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

ONIONS.

The onion ranks high in commercial importance among the vegetables grown in Ontario. Next to the potato it is the most common vegetable in the home. It is an important crop for market gardeners near our large cities, and large areas are set aside annually for this crop. Market prices vary from year to year, but average prices afford excellent returns for the production of this crop, and, in spite of the fact that Ontario annually produces many thousands of bushels, the imports are very heavy. For this reason an increased production in this crop is warranted, and also because the onion is a staple crop enjoyed in practically all households, because it can easily be kept over the winter months when properly grown and cured.

Soil.

The onion is easily adapted to many soils and a soil which is not originally conducive to the growth of a satisfactory crop, can readily be made productive by the application of quantities of manure. Sandy and sandy loam soils are excellent for this crop, and black mucks properly handled are probably the most favorable soils for onion growing in Ontario. The largest areas of onions in Ontario are grown on reclaimed muck soils. It is advisable in all cases to secure a soil rich in vegetable matter, fairly level, well drained and as free as possible from stones. A soil of this nature will produce onions possessing large bulbs of excellent quality, provided careful cultural methods are followed.

Manuring and Fertilizing.

Land to produce good crops of onions should be manured heavily, excepting in the case of black mucks. It is a good practice to apply well-rotted manure, but this cannot always be secured handily. In any case a sand or sandy loam soil should receive annual applications of from 35 to 50 tons of manure per acre. Manure should be applied in the fall and plowed in. Disking the soil in the spring will be all that is necessary if this is followed. Black muck soils can be handled satisfactorily with the aid of commercial fertilizers. Many growers in this province depend only on large quantities of barnyard manure, while others who cannot secure a ready supply use as much as possible with commercial fertilizers. Large quantities of potash when obtainable give excellent results on muck land with this crop.

In some cases onions are grown on the same soils many years in succession. Where this is practised, liming the soil once in three years is advisable. From 1,000 pounds to a ton of lime should be applied to the acre, either in spring or fall, as convenient. This corrects acidity and improves the general condition of the soil, resulting in better yields. This applies particularly to muck soils.

Planting.

By far the greatest number of onions in Ontario are grown from seed planted in the field. This seed should be of unquestionable quality and germinating value. Seed should be planted in rows 12 to 15 inches apart. Sufficient seed should be used to produce eight to ten plants in 12 inches. Extensive growers use from four and a half to six pounds per acre, depending on quality of seed and soil. Seed should be covered by one-quarter inch of soil in fairly heavy soils, and by half-inch in light soils. It is imperative that the seed drill be accurately set to sow the seed as directed.

Cultivation.

If onions are properly drilled in, thinning is unnecessary. Weeds should be kept down by constant cultivation by means of a wheel hoe, which also stirs up the soil between the rows. Hand weeding will be necessary at least once a season, or oftener, if the onion land is very weedy. This is an expensive operation necessary in growing onions, and the freer the soil is from weeds the cheaper the cost of production. It is advisable to commence cultivation as soon as the crop can be seen, and some growers cultivate between the rows even before the seedlings show.

Harvesting.

Maturity of the crop is indicated by a drying and falling over of the tops. The roots of the onions die off at the same time as the tops, and the onion should be pulled when the roots are almost entirely dead. If left in the soil after this period the onion sends out fresh roots and also starts fresh growth of the stem inside the bulb, which causes considerable loss during storage. Onions are usually pulled by hand and four rows laid in open windrow usually butt to butt. They should be allowed to dry for three or four days in this position, when the sun and wind will almost completely dry up the tops. After this is accomplished it is advisable to take the onions in slat boxes to a shed to allow curing to take place. Topping can commence at once and this should be done by cutting off the top one inch from the bulb, using a sharp knife or a regular onion topping machine which will handle many bushels per day. The latter machine is recommended where any large acreage of onions is grown.

The onions should then be placed in open slat boxes or on shelves in a building which allows free access of air on all sides.

Marketing.

Onions grown in Ontario are marketed from Vancouver to Halifax. They are shipped in bags weighing 75 pounds and holding one bushel and a half. Large quantities are handled on local markets. Grading is necessary to command the top market price. Only by careful topping, careful grading and careful shipping will any onion grower build up a business for himself which will net him satisfactory returns. Too often low prices for onions prevail, not because of over-production, as it is called, but owing to immense quantities of onions of inferior quality and grading being literally dumped on the market.

Storing.

Onions should not be stored for winter keeping in bags or in bulk. They should not be stored with other vegetables, because they tend to taint the flavor of other vegetables and moisture conditions cannot be controlled as well. They should be kept on shelves with slat bottoms or in open slat boxes, so that there will be plenty of space for air circulation. If placed on shelves the layers should not be more than ten to twelve inches thick. The cellar of the home can be used satisfactorily, if it is kept cool. In the home they can easily be kept in 11-quart baskets suspended from the ceiling of the cellar. When the crop is large they should be stored in cool, dry, well ventilated buildings, and the temperature should remain as close to freezing as possible. Freezing and thawing will cause the onion to rot.

Cost of Production.

Unfortunately very few extensive onion growers have any idea of the cost of producing a crop of onions. However, one grower in the Leamington district produces a first-class crop at less than $60 per acre, while for others the crop averages about $100 per acre. Much depends on the management of the crop and the machinery and buildings used in harvesting and storing the crop.

New Onion Culture.

The new onion culture is becoming popular with many market gardeners. The seed is sown in the hotbed or greenhouse any time up to March 1st. Strong, vigorous, healthy plants must be started early in the season. The seed is sown in flats in rows two and a half inches apart in fine soil. Plants must receive careful attention to prevent damping off. Tops may be clipped off with shears when five inches high. This trimming will induce stocky growth. This should be practised every week, keeping the tops at a height of three and a half to four inches. Many growers plant seed direct in the hotbed and transplant from there. The same general directions are followed in this case.

When danger of severe spring frosts is over, these onions, which should be three-sixteenth inches in diameter, are transplanted into the field eight inches apart and eighteen inches to three feet between the rows—the latter when another crop is grown between the rows. With careful handling large bulbs will be harvested, many weighing one and one-half pounds, two pounds and over.

Onion Sets.

Onion set growing is also an important branch of onion business in Ontario. One section (Hensall) sows over 70 acres and produces immense quantities of onion sets for distribution to all parts of Canada.

To produce onion sets the seed should be sown as early in spring as possible, in rows three to four inches wide, ten inches being allowed between the rows. From 80 to 100 pounds of seed is used per acre.

Sets are harvested in early fall and dried in small heaps in the field and then cured in large storage houses, on trays which permit ample circulation of air. Five tons is the average yield per acre.

Green Onions.

Green onions for bunching purposes are also an important crop. These are secured from onions grown from seed sown six to eight weeks before freezing up in the fall or about August 1st. These winter over and in spring a rapid growth produces green onions. Many are grown from small onions planted in warm soil as soon as land is in fit condition to work in the spring.

Many thousands of bunches of green onions are sold annually on our markets and the demand is gradually increasing.

White perennial onions are also grown for bunching purposes. These are planted from the middle of August to 1st of September, in rows 15 inches apart. Onions should be set two inches apart in the row. These produce good green onions the following spring.

Shallots are handled in the same way, but are not in favor with vegetable growers because the tops are too small and are very easily broken.

SOLD FOR $6,300.

Increasing Value of Jersey Cow as a Food Producer.

The increasing value of the Jersey cow as a food producer was demonstrated last week at an auction sale of Jerseys at Hood Farm, Lowell, Mass., when Sophie's Elberta was knocked off at $6,300, the highest price for any Jersey at public sale in this country this year.

Another cow, Sophie's Florence, four years old, went for $3,000. A bull only one year old went for $1,600 and another of the same age $1,500. There were 71 animals sold for a total of nearly $54,000, an average of $755. Many of the Jerseys went to Texas, some to Oregon, and others to different parts of the country.

Smothering the Weeds

No plant can survive any great length of time without air, and it gets air through the leaves which are formed above ground. If the ground is kept absolutely black for one year, quack grass and most other weeds will be entirely killed—there is no question about this.

Quack land that was fall plowed should have work started on it before the grass gets a start. If the sod is heavy a sharp disc must be used—preferably of the tandem type so that the land is kept level. The quack grass or spring-tooth cultivators are more effective than the disc if the land is not too soddy, as the roots are brought to the surface. The roots may then be raked and burned if they interfere with working and land.

If the land was not fall plowed and the sod is heavy, beginning in the spring would require a great deal of extra work in tearing up the sod. It would be nearly as effective to leave it until the quack heads out, then mow and burn, plow shallow, disc and work the land thoroughly until it freezes up; and continue this the spring following until the quack is all dead, or sow a smother crop.

The sow thistle spreads both from the roots and seeds, and is the one that is causing so much trouble in the older settled districts.

It is deep rooted with large vigorous running rootstock, from which new plants start. The stem is from 1 to 5 feet high, hollow, with few leaves, and branches at the top. The whole plant is filled with a bitter milky juice. The leaves are from 6 to 12 inches long, pointed and deeply cut. The flowers are bright yellow, about 1½ inches across. They are usually seen in the early morning, and appear about 4 or 5 inches above the surrounding grain, and are frequently mistaken for sunflowers. After the sun begins to shine they partly close up, and are not so noticeable. The seed is about one-eighth inch long, dark brown in color, and contains a number of ridges running lengthwise.

In the early stages of growth the perennial sow thistle is often mistaken for blue lettuce, dandelion and chickweed, as well as the annual sow thistle.

The sow thistle and other noxious weeds will not be eradicated until the farmers of the infested districts are educated to the importance of getting rid of them, and realize that the only way to do so is by concerted action. It does very little good for one man to clean up his farm, if neighbors allow sow thistle to go to seed.

In districts which are already badly infested, complete eradication would be almost impossible, because the expense would be so great that farmers would not be able to stand it. In such areas the weeds must not be allowed to go to seed and spread farther. In this way they can be held in check and gradually cleaned out.

To do this, methods of cultivation and rotation of crops must be adopted which will enable the farmers to kill out many of the weeds and lessen the injury done by those which are left. Land which is badly infested may be pastured with cattle or other stock to good advantage, and some returns secured from the weeds, while other areas are being cultivated and cleaned up.

To prevent the spreading by seed, it will be necessary to keep the weeds cut down so they do not go to seed. This will mean also that in sowing the farm seeds, great care must be taken that they do not contain seeds of the sow thistle, or any other noxious weeds.

The killing of the roots of the sow thistle may be accomplished in several ways. One method frequently tried is to sow some other crop that will crowd out the sow thistle. Brome grass is capable of doing this under certain conditions and also alfalfa and sweet clover may be used with success in some localities. However, in most cases the sow thistle will doubtless crowd out the crops that are sown with them.

THE USE OF CANNED MILK.

In using recipes that call for fresh milk, canned milk may be substituted, but it should be diluted with equal parts of water, which will make it the consistency of the fresh milk. If cream is called for in the recipe it should be used without diluting. It takes the place of fresh milk for all table use and may be substituted for cream in coffee, on cereals, fruits and desserts.

"You're under arrest," exclaimed the officer, as he stopped the automobile.

"What for?" inquired Mr. Chuggings.

"I haven't made up my mind yet. I'll just look over your lights, an' your license, an' your number, an' so forth. I know I can get you for somethin'."

The Quiet Observer

A Mean Skunk

Some pretty mean things are being done by the people who prefer being mean to being honest. One of the meanest lately was the action of a man who took the trouble to dress in uniform and ride down on a bicycle to where a young lady stood on the corner of a street, where she had been selling tags. It was near the close of the day and he told her he had been sent from headquarters to collect the box and supply her with another, which he gave her. Unsuspectingly, she handed over her box of collections, and this skunk went off with them. They were intended for the cripples of the war, and this able-bodied man stole them. While our civilization and our Christendom produces men of this stamp we have nothing to boast of over some of the countries we affect to despise.

Some Good Licks

Sir Henry Drayton's budget has been somewhat changeable in its terms, but it gets there just the same. As remarked before, its object is to raise money, and that is the standard by which it must finally be judged. Those who contribute can point with pride next year to the noble sum which they have assisted in accumulating, and no doubt all loyal citizens will find a fierce pleasure in purchasing the most luxurious articles with a radiant consciousness of their virtue in adding to the inland revenue. There is an artistic side to it also, for it has been decided that the taxes are to be registered by stamps. No doubt they will be the most gorgeous stamps ever designed, so that those who lick them will enjoy artistic sensations such as they have never had an opportunity to do before. There will be a thrill about licking a ten dollar stamp which should be well worth the money.

The Big Cities

New York has been expecting to be declared the biggest city in the world, but turned out to have made a much less increase in the last ten years than was anticipated. It would seem that London still retains her metropolitan distinction, though estimates of the New York metropolitan area have been made that are supposed to be greater. In areas of dense population nothing can beat Lancashire, with Manchester, Liverpool and other great commercial centres crowded into an area which is more densely populated even than London. London areas give a population of over 10,000,000, while Lancashire will run to 12,000,000 or more in a similar area. New York will not rival this for some time, and it is just possible that the era of dense population is passing. Sanitation and convenience, rapid transit and high cost of living will tend to scatter population over wider areas. Detroit shows the most phenomenal increase of any of the United States cities and now ranks fourth with nearly a million population. The motor car industry appears to be largely responsible for this growth.

Political Sculduggery

President Wilson is described as in excellent health again and he has certainly lost nothing of his courage. His defiance of the Republican party and his determination to make the League of Nations an issue in the presidential election will give the American people an opportunity to show how far their professions of regard for liberty, justice and self-determination for the smaller nations will carry them. It would, of course, be absurd to expect that a presidential election could be carried altogether on a foreign issue when the politics of the United States are so essentially and intensely domestic, but there is a profound principle involved in the League of Nations, and since the participation of the United States in the war, and the recognition of certain responsibilities such as are represented by Cuba and the Philippines, the great bulk of the American people have a consciousness of these obligations external to the limits of the western continent. President Wilson's language is sufficiently unacademic to attract the popular ear. "This thing," he said, "lies too deep to permit of any political sculduggery, any attempt to sidestep—to evade moral and humanitarian responsibilities—much too solemn to treat so lightly or ignore."

Public Opinion Needed

There does not appear to be much basis to the charges hinted at or suggested but not actually made of bribery or attempts to bribe members of the Legislature. The offer of cash down for Legislative favors has become rather a dangerous business since R. R. Gamey showed how bribers could be double-crossed. The methods of political fine-workers are more diplomatic than of old, and it is by enquiries like that conducted by Justices Riddell and Latchford, rather than elsewhere, that most of our political corruption can be located. It is well-known that corporations will descend to conduct that individuals would not dare to acknowledge, and that officials of corporations will perform acts for their employers they would never dream of doing for themselves. The lack of conscience in a corporation is a curious psychological fact, and has to do apparently with the psychology of mobs in which the moral sense is always lower than the average moral sense of the whole. This means that public opinion still stands badly in need of cultivation and education. We do not teach public opinion in the home or the school, and consequently cannot expect to find it in public life. The sense of joint or community ownership is rarely instilled in children and individualism run wild crystallizes in the corporation and too frequently forms a social organism which preys on the society of which it forms a part.

Sam Gompers' Rebuff

Sam Gompers had a decided rebuff in the Labor convention at Montreal on the issue of public ownership of the United States railways. Yet Mr. Gompers had a good deal of reason on his side. He sees that without a cultivated public opinion public ownership may degenerate into a kind of public parasitism, and the most striking part of his protest was based evidently on a doubt of the moral strength of his fellow-workers. He warned them that public ownership of the railways would place 2,000 000 men under government control as civil servants. If they were trained to serve the people as faithfully as they are compelled through fear to serve the corporations, Mr. Gompers would not need to be anxious. The difficulty of creating checks and guarantees is very great when a body of men are subject to no authority but their own, and this is what has so frequently proved fatal to public ownership schemes. The same body of men who voted so enthusiastically for public ownership of the railways are responsible for the strike at the Chippewa canal, which threatens to overthrow the most successful attempt at public ownership yet achieved. The Industrial Banner declares that in this case the Hydro-Electric Commission is attacking the eight-hour day. The evidence is that under the eight-hour day, with two hours overtime paid at time and a half, the men did less work than formerly under a ten-hour day. These are the things that Sam Gompers fears, and that led him to oppose public ownership of the railways.

Temperamental Ireland

Sir Hamar Greenwood went to Ireland with a policy of conciliation and as soon as this was known the American and German agents who are using Sinn Fein as a cloak immediately began a campaign of ferocity which rivals anything done by the Turks or the Boshi-Bazouks. The object was to destroy Sir Hamar's policy. He came over with an olive branch, but the government brought over bayonets and bullets at the same time, and the policy of conciliation was discounted. It is difficult to understand how susceptible the Irish people are to the influence of agitators and conspirators unless familiar with the country. Catch-words that mean nothing at all to outsiders send Irishmen, north and south, into white-hot fury, and in this inflamed state nothing can be done. Nor does the Irish frenzy ever seem to exhaust itself. If it is not on political matters it will be on religious grounds that the fury rages, and when this is lacking personal grievances supply material for transports of wrath. In the comparatively quiet times of 35 years ago under the shadow of the Rock of Cashel, a visitor saw one of the family rows going on in which an ancient heldame came out on the street, tore her hair, gnashed her teeth, cursed everybody in sight and called down with fierce imprecations plague, pestilence and all evil fortune on her relatives and neighbors. Sir Hamar Greenwood is helpless in presence of such a temper.

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF CHILDREN

By ELINOR MURRAY

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WHY BABIES CRY.

It is a good thing to know the different cries of babies so as to judge what may be the trouble. There is the fretful cry of the baby who is not happy. He is hot or cold or hungry or uncomfortable. There is the cry of anger and disappointment when things do not please his majesty. There is the cry of pain, an unceasing, loud cry which does not yield readily to comforting. There is the hoarse cry of the baby who has cried long and loud. There is the low, moaning cry of the sick baby. There is the cry of habit, which ceases when the baby is taken up, as he is expecting to be. If he is put down the noise starts again louder than ever. This is the time when he comes up against discipline, and if allowed to have his cry out, will learn that to fight is useless. Be careful to find out if your baby has any reason for his cry before you leave him to have it out with himself. If you are sure it is the beginning of the "habit" cry—be very firm, even if it is harder on you than on baby—let him learn his first big lesson and you have started him on the road of obedience to discipline. But, I repeat, never let him cry for a length of time without knowing why he is crying. Sometimes the cry of hunger is hard to distinguish from the cry of indigestion. Hunger will make the baby fretful just before a feeding is due; while a baby suffering from indigestion or insufficient nourishment will cry soon after a meal and may keep it up until the next meal time.

Some babies cry because the daily routine does not suit them. Their mothers forget that as a baby grows older he sleeps less and exercises more, and they neglect to change the day's plan to suit the age of the baby.

Older children of nervous, irritable dispositions will cry a great deal unless managed with tact and care. Their trouble is usually due to some error in diet; and if this be corrected they should lose their disagreeable fretting habit.

The History of a Name

PALMER.

Variations—None.
Racial Origin—Medieval English.
Source—Descriptive.

Palmer is a very appropriate family name for a crusader. Its origin is traced straight back with little variation or change to the days when the spirit of fighting religion swept over all Europe and crusade after crusade was launched at the Turks with the object of winning back the Holy Land.

One very old English document, dating from Norman-French days, gives a list of names, among which is one Harvey le Palmer. Another mentions a Geoffrey le Palmere, while an old document of Parliament speaks of John le Paumer, Harvey the Palmer, Geoffrey the Palmer and John the Palmer.

A palmer, of course, was one who carried a palm leaf. It wasn't considered a silly thing to do in those days, any more than it is considered silly today for the soldier to wear his campaign stripes or other insignia denoting service in the army or navy, or membership in a society or lodge. The palmer was one who had made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, either as a warrior fighting the Turk or simply as a traveler actuated by religious fervor.

The descriptive appellation of palmer quite naturally developed into a family name on a very large scale. In the first place, there were many pilgrims. In the second place, the man who had made the pilgrimage was likely to be considered the most important member of his family for several generations before and after, and was therefore the most likely individual in his family to perpetuate his name to the extent of its being permanently accepted in the course of years as the family name.

An Indian one hundred and thirty years of age has just been converted to Christianity. Probably he figured it was about time to stop sowing his wild oats.

Some men found guilty of robbery confessed the other day that they did it in order to start business. They had better have kept to the usual procedure and started business first.

Visitor—I am collecting for the poet's hospital. Will you contribute?

Editor—With pleasure. Call to-night with the ambulance and I'll have a poet ready.

Prof.—What happened to Babylon?
Fresh—It fell.
Prof.—What happened to Tyre?
Fresh—It was punctured.

Lady (who has given a beggar a shilling)—Don't imagine I believe in you. I only give you this because I like giving.

Beggar—Well, make it 'arf a crown, lidy, and thoroughly enjoy yourself.

"See the dancing snowflakes."

"Practising for the snowball, I suppose."

"Do handsome husbands pay?" asks a Sunday paper. The usual experience is that, whether handsome or not, they pay just the same.

"Got a hacking cought and a headache? Well, I've a little wood you could hack, and it might cure your headache."

"Much obliged, mum; but my 'adache ain't of the splittin' variety."