

INTERESTING AGRICULTURAL FEATURES FOR OUR COUNTRY READERS

HORTICULTURE
NEWLY PLANTED TREES

How to Shape Them for Future Protection and Usefulness.

An important part of orchard work just at the present time is the forming of the tops of the young trees. The height of the trees is a matter of moment and this is determined at the start. There is no question but that the lower the tops can be formed the better it will be for the tree, yet cultivation must be carried on and the tops of the trees must be adjusted to accommodate this work. I have often thought that if I could get plenty of straw or other material to cover the ground I would form the tops of the trees we are now planting, close to the ground, and would use much instead of cultivating, taking the chances against fire. But this is out of the question, and the proposition is to form the tops of the trees as low as possible and still allow room for cultivation. This work must be done by hand, and the hired man must always be reckoned with in all our orchard plans. If a man is employed to do this work himself it may make some difference with his plans, but it is a question of when he gets right down to the matter of handling the trees and tools around them, how low he would not have greater consideration for his own convenience than that for the hired man. It is quite different from working in an open field. And when a man comes to make this practically his business for perhaps four months, the matter of "picking all the fruit from the ground" loses much of its attractiveness. It's a safe gamble that after one season's experience, if the tops are very low, he will conclude to raise them up and forego the inconvenience of using ladders in harvesting fruit.

But this is a matter that one must decide upon for the tops cannot be lowered much if started too high. Another thing to be noted is that low branching of the limbs does not necessarily mean lower tops. We not infrequently see trees with the branches coming out only a few inches from the ground, and still the tops no lower or wider than others which branch considerably higher. The limbs of such low-branching trees are more likely to break down than those that branch higher up and are correspondingly shorter. In our work I have come to the conclusion that the tops of trees should be twenty to twenty-five inches above the ground as about the right height to start the branches. The young trees at planting are cut off twenty-four inches or a little more, above the ground. If this is possible, as they come from the nursery, the branches must come out below this. Sometimes we get trees from the nursery that have been trimmed up too high for this, but we try to get those which are not.

I am now working on a lot of young trees of different kinds from one to five years old. I like to do this work myself. With the yearlings I select three or four branches, never more than five, at about the height I have stated, coming out at even distances around the tree so as to make an even, symmetrical head, and cut away all the rest. Never leave two limbs, as a rule, in one tree. If the tree is making a stronger growth than the others, which will usually be found to be the case, it is a credit to the grower. Usually all are cut back more or less, owing to the vigor of the trees. It is well to have a lot of coarse strings in one's pocket for frequently a limb will be found which is wanted for the top but which turns down too low, or perhaps to one

side. This can be raised up to the desired position and tied across to a limb on the opposite side. It will soon grow in this position, when the string may be removed. Sometimes, too, one or more branches will be found growing out from the side of the trunk, but too low to conform to the ideal or standard we have set. If left as they are they will form a one-sided tree. In such cases we bring the most desirable branch to an upright position and tie it to the old trunk, cutting away all of the other ones resting off the top of this at the desired height. It will soon grow in this position, and next spring the required branches can be selected and the top formed the same as with a year-old tree. The string and piece of old trunk above the branch may also be cut off. It will soon outgrow the bend in the body so this will not be noticed.

It is necessary for each grower to have an ideal tree in his mind, and the forming of the tops is a matter of bringing the trees into conformity with that ideal. No two men form the tops exactly alike. The inverted vase form is one most approved, leaving the tops open in the centre so that the sun may reach all the part of the tree. This is a matter of leaving the proper number of branches on the main limbs growing out at the proper distance from the trunk, and this is a different proportion with different kinds of trees and of different varieties of the same kind. A very good way to study old trees and note how many branches may be allowed in these and at what distances from the trunk, remembering that the smaller limbs and branches we leave now practically remain where they are except for changes that may be made later by the load of fruit bringing them closer to the ground. Then arrange the branching in the light of the observation thus gained. Edward Hutchins, in Michigan Farmer.

GIANT PURPLE CONE-FLOWER

The giant purple cone flower (*Echinacea purpurea*, syn. *Echinacea purpurea*) is not seen often enough in our gardens. It is a handsome open plant, the flowers from five to six inches in diameter, being of a rather peculiar but pleasing shade of soft magenta pink with a large cone of brown in the center of a strongly contrasting brown. It needs a warm soil and sheltered position to stand out Toronto winters for although a native of this continent its home is considerably south of us, Gray's Mountain, giving its range as Penn. and Va. to Iowa and southward, adventuring occasionally eastward.

Echinacea angustifolia, a sister, is found on our northwest prairies, around Brandon (Man.). The flower of the latter species is somewhat smaller and the color, Gray tells us, is rose or red. If some enterprising grower would produce a hybrid from these two species, a hardier plant would probably be the result, although the giant cone-flower is quite hardy in Ottawa according to T. Macoun's list of *Barbarea Perennalis*. This proves that where the snow lies steadily all winter long many things can be wintered that think it is milder and the snow cannot melt. I have seen upon a covering that will "stay put."

Even if you live in a locality where the snow lies occasionally "winter" kill, so that a perennial is well worth growing as it can be bought for fifteen cents and at that price one can afford to renew one's stock when necessary. By the way, why is it that large sums of large sums of tender bedding plants each season, seem to think it the height of extravagance to spend a few cents on a perennial plant that is tolerably certain to give them one or two seasons' bloom, but may eventually winter-kill? This seems to be the particular

form of economy that pertains to the average gardener.—M. E. Blacklock.

STOCK

CARING FOR THE SOW

I have my brood sows in good condition at breeding time. There is a pen for them to go to whenever it suits them. In this way they get plenty of exercise.

A week before farrowing I put the sow in a box stall in the cow stable, and feed her chopped oats and bran, equal parts, by the liter, half themselves, and when due of herself. After farrowing I do not feed her until she looks for it, and then very lightly—only a little bran and water in the shape of a drink for two or three days.

I keep the young pigs as dry as possible, and leave space under the stall doors for them to go out into the stable. When a week old they will run around the stable, and grow nicely. I let the sow out for a short time in the yard for exercise.

When the little ones are over three weeks old and begin to eat a little, I start to feed them. They feed outside the box stall door, and continue growing right along. When six or seven weeks old, I wean the pigs, and the sow is ready to breed again in three or four days.—D. D.

LICE ON CATTLE

Although some cattle apparently seem to be naturally predisposed to this accumulation of filthy life, the majority of cases are the outcome of poverty and bad management. Good feeding seems to be looked upon by many when applied to live stock as being necessary to fatten an animal, but there is such a thing as good feeding necessary for stock in the way of wholesome and nourishing, but not general well-being and the profit to be fairly expected depends on this. The stomachs are often made a medium for transforming inferior hay and chaff into manure for the purpose of profit on the cattle, as well as on the manure, this being looked upon as being a means of putting waste material to profit. Mouldy hay or chaff eagerly accepted as such in the majority of cases as applying to fattening cattle, but in the case of stock it is not fairly enterprising. The well-being of stock stock has to be maintained to facilitate growth of bone and expansion of muscle, and nourishing food, besides being essential to these requirements also maintains the health of the skin. Inferior food forced on cattle—often because they are not allowed an alternative in the way of better food, suppress the free and healthy action of the skin, and the result is a condition of the skin which is not only a source of discomfort but also a source of loss of money, and under these circumstances the whole system of fattening is a failure. The pores of the skin lose their tone, and do not naturally throw off the impurities that should be gotten rid of, and lice breed in consequence of the lack of healthy activity, and this means little profit, often under sight of an abundance of healthy food. The health of the cattle is thus economy reduced to a low stage that the natural activity of the skin lacks the power to throw off the old coat, and the presence of lice is the result. The lice feed on the skin and the condition of the skin is that of a person who is not clean. The lice feed on the skin and the condition of the skin is that of a person who is not clean. The lice feed on the skin and the condition of the skin is that of a person who is not clean.

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INVESTORS
Bluebell

For you can buy, because other separators and these separators are the only ones that have phosphorus in them. They are entirely protected and are easily accessible. They are dirt-arresters. These H.C. local agents write the nearest station desired.

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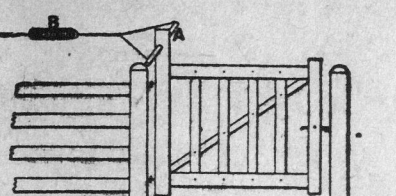
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Each a strong coil spring (B) from some old mower or binder. Run a further wire from the other end of the spring to the second post of the fence. The gate will swing either way and be pulled shut again. If opened clear back, it will stay open.—Olaf Rosten.

ALFALFA MAXIMS

1. Alfalfa must be inoculated.
2. Alfalfa cannot stand wet feet.
3. Alfalfa needs a well drained soil.
4. Alfalfa is a poor weed fighter the first season.
5. Alfalfa does not thrive when not cut.
6. Alfalfa needs a well drained soil.
7. Alfalfa should not be cut too late in the season.
8. Alfalfa roots go deep.
9. Alfalfa is the prince of drought resisters.
10. Alfalfa needs a deep, well packed seed-bed.
11. Alfalfa does best on matted soil.
12. Alfalfa is best seeded without a nurse crop.
13. Alfalfa should be seeded with a drill.
14. Alfalfa should not be pastured until well established.
15. Alfalfa should not be pastured in the spring, when starting growth.
16. Alfalfa boards itself and pays for the privilege.
17. Alfalfa adds humus to the soil.
18. Alfalfa produces good crops.
19. Alfalfa yields are large.
20. Alfalfa represents quality.
21. Alfalfa is the prince of drought resisters.

—Prof. L. R. Waldron, Dickinson, N. D.

SIXTY HOURS FOR AMHERST.

Says the Amherst News: The building committee appointed by the board of trade some weeks ago held its second meeting in the town hall last evening and A. S. Curry, C. J. Sillick and J. E. Lusby were appointed a committee to confer with the merchants and manufacturers of the town. From the views expressed by the different members of the committee and by several gentlemen present, it was not anticipated that there would be any trouble whatever in raising the necessary funds so as to start building operations at an early date.

Though 50 years ago there were only 50 miles of railway in South Africa, there are at the present time 8,000 miles in the Union of South Africa alone.

GENERAL

A SELF-CLOSING GATE

For the self-closing gate, illustrated here, with the upright piece at the hinge end and the gate is made a little higher than the post upon which it swings as seen in

ander, Brown, A. F. Baird, Miss Jewett, Melanson.

Second division—Morrison, Laughlin, Melrose, Andrews, Miss Wallace.

Third division—Whelpley, Pugh, Duffy, Jewett, McLeod, Bowes, Miss Wier.

Junior Electrical Engineering Laboratory.

First division—McLean, Murray.

POTATO GROWERS

ARE WARNED

A note of warning has been sounded from Ottawa in regard to a very dangerous potato disease that has been brought to Canada in tubers imported from Europe during the present year. The disease which is known as potato canker was recently discovered in an imported shipment. To warn Canadian farmers against the danger of planting imported seed, the director of the experimental farms has issued a leaflet known as Farmers' Circular No. 1, prepared by H. T. Gussow, the Dominion botanist, which contains the following points:

1. The only way in which the disease can be introduced is through the planting of affected tubers.
2. The use of diseased tubers for seed may, in the worst case, result in the complete destruction of the entire crop.
3. When once introduced the disease germ infests the soil for a period of eight years, which means that for at least eight years no sound potatoes can be raised on land thus infected.
4. None of the known remedies for other plant diseases will prevent the appearance of the disease.
5. The disease is spread readily through infested soil carried by wind, animals, farm implements, old bags or other means.

Attention is called to provisions under the destructive insect and pest act which show that to use or sell for seed potatoes imported from Europe is illegal. Copies of this Farmers' Circular may be obtained by applying to the Publications Branch, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa (Ont.).