Farm Crop Queries

Conducted by Professor Henry G. Bell

The object of this department is to place at the service of our farm readers the advice of an acknowledged authority on all subjects pertaining to soils and crops.

Address all questions to Professor Henry G. Bell, in care of The Wilson Publishing Company, Limited, Toronto, and answers will appear in this column in the order in which they are received. When writing kindly mention this paper. As space is limited it is advisable where immediate reply is necessary that a stamped and addressed envelope be enclosed with the question, when the answer will be mailed direct.

M. R.:—1. What will destroy ox-eyed daisies? 2. Will red clover make good ensilage?

Answer—Ox-eyed daisies are destroyed by constant cultivation. . .If your meadow is full of this weed you had better plow it up and plant a hoed crop such as potatoes, roots or corn for a couple of years. The cultivation of these crops will kill out the weed. 2. Red clover cut for ensilage makes fair quality feed. My own experience with clover mixed with corn in the silo has not been entirely satisfactory, but I have within a couple of months seen clover which had been ensiled, coming out in good shape. There is a question of farm chemistry involved which does not entirely favor the use of clover in the silo. Clover is especially valuable as a hay on account of the high per cent. of protein it contains. When the crop is put in the silo the fermentation which goes on in the silo breaks down its protein and largely destroys its flesh producing power. It is therefore economical to make hay out of clover and to put corn in the silo.

S. G.:—1. I have a few acres of rather heavy marsh land, would this grow barley successfully? What variety, when and how much should be sown for the best results? Is barley straw good for feed as oat straw? Is millet good feed for dairy cows?

Answer—Your marsh land would grow any grain or other crop much better if it were possible for you to open surface drains and carry off as much water as possible. Barley is possibly the best small grain crop you can use on it. The bacterial life of the cold marsh soil will be slow in spring. I would therefore recommend that when seeding barley you add a fertilizer high in phosphoric acid in order to hasten the growth and produce well matured grain. O. A.C. No. 21 barley is probably the strongest strawed variety and well among the high yielders grown in Ontario Barley should be sown as soon as the ground is worked in the spring and at the rate of about a bushel and a half per acre. Barley straw is not as rich in protein as oats, but it is richer in carbo-hydrates. Millet hay is not especially good for dairy cattle. It is comparatively low in protein therefore not over six to eight lbs. should be fed daily.

R. R.:—I am thinking of making a silo. What is the best grain to use? Is oats any good?

Answer—I would not recommend anything for silage except corn. For reasons outlined in answer to question No. 1 it is not very economical to put clover or other legumes in the silo. I have never heard of oats being ensiled.

Why Corn Yields are Low.

Growing corn under conditions to which it is not adapted is the principal reason for low average yields. Other reasons why the yield is low are the decrease in soil fertility and the failure on part of the grower to rotate crops properly.

The only time when it is desirable to change seed is when an inferior variety of corn has been grown or where a person has made no effort to select the seed properly year after year. In these cases it will pay to secure good seed from a person nearby who properly selects his seed, provided the soil conditions of the two farms are similar. If, for some reason, home-grown seed is not in good vitality or of good quality, better results can be obtained by securing first-class seed grown as near home, and under conditions as nearly like those under which it will be planted, as possible.

Every person should select and save his own seed, as the corn which was grown on his farm is likely to be better suited for planting there than that grown elsewhere. Many persons, however, would rather buy seed than go to the trouble of properly selecting and saving it.

For this reason there will always be an opportunity in every locality for one or more persons who are capable of producing good seed corn to build up a local trade, and thus dispose of a part of their crop at seed-corn prices. The community seed-corn grower or breeder not only would be engaged in a profitable business for himself, but would also furnish an opportunity for others in his locality to obtain seed suitable for growing on their farms.

Seasonal conditions are regarded by many corn growers as dominant factors in growing corn. These conditions vary so greatly from year to year that no one method of seed-bed preparation, planting, or cultivation of corn will consistently give better yields than every other method. The person who by the exercise of good judgement uses methods of tillage that meet the seasonal conditions to greatest advantage is the one who, on the average, is the most successful.

The critical period in the growth of corn is in July and August, and during these months drought and hot winds may destroy in a few days the accumulated benefits derived from thorough work in preparing the seed bed and caring for the corn during the early part of the season.

Often, because of drought during the latter stage of the growth of the corn, that which has the greatest capacity to yield is, because of the greater capacity to yield is, because of the greater development of foliage, the first to dry up.

On the other hand, corn that has made a smaller growth because of poor cultural methods survives the drought and also produces the greatest yield of grain.

The person who consistently practices methods that conserve moisture and develop plant food, and who plants his crop opportunely, will, however, obtain the best average yields for a period of years.

Start The Boy Right.

The boys who are just growing up to High School age are likely to attain manhood in the midst of the period following the close of this war, assuming that it is to be won within the next four or five years. Conditions surrounding these boys will be much more serious and difficult to cope with than conditions which surround the men of to-day at a corresponding age. The world is already crying out for big, capable men, and humanity is humiliated to find how many are only mediocre. The meaning of this to you, the father of a boy on the farm, is that you must give your boy the best kind of opportunity. You want him to be a better man than you are. Do not waste his valuable time in these growing, learning years, with scrub live stock, with mongrel seed corn, with commonplace stuff which might as well be the best.

A Good Road.

I am the road
That carries the load
From countryside to town.
If you dr a etgerumidm-n-8jsviddv.n
If you drag me true
I will pull for you,
And never mire you down.

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INTERNATIONAL LESSON AUGUST 25.

Lesson VIII. Christian Testimony—Acts 1. 8; Matt. 10. 27-33; James 1. 26, 27. Golden Text, Luke 12. 8.

Acts 1. 8

Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth—The gift of the Holy Spirit was to enable the disciples to spread the great news. They were to testify of the things they had seen and heard and the results in their own consciousness or experience. They were sometimes horribly persecuted because of their witnessing and often sealed their testimony with their blood.

Matt. 10 27-33

Verse 27. Speak ye in the light . . . . proclaim upon the house-tops—In the previous verse Jesus exhorts his disciples not to fear those who will persecute them but to remember that there can be no ultimate concealment of truth—it must come forth. What is taught in the darkness of private communication is to be made known in the light of the whole world, and what is whispered is to be shouted from the tops of the houses.

28. Be not afraid of them that kill the body—Danger of physical injury and even death itself must not halt the message. The most extreme sacrifice must be ventured rather than give up loyalty to the truth. Not able to kill the soul—No bodily injury can touch the real self, the inner life of the spirit. Christian history is full of noble examples in illustration where men have died gloriously rather than surrender their convictions. Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell—Which may mean either (1) God, whose power extends beyond this life, or (2) Satan, into whose power the wicked surrender themselves.

29-31. Two sparrows sold for a penny? . . . . ye are of more value than many sparrows—The word "sparrow" may mean any small bird. The teaching is that human life is more precious in God's sight than the life of the lower animals, and that kindness to animals is part of God's law.

32, 33. Who shall confess me . . . whosoever shall deny me—Literally, "confess in me"—"make me the central point and object of his confession." One of the earliest names for a Christian was "confessor," because of his bearing witness to Christ. This confession was not a mere verbal assertion but much rather the testimony of the life as well, as Jesus clearly states in Matt. 7, 21, 22: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you."

James 1. 26, 27

26. If any man thinketh himself to be religious—These verses are the conclusion of the intensely practical and ethical discussion of the relation between faith and works. We have here a terse and remarkable clear defination of true religion. According to James true religion consists in mastery—"bridleth not his tongue." It is by the tongue that men particularly express themselves, and if a man has an unruly tongue it is quite clear that the rest of his nature is unbridled. The first evidence, therefore, that a man is truly religious is that he has control of himself. A religion that does not produce this result is a sham religion "This man's religion is vain." It is a fraud. The second evidence of true religion is philanthropy—"Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." A religion that does not reach out to help the needy and bring forth deeds of mercy and help is woefully lacking in the spirit of Christ. The third evidence of genuine religion is sanctity—"keep oneself unspoted from the world." What sort of a "world" is it that "spots" a man? Not the world of nature, not the world of art, science, or literature; not the world of folks; but it is the world which John himself calls "the lust of the flesh; the dust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life."

Important Things in Success.

The work of the young man until he leaves college has been that of getting an education. There are, however, three by-products of this process of getting an education any one of which for success in life, is more important than the education itself. These by-products are: Common sense, character and integrity.

Common sense is the ability to decide as to the relative importance of things—the ability to select from among the several possible lines of action which lie before you the one act which is best, the one act which will yield the largest return.

Character is the ability to control yourself, body and mind; the ability to do those things which your common sense tells you you ought to do; the ability, above all, to do things which are disagreeable, which you do not like. It takes but little character to do difficult things if you like them. It takes a lot of character to do things which are tiresome, monotonous and unpleasant.

By integrity I do not mean merely the kind of integrity which will keep a man out of jail. I mean that straightforward honesty of purpose which makes a man truthful, not only to others but with himself, which makes a man high-minded, gives him high aspirations and high ideals.

A Child's Fancy.

O little flowers, you love me so,
You could not do without me;
O little birds, that come and go,
You sing sweet songs about me;
O little moss, observed by few,
That round the tree is creeping,
You like my head to rest on you,
When I am idly sleeping.

O rushes by the river side,
You bow when I come near you;
O fish, you leap about with pride,
Because you think I hear you;
O river, you shine clear and bright,
To tempt me to look in you;
O water lilies, pure and white,
You hope that I shall win you.

O pretty things, you love me so,
I see I must not leave you;
You'd find it very dull, I know,
I should not like to grieve you
Don't wrinkle up, you silly moss;
My flowers, you need not shiver;
My little buds, don't look so cross;
Don't talk so loud, my river.

Care of the Window and Door Screens

Quite often too little attention is given to the window and door screens, and therefore the screening of the house is quite an item, which if the proper care be given them they can be made to last several seasons.

They should be given a coat of paint when brought into use in the spring. A little linseed oil placed on a rag and the wire screens rubbed thoroughly on both sides with it, several times during the summer and again when the screens are removed and stored away for the winter, will be found sufficient to preserve and keep them from becoming rusty.

It is also necessary to give the frames a coat of paint or varnish in order to preserve them. They should if possible be stored in a dry place when not in use. A great deal of annoyance will be avoided and many dollars will be saved if screen doors and windows are thus cared for.

WHERE SILENCE IS IMPERATIVE

I told you that in strictest confidence," John stormed angrily, "and now everybody in the neighborhood knows I want Old Baxter's farm. If someone doesn't buy it before he hears about it and then raise the price on me, he'll hear it himself and I'll have to pay $20 an acre more. Why didn't you keep it to yourself?"

"But I only told one person," Grace protested. "I just happened to mention to Minnie Snelling that you'd like to own it. I never said you intended to buy it."

"Minnie Snelling!" John snorted. "You might just as well have written it up for the country paper, and you know it. You 'just happened to mention it to her and she 'just happened' to stop at every farm from here to town and tell 'em John Ludlow was going to buy old Baxter's farm. I'll keep things to myself after this. If a man can't trust his own wife who on earth can he trust?" And with a bang of the door that shook a plate off the pantry shelf, John stalked off to the barn.

"Ugly old brute," Grace exploded as she picked up the remains of her favorite plate and put them in the rubbish basket "It's too bad he can't trust his wife! I didn't tell Minnie he was going to try to get the old farm. I just said he'd like to own it. I'd like to own a limousine and a baby grand, but I don't exepct to so long as I live with an old miser like him that only thinks of buying farms. I'm glad I did tell and he can't get the old ranch. Just that much more hard work and another hired man to humor. I'll tell anything I please. I'm no child to be told to sit down in a corner and keep quiet." And with this resolution Grace began to slam dishes into the pan as a means of working off the storm.

Dinner found John still silent and moody, still chewing the cud of his wrath and disappointment. Grace made one or two attempts at conversation but not being met half-way, loftily tossed her head and pretended to be absorbed in pleasing thoughts. John needn't think he could lord it over her that way. She could be just as independent as he was. Suppose he didn't like her telling. He might have been a gentleman. Plenty of wives told more important things than that and their husbands never scolded and took on like tyrants.

But when days rolled into weeks and John still stuck to his policy of keeping his own counsel, Grace's faith in the absolute right of her own course began to waver. They had always talked everything over, and she missed the comradeship. John no longer sulked, he could not remain bad-tempered if he tried. He was once more whistling and joking, and willing to talk about the war in Europe. But when it came to personal affairs he kept a stubborn silence. Grace was at first amused. John thought he would teach her a lesson, she smiled to herself, the day he brought home a tractor without telling her he intended to buy one. But when the purchase of the tractor was followed by the building of new cement walks and a watering trough at the barn, her amusement turned into dismay. If John had so much money to spend, why didn't she know about it? She had always known before when things were to be bought or improvements to be made. There were no end of things she wanted, if money was so plentiful. Surely John could not have been serious when he made that silly threat to keep things to himself?

If he were not serious, John proved that at least he meant to give the plan a thorough trial . The finishing touch came when he walked in one day and tossed a legal document into Grace's lap. She took it up wonderingly and found it to be the deed for the Baxter farm.

"Why didn't you tell me you were going to buy this?" she demanded. "I think when it's a question of more work and a big outlay of money I might at least be consulted."

"I didn't tell you because I wanted to get it at as low a figure as possible," John replied. "I told you some months ago I'd like to get it, and woke up next morning to find everybody knew I was going to try to buy it. Next time I drove by there the old man ambled out and told me his 'figger' was $125 an acre. I told him he could probably get it if he waited for someone who didn't know how it was run down, and drove on. Last week he offered it to me for $100 an acre cash, and finally agreed to take a $1,000 payment and a land contract for the balance. By keeping my mouth shut I got what I wanted."

"But I wouldn't have told if I had thougth it was anything important," Grace said. "I never tell anything I know matters."

"Everything personal is important between man and wife," John came back. "Neither one has any business to tell things they talk over at home. They don't know how the next one is going to twist things, nor how the story is going to sound when the neighborhood gets through with it."

"Well, you needn't have jumped on me the way you did," Grace protested. "A body would have thought I had cimmitted the unpardonable sin. Lots of wives tell more important things and their husbands don't row them."

"No, nor they never trust them again," John said. "They just shut up like clams, and their wives never know what's the matter nor why they never talk things over any more. I could have done that and been a gentleman, but I thought I'd rather let you know where I stood. Then if you understood, we could keep on as partners. If you didn't want to reform. I would still have a chance of keeping still in the future."

"Yes, but you did both," Grace objected. "You made a terrible fuss about it and then you never told me anything any more either."

"Well, you acted as though you were perfectly right, and didn't care a mite what I wanted, so I thought I'd be just as independent as you were," said John. "Now we've both acted like a couple of children, let's be good and start over again. I'm just busting for someone to talk to."

"I'll sure be glad to know when there is any money to spend," Grace conceded. "I know a dozen ways to spend a ten dollar bill right now. And honest, I didn't tell Min you were going to buy the old farm. I just said you'd like to own it. I might have known, though, she'd jump at a chance to gossip."

"Well, it's over now and we've got the farm," said John. "So let's forget it. How about a bite to eat to bind this new agreement?"

"'After violent emotion, most people and all boys demand food.'" quoted Grace. "The person who said that must have known you. There's a half a lemon pie—" but john was already in the pantry.

A dedicated House.

Dedications usually are associated with churches and temples, but the writer knows of a new house which was formally dedicated and set aside for its great purpose of providing a roof-tree for a family.

In the newel post of the raftered hall there was deposited a box containing an account of the building, its cost, time of construction, the fact that its erection was the fulfillment of a boyhood aspiration, the history of the builder's family, their pictures, and a message in a few strong words to the descendant or whoever should open the box at some far future time.

When the post was ready to set, the builder gathered his family together, and after a prayer that the Master Builder might approve of this house, the record was read aloud, then a magnificent tenor voice broke forth in a song of praise and thanksgiving, after which a little child placed the box in the newel post and with the reciting of part of the "Hanging of the Crane" the house had received its hallowing ceremony.

The builder, as a little boy, dreamed of a gray stone mansion "all his own," and through the struggle of youth and manhood the ideal held, but it was not until middle life that the opportunity came of its realization.

The planning an derection of the building had been a labor of love, as stone by stone it grew, visualizing the hope of years. The well-chosen site, with outlook across a broad river, beyond which showed blue mountains broken here and there by rugged gaps, formed a pleasing change from the wide, sweeping prairies of the region in which the builder spent many of the years during which he had accumulated the fortune which made possible the undertaking.

The builder felt that a house was almost as holy a place as a temple, and on the completion of the longed for structure planned this little service as an expression of thankfulness, joy and belief in the sancity of a building destined to house a human family and to form that which we call "home," although poets have spoken of it as "heaven upon earth."

The Bridal Color

The choice of white for wedding gowns is really of comparatively modern origin. The Roman brides wore yellow, and in most Eastern countries pink is the bridal color. During the Middle Ages and in the Renaissance period brides wore crimson, to the exclusion of all other colors. Most of the Plantagenet and Tudor queens were married in that vivid hue which is still popular in parts of Brittany, where the bride is usually dressed in crimson brocade. It was Mary Stuart who first changed the color of the bridal garments. At her marriage with Francis the Second of France in 1558, which took place not before the altar but before the great doors of Notre-Dame,she was gowned in white brocade, with a train of pale blue Fers,an velvet six yards in length. This innovation caused a great stir in the fashionable world at that time. It was not, however, until quite at the end of the seventeenth century that pure white—the color worn by royal widows—became popular for bridal garments.

Use Brown Sugar.

Have you tried brown sugar in your preserves? The most astute housewife can detect no shade of difference between it and ordinary white sugar.

There are three grades of brown sugar, generally classified as bright, yellow and dark yellow. They contain from 7 to 10 per cent. less sucrose than refined sugar but they have in addition, from 4 to 8 per cent. of invert sugar, which has a sweeter taste than cane sugar and is the sugar found in honey, molasses and fruits.

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