. I tried everything that I heard of to get relief, but not until about a year ago when I saw Chamberlain's Tablets advertised and got a bottle of them, did I find the right treatment. I soon began to improve, and since taking a few bottles of them my digestion is fine." For sale by all dealers.

Fishy.

Knicker—Was your house robbed?
Bocker—Yes; burglars stole the plants, cat and canary just before my wife came home.—Brooklyn Life.

As a republic or democracy, Mexico indeed seems a hopeless case.

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Vacuum Theology.

A colored Baptist was exhorting. "Now, breddern and sistern, come up to de altar and' hab yo' sins washed away."

All came but one man.

"Why, Brudder Jones, don' yo' want yo' sins washed away?"

"I done had my sins washed away."

"Yo' has! Where yo' had yo' sins washed away?"

"Ober at de Methodist church."

"Ah, Brudder Jones, yo' ain't been washed; yo' jes' been dry cleaned."

—Lippincott's Magazine.

A Mere Film.

"I suppose you are mamma's darling?"

"No, ma'am, I am my mamma's moving picture."

"Your mamma's moving picture?"

"Yessum; she is always telling me that I should be seen and not heard."

—Houston Post.

Important.

Bear in mind that Chamberlain's Tablets not only move the bowels but improve the appetite and strengthen the digestion. For sale by all dealers.

The "hunger strike" is viewed as a fool joke by most people in this country and is not calculated to arouse much sympathy or support.

Remarkable Cure of Croup.

"Last winter when my little boy had croup I got him a bottle of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy. I honestly believe it saved his life," writes Mrs. J. B. Cook, Indiana, Pa. "It cut the phlegm and relieved his coughing spells. I am most grateful for what this remedy has done for him." For sale by all dealers.

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