

# Success in Growing Tomatoes

*The Experience of Many Years*

By GEORGE BALDWIN

THE Tomato or "Love Apple" first came into prominence about sixty years ago in the South American States, and until thirty years ago was little used as a vegetable, but to-day it is generally esteemed. When we think of the ugly, crinkly-looking specimens of thirty years ago and compare them with those now, how noteworthy has been the development. Tomatoes can be grown successfully in almost any locality, with the aid of a hot-bed and following the cultural directions of some one who is capable of imparting advice. This reminds the writer of a conversation he once overheard. Some friends were giving great praise and credit to one who had made a success of his garden. They said, "You must have worked very hard, but how did you do it?" "Well," the man said, "I put my seed in hot-beds, got good, sturdy plants, planted them out, and by attending to them I have got good results." The following method I have found to be very successful, both from an economic and prize-taking point of view. It is possible to have ripe Tomatoes by the first week of July, with the aid of a hot-bed, sowing the seeds at once. After sowing them in small, shallow boxes or pans, and placing them in a sunny south window, give fresh air on very fine, warm days. As soon as seedlings are an inch high they may be transplanted into other pans or boxes to give them more space, four inches each way being the proper distance; stir the earth frequently and water copiously, keeping them moving until about the 15th or 20th of May, when they are ready for the garden. If it is not possible to raise the plants oneself, buy them, and try to get them anywhere from twelve to eighteen inches long, for the following reasons: Prepare the piece of ground allotted for Tomatoes by digging deeply, mark off the holes 42 inches each way in rows, digging a hole eighteen inches square and deep and putting in two good shovels full of well-decayed manure. Cover with earth to within nine inches from the top, then pour in about half a gallon of water, then place the root of the plant down in one corner, bending the stem over so that only about six inches of the plant is above the ground line. Press the earth firmly around so as to bring the part that is above ground in a perpendicular position; the object is, that the roots, of Tomatoes in particular, have a tendency to come upwards for moisture, especially in very dry, hot weather. A rest, so far as Tomatoes are concerned, can now be taken until they are about eighteen inches above ground, when pruning and cultivating are essential. A rake is better for stirring the soil than a hoe, because, owing to the tendency of the roots coming upwards, shallow cultivation is necessary, but should be often done. Do not let the vines trail all over the ground, as is customary, but put four stakes to each plant about four feet long above ground and an inch square. Drive them into the ground about a foot from the plant and at an angle of about 75 degrees. By this time it will be found that the plant has thrown out shoots from above every leaf. Leave the main shoot and three of the strongest side-shoots for training up the four stakes, taking out all other shoots, also any suckers that may from time to time come up from the roots. As soon as the four shoots which have been selected are long enough, tie them to the stakes with raffia or some soft-tying material at intervals of eighteen inches. Now watch for the flowers, and as soon as the third set have well formed, pinch out the top of the shoots, which will strengthen the fruit which is forming under the bloom, and as soon as all the fruit is well formed allow one more shoot to come from the side of each stalk and which will eventually give you some green Tomatoes for pickling. The application of nitrate of soda is beneficial if used judiciously, say three times during the growing season, a tablespoonful dry scattered around the roots when planted, again when the blooms are showing, and finally when the fruit is set. When the fruit is beginning to ripen take a pair of scissors and snip out here and there parts of leaves which appear to be shading the fruit too much from the sun. While Tomatoes require plenty of water, especially in dry seasons, do not use the hose indiscriminately, as though you were sprinkling a lawn, but take the nozzle off and water well around the roots. Squirt the water all over the fruit. This has a tendency to bring on "Tomato Rot." This and the large, green caterpillars, about three inches

long, are about the only difficulties you will have to contend with, so use the water with care.

## THE BEST TOMATOES

A few words as to varieties will not be amiss. Of course if the plants are purchased you have not much choice, but for the benefit of those who will



TOMATO—"RED CANNER."

Some Growers Recommend Three or Four Sets of Fruit to a Branch. This Vine, from Which Were Taken Thirty-three Pounds of Ripe Fruit and Five Pounds of Green, Shows Six.

take the trouble to raise their own, the following varieties will be found very satisfactory. Very early varieties, Sparks' Earliana and Sutton's Early are the best for sowing at once—get Chalk's Early Jewel, New Stone, or Red Canner, for reds, the latter I tried last year and found very prolific, as will be seen in the accompanying illustration. Of pink varieties, Beauty is the best, followed by McInnes' Plentiful or June Pink. McInnes' Plentiful is a strong grower with deep green foliage, the leaves being almost like those of the Potato. Unfortunately, all city back gardens are encompassed with unsightly board fences. They can be made to look infinitely better if covered with Ornamental Tomatoes. They are called "Ornamental," but they are really the best flavoured. These can, with very little trouble, be made to climb up the fences, not only hiding the same, but a good crop is secured, especially on the fence facing the south. The following are the best known varieties: Red and Yellow Plum, Red and Yellow Pear, Red and Yellow Cherry, and those not usually grown are Golden Nugget, Sunbeam, Cascade, Clarke's Apricot, Brown's Peachblow and Red Currant; and then there is the Strawberry Tomato, which is the sweetest of all, but grows only in dwarf bush form. Two or three plants here and there in the perennial border will prove quite a novelty.

## A TOMATO OMELET

I will not presume to tell you of the many ways that Tomatoes can be served, but just try this one for a Tomato Omelet. Go to the tomato patch and select four good-sized, ripe Tomatoes. Then walk a little further into the chicken coop and get two

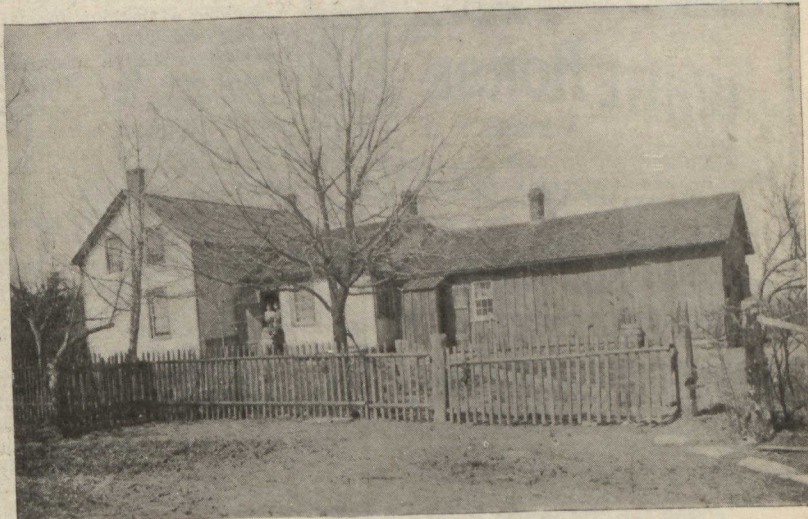
new-laid eggs. Return to the house, light the fire (remember this is 6 o'clock in the morning), and get the frying-pan. Put in a piece of butter about the size of a walnut, slice the tomatoes up into this and let them simmer away till they are about half cooked, then crack the eggs, pour them into the pan and keep stirring until the whole is well cooked. Transfer to a warm plate and put in the oven for a short time, and seasoning to taste with pepper and salt. Very dry bran is very good to pack Tomatoes away in for November use.

## Why Farms are Often Ugly and Forbidding

*Need of Greater Attention to Their Surroundings*

By E. T. COOK

A RETURN recently made of immigrants who have come over here for the specific purpose of entering upon farm life in Canada—Ontario in particular—showed that a large proportion soon found their way back to the cities, many undertaking work in market gardens near large centres of industry. Cannot this falling away from original intentions be traced partly, not so much to the comparatively lonely life of the farm, but to an almost complete absence of anything else except tending cattle and the daily round of duties that varies little from year to year? It may be said that the farmer has no time for any work outside appertaining strictly to the farm, and perfectly true this is of some cases, but distinctly not of all. An illustration is given of a farmhouse that cannot be accounted inviting, although there are great possibilities of clothing its surroundings with beauty that is neither costly in labour nor money. Frequently there is someone in the farmer's family who is wishful to combine domestic duties with those of the garden and takes more than a cursory interest in the home surroundings. These notes are prompted by conversations which the writer has had with farmers in many districts in the province, and in one instance, although capital was not plentiful and labour exceptionally scarce, a garden was to be established as quickly as possible to impart a real feeling of "home," so dear to many an emigrant's heart. It was as bare of flowers and vegetables as a sidewalk, but is gradually undergoing a change which the small outlay on seeds, plants, and firs have been instrumental in producing. One frequently hears the remark, "a garden is impossible—the cattle would gobble it up." Nothing of the kind. Where there's a will, there's a way, and before the summer is over one or more illustrations perhaps will be given to show the change that has taken place, from utter barrenness to something approaching an idyllic homestead. Ugly, uninviting, and unsympathetic surroundings unquestionably, if not exactly, a hindrance to general advancement are certainly not an uplifting force—and beyond this flowers certainly have a good influence on the mind. The question of expenditure is in most cases one for serious consideration, but flower seeds can be purchased in reasonable quantities at a trifling cost. It is astounding the pleasure that Nasturtiums, Morning Glory, Sunflowers, and the kinds that have been recommended from time to time in these pages will give during the summer and fall months, and fences at present bare may be turned to good account for vines, tomatoes, runner beans and squashes. The articles by Mr. Baldwin should be carefully read and acted upon. They are, I know, the outcome of years of practical experience and are invaluable helps. Many farms I am acquainted with are absolutely without a batch of vegetables, save perhaps tomatoes and potatoes that may be grown for market. This is an indisputable



A Farm Building That Could With Little Difficulty be Made Beautiful.