

# Farm Crop Queries

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

F. S.: Had a small spot of quack grass in my hay this year. I do not find any seed in the quack. Would like to know if it will seed back by the hay being fed and returned to the land as manure.

Answer: If all the hay is consumed it is not likely that any vital seeds of quack grass will be spread on your farm. There is danger, however, that seed will be spread by a few heads of ripe couch getting into the manure, and being taken out on your land when the manure is spread.

C. W.: Will you kindly tell me if nodules form on sweet clover roots the first year when inoculated. Also, is mammoth clover as sensitive to acid soils as sweet clover or alfalfa?

Answer: Nodules will form on the roots of sweet clover the first year if the soil is sweet and the seed has been inoculated. Mammoth clover is a perennial that is about as sensitive to sour soils as is sweet clover and alfalfa.

H. M.: I had about forty rods of the so-called honey locust hedge, which I cut down last winter, but now they all have sprouted out again. Now they tell me if I cut them off in August and put on thick salt it will kill them. What is your advice? I have also thirty rods of the same which I never trimmed off and grew up to good-sized trees and measure from six to eight inches through, which I am told will make better fence posts than cedar.

Answer: August or early September will be a good time to cut down your locust hedge. The cutting should be done when the trees are putting most energy into leaf bearing and seed production. By cutting the hedge in August and carefully cutting off all sprouts that start next spring you should be able to kill out the hedge in one or two seasons.

R. H.: I am wondering if sweet clover and orchard grass could be sown on red-top sod for permanent pasture. Soil is rather light sand. If so, how much per acre and what time should they be sown? Which would be the best, annual or biennial sweet clover? Would it be best to run over the field with a spike-tooth drag or not? If those grasses would not do on the sod, what would you suggest?

Answer: Red Top grass usually grows when soil is sour. Sweet clover and orchard grass both thrive in soils rich in lime, therefore I would not advise you to try to get a catch of either or both without first liming the soil thoroughly. Work in at least 1,000 lbs. of limestone per acre. This can be done any time after the ground is plowed this fall.

How Many Cows to Keep.  
It usually pays to keep no more cows than you can raise hay and silage for in a rather poor year. This allows some roughage to sell in good years. If a man keeps all the cows he can feed in a good year, he will have to buy hay in a poor year, or sell some of the cows. Hay is high in a poor year, and the price of milk doesn't change much.

When dry weather injures the first crop of timothy, the temptation is great to mow the aftermath. If this is done, the stubble ought to be left high. Close cropping will leave the roots exposed and next year's crop may be materially damaged.

## A Rainy Day at the Farm

Dusty, blinking, stood the farmhouse till that plunge of midnight rain  
When the pear bushes rasped the eaves and the gutter overflowed;  
Morning, and the kitchen smoky,—dampened logs that hissed again,—  
But a paradise to turkey, dragged woe ones, warmly stowed.

Men-folk, balked of wider farthings, plodded round the tidy floor;  
Rills ran down from gleaming rubber; quavers filled the turkey's throats.  
All the porch lay washed and dripping just beyond the deadened door.  
And a lake beneath the elm tree rocked its little leaves for boats.

Things were cosy after breakfast, with the shining dishes done  
And those restless tramps vanished to the granary or barn.  
Quilts were auntie's master passion, and her choice the rising sun.  
While the grandma dotedly knitted and the kitten chased her yarn.

There were attic for the children and a dark old parlor too,  
Rarely entered, rather musty, yet for us it held no flaw;  
For a peddler's winsome patter once had sold, oh, many a "view"  
And a twin-eyed, hooded object into which we peered with awe;

Since, for just a peep through lenses we might see the world go by,  
Banks of Doom or Bank of England, did it matter, so we stared?  
And there waited us an album showing bride and bridegroom shy  
And a baby most distrustful of "the birds" as he glared.

Why of all the summer's necklaces should I choose this clouded gem,  
Dripping day instead of sunshine when I beckon back the charm?  
Dear old walls! I think I loved them with the greater need of them  
When the creek spread wide its silver, and the rain whips lashed the fern.

—Jeannie Pendleton Hall.

## The Sunday School Lesson

August 27  
Nehemiah's Prayer, Neh. 1: 1-11. Golden Text—The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working.—James 5: 16. (Rev. Ver.)

Lesson Forward—Nehemiah has been described as "a conspicuous instance of the right man in the right place." The work of reorganizing the weak Jewish community in Jerusalem after the exile required strong leadership. Ezra, as we have seen, reorganized their religious life. Nehemiah assumed the leadership in their civil affairs.

V. 1. The words of Nehemiah. About half of the book of Nehemiah is composed from his personal memoirs. This is shown by the use of the personal pronoun "I." In the first seven chapters of the book, "the words" are, therefore, to be understood as "the revised" version translates it, "the history" of Nehemiah. The month Chisleu, in the twentieth year of the month Chisleu corresponds roughly to our month of December. The twentieth year refers obviously to the twentieth year of Artaxerxes' reign. Among the ancients, dates were named by reckoning from the time of the accession of the reigning monarch. I was in Shushan the palace. Originally Shushan or Susa was the capital of the kingdom of Elam, a territory in the mountainous region to the east of Babylon. After its capture by Cyrus about B.C. 546, it became the capital of the Persian Empire. Artaxerxes built a splendid palace, and in that palace Nehemiah held a post of high honor.

V. 2. In the city of Shushan there arrived a number of Jews who had been on a visit to Jerusalem. Here Nehemiah eagerly plied them with questions. V. 3. The deputation told Nehemiah how miserable a state Jerusalem was in, in particular the condition of the wall of the city. In great affliction and reproach. This relates to the poor people and in very depressed fortunes. Ryle says that "the affliction" denotes the evil plight within the walls: the "reproach," the scornful attitude of the enemies without.

V. 4. The evil tidings stirred the patriotic heart of Nehemiah, and like a true Oriental, he gave vent to his feelings vehemently. After the first paroxysm of grief he recollected his soul in prayer—a prayer which may be considered a model of true devotion. II. Nehemiah's Prayer, 5-11. V. 5. The prayer opens with an address to God, naming his attributes of might and majesty on the one hand and of faithfulness and mercy on the other. Ryle points out that the Divine forgiveness alone could vouchsafe the restoration which Divine power alone could effect.

V. 6. In the first half of the verse there is the humble approach to God which is followed, in the second half, with a confession of sin. Confess the sins... Israel. The experiences of the exile had pierced the heart of Israel with a deep sense of sin. The afflictions and desolation of those long years in Babylon made Israel feel how terrible a thing sin is. Before the joyous affair; after the exile it became much more solemn. Israel's conscience had been awakened and became aware of sin.

V. 7. The sin of Israel which had brought the sorrows of the exile upon them is now specified. It was a lack of fidelity to the law given by Moses. Was your wheat smutty? Prevent it next year by treating the seed with formalin before sowing this fall. Buy the formalin now. This treatment costs only a few cents an acre. A pint of formalin, properly diluted, will treat from thirty to fifty bushels of seed. Stir a pint of formalin in thirty or forty gallons of water, sprinkle the liquid over the seed wheat, then dry the wheat so it will run through the grain-drill without clogging.

Pull ripened onions and let them lie on the ground for two or three days until well cured. The way to kill gophers or rats is to attach a piece of hose to the exhaust, stick the hose in the opening of the burrow and start the engine. This will get the wise ones that dodge traps and poison. We hear that many county representatives are using this plan in the West.

## For Home and Country

The Women's Institute—Its Objects and Aims  
BY A. R. MARSHALL.

The motto chosen by the Women's Institute is "For Home and Country." The constitution states that the object of the Women's Institute shall be—"the spreading of knowledge relating to Domestic Economy—special attention to home sanitation, a better understanding of the value of foods, child care and training of children, with a view to raising the general standard of the health and morals of our people."

We find that in some districts an impression prevails that the work of the W. I. consists wholly of addresses and discussions on foods, and methods of cooking the same. Of course the large majority of members are homemakers, who spend much time and energy in thought and work bearing directly upon the preparation of wholesome, palatable food; so they naturally give as much, if not more, attention to this feature of home-making as to any other. Along with these subjects are discussed such as—"The nutritive value of staple foods," "Balanced meals," "Cereals," "Their food value and how to cook," "Milk—its food value and how to use it most generously on the farm."

But we know too that health in the home depends greatly upon good ventilation and good lighting, so how we shall build or improve our homes to attain these advantages is one of our most present day topics of study also. Then we recognize that to the influence of the home may be traced the health, happiness, and usefulness of the children who go out from it to take their part in the world. We want to acquire knowledge to assist us in caring for, and training them to make happy, good, useful men and women. Some topics along this phase of the subject would be "Courtesy and good manners in the home," "How to develop an appreciation of good music in the child," "The home library," and "Choosing the right life work."

The home-maker will realize that in justice to herself and her family, she must have time to read, and to indulge in social life to some extent. In order to do this, she must have every labor-saving device that she can secure, and must plan to save as much time and as many steps as possible. The task of sick-nursing comes in due course to every home-maker. The Institute through its lectures and demonstrations gives valuable assistance in this matter, and also in home sewing. Topics may be dealt with, too, along other lines, but it is the desire of the department and of the members, that the work of the Institute be not diverted too much from the practical. Another item to be borne in mind is the local needs; it would be waste of energy to spend time on community work that no one needs. It has been asked—Is the Women's Institute really becoming an educative force? Is it really helping to make better homes, or better anything else, or is it just a fad that will wear out or rust out in time? As long as the world lasts there will be cautious people, doubtful people, who will not take part in anything that does not seem the accounts of what the Society has accomplished, and from its growth from a few farm women meeting in Stoney Creek 25 years ago, to the thousand odd societies in the province to-day, we judge it must be much more than a fad—is in reality a strong, uplifting force in the world. As it is largely appreciated in rural districts, and aims at the improvement of agriculture along scientific lines, it must appeal to us. The world has realized since the war that the wealth of any nation lies in the land; and that country is strongest that has the greatest proportion of its people on the soil, and the boy or girl who receives training in scientific agriculture will become an educated man or woman. We no longer consider education a cramming with knowledge, but the drawing out and developing of the faculties of the child to produce a sound mind in a sound body. The Institute tries to assist in this through its interest in the school conditions; and also through encouraging the community spirit.

In conclusion we would sum up by saying that the aim of the society is to engage in any work that has for its object the uplifting of the home, and the betterment of conditions surrounding country life.

## Sod Lands for Gardens.

Too many farmers who have plenty of land come to look upon some one piece of ground as the garden, and plow and plant this one piece of ground year after year without regard to results. It is a common custom to fence this piece of ground to keep out chickens. The fence makes it hard to work, and discourages a change of ground each year. I like to use sod land for a garden because of its more mellow and friable condition. Sod land does not pack and bake, consequently the work of hoeing and weeding is reduced. Weeds also, are much less troublesome on sod. Any one piece of ground that is used incessantly soon becomes infertile with weeds.

We had one or two striking illustrations of this the past season. The root crop has been scattered about on several small pieces of ground. Two of these have been under cultivation for several years, and the work of weeding on these two plots has more than twice doubled that on the other two plots. Rapid growth of plants is another advantage of sod land. This year our garden was enlarged to twice its former size and the rows of vegetables were planted in a straight line from the old worn ground into the new sod land. The difference in the size of the vegetables on the sod land compared with those on the old ground is remarkable; both plots were planted at the same time. Muskmelons on the sod land made a very strong and vigorous growth; while on the old soil, that has been cropped and tilled for years, although they have had equal attention, the stalks were not nearly so good.

I can not say how many vegetables do better on sod. Perhaps the advantages in germination of small seeds make the old ground better for the smaller seeded vegetables, but I am sure that sweet corn, tomatoes, muskmelons, potatoes, cabbages, beans and many similar vegetables do much better in sod than in ground that has been incessantly worked without a rest or change. Clover makes a much better sod than the regular grasses. It is best plowed in the fall; leave it rough so as to collect and retain all the rain and snow. With one-third to one-half of the regular garden plot in clover each year, the ground can be rotated.

When the pasture's brown and dry, Silage keeps the milk yield high. I kept my onions in a dry, cool (frost proof) loft last year. Neighbors kept theirs in cellars. Theirs sprouted, with much loss. Mine kept. Try my plan.—George Gilbert.

A ragged bale of hay sells for less than a neat bale. In fact, baled hay is graded largely according to appearance of the bales. To sell baled hay for a good price, the seller must know just what the market demands. Some markets demand big bales, some small. Some farmers object to tightly baled hay. Study your market.

Field-mouse and chipmunk, Bird and butterfly, She never said a word because Each asleep did lie. I got up on tip-toe— And let down the bars; And the lady moon went through, Out to join the stars. —Ethna Valentine Trapnell.

## FARMERS SHOULD PLAY

I was talking recently with a man high up in agricultural circles, a man who has lived both in the city and in the country. Our conversation turned to the matter of play among farmers and among city business men. Let us call the man I was talking with by the name of Smith. Now, Smith said that the average business man of the city takes more time for play than the farmer, and he regretted the fact that the latter did not play more, so as to bring into his life a new zest which would enable him to do better all-around work when he did work.

In defence of the farmer, I said that the average farmer had to work more hours out of the twenty-four than did the city business man, in order to make a living. Smith disagreed with me, and said it was largely a state of mind, or a tradition, with the farmer that he must work hard from early morning into the evening, oftentimes; whereas, if he gave as much thought to systematizing his work as did the city business man, this condition could be eliminated, except in special cases.

"The city business man could work just as many hours, in most cases, if he would allow himself to do so, but he will not," Smith said. "He realizes that he must have certain periods for recreation, in one form or another, if he would keep going and make a success of his business. He puts into practice the saying, 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.'"

I am not a farmer, but I lived among farmers, and I have always been interested in them. Both sides pretty clearly, and, speaking in a broad sense, I agree with Smith that the average farmer could take more recreation if he would, and that in so doing he would get a whole lot more fun out of his living. A reasonable amount of recreation, too, does more than anything else, I believe, to keep a man rightly balanced between the two extremes of taking life and his life work too seriously, or else too lightly. And all sane-thinking persons know that when one swings to either extreme there is great danger.—E. W. Brookway.

## Spare the Calves.

Statistics prove that a large dividend would be saved to the country by returning to the farms drafts of carefully selected calves from the numbers that continue to find their way to the big central markets. Time and again the Dominion Live Stock branch has urged farmers to retain valuable heifer calves for breeding purposes. It not only saves the breeders and keeps the cows, but also spares the calves. In spite of this advice there has been this year a tendency to rush calves to market. That means, of course, a depletion of full grown cattle in the future. A hundred-pound calf is a thousand pound steer in embryo. Kill the calf and you get but a fifty or sixty pound delicacy for the table. Kill the steer and you provide five or six hundred pounds of beef for the building up of the manhood of this or some other country. The latter also means the utilizing of procuter, grass, hay, straw, and grain, which otherwise would lose in demand and depreciate in price, or possibly go to waste.

## Weevils in Beans.

Weevils can be killed in beans and peas by the use of carbon bisulphide. To treat these put them in a jar, tub or other vessel which can be covered tightly. Put into a glass about one teaspoonful of carbon bisulphide for each ten gallons of space in the enclosure and place the glass in with the beans. Allow them to remain in the fumes of the carbon bisulphide over night, then take them out and place in dry storage quarters. Do not take lamps or lighted matches near the material, and do not breathe the fumes.

The hen that begins her molt in August has very little to recommend her as a layer. Gooseberries, currants, raspberries and blackberries should be cultivated throughout this month. If bushes are forced in growth until the end of the month, next year's crop will be much improved.

There are three modes of bearing the Ills of Life: by Indifference, which is the most common; by Philosophy, which is the most ostentatious; and by Religion, which is the most effectual.—Colton.

To make a lime kiln in a hilly section, dig out a place on the hillside large enough to hold all the limestone that is to be converted into lime. A trench must be dug across the centre from front to back of place to furnish draft, and an opening is left in the back of the pit to furnish a "flue for the smoke. Old rails are laid across the trench, a lot of dry wood is laid over them, then a layer of coal, after this alternate layers of lime rock and coal, covered over at the top with earth. The front is sealed up with mud and a fire is started in the trench. This may not be the best way to burn lime, but it is one way.—C. S. Dean.



The Moon Lady.  
Sing a song of sundown,  
Twilight and dew.  
I sat nodding on a stile  
And the moon came through.

The moon, she was a lady  
With floating silver hair,  
Garments all of gossamer  
And pearl chains to wear.  
She made a sign of silence,  
Lips with finger pressed  
For all the little wood-things  
Were cuddled on her breast.

Field-mouse and chipmunk,  
Bird and butterfly,  
She never said a word because  
Each asleep did lie.  
I got up on tip-toe—  
And let down the bars;  
And the lady moon went through,  
Out to join the stars.  
—Ethna Valentine Trapnell.