WHY BURN THE MARSH?

This Writer Thinks it Poor Practice for the Farmer.

BY B. EAST.

The season for spring marsh fires is near at hand. With the passing of the snow, and the coming of the warm days of late March or early April, to dry the dead grass and the ground under it, the practice of burning over waste land begins. A farmer makes no greater mistake than the burning of these worthless acres, and nothing he does is more detrimental to the wild life of his section, that, if left alone, will berefit him immeasurably during the summer months.

The swamps, marshes and swales are the final refuge of birds and animals in settled or cleared country. If a late spring storm catches the song birds after they have returned from the south, they find shelter in the thick clumps of marsh grass. Later, dozens of species build their nests and rear their young in security, in the seclusion of those same marshes. The redwing blackbird, really one of the most valuable song birds in the destruction of insects in this section, knows almost no other home. Other species, for whom the marshes are too wet, find the desired solitude in the dense, brushy swamps. Robins, chewings, thrushes, catbirds and kingbirds nest by the thousands in the swamps of this region. All of these, to say nothing of the waders and water birds, whose habitat is the wetter portion of the marshes and bogs near open water, require the cover of grass and reeds.

Besides these birds, the marshes and swamps furnish the finest of winter shelter for quail and grouse—shelter against their natural enemies, against hunters, and most important of all, against snow and cold and hunger in the bitterest weeks of winter. Autumn burning destroys this cover, turning the marsh into a bleak, snowswept barren stretch. Even the muskrats do not like to occupy houses already built after the marsh is burned.

Spring burning is even more destructive. It not only destroys cover for the birds and small animals, but in all too many cases, destroys the birds and animals themselves. The ground is seldom dry enough for marsh burning until after larks and other early spring birds have begun nesting, and hundreds of litters of young rabbits are killed by those same fires.

Why burn the marshes at all? Does it improve them any, and are they of any value to begin with? If they produce grass fit for hay, then the annual cutting should keep it short enough on those areas that are valuable. Many a good farm building has been burned by fire that began as a small burning in a half-acre pond, a half mile from the buildings, and many a farmer has lost a valuable half-day's time while he fought to regain control of such a fire, spreading before a rising wind. If you have been burning your waste land, just out of habit, think it over this spring, and let the birds have their cover. If you have land that really must be burned, take care that the burning is done before the birds are back, which means just as soon as possible after the snow is gone.

This question of marsh fires in cleared sections is in no way related to the more serious one of brush fires set by farmers while clearing new ground. That is a problem by itself, involving the possible loss of thousands of dollars worth of timber, human dwellings, and even human life. It all means we should use fire cautiously.

Fitting Sheep for Pasture.

Shearing is one of the first operations in getting the flock ready to turn out for the season at pasture. The yearlings and rams may be shorn any time after the warm days of spring appear. If the ewes having lambs at foot are shorn when the weather is still cold the flow of milk will be seriously curtailed. A warm day in early May should be about right for the average season.

Machine shearing is more efficient than hand shearing. If more than 100 head are kept, a power machine can be used to advantage. Select clean grass or barn floor for the job. The sheep should be dry when sheared. The fleeces should be neatly folded inside out and tied with paper twine. Store in a clean dry place.

Within two weeks after shearing the flock should be dipped. Any reliable dip can be used. If a good job is done once a year, it will keep the flock free from ticks and the skin and fleece in good condition. Where practicable one dipping tank can be used for a community.

Internal parasites are very prevalent among sheep and it is essential to good management that they should be eradicated. This is comparatively easy with the iodine treatment recently perfected. Lambs averaging thirty pounds in weight may be drenched with four ounces of a solution made by adding half an ounce of Lugol's solution to one quart of water. This should be repeated once in four weeks. For older sheep, use four ounces of a solution made up by adding one ounce of Lugol's solution to one quart of water; and repeat at four-week intervals from June to October, inclusive.

Rather extensive experiments have shown this to be a very satisfactory means of combating the stomach worms.

By following out this program there is little that need be done except to salt the flock weekly. Adequate pasture and a good fence are essential in handling any flock. Fences can be made practically dog proof without much extra trouble.

A patch of rape is of great value for the lambs when they are weaned. There is a difference of opinion regarding the best time for weaning, but with most of the more successful flocks the lambs are weaned in midsummer, just about as the pasture begins to go back.—H. L. G.

Planting Plum Trees.

The spring is the time to plant plum trees, and the earlier it is done the better, providing the soil is not sloppy, says the Dominion Horticulturist. After the trees are taken out of the packing in which they are shipped great care should be taken to prevent the roots from becoming dry before planting. Dipping the roots in a thin mixture of clay loam and water will protect them somewhat, advises Mr. W. T. Macoun, the Horticulturist, in his pamphlet on "Plum Culture," but wet burlap, old bags, or wet straw should also be used. As a rule it is necessary to make the hole, which should be repaired before exposing the roots, somewhat larger than will accommodate the roots spread out to their full extent. It should be made about eighteen inches deep, after which the subsoil should be loosened a few inches more but not removed. In digging the hole the surface soil should be kept separate from the subsoil or that of poor quality. Sufficient surface soil should be thrown back to make the tree when planted about an inch in the ground deeper than it was before. Care should be taken to plant the tree not too deep but just deep enough. Before it is planted permanently in the hole the soil which has been thrown in should be raised and rounded off in the centre. Broken or bruised roots should be cut off before planting the tree. The soil should come in contact with the root fibres and the surface be left loose. If the planting is well done in the proper season and the soil fairly moist and compacted about the roots, watering is not necessary. In districts where drought is liable to occur, or even in places where the soil is likely to become rather dry, and thorough cultivation cannot be given frequently, Mr. Macoun further advises in his pamphlet, which can be had free from the Publications Branch, Ottawa, it will be wise to mulch the newly planted trees to a depth of from four to six inches with manure, straw, sawdust, or anything of that nature which will not become a compact mass.

Planting Apple Trees.

When the young apple trees arrive from a nursery they should be placed in a trench large enough to hold them all in an upright position so that when filled in the roots will be completely covered. The trench should be in a cool shady spot and, if at all dry, the trees should be well watered, for in this way the danger of their drying out when planting is delayed will be obviated. The way to plant young trees is described in detail in a new bulletin on the cultivation of the apple in Canada, issued by the Experimental Farms Branch and distributed by the Publications Branch, Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa. According to the bulletin, the holes dug for the trees should be somewhat larger than the spread of the roots after unnecessary long portions have been removed. The earth must be well firmed around the roots by pounding or tramping. The surface soil should be put in first and the sub-soil last in order to give the young rootlets quickly available plant food. Care should be taken to protect the trees from drying when being removed from the trench to the place of planting.

Farm Crop Experiments.

We are informed by Dr. C. A. Zavitz, Agricultural College, Guelph, Ontario, that 2,832 Ontario farmers conducted experiments with field crops on their own farms in 1925. The number is increasing from year to year. Choice seed of some of the best varieties is being distributed now free of cost. Any farmer who asks for it may have the seed for an experiment with one of the classes of farm crops such as oats, field corn, mangels, turnips, alfalfa, sweet corn, etc. The distribution will likely continue well into April or until the supply of seed of the different crops is exhausted. These co-operative tests of the Experimental Union have greatly increased crop-yields making Ontario outstanding in this respect.

At present, fire seems the great enemy of the corn borer. In sections where this pest has gained a foothold, every farmer should take special pains this year to collect all cornstalks and refuse in the fields and about the barn, pile them and see that they are thoroughly burned. This work should be completed not later than the middle of May. After that date the corn borer moths will emerge from the stalks and spread as far as the winds will carry them.

A HIGH SPOT OF FASHION.

The polka dotted gown has created a furore in the smart fashion centres. Polka dots, large or small, and in all colors are smart, but particularly smart when of navy-blue on a light background with a border design. We present here a one-piece frock, the simple design of which is admirably suited to materials of this type. The dress opens at the neck and is finished with a round boyish collar. The long sleves are trimmed with tailored cuffs, and two inset pockets furnish a decorative note. No. 1162 is in sizes 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust. Size 36 bust requires 2⅛ yards 54-inch bordered material as illustrated. Price 20 cents.

Every woman's desire is to achieve that smart different appearance which draws favorable comment from the observing public. The designs illustrated in our new Fashion Book are originated in the heart of the style centres and will help you to acquire that much desired air of individuality. Price of the book 10c the copy.

HOW TO ORDER PATTERNS.

Write your name and address plainly, giving number and size of such patterns as you want. Enclose 20c in stamps or coin (coin preferred; wrap it carefully) for each number and address your order to Pattern Dept., Wilson Publishing Co., 73 West Adelaide St., Toronto. Patterns sent by return mail.

Methods of Pasteurization in Dairying.

Inefficient methods of pasteurization have a bad effect on the dairy industry by giving the public a false sense of security, according to a new bulletin on pasteurization of milk, cream, and dairy by-products, issued by the Dominion Dept. of Agriculture. On the other hand, efficient pasteurization assures the safe supply of milk and other dairy products, delays the souring of milk, and improves the flavor and keeping quality of butter. The bulletin, which may be obtained from the Publications Branch, Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa, describes in detail the best methods of pasteurization for use in cheese factories and creameries.

A Boy's Answer.

Teacher—"What can you tell about Adam and Eve eating the apple?"

Young America—"I don't know; was it a Dutch treat?"

Vegetables, fresh fruits, fresh air, exercise, and plenty of pure drinking water—this is the recipe for a good complexion.

A PEEP INTO THE BRIDE'S HOPE CHEST

To Meet Conditions in Her New Home, the "Green Trunk" Should be Well Planned.

Shakespeare wrote, "In the spring a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of love." He might well have written, "young lady's." But, perchance, the famous scholar born on Stratford-on-Avon was not versed in the peculiarities of the soprano sex.

Measured in heart beats, June seems a long way off to the prospective bride. But she is a wise virgin, indeed, if she has her hope chest well planned and under way by now. The big interrogations which will loom superlatively in her mind will be: "What type of things?" and "How many of each?"

She will, of course, have a supply of dainty lingeries, handkerchiefs, hosiery, dresses and aprons of both serviceable and pretty, but practical kinds. Her wardrobe should coincide with her social needs, her community—and not least—her pocketbook.

If the young bride is to live in the city after the nuptial, she can plan her hope chest accordingly. If she is to remain a country lassie, she will need simple, substantial pieces, rather than elaborately decorated ones. She will have little need for flimsy knick-knacks, tea sets, and the like.

The household linens, including table linen, bed linen, dresser scarfs, towels, etc., may be unique—show individualism, and yet be serviceable.

No bride can have too many bath towels, dish towels and wash cloths. The quality of each should be paramount, instead of quantity. Linen wears better than cotton—washes and irons beautifully. It does not take on the washed-out appearance so characteristic of cotton. The initial cost of linen is more, but in the end, it is the economical "buy."

A dozen dish towels are a safe number; two dozen are better. Some of these may even be made of sugar or flour sacks, neatly hemmed. For the farm, nothing takes the place of the unbleached linen ones. They will whiten with use. No chest is really complete without a half dozen linen glass towels for drying china and glassware. Five yards of this toweling will make six towels, thirty inches long. Some of these may be embroidered with perky teapots or bluebirds.

Unbleached linen hand towels are the appropriate kind for the sun-kist lassie. Have plenty of these. A few nice guest towels, too, must not be forgotten. Four to six bath towels will be necessary. Select the big, double-loop ones.

The hope chest should contain at least four pairs each of sheets and pillow slips. If I were limited to three pairs, I would make two pairs plain, or nearly so. The pillow cases could have hemstitched hems—or monograms in white, or simple crocheted edges.

The standard mattresses are seventy inches long—hence, the sheets should be about ninety inches long. This is important as it assures ample amount for the tucking-in process. A sheet made too short is wrinkly and uncomfortable. Select a firm quality of double-width sheeting or bleached muslin with little or no starch.

Two bedspreads is the minimum number. One of these may be of unbleached muslin, with the popular cross-stitch or applique work, intact. Be sure to use color-fast floss. The other spread could be of the crinkled dimity type. These are easy to launder, dainty-appearing, and very practical for every day. The heavy type of spreads, once so popular, are rapidly becoming obsolete.

Dresser scarfs, buffet scarfs and doilies—here the bride-to-be may lavish needlework to her heart's content. Unbleached scarfs with basket or cross-stitch designs, or applique work are lovely. Colored linen ones are also very popular.

Two pairs of pillows (with feather-proof ticking), will be needed. The blanket and comforter problem is often solved by gifts. Two pairs of double blankets and four to six comforters will not prove amiss. If a dear old grandmother has given one of her patchwork quilts—how fortunate!

At least one good linen tablecloth with napkins to match, will be needed. The bluebird cloths for every day are both serviceable and pretty. The size of these to be determined by the table.

It is usually unwise to make curtains. They will depend on the size and number of windows in the bride's future rendezvous. Unless familiar with the data, it is better to postpone their making.

Pan holders, dust caps, a clothespin apron, rubber apron and laundry bag have their corners in the hope chest. The bride's lifetime accumulation of silver, china, glassware, pictures, etc., should be congregated. She will cherish these more than ever in a home of her "very own."

The hope chest should be ready a month before the wedding, to eradicate last minute worries. Be ready, indeed. 'Tis said men simply can't stand waiting on their womenfolk.

Test Oven Without Thermometer.

At the very last minute, food that has been so carefully prepared, can be so easily spoiled in the oven that it is a wise cook that will take a few seconds to test her oven before the cooking process begins.

Custards and meringues will need a slow oven to keep the egg white from separating from the other ingredients, and the whole becoming watery. Sponge cake and angel food will need a slow oven, other cakes and cookies will require a moderate temperature for baking. Baking powder biscuit and pastry bake better in a hot oven.

If you have no thermometer by which to judge the temperature, you will have very good success by the flour test. A simple test is to place a teaspoonful of flour on a piece of unglazed paper in the oven. If the flour browns lightly in ten seconds, the oven is hot; if in thirty seconds, the temperature is moderate; if in sixty seconds, it proves that the temperature is low. If the oven temperature runs up faster than you wish it to, set a pan of water in the corner of the oven. A pan of steaming water set in one corner will keep food from browning too much, or the crust becoming too hard.

The Perennial Pea.

By Mrs. Jeanette Leader, Member of Ont. Horticultural Association.

One of the most satisfactory of perennials is the Hardy Perennial Pea. The flowers are very similar in form to the annual Sweet Pea. It is quite as desirable except that the Perennial Pea has no fragrance and is not as dainty in form. But when cut it will last much longer than the sweet pea, and once the plants are established they thrive under almost all adverse conditions. They will bloom constantly all summer, and withstand long droughts, until the plants are killed by frost. The seed pods forming do not seem to interfere in the least with the vigor of the plants and blossoms. Two or three plants will provide abundant flowers for the table all summer. I have counted over two hundred trusses of blooms on a single plant at one time.

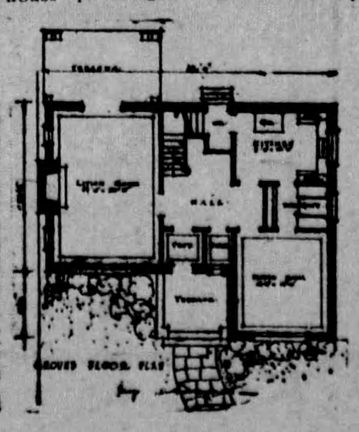
They need a wire fence to cling to and plenty of sunshine. The colors are a pretty rose shade and white. Seeds sown one year will produce plants that will blossom the following year, and the years to come in ever-increasing quantities.

A grower is never so successful that he can afford to buy poor seed.

The Tudor House of Beauty and Convenience

By Warren and McDonnell,, Architects

Planned for a lot with fifty feet frontage, this house thirty-eight feet by thirty feet, comprises six rooms with the bath room and the dining alcove in addition. The living room with its verandah is the best arranged room as to doors and windows, and leaves very little to be desired for a house of this size. The fireplace, located to give ample space for cozy chairs and reading lamps, and wall space for piano and the settee. What might be termed a square hall, with returned stairs, and a window on the landing, will make this unusually attractive and homelike. The dining room and dining alcove—which latter has now become a necessary feature in modern house planning—is served directly from the kitchen, which has the trades and basement entrances in close touch.



Three bedrooms on the first floor, with cupboards to each, the larger room being about fourteen feet by nineteen feet. Off the main hall is a roomy bathroom finished with tile and sanitary walls. The basement contains the usual accommodation for laundry, heating plant and storage—well drained and lighted.

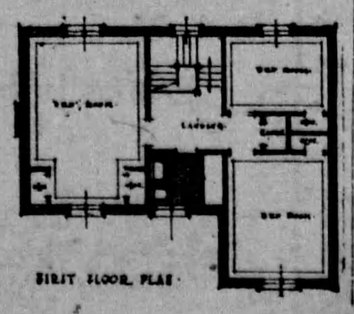
The exterior shows a house of Tudor design of much merit; simple, pleasing roof outlines, with eave lines broken by the gabled first floor windows, and interest is added by the careful grouping of the casement openings, and the half timbering of a portion of the first floor. The chimney, carried well above the roof and offsetting the dominating parallel lines by its strong vertical design showing experienced study. Kept snug down on the site the house seems to be a part of the lawns and approaches, an effect not always easily obtained, but very helpful to this style of domestic architecture.

This house will look well built with dark red brick, laid Flemish bond, in white mortar; the roofing of oak stained shingles, and the woodwork painted brown, the half timbered work being left "off the saw," and stained the same color.

A plain Tudor panelled door for the main entrance,—oak perferably and red Dutch tiles for the terrace, will make this a very suitable and attractive entrance.

Regarding the interior finish—all the floors are hardwood—oak and birch, stained and floor varnished. Walls throughout with the plastering finished in fine sand stucco, for cold water paint finish of various tints. The trim, doors and staircase on the ground floor are of plain oak, upper floor in pine, with paint finish.

The plumbing and heating—the latter by hot water—are of the best quality and suitable for this class of a dwelling.

The cost of this house, ready for occupancy, would be about eight thousand, five hundred dollars, exclusive of the land.

Readers desiring further information regarding the plans and specifications of this house should communicate with the architect direct. Address Warren and McDonnell, Home Bank Bldg., Hamilton, Ont. Copyright 1926, MacLean Building Reports, Limited.