FARMING

In this department each week will be given general information to farmers and stockmen. No attempt will be made to criticize the work already being done by Canadian farmers; but an effort will be made to present to the farmers of the country summarized information contained in government reports, and the actual experiences of men and women who have achieved success in farming by following modern methods. Farmers who have found new "wrinkles" or have made a success in any special line of agriculture are invited to send short letters to this paper giving their experiences, or criticizing any of the information contained in these columns.

Vegetable Growing

MUSKMELONS.

Muskmelons are grown extensively in the warmer counties of the province, particularly for the early market. The muskmelon has become more popular since introducing a melon of the small type. The large melons in many cases have none of the superior flavor which has been secured in many of the small type varieties.

Growing Plants.

For securing early plants the seed should be sown in hotbeds or greenhouses five weeks before the plants can be transplanted into the field. In many cases the seed is sown in two-inch pots. One plant is grown to a pot, although two or more seeds are sown, in order to secure a strong plant. When the roots fill the pot the plant should be transplanted to a four-inch pot or an ordinary strawberry basket. The soil in these pots should be very rich, and should contain considerable sand. Some growers place an inch or an inch and a-half of well-rotted manure in the bottom of the pot. The plants should be grown in a warm atmosphere and should never be overwatered. Considerable care is necessary to grow good, stocky plants which will bear early fruit. Another method commonly used is that of planting several seeds in a piece of sod four inches square, the grass side being turned down. The sods are laid close together in a hotbed or garden flat, and plants and sod are transplanted to field as soon as weather is suitable.

Soil.

Melons thrive best on sandy land which has large quantities of manure well worked into it. It must be well drained, and a soil which warms up early in the spring. A sheltered southern slope is the ideal location for this crop. Heavy soils will not give a good crop of melons of first-class flavor unless by the addition of quantities of manure it has been made very porous and to possess abundant plant food.

Planting.

Following the method described, the melon plants should be set at a distance of six feet each way. All earth around the roots should be planted in the furrow. For planting in districts where late spring frosts often occur the melons are often grown in frames, having sash for covering at night. In this way two melon vines are grown to each sash, the hills being placed at either end of the frame. Another system which is followed by some growers is that of digging a trench 14 to 16 inches in diameter. This is filled with ten inches of fresh horse manure, four inches of soil are added, and the melon plant, or even seeds of the melon, are placed in this. A small frame, to accommodate one light of 10 x 12 glass, is placed over this hill, and is in reality a miniature hotbed, and should be handled similarly, with the exception of watering. It is advisable to keep the glass on during the night until all danger of frost is over. This small forcer will help the seed to germinate quickly, and will keep the plants growing rapidly. No water should be given in growing plants after this method. Seeds are often sown in hills six feet apart each way in the field. This should be done when the season is well advanced and warm weather is assured. Usually five or six seeds are planted to the hill, depending on the germination, and only one strong plant left to a hill. A spent hotbed can be used for growing extra fine melons, the rotted manure making an excellent feeding ground for the roots.

Cultivation.

Melons should be carefully cultivated in the field with a horse cultivator and with a hand hoe. This should be done every week as long as the vines will permit. Keeping a fine mulch on the surface of the soil is necessary to keep the melons growing rapidly. While hand hoeing it is generally a good practice to draw a little earth up around the plants during the young stages of growth. This gives the melons a stronger stem and affords stronger anchorage for the plants. It is imperative that while cultivating the vines they should not be moved in any way, as considerable damage will result.

Watering.

It is not advisable to water melon plants. Usually the plants can secure sufficient moisture from the soil if careful cultivation of the soil is carried on during the growing season.

Handling.

It is advisable, when possible, to turn the melons several times while they are growing. This could not be carried on economically on a large scale, but where only a few melons are grown, the quality of the resulting fruit will be superior if the melon is not allowed to mature on one side. A shingle placed under each melon will prevent any discoloration on the side of the melon.

Harvesting and Marketing.

For immediate sale or use the melons should be gathered when the stem separates from the melon with slight pressure from the thumb. For shipping purposes they have to be gathered somewhat earlier and in a green state. They ripen during shipment, but lose the flavor characteristic of a melon allowed to ripen on the vine.

For local market muskmelons are sold in bulk, being drawn in in wagons or in large boxes.

For shipping the melons are graded as to size and shipped in various carriers. Some use slat crates, others large wicker baskets lined with hay, and others ordinary 11-quart basket with a slat top. It is imperative that the carrier be so made that there will be plenty of air space around the melons, for they will soon commence to decompose if otherwise shipped.

SIXTY-FOUR MILLIONS FOR SOLDIER FARMERS

Land Settlement Board Has Approved Applications From Nearly 40,000 Men.

The latest figures of the operations of the Soldiers' Settlement Board of Canada show the following results:

Total loans approved, $64,585,098, for the following purposes:

Land Purchase—		
Amount for purchase	$35,321,708	
Amount for improvements	4,752,291	
Amount for stock and equipment	14,221,904	
		$54,295,903
Charges on Dominion Lands—		
Amount for improvements	$ 1,628,952	
Amount for S. & E.	4,542,396	
		$ 6,171,348
Mortgages on privately owned lands:		
Amount for removal of encumbrances	$ 1,930,884	
Amount for improvements	708,499	
Amount for S. & E.	1,478,464	
		$ 4,117,847
		$64,585,098

Number of loans approved, 24,894.
Average loan, $3,945.

The Agricultural Branch has received 51,877 applications for qualification certificates and of these 38,157 were approved from the following provinces:—

British Columbia	4,667
Alberta	10,453
Saskatchewan	9,610
Manitoba	6,639
Ontario	3,525
Quebec	1,063
New Brunswick	979
Nova Scotia	779
P. E. I.	442
	38,157

The Board also reports a total of 6,886 Soldier Grant Entries. This means an acreage of approximately 1,600,000.

KEEP MOTHERLESS CHICKS BUSY.

A keen poultry observer will tell you that a mother hen is always busy keeping her family on the move all day long, excepting for short periods of rest. Evidently she knows her business, because she usually has raised a very vigorous family by the time they are ready to shift for themselves. Undoubtedly the feed and the way it is fed is the cause of more bother than any other one single factor. Many mistakes are continually made along these lines, due to a lack of information or to the careless application of the same. A chick hatched in an incubator should develop in a normal way if the machine is properly run. He should come from the shell just as naturally and just as strong as if the mother hen had done the hatching. But to keep him strong and vigorous is the big problem of the feeder.

PIGS THAT PAY.

In olden times the pig was regarded as the one animal on the farm that thrived in filth. It was a mistaken idea on the part of a past generation, but, unfortunately, it has in many cases survived to the twentieth century. The pig is quite a clean beast, and thrives where hygiene and ordinary cleanliness prevail. It is, indeed, unnecessary to preach that doctrine today, for the modern piggery is usually built with the object of keepng disease that might be harbored by dirty surroundings and bad drainage at arm's length. We are looking for pigs that graze well and forage for a living, not too much given to rooting, but active, the bearers of good litters, and capable of suckling ten lusty "brats" when the occasion demands. There are so many different purposes in pig-breeding that we need all the pure races we can get, for the pig that will graze well and stand the sun there is a large call. The breed that porks well and is turned off at a handy weight in a hurry has many supporters. Then there is the baconer, with his light jowl and fore end, his long sides and good hams. These are the three classes of pigs that are wanted, and, be it noted, that size must not be sacrificed in the race for quality. Daily gain in live weight is not a thing that the practical man is disposed to overlook.

"An optimist is a man who cherishes vain hopes, and a pessimist a man who nurses vain regrets."

"And what is a man who does both?"

"Oh, he's just a plain ordinary human."

JUST BOOKS

BY ELINOR MURRAY.

Registered According to the Copyright Act.

The most guessed-about and talked-about of coming books is the autobiography which Mrs. Asquith, wife of the Liberal ex-Premier, is now actively writing under a contract with one of London's newest and most adventurous publishers, Thornton Butterworth. Yet, of all the statements made about it, not one has been authorized, and few have been correct. I am able, on absolute authority, to give the truth of the matter.

Mrs. Asquith, who was Miss Margot Tennant before her marriage, has now a lifetime of exceptional memories to draw upon, and for many years she has been urged by her intimate friends to write of the world in which she has shone with a piquant and wholly individual light. Mrs. Asquith, as the wife of her husband, has, of course, met countless interesting and distinguished men and women, and she has enjoyed the special friendship of Tennyson, Gladstone, Arthur James Balfour, Lord Morley and many others. But all this might be said of others. The special interest of Mrs. Asquith's forthcoming book, and the restless curiosity it excites, are due to the well understood fact that adventures are to the adventurous in social intercourse as everywhere else, and Mrs. Asquith has always been adventurous, provocative, magnetic, original. And, as she has given, so she has received.

Yet she has been slow to take up her pen in this enterprise. One of her most ardent persuaders thereto has been Mr. Balfour, who was vastly content when, last November, he met Mrs. Asquith at Buckingham Palace, on the occasion of the reception of the Shah of Persia, and was told by her that she was taking the plunge. He replied with delighted congratulation, "Margot, you have at last done the right thing." And, knowing how vainly for years he had tried to incite her to the task, he added: "The publisher who has induced you at last to do it is a genius."

Mrs. Asquith is nothing if not electric, and on the very day of signing her contract she began to write. An early riser by habit, she devoted the hours from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. to her work, but soon became so keen on it that she has since worked sometimes seven hours a day. Consequently the book is well on its way to completion; Mr. Butterworth expects to have it in manuscript on his desk in St. Martin's Lane by the beginning of March, and the literary gossipers are at their wits' end for news and forecasts. A distinguished literary man, whom I am not at liberty to name, who has seen some of Mrs. Asquith's earlier sheets of manuscript, has already written to her, "If you can keep it up it will be an amazing book." Lord Morley, in his Wimbledon retreat, is keenly interested in its progress, and has made the like prediction, that Mrs. Asquith's autobiography will be "bright with real knowledge of the world," and that, alike in its strength and weakness, it will never be petty or small. His fatherly advice, based on unrivalled experience of the literary world, has been: "Be sure to trust yourself, and don't worry about the critics."

The book will be new from beginning to end, a recent statement that it will include reminiscences which have already appeared in two London magazines being quite incorrect. It will be in one volume, illustrated with portraits and with reproductions of drawings by Mrs. Asquith herself and others, together with a few facsimiles of letters. Mr. Butterworth has hopes of issuing it in May, though it is quite possible that next September will be preferred.

A deposit of from 10,000 to 15,000 tons of sulphur has been discovered in the crater of an ice-covered mountain in the Aleutian islands.

Robins range from Mexico to Alaska.

For many purposes cast iron has been found preferable to steel because it is comparatively rustproof.

CORN LOSES ITS SUGAR FOUR HOURS AFTER PICKING.

Do you know why sweet corn cannot be bought from the grocers? Don't accuse the grocer of selling sweet corn, because it isn't sweet. Corn loses its sugar four hours after being picked. It can't be kept overnight and retain its sweetness. A chemical action takes place which changes the sugar in the corn to starch. So corn must be home grown or grown very close to home if it is to be put on the table really sweet.

A TRIBUTE TO THE COW.

By E. G. BENNETT.
Missouri Dairy Commissioner.

LITTLE do we realize the debt we owe the cow. During the dark ages of savagery and barbarism, we find her early ancestors natives of the wild forests of the old world. As the bright rays of civilization penetrated the darkness of that early period, and man called upon the cow, she came forth from her seclusion to share in the efforts that gave us a greater nation and more enlightened people!

In 1483 when Columbus made his second voyage to America, the cow came with him.

Her sons helped till the soil of our ancestors, helped clear dense forests and made homes possible for the coming generation—and when the tide of emigration turned westward, they hauled the belongings of the pioneer across the sun-scorched plains and over the great mountain ranges to new homes beyond. Truly, the cow is man's greatest benefactor. Hail, wind, drought and floods may come, destroy our crops and banish our hopes, but, from what is left, the cow manufactures the most nourishing and life-sustaining foods. We love her for her docility, her beauty and her usefulness. Her loyalty has never weakened—and should misfortune overtake us, as we become bowed down with the weight of years, we know that in the cow we have a friend that was never known to falter. She pays the debt. She saves the home. God bless the cow—little do we realize the debt we owe her.

For the Motorist

FLASH LAMPS NEEDED ON AUTOS AT NIGHT.

A hand flashlight ought to be part of the tool box equipment for those automobiles that are not already fitted with a trouble light. Often enough the motorist is stopped on the road in a dark spot for reasons of mechanical trouble, or perhaps to change tires. It isn't safe or satisfactory to light matches in order to investigate what is wrong with a gasoline engine. The light from a flash lamp is steady, and the light can be set down somewhere so that it throws its beams on the work in hand.

It may not often be needed, but there does come a time when having such a light handy is worth a great many times what it costs to buy one and carry it around.

DONT'S FOR THE BATTERY USER.

Don't use anything but pure, distilled water for the storage battery. Boiled water will not do—it must be distilled water from which all impurities that would injure the battery have been rmoved.

Don't lay tools, or anything else, across the top of the battery.

Don't attempt to add acid or electrolyte to the battery. This should be done only by skilled battery men.

Don't fail to look at the battery occasionally and if the solution is sprayed or spilled, wipe the box clean with a sponge moistened in ammonia. All metal parts or connectors which are not lead-coated should be kept covered with a thin coating of vaseline.

Nobody is more anxious to avoid accidents and "close calls" than the self-respecting motorist—notwithstanding the apparently deep-rooted opinion of the average pedestrian to the contrary. The Vancouver Auto Club has always taken a strong stand on careful driving, realizing that the avoidance of accidents is dependent upon cooperation and harmonious understanding between drivers and pedestrians. The following set of "rules" is printed in a handbook recently issued by the club:

Take no chances.

Precautions—look both ways for approaching cars at intersections.

Test brakes often.

Make sure headlights and tail lights burning.

Keep in mind speed laws and ordinances.

Watch the "Other Felow."

Watch for traffic and danger signals.

Make turning signal in time to protect yourself and others.

Use your horn freely and listen for others.

Street cars are confined to fixed tracks—you always know where to find them. They cannot turn to right or left. Other traffic can.

Think "Safety First"—then go ahead.

Don't cut in ahead of moving street car going in your direction.

Don't try to "beat" street car or train over crossing.

Don't cut corners.

Don't operate in fog greater than will permit you to stop within range of your vision.

Don't hurry. Don't take chances.

Don't forget that a street car "overhangs" when turning a sharp curve.

We stand for safety on our streets and roads—first, last and always.

HINTS ON CARE OF TUBES.

Inflate that inner tube slightly before inserting it in the casing.

Be sure there is no dirt, sand or small stones in the casing.

Be sure that the inside of the casing is dry and use some soapstone, but not too much.

These little tube hints add not only miles to wear, with consequent saving in trouble, but will actually add miles to the tire itself. One of the dangers in putting tubes in casings is that the tube will be pinched under the tire. Slight inflation of the tube will prevent this.

Dirt or small stones in a casing gradually work through the tube, causing it to blow out or puncture. The use of wet soapstone or dampness in the casing itself will cause the tube to stick to the casing and start rot. Due attention to these little things will give much more satisfactory and profitable service out of tubes.

STOPPING A LEAK.

If you have a leaky radiator or an obstinately leaking pump packing, add a small amount of shellac to the denatured alcohol used in the anti-freezing solution. The shellac may also be used in summer in the plain water with which the cooling system is filled during the hot months.

IMPROPER LOCKING.

Don't attempt to change a tire from a rim with which you are unfamiliar. Serious accidents have occurred because of improper locking resulting in their flying off when the tire has been inflated.

FIND CAUSE OF FAILURE.

Don't spend a lot of time cranking the engine with the starter if it fails to start after a few trials. Look for the cause of the trouble. Continuous cranking runs down the battery.

CRIMINAL CARELESSNESS

"The fire, which started in a waste-paper basket, is supposed to have been caused by a cigarette butt."

The above summarizes the cause. But for the fortunate discovery by a passing policeman at 11 o'clock at night, a valuable manufacturing plant would have been in ruins, a large number of employees would have been out of work, and considerable time would necessarily have elapsed before operations could be renewed.

The 1919 amendment to the Criminal Code provides that "Every one is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to two years' imprisonment who by negligence causes any fire which occasions loss of life or loss of property."

Criminal carelessnes was only offset by fortunate circumstances. A few minutes later and the fire would have made sufficient headway to ensure a complete loss.

Shells increase in destructiveness more than in proportion to their inches. A twelve-inch shell is eight times more dangerous than a six-inch one.

The age at which marriage may legally be consummated in India is ten years.

The best type of man for long life is rather short and below the normal weight.

New York wastes as much water every day as would supply a city of 100,000 population.

In India, if a man is not married at the latest by his twenty-fifth year, his reputation suffers.

Upon attaining her majority Princess Mary of England received an annual income of $30,000.

JOHN IS THE MOST COMMON NAME

Came Originally From the Hebrew Jehohannen

John is the most common given, or Christian name we have. Its history is curious. It came originally from the Hebrew Jehohannen, "God is gracious" The Greeks made it Johanan, and in the feminine it became Anna and Hannah. The name was unknown in Saxon England, and was seldom used among the Normans. In the Doomsday Book, the record of the inhabitants of England which William the Conqueror had compiled, only two Johns were listed, and one of them is a Dane.

John was the name of the beloved disciple, and the writer of one of the gospels. As the Bible became more familiar to the people of Europe, this name became increasingly popular in Europe, especially after the Bible was translated from the Latin into the language of the people.

An enormous increase in the number of Johns resulted from the pilgrimages and the Crusades. About the year 1000, it became customary for devout Christians to make journeys to the Holy Land in order to see the places made sacred by the life of the Lord. At first they went as peaceful travelers. Later they went as armed bands, intent upon rescuing the tomb of the Saviour from the infidel Each pilgrim was known by two signs—a cross worn on the shoulder or breast and a bottle at his belt. The cross was the symbol of his vow to rescue the tomb of the Saviour, and the bottle was to be filled with holy water from the River Jordan. On the return of the pilgrims, the contents of their bottles were used in christenings. Happy was the mother who could secure a few drops of water from the river in which the Saviour had been baptised for the baptism of her own child. The name John would naturally occur as appropriate for a boy baptized under these conditions, since Jesus was baptized in the Jordan by John the Baptist. It may also be said that the world went suddenly John crazy. It was soon estimated that two-thirds of the English males were named John. Families of six or seven boys were all named John.

So common did this custom become that various methods had to be adopted to distinguish one John from another The surnames Littlejohn, Pettyjohn, Mickyejohn, and its Norman equivalent Grossjean (mean Big or Fat John), from which the immortal name of Bunyan is corrupted; Upjohn (John on the hill), Donjohn (Downjohn, or John in the valley), are all examples of attempts to distinguish one John from another. Many of these names still exist as surnames.

Considering the popularity of the name John, and the fact that at this time it was spelled "J-o-n" and pronounced "Jone," the size of the Jones family will be explained. The name means "son of John." John Jones is found in almost every community. In Wales this name is so common that, in the words of the registrar-general, it is a "perpetual incognito." A warrant for "John Jones" issued to an officer in Wales might almost as well have used the word "man," instead of the name. It would mean no one in particular. A single Welsh militia company had 36 John Joneses

The German form is Hans, and sometimes Johan. From these we have the surnames Hanson and Johanson. The diminutive is found in Hanks, Hankin, Hankinson, Jankin, Jenkins, Jenson and Jennings. Shane is the Irish form of John, and Jean the French. McShane and McGinnis are the equivalents of our English Johnson and Jackson, the prefix "Mc" meaning "the son of." Giovanni is the Italian form of John. The Scotch feminine forms are Jean, Joanna, Janet and Jessie. The French have Jeanette, the Spanish Juanita, and the Russians Ivanna. All of them are ohns, varied to suit the usages of the various languages, and the fertility of resourse is displayed in forming diminutives and nicknames.

WANT ADS APPEARED IN EARLY PUBLICATION.

In the reign of William III., one John Houghton, who combined the business of apothecary with that of a dealer in "tea, coffee and chocolate," commenced an advertising paper which he called A Collection for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade. In those old days the editor or the paper and the advertiser frequently spoke in the first person singular, while the advertiser also often spoke through the editor. The issues of this curious publication contained many advertisements regarding the musical profession, of which a few specimens taken at random will serve to give a tolerably good idea of the style then prevalent:

"I want a negro man that is a good house carpenter and a good singer."

"If any young man that plays well on the violin and writes a good hand desires a clerkship I can help him to twenty pounds a year."

"I want a complete young man that will wear a livery, to wait on a very valuable gentleman, but he must know how to play on a violin or flute."

"I want a genteel footman that can play on the violin to wait on a person of honor."

"If I can meet with a sober man that has a counter-tenor voice I can help him to a place worth thirty pounds a year or more."—London Musical Times.

In the fiscal year, 1918-19, 12,723,000 pelts were imported into the United States from Canada. These imports included large numbers of rabbit skins from Australia and New Zealand and about 250,000 sheep skins from Australia, New Zealand, India and Peru. These figures demonstrate that Canada is exporting more furs than ever before in her history, and that the number of fur-bearers taken in 1918-1919 was in excess of the annual increment, thus trenching upon our capital stock.