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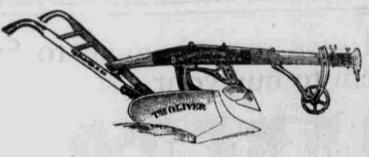
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HOME COURSE IN AGRICULTURE

IX-Weeds and How to Combat Them By C. V. GREGORY

Agricultural Division Iowa State College

against him. Among the worst problems that confront the farmarge amount of plant food is in availaale form, with pienty of moisture to and convert them into a worthless product.

Weeds may be divided into three general classes—annuals, biennials and perenutats, Annual weeds are propogated entirely by seeds and live but one year. An exception to this is found in the winter annuals, which

Among the most troublesonte are serious damage.

weeds are the foxtails. These are serious damage.

Blennial weeds live through the first Blennial weeds live through the second to need any special description. The fact that makes them so difficult to



PIG. XVII-A BUSSIAN THISTLE

combat is their great seed producing ing up fresh shoots every spring. capacity. It is not difficult to kill one formal plant, but no sooner is that blesome perennials are the Canada done than another springs up to take thistle, morning glory, wild artichoke,

tion of the land for planting. cheap operation, since so many acres can be gone over in a day. The more times a cornfield can be gone over which stick to the shovels will grow with the harrow before the corn comes up the better. In harrowing to kill weeds care should be taken not to do the work when the weather is cloudy or the ground too wet, or the weeds will be transplanted rather than killed

In regard to the value of harrowing growing corn opinions differ greatly. It is almost impossible, however, to harrow corn without destroying some of it. It is a waste of time to test the seed and planter with the idea of getting a good stand and then harrow part of it out. Unless the weeds are very bad the harrow had better be put away in the machine shed as soon as the corn begins to appear above the surface of the ground.

Thorough cultivation from the time the corn is two or three inches high until it is ready to "lay by" will do much to keep the weeds in check. The deep early cultivations will bring up the seeds that have been lying dormant at the bottom of the furrow slice. These will germinate and be killed by the later cultivations. Foxtail may grow up and go to seed after the crop gets too large to cultivate. It is often a good plan to sow rape in corn at the last cultivation. This will come up quickly and shade the ground so completely that it will prevent the growth of annual weeds almost en-

Annual weeds seldem do much damage in small grain. If the grain is drilled in on a properly prepared seed bed it will get such a start that most of the weeds will be smothered out and die for lack of plant food and light. One annual that is sometimes troublesome in grainfields is mustard. Since this weed is easily killed by cultivation it seldom goes to seed cornfields. Consequently when small grain follows corn there is little

which is sown with the oats. eradicate than those mentioned so far. than an injury. If it were not for cause of its fuzzy heads. The seeds are very light and are attached to before cultivating and thus fail to get carried for considerable distances by

the wind. an extent as to make them almost put their best efforts into producing a worthless. Mowing as soon as the waximum yield.

N attempting to produce targe heads appear will not kill the plant, crops the farmer finds that he but if kept up throughout the season many enemies working will prevent it from producing seed. In had cases about the only remedy is if these are weeds. One of the great- to plow up the field and put it in to some cultivated crop. Where a reguer is that of keeping his crops free from these pests. After a field has own and pastures is followed this been so handled and prepared that a weed can be readily kept in check. A point that must be carefully attended to in preventing the spread of this as its solve it. It is poor policy to allow well as of any other weed is to keep weeds to selze this fid and moisture the roadsides and fence corners from ruising weed seed enough each year to keep the entire farm seeded.

Another troublesome annual in some sections of the country is the Russian thistle, a form of tumbleweed. By rolling across the fields after it ripens scatters its numerous seeds very widely. These weeds are usually not come up in the fall, live through the winter as small plants and produce seed the following spring.

widely. These weeds are under so plentiful but that they can be easily destroyed by pulling before they form seed the following spring. Among the most troublesome annual from becoming thick enough to do any

> winter and produce seed the second year of their life. They die as soon as the seed is ripe. The common buil and prairie thistle and burdock are conspicuous examples of this class of weeds. Biennials are not difficult to subdue. In cultivated fields they seldom live long enough to produce seed. They seed so late that they hardly ever ripen seed in meadows. In permanent pastures they may be controlled by cutting off below the surface of the ground just at the beginning of blossoming time. Sheep and goats will rid a pasture of these and

> all other troublesome weeds.
>
> The hardest class of weeds to combat are the perennials. These do not depend entirely upon seed production to spread themselves, but are propagated by means of underground stems. These stems extend along beneath the surface of the ground, sending up stalks at short distances. They live in the soil from year to year, send-

Some of the most common and troumilkweed and quack grass. These Early fall plowing gets rid of many weeds are found on all parts of the of these weeds by turning them unfarm—in cultivated fields, in small der before the seed is ripe. Some of grain and in meadows and pastures. the seed which is ripe will grow up. The only way to kill them is to de-and the plants will be killed by the stroy the roots or starve them by prefirst freezes of winter. If the field is venting leaf growth. This is much harrowed early in the spring many of more easily said than done. Where the remaining seed can be induced to the weeds occur only in small patches start. The more weeds that come up the desired result may be accomplished at this time the better, since they will by covering them with a thick layer be killed in the subsequent prepara- of straw. In a dry season thorough There is no better implement for though it will seldom exterminate killing weeds before corn comes up them entirely. When the ground is than the harrow. Harrowing is a wet cultivation will do more to spread perennial weeds than to kill The pieces of the underground stems wherever they happen to fall and thus

start a new center of trouble. Of all the means of getting rid of perennial weeds that have been tried none is so effective as turning the field into a hog pasture. If the fields are fenced hog tight and the rotation includes the hog pasture the hogs will get a chance at all parts of the farm



FIG. XVIII-QUACK GRASS.

every four years or so. They are very fond of the roots and stems of perennial weeds, especially those of quack grass and morning glory, and they will continue to root until the last piece is brought to light and eaten. Where all the fields are not fenced hog tight a temporary pen may be used. This can be moved about over the patches of quack grass and morning glory until they are destroyed.

The weed problem is not nearly so difficult as many people believe. The mustard seed in the soil except that remedy for weeds is good farming. and when good farming becomes the There is another annual, or rather rule weeds will largely disappear. In winter annual, that is much harder to a way weeds are more of a benefit This is squirreltail grass, so called be them we would often be tempted to let the cornfield go a few days longer long beards, which cause them to be as large a crop as we might otherwise have done. It is the cultivation that the presence of the weeds forces upon Squirreltail grass is not troublesome us that makes plant food available cultivated fields, but often in and prevents the escape of capillary fests meadows and pastures to such moisture and so enables the plants to

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