Soils and Crops

Address communications to Agronomist, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto

A JOURNEY TO THE HOME OF INDOLENCE.

Lemuel Sprowl still owned a small interest in a farm on the road that branched off the main pike in the direction of the poorhouse. For some years he had been unable to pay in full the interest on the mortgage. Neighbors ventured the assertion that it would be only a question of time when Mr. Sprowl and his wife would be compelled to reliquish the place, and become guests of the county.

Happening by on a hot summer day, we left the flivver to cool under a wide-spreading oak at the roadside and went in to have a look at the property. Mr. Sprowl was on the porch, taking his ease in a broken-down, upholstered chair that had seen better days and which, its present occupant found occasion to inform us, had been picked up at an auction some three or four years previous "for the price of a two-bit piece."

"I set this here chair on the porch when I brought it home," he drawled, as he saw us taking note of it, "and somehow I haven't ever got around to carry it into the house. I dunno as it makes much difference. Sort of need something out here every summer. What can I do for you, stranger?"

We made known our desire to look over the farm

"Nothin' easier," he replied. "There isn't any place around here that offers greater opportunities. It's a little too big for me to keep everything just shipshape. But a younger man like you—" He eyed me critically, "Yes, you might get along on it pretty well." He led us out to the barn, where we entered the milking stable over a broken walk that held abundant possibilities for broken bones and twisted ankles.

"I keep thinkin' I'll fix that place," he said, "but somehow I don't get to it. I dunno, though, as it's any killin' matter, so long as you know right where to step."

Hearing voices beyond the stable, we inquired if he kept a hired man.

"Not regularly," was the reply. "I dump the manure from the stable out in the yard, and twice a year I get some one to haul it to the fields. Saves a lot of fussin' to do it that way. I'm late, though, with it this summer. That waste's been lyin' there most of a year. It should have been seen to last spring."

"You'll have to straighten that silo, won't you, before you can fill it again?" we questioned, as we noticed the Leaning Tower of Pisa which reared itself in the barn lot next to a feeding shed.

"I quit usin' silage two or three years back," Mr. Sprowl advised with an air of wisdom. "The fellow who put up that silo was a stock-feeder and he put it pretty near in the middle of the lot. Handlin' dairy cows I had to lug the feed clear across to the milkin' stable. I couldn't see any sense in makin' a slave of myself for the sake of a parcel of cows, so I quit fillin' it. Yes, I've been noticin' quite a while that she's gettin' a slant in her. It seems I could never get time to tighten them hoops when they should have been looked after. Farmin' in summer don't have much let up to it, you know. I guess that's the reason I never tended to it." We continued on our way past the outbuildings.

"Looks as though it was about time you cut your weeds," we observed. "What's that you're tryin' to hide in that jungle of burdock?"

"Oh, that!" Mr. Sprowl's tone was one of mild surprise. "Why, that's what these automobile fellows call a chassis—only in this case it's part of a lumber wagon. It was so hard to get it in and out of the shed I took to leavin' it out here. I dunno as it improves it any, but when I've wanted it I could hitch on in just a jiffy—standin' where it does. My, but them burdocks do grow tarnation fast, don't they?"

Reaching the end of the row of buildings we faced the open field. A hundred yards away there stood a three-section crib made of fence-rails and holding several hundred bushels of corn.

"Some of my last year's corn," Sprowl explained with a bit of pride. "So long as I've got that crib full of corn," he explained, waxing facetious, "I feel like the tramp who always carried a silver dollar which he'd never spend. There wasn't no judge, he said, who'd send him to jail for havin' no visible means of support."

"But the rats and mice?" we suggested eyeing the makeshift crib.

"I suppose there may be one or two around," he admitted, "but if they're out there we don't have 'em in the barn. I can't see that it really makes much difference."

Taking leave of Sprowl, who had led us back to the vicinity of the battered chair on the porch, we thanked him for his courtesy. Again he surveyed us with close scrutiny.

"Farmin' is no work for a sluggard," he advised soberly. "If the bank takes a notion to let you lift this roof from over my head, I hope you'll remember what I've told you. It's the truth. I ought to know."

POULTRY.

One hundred baby chicks when hatched will usually weigh between seven and eight pounds. When the chicks have reached an age of twelve weeks they should weigh between one hundred and seventy-five and two hundred pounds. For sake of comparison we will take a calf at birth with a weight of eighty pounds. Should the calf make the same rate of gain as the chick, it would at twelve weeks of age weigh a ton. This will help one to understand why broods of chicks vary so much, and will also assist the feeder to appreciate the opportunity at hand to display his skill, so says Prof. W. R. Graham of the O.A.C. Poultry Dept.

The use of the incubator and brooder has forced the poultry keeper to study the methods of growing chicks. A mother hen and her brood, when allowed to range, can be fed many feeds, and the chicks do well simply because the hen and the chicks balance the ration by catching insects and selecting tender green feed and, it may be, several other things that we have never observed.

There is a great variation in different broods of chicks reared by the artificial method, and many broods have a high mortality and a very unthrifty appearance. The chicks can be reared easily with reasonable care and attention. The use of a little common sense is essential.

One should remember that, given a brooder, a colony house, and say three hundred baby chicks, it is the duty of the operator to keep the chicks comfortable, and that every need of the body must be taken to those chicks. There is no clucking hen to pick up bits of gravel or to catch insects. The feed must be taken to the chick.

At present the Dept. of Poultry Husbandry at the O.A.C. is conducting a series of experiments, the object being to find a simple, inexpensive method of growing a normal chicken. It may take years to get the answer, but each season we add a little to our knowledge.

Celery Culture.

Any good rich garden soil will grow good celery. It is a gross feeder and must have an abundance of fertility to draw upon if tender, well-developed stalks are to be obtained. If the soil becomes dried out, even with an abundance of plant food present, succulent stalks are not likely to develop. These two things, plant food and moisture, are essential in order that growth may go on uninterruptedly. Hot dry soils can be made cool and moist by water or by mulching. It is not a very great task to keep a small area in celery watered during the dry periods.

When preparing your new vegetable garden set aside some good well rotted manure for a row of celery. Dig or plow out a space about 18 inches wide and about six inches deep and into this scatter the manure about four inches deep. On this place your good garden soil, and mix thoroughly with the manure, and to this add acid phosphate at the rate of 500 pounds per acre. If the garden is one which has been well manured for years scatter a coating of manure broadcast and work it into the soil adding acid phosphate as well, and on this good celery can be grown. A well-balanced 4-8-5 commercial fertilizer, at the rate of 2,000 pounds per acre, scattered broadcast and well mixed with the soil to a depth of five or six inches, will grow good celery without manure if moisture conditions are right.

Celery seed will germinate in any good garden soil in about two weeks after planting; during this time the soil should be kept damp. The seed box may be set any place in the kitchen, and when the seedings appear, in a bright window or hotbed. In two weeks the plants may be singled out and transplanted to one and one-half to two inches apart. In another month these will have developed into good plants for setting to the open grounds. It will be seen that it takes about two months to develop good plants. Seed sown on the first of March should develop plants for setting out May 1st. For later plantings and fall crop, seed started the middle of April or first of May will give good plants for setting in June.

Cylinder-Head Bolts.

In refitting a stationary engine with a new cylinder head it was found that the bolts set into the jacket were a little too short when the thickened gasket was in place.

To unscrew them a few turns so that they would serve, a nut of the right size was cut half in two with a hack saw, and this, when turned on the bolt, gripped with a pair of pliers. The open side "gave" enough to grip the threads tightly and to turn the bolts. This prevented damaging the threads as the only other means would have been to use a pipe wrench.

Pruning for Fine Roses.

The rose grower has it in his power at this season of the year to prepare his plants for a heavy crop of moderate quality or a smaller crop of superior blooms. It must be observed, however, that the amount of pruning that should be done to a rose bush depends somewhat upon the variety of the rose. Roses of modern varieties bloom on wood of the current year's growth. That is to say, the buds that start from the old branches this spring will produce the flowers this year. Rose growers will have observed that the strongest new wood and the finest bloom comes from the buds that are close to the ground. It therefore pays to shorten back the wood to within a foot or so of the root. This applies more especially to young plants. Older plants of the strong growing varieties such as J. B. Clark and Frau Karl Druschki, should not be pruned so severely. It is always desirable that the bush when it develops should have an open centre, so as to let in the sunshine. For this reason, when a branch is cut off, the cut should be made a half inch or so above the bud on the outside. Pruning should not be done until the buds are commencing to swell. One may then be assured that he is leaving uninjured wood. It is not necessary to wait until the buds near the ground are bursting, because those higher up open first and, if a fairly long stem is left, the lower buds do not break at all. By cutting off the stems fairly low, the lower buds are forced into growth. Experience will soon teach what is the best method of pruning for the particular conditions desired. In pruning, the strongest healthiest stems are left and the weak ones cut off close to the ground or bush or larger limb.

As a safeguard against mildew and black spot it is well to burn all the pruned wood and to spray the bushes with a fairly strong solution of Bordeaux mixture or other suitable fungicide. Instructions for making and applying fungicides as well as insecticides for rose plants are given in Bulletin No. 85 of the Experimental Farms, "Hardy Roses," available at the Publications Branch of the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa. This bulletin also names and describes the best varieties to grow.

Control of Grasshoppers.

Locusts or grasshoppers lay their eggs in the late summer and autumn of one year and the young appear about May in the following year. Every kind of field crop suffers from their presence. A leaflet issued by the Dominion Entomological Branch states that in Eastern Canada the following mixture broadcasted over infested fields has proved effective in control: Bran 20 pounds, paris green or white arsenic half a pound, molasses 2 quarts, juice of oranges or lemons 3 fruits with peel chopped fine, to 2½ gallons of water. The bran and paris green or white arsenic should be mixed while dry. Another bait that has answered well is: sawdust 20 pounds, paris green ½ pound, salt 1 pound, water 3 gallons. Twenty pounds of either of these baits is sufficient to treat five acres of growing crops. The morning is the best time for broadcasting.

In the Prairie Provinces what is known as the Criddle mixture has proved effective. This is made by adding 1 pound of paris green, or white arsenic, and 1 pound of salt, to 15 gallons, by measure, of fresh horse droppings, sufficient water only to make the mixture moist being added.

Old pastures should be plowed to a depth of at least six inches and immediately followed by harrowing.

Cultivation of Strawberries.

Strawberries require a moist, rich rather light and loamy soil to produce the best results. The land should be in good condition and free from weeds. A heavy application of manure should be worked into the soil at the time of planting, using well rotted manure, at the rate of thirty to forty tons per acre, according to the Dominion Horticulturist, who further advises, if impossible to obtain barnyard manure, the turning under of a crop of clover and the use of a fertilizer composed of 200 to 300 pounds of muriate of potash (or 25 to 45 bushels of wood ashes), 200 to 300 pounds of either ground bone or acid phosphate, and about 75 to 100 pounds of nitrate of soda, to be applied at time of planting. Planting is done preferably on a cloudy day, and the young plants should not be allowed to become dry at any time. After planting the plantation should be given a thorough cultivation with a fine-tooth cultivator and this cultivation should be continued at intervals of two weeks through the season, and after each heavy rain. The blossoms should be picked off the first season and the ground kept free from weeds. A few trips through the patch to place the runners properly should also be made. In selecting runners for propagation select good-sized healthy plants.

Better Prices for Lambs.

The sheep raiser has it in his own hands to decide whether he will take the top price for his male lambs next fall, or sell them at a discount of two dollars or more per head. The decree has gone forth that a cut of $2 per hundredweight will be made on all buck lambs purchased after the middle of July. It may not be generally understood that wether lambs make thicker and better carcasses than do rams, and that the meat is of finer flavor. The operation of emasculation is not only as necessary with lambs as with calves and pigs, but it is just as simple and subject to as little loss. A pamphlet entitled "The Great Neglect in Sheep Husbandry," describes the operation and shows how to take off the tails as well. Unless a flock owner can afford to take a low price for his lamb crop he had better make sure of the highest return by trimming his lambs this spring.

Making Liars of Our Children

"I'll teach you to lie," said an angry father, who was thrashing his twelve-year-old boy with a big stick; "I'll teach you to lie!"

How little did this man realize that he was, indeed, teaching his boy to lie, by making him afraid of him and thus afraid to tell the truth!

Childhood is timid. Children have not yet developed their moral faculties to any great extent and they will usually take the safest, easiest way. They, naturally, are always trying to protect themselves.

A well-known woman writer once undertook to classify lies. She listed lies of vanity; lies of flattery; lies of convenience; lies of interest; *lies of fear;* lies of malignity; lies of malevolence, and lies of wantonness. Mark Twain in taking account of stock counted eight hundred and sixty-nine varieties of lies!

There is no question that there are all sorts of lies, and that truthfulness as a principle and as a policy is unknown to multitudes of people. Often the reason for this is lack of proper training in childhood. A great many men and women have grown up to believe in the lie as a policy. They believe that it pays to deceive. Yet the reputation of always, everywhere, under all circumstances telling the truth—the exact truth—is worth a thousand times more to one than any temporary gain from deceit.

One of the most dangerous of all characters, in business or in social life, is the man or woman who is indifferently honest, or who will tamper with the truth.

There are multitudes of people who began to lie in childhood from fear of punishment and the desire to ward it off. It is not always so much the actual suffering of the whipping as the anticipation of it that is so dreadful to the youthful mind. There is something inside the boy and girl that protests against such an insult, as they regard any attack upon their person.

It is the worst policy in the world to make children afraid of you by telling them to tell the truth or take the consequences of severe physical punishment. I know of no quicker way to make a real liar of a child than making him afraid of you by giving him a beating every time you find him telling an untruth.

Don't delude yourself that beatings and other severe treatment will make your child truthful. In almost every case they have just the opposite effect. Timid children are proverbial liars, because they are the little victims of fear, and when in terror of punishment they will do almost anything to avoid it.

The lie doesn't seem so bad to a child as it does to you, and yet my adult friend, are you sure you are always truthful? I know many a parent who punishes his child for lying who does the same in his business and social life, but in a more polite way, perhaps. A man will lie in his advertisements, in his misrepresentations of the merchandise he is handling, in cheating customers in different ways, by covering up defects, in selling "foreign" silks made at home, and all sorts of "imported" articles made in this country.

I know a boy whose father had been abroad and had brought home with him precious works of art, and he was one day showing a friend about his house. The boy heard him say, "This picture is the work of Rembrandt," (or some other great artist,) "I paid $10,000 for it." A little later the father called the boy before him to punish him for lying, and the lad said, "Father, how much did you tell Mr. Blank the other day that you paid for that picture?" "Ten thousand dollars," was the reply. "But you know, daddy, that you didn't pay but $4,000." "Yes, but it was worth $10,000; I bought it cheap."

Now what sort of an example in truthfulness is that father setting his boy?

"*Veritas*" (The Truth) is engraved upon the buildings and gates of one of our great universities, and above a principal entrance to the college yard we read this legend from a great Hebrew poet:

"Open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth truth may enter in." No self-respecting gate upon the globe will open willingly to those who do not keep the truth—"truth in the inward parts," as Hebrew sages used to say,—truth in conscience and life.

Train your child in the way of truth.

Teach him that the world listens when truth speaks.—O. S. M., in Success.

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Home Education

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Suringtime Gardening—By Sophie Kitchener

"See, what a wonderful garden
is here,
Planted and trimmed for my
Little-Oh-Dear!
Posies so gaudy and grass of
such brown—
Search ye the country and hunt
ye the town
And never ye'll meet with a
garden so queer
As this one I've made for my
Little-Oh-Dear!"

Training that associates itself naturally with the season of the year is particularly apt to make its impression on a child. The child is sensitive to the natural changes in the world about him and there is value in any "lesson" that can be correlated with the lively interest he takes in the weather, the sky, the trees, and the plants.

In the spring, for instance, the child loves to play in the little rivulets that form from the melting snows and the rains. He bridges them; the dashing torrents he dams to turn his little waterwheels; on the quiet navigable ones he floats his paper boats. He is conscious of the special tang he feels in playing in this mud and water. He is unable to know it is the "liveness" of waking nature appealing to him, but he senses the message and responds.

The mother, too, if she be a lover of nature, thrills to the same message brought by other couriers. How much more the child's half-conscious love will mean to him if she realizes that he shares her own appreciation and if she takes care to foster it until it becomes actual knowledge of nature.

One mother of my acquaintance realized the value of such timely training. She purchased for her little daughter, a book that told the story of the bean. It told of its development from an insignificant pebble-like thing into a lovely tall vine with flowers which, in turn, produce the bean that people use for food.

The lima bean was pictured as a baby that grew and grew. The child was interested, so the mother got some lima beans, quite a while before it was time to plant them outdoors, and put them between a roll of good blotting paper, inserted in a drinking glass, and the wall of the glass. A small amount of water was poured into the glass which was then put on the window sill in the sun.

As the days went by the child could observe the tiny shoots coming from the seeds. First came the root, then the leaf shoot which unfolded and grew until little leaves began to show. These grew larger and larger and the shoot grew stronger and stronger until it overtopped the glass.

It was then time to put it in the ground. The mother showed the little girl how to plant it and together they planted other beans to grow as the first had done.

All the while these seeds were developing underground the child knew what was happening and eagerly waited for the first tiny leaves to appear above the surface. She cared for the garden herself, watering it faithfully. Later in the summer she was rewarded with a very small crop of beans, for this was but a small garden in a yard at the back of a city house. But how much she had learned, and what a joy it had been!

Feeding Poor Hay.

While the general farmer finds economy in feeding his lower grades of roughage, so the fact should not be overlooked that such feeds do not have the full nutritive value that number one roughages have. Otherwise, there would be no difference in the market price of these different grades of feeds. The value of the various farm feeds can be roughly gauged by the condition of the animals to which they are fed. Watching closely his stock, the feeder can know quite accurately whether he is treating the animals to the quantity of roughage they should have.

Keep the Sheep Dry.

A practical sheep man advises that farmers owning flocks pay especial attention to the ewes in the period preceding the lambing season. Dry beds are important. The wind and rain should be kept out of the quarters in which the ewes are housed. Another essential is exercise. To provide for this, the eyes should be allowed access to the barnyard or field. Oats and bran, equal parts, make an excellent feed for the ewes at this season, while legume hays, particularly alfalfa, make first grade roughage feed.

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