4. THE FUTURE OF SWEET CLOVER IN THE CORN BELT

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I believe that it is generally agreed that the best means of judging the events and conditions of the projected future is to consider the events of the past as they may bear upon the present. Therefore, in considering the future of sweet clover it may be well to give brief consideration to the agricultural history of sweet clover to the present time.

It must be recalled that it was only a few years ago that this clover was generally considered not only worthless as a field crop but as constituting a great and growing menace to our agriculture, a foe lurking at our very gates, awaiting the unguarded moment when it might gain a foothold upon our cultivated soil, henceforth, forever to oppose its profitable cultivation.

A bulletin published by the Ohio experiment station in 1912 reporting studies made with sweet clover and consisting primarily of "summarized opinions and experiences of 1,822 Ohio farmers in regard to the agricultural value of sweet clover" probably had a greater influence than any other single experiment station activity in gaining for this plant favorable, or at least unprejudiced, consideration.

And with it all what a change has come about. Very few other crops, if any, have ever received the publicity accorded sweet clover during the past few years. Agricultural editors, county agents, extension and experiment station workers, seedsmen, and politicians alike have worked overtime to undo in a day the accumulated prejudice of the years.

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