From this, anyone would guess that Timothy could be used for winter games pitches.

**Holcus lanatus** (Yorkshire Fog): in America, known as "velvet grass", but is greatly reckoned to be a weed of turf. How it got the name Yorkshire Fog I do not know, but *holcus* is the old Latin name for a kind of grain and *lanatus* means "woolly", referring to the hairy leaves, or possibly to the softness or woolliness of the grass.

**Anthoxanthum odoratum** (Sweet Vernal): at one time included in seed mixtures for hay because of its fragrant smell. The presence of a substance called coumarin gives the plant this characteristic scent. However, it does not taste so good. *Anthoxanthum* from *anthos*, a flower, and *xanthos*, yellow; *Odoratum*, sweet-smelling.

**Festuca rubra commutata** (Chewing’s Fescue): a Mr Chewings first sold this seed in New Zealand. Although this is considered to be one of the first grasses for turf purposes, it is interesting that *Festuca* is the old Latin name for a weedy grass (probably not much good for sheep or goats!). *Rubra*, red, describing the colour of the spikelets, and *commutata*, change or alteration. The varietal name of this grass until recent years was *Fallax*—a Latin word meaning deceitful or false, so it would suggest that it is hard to pin down!

**Deschampsia flexuosa** (Wavy Hair Grass): this is named after a French naturalist, Mr M. H. Deschamps; *flexuosa*, wavy, a good description of the flowering branches.

**Nardus stricta** (Moor Mat grass): the leaves of this species are very hard and brittle, with a lot of vegetative shoots closely packed on short rhizomes. *Nardus*, from *nardos* the Greek name of an aromatic Indian plant, and *stricta*, constricted, referring to the shoots packed together.

Incidentally, I like my own botanical name, *crataegus*. The common name Haw means hedge, referring to its use in hedgemaking.

But *crataegus* comes from the Greek *Kratos*, increasing toughness with age.

I may not be so tough as I used to be, but I like to think I am!

*With grateful acknowledgements to the “Groundsman.”*