

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. Address all questions to Professor Henry G. Bell, in care of The Wilson Publishing Company, Limited, Toronto, and answers will appear in this column in the Toronto edition of this paper. An space is limited it is advisable where immediate reply is necessary that a stamped and addressed envelope be enclosed with the question, when the answer will be mailed direct.



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E. F.—Please tell me what to do to keep bugs out of my seed beans and yet not destroy the germination of the beans.

Answer—To destroy the insects which injure beans in storage, place the beans in a close bin or in a barrel and obtain a pint or a pound of carbon bisulphide. Place a deep saucer or dish (other than metal) on the surface of the beans and pour out the carbon bisulphide in the dish, then cover the top of the barrels or close the door of the bin so as to keep the place as nearly air-tight as possible.

The carbon bisulphide evaporates quickly and has a very penetrating, unpleasant odor. It is very inflammable, hence do not have a fire of any sort about when you are treating the seed.

N. B.—Will you explain to me the fertilizing value, if any, of fresh cow manure and clover chaff on a garden spot, or for a potato and strawberry patch.

Answer—A ton of cow manure carries 12 pounds nitrogen, 3 pounds phosphoric acid and 9 pounds of potash, while a ton of clover chaff carries 34 pounds of nitrogen, 15 pounds phosphoric acid and 10 pounds of potash. From this you will be able to estimate the value of the material that you have suggested.

C. H. R.—I am milking seven cows, nearly all fresh, and out of the seven, five of them hold their milk until they are very disagreeable to milk. Have been unable to learn either the cause, or a cure.

Answer—About the only cause for the condition that you name is a tenderness of the cow's udder. Have your cows been exposed to a draft in the stable where they are housed?

An application of a mild liniment followed by some softening application such as a warm oil of some kind would have a beneficial effect.

F. H.—Are potatoes a good winter feed for calves seven to eight months old? If oats are fed should they be ground?

Answer—Speaking generally, potatoes are not considered good stock feed, that is, if fed in too large quantities. In a German experiment reported in 1907 the writer found that cows should not receive more than 23 pounds per head of cooked potatoes, and less of raw potatoes.

Director Hills of Vermont claims that potatoes at 15c per bushel are more costly than corn ensilage. If oats are fed to calves the oats should be ground so as to aid in their digestibility.

H. M.—I would like to know if Sudan grass is any good for hog pasture; also how many March and April hogs can I pasture on one acre under average conditions.

Answer—Sudan grass is not considered a good pasture for hogs. It is a hard rank grass.

Pasture can be very much better supplied in Ontario in the form of Dwarf Essex rape and red clover, sowing to the acre at the rate of 8 pounds of rape to 10 pounds of clover. Wheat and vetch at the rate of 1 bushel and a half of wheat to one half bushel vetch makes very good hog pasture. Either of these mixtures produce pasture much richer in hog-growing constituents than Sudan grass.

An acre of the mixture suggested should carry 15 to 20 hogs 3 1/2 to 4 months.

W. L.—Would like to ask how many times we have to sow rye and vetch on a piece of land to fit it for alfalfa. Have sown it three times.

Answer—While sowing rye and vetch on a piece of land helps to work it down in shape for alfalfa such a practice is not necessary. I would judge from your description that your land is in very good shape, hence I would advise you to plow it medium deep as soon as the frost is out of the land.

After plowing, scatter lime on top of the furrows at the rate of 3 to 4 tons per acre; also apply well rotted stable manure at the rate of four or five tons per acre. Work the ground down fine by several disking and harrowings, then apply a fertilizer carrying at least 3 to 4 per cent. nitrogen.

Too Many Cows Are Below the Standard of Profitable Production.

One may have a fairly good herd of cows but when their production is compared with that of many other herds in the country, the room for improvement becomes abundantly evident. Careful estimates have placed the average production of milking cows in Canada at 4,000 pounds of milk and the average production of fat at 150 pounds. Since it is known that a very large number of cows produce much above this amount, the inference is that many fall below it and are merely an unprofitable burden to their owners. Through cow-testing conducted by the Dairy and Cold Storage Branch of the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, herds have been brought up and up in production until they have become highly profitable as well as a source of pride to their owners. The average production of almost a thousand cows under test in the Province of Ontario in 1920 was 7,136 pounds of milk and 240 pounds of fat. One centre in that province showed an average of 9,413 pounds of milk and a little less than 350 pounds of fat. Whole herds have given an average of over 11,000 pounds of milk per cow and as high as 371 pounds of fat.

Individual grade cows in some of the high producing herds have produced 15,000 lbs. of milk each and a quarter of a ton butter fat. And even these records are surpassed by highly bred, well selected and well fed cows that have given almost 18 tons of milk and two thirds of a ton of butter fat in the 365 days. At a time when labor means so much it is unfortunate for one to be working away with an average herd which could in a few years be brought up to a profitable standard. Testing involves weighing and testing the milk from time to time in order to identify and discard the poor milkers. Herd improvement includes the use of vigorous sires from high producing mothers, generous feeding, and such kindness as to keep the cows comfortable under all circumstances. Pamphlet No. 24 of the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa, brings out clearly the reasons for and benefits from cow testing carried on for a number of years. A chart in this pamphlet shows that the improvement made in one herd in eight years amounted to raising the yearly average production from 5,600 pounds up to 12,500 pounds per cow. This pamphlet and other publications on cow testing are available at the Publications Branch, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa.

The Dairy

The exact cause of warts on cows' teats is unknown, but constant irritation of the affected parts seems a likely cause. Warts that have slim necks may be snipped off with scissors, a few at a time, and tincture of iodine then applied to the wounds. Masses of small warts will disappear after a time if you immerse the affected teats for five minutes night and morning in water containing all the bicarbonate of soda it will dissolve when hot. After the evening immersion, dry the teats and apply freely a thick paste made of equal quantities of salt, flowers of sulphur, and cold-pressed castor oil.

Cleanliness, neatness, order; shiftlessness, untidiness, dirt; which? Either has its reaction.

If we could farm forever without any setbacks it wouldn't be real living. Adversity holds an important place in the regular order of business.

The Sunday School Lesson

FEBRUARY 25

The Parable of the Pounds, Luke 19: 11-48. Golden Text—He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much, Luke 15: 10.

Lesson Setting—Jesus was drawing nigh to the city of Jerusalem. There was a great multitude with him. It had been stirred by his miracles, to great enthusiasm. Jesus saw that the people seemed to think that the dawn of the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and that they were ready to follow him to the Messianic king. Jesus felt that he must restrain this blind enthusiasm and dispel their expectation of an immediate kingdom, and speaks to them the parable of our lesson. It shows that the immediate duty of his followers is working and waiting in expectation of the Master's return.

V. 11, 12. Night to Jerusalem. As Jesus passed on to the city of Jerusalem, the multitude would draw the multitude, and enthusiasm would kindle enthusiasm. He knew that as soon as they came in sight of Jerusalem, the multitude would become unmanageable. Now was the time for the steady word and the tempering thought. A certain nobleman went into a far country. The setting of the parable seems to be historical. Archelaus, the son of Herod the Great, went to Rome at his father's death and begged that the Emperor might allow him to succeed to the throne. He was a cruel prince, and the Jews sent representatives to Rome to oppose his claims. After a long delay, Archelaus was granted his request. He went home and rewarded those who had watched his interests in his absence by giving them governorships, and slew the leaders who had appeared against his claims. This historical reference would strike a chord of interest in his hearers.

V. 13, 14. Called his ten servants; not all his servants, but ten of them whom he regarded worthy of confidence and possessed of ability. Delivered them ten pounds. The word translated "pounds" is "mina." It represented a sum that a working man of that time could earn in about three months. In the parable of the talents in Matt. chap. 25, the master divides all his property among his servants, and each servant receives a large sum, but in this parable they receive a small sum, but still enough to test their capacity, diligence and fidelity. Occurs in the parable of the business till my return. They are given to understand clearly that there is a time of reckoning coming. Citizens hated him . . . sent a message; sent an embassy. The embassy mentioned before consisted of fifty men, and when the Jews of Rome heard of their coming, eight thousand Roman Jews accompanied them to the emperor's palace.

V. 15. When he was returned . . . commended these servants to be called. The fact that this master was a wicked man whose going away and coming again was not like the going and coming of Jesus, does not weaken the truth that Jesus seeks to convey. If the kingdom of heaven is not, as the multitude expect, to be set up immediately, and if Jesus is to go from his followers, he will come again. His absence means responsibility and opportunity, and his coming again means accountability. As there were those who justly refused to have Archelaus reign over them, so there will be those who justly refuse to have Jesus in his absence. But this only magnifies the responsibility of his faithful servants.

I. Rewarding the Servants, 16-26. V. 16. Then came the first . . . ten pounds . . . ten pounds. This servant was made a good use of his pounds. He had used a little well, and his reward is according to his stewardship. Note that in the parable of the talents, while each man receives a large amount, the amount differs according to differing ability. The test, therefore, is fidelity solely. One man does as much relatively with his two talents as the other did with his five, and receives the same commendation and the same reward. Here the capital for all is the same, and the different results call for different commendation and different rewards, indicating different capacity and different fidelity to opportunity.

V. 17. Well, thou good servant; active done. Have thou authority over ten cities. His diligent and energetic use of a little means with an appropriate reward.

V. 18, 19. The second . . . be thou . . . over five cities. The second man has shown a measure of capacity and energy but he has not done his best and therefore there is no hearty word of praise and his promotion is determined by result.

V. 20. Another came . . . here is thy pound. This man having an opportunity equal to that of the rest, comes to the master with no results whatsoever. Laid up in a napkin; a safe place, but not a fruitful place.

V. 21. I feared thee. He proceeds to give the reason for his inaction, and instead of finding the reason in himself, he seeks to find it in his master. He seeks to excuse himself by accusing his master. Thou art an austere man; harsh and heavy laden. Thou takest up what thou layest not down. You lift what you did not deposit. That is, he looked for results and returns that were not reasonable or just.

Vs. 22, 23. Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee. The master will find in his own servants a just ground for his condemnation. The servant had not acted up even to his excuse. Wherefore . . . gavenot thou my money into the bank. The servant had not brought the master his own, for that pound should have earned interest in the interval. With-hold thy talent from me. The servant had secured this interest. The banker would have been willing to use that money. Mine own with usury. Usury means legitimate interest, although not it means exorbitant interest.

Vs. 24-26. Take from him the pound give it to him that hath ten pounds. The man that has made the most use of his pound, receives yet more. Jesus proceeds to state this reward as a law of spiritual life.

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For Home and Country

Lady Byng and the Home-Makers.
BY GIBSON SCOTT.

"We can scarcely ever get her to appear at our social functions and she is not only going to your Women's Institute Convention but is giving an address there. What is the mysterious drawing power?" asked an Ottawa lady.

The drawing power was the keen interest one Institute woman, and she the wife of Canada's new Governor-General, feels in the work and methods of all other home-makers for the betterment of their own homes and community, for at home in England the Lady Byng of Viny had been an active branch officer in an Institute.

"But I did not come here to-night to make a speech. In reality I came to ask questions and learn from Ontario, the mother of the whole Institute movement, how you have carried on so successfully for 25 years, for this, I understand, is your Silver Anniversary," said Her Excellency to the delegates at the Eastern Ontario Convention recently held at Ottawa. "It is a real pleasure to come to a Canadian Institutes Convention, for over in England where we are young in this work, we feel that we can learn so much from Canada which first brought this Institute idea to us, and especially from Ontario, of how to meet and solve our difficulties and the best methods of carrying on the work."

"Now we find for instance that the third or fourth year is a critical and difficult time in the history of the branch. Interest begins to lag; we do not quite write what to do next. What have you done here, you whose branches have been going for ten, fifteen, twenty or even twenty-five years? What were your methods? What did you do? What proved successful in your work for homes and community? While we have about 2,500 branches in England, we have not yet your long and successful experience."

A lively discussion by the members followed this appeal, the result of which was a decision to collect for Her Excellency's consideration reports from the various Conventions of Ontario and other information showing how the branches had carried on and what were the underlying sources of their strength and permanency.

At the close of the session Her Excellency expressed the wish to meet over delegate and a brief informal reception left the Eastern Ontario Institutes with a warm place in their hearts for the new mistress of Government House and the conviction that those who were working in the Institutes for better homes and communities throughout rural Ontario had a co-worker of unusual sympathy and understanding in the first lady of the land.

There was also the thrill of inspiration in the knowledge that the apparently quiet unnoticed work in solving the problems at home in our own neighborhoods was a source of keen interest and real helpfulness to countries thousands of miles away. "For Home and Country" now enlarges its meaning to "and Other Countries."

Winter Hymn.
God a cloak on all doth lay;
On the earth, the snow He sheddeth,
O'er the lamb a fleece He spreadeth,
Gives the children home and food;
Let us praise Him, God is good.

The Silly Bakers.
Four and twenty bakers
For the good queen's sake
Got all their ovens piping hot
A jelly roll to bake.
The dough was mixed with deftness
And worked into a roll.
"How can we put the jelly in,"
They cried, "without a hole?"
Four and twenty bakers
Left their jelly roll
And traveled thirty acres
Looking for a hole.
They said, "The jelly's waiting
All rich and red of hue;
Where's the hole to put it in?
Whatever shall we do?"
They never, never finished
The roll they did begin,
Because they couldn't find a hole
To put the jelly in!
Not Used to Capacity.
The Panama Canal is now carrying about a million and a quarter tons of shipping a month, and the revenue from tolls is about a million and a quarter dollars. That means that only about ten vessels a day pass through the canal—a number that is only half as many as the locks can handle even by daylight, and since the canal is fully lighted, only perhaps a quarter of what it could handle in the twenty-four hours.

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