

Soils and Crops

By Agronomist.

This Department is for the use of our farm readers who want the advice of an expert on any question regarding soil, seed, crops, etc. If your question is of sufficient general interest, it will be answered through this column. If stamped and addressed envelope is enclosed with your letter, a complete answer will be mailed to you. Address Agronomist, care of Wilson Publishing Co., Ltd., 73 Adelaide St. W., Toronto.

H. W.—1. What is the best keeping onion, those grown from seed or from Dutch sets? 2. What is the best time to sow buckwheat and what is the best variety? 3. What variety of millet do you recommend and when should it be sown? Can you give me directions for the culture of millet and rape? What is the best soil for all these crops?

Answer:—1. Both systems of growing onions are used. Some produce them from seed and others from Dutch sets. The yield from Dutch sets is usually less than that from seed, but the advantage is that the sets can be planted as soon as the ground is ready in spring and the green onions are ready to use earlier than those raised from seed. As a rule better bulb onions for keeping are produced from seed. 2. Buckwheat can be sown any time early in spring until the first of July. Possibly sometime in June is the best time to sow it. In tests at Ontario Agricultural College these four varieties stood high—Common Gray, Japanese, Silver Hull, Rye Buckwheat. 3. In Ontario tests the following millets have given good results, Siberian, Hungarian, Canary Bird. Millet can be grown on any good soil. It can be planted later than most other farm crops, and produce a fair yield of hay. In order to get a good stand of millet, after the ground is plowed it should be thoroughly disked and harrowed and if still lumpy should be rolled and harrowed. The millet is then sown broadcast at the rate of 20 to 30 pounds per acre. It is worked into the soil by a light harrowing. Under normal conditions the germination and growth will be rapid. The crop should be cut before it is too old else the hay will be woody and of poor nutritive value. Rape can also be grown on most farm soils but does not do its best on muck soil. The seed bed should be carefully prepared by plowing, disked and harrowed and the seed can be sown in rows broadcast at the rate of 2 to 4 pounds per acre. A medium loam or a heavy loam soil is best adapted for the growing of rape. As to variety, Dwarf Essex Rape has given best results in Ontario.

W. W.—1. What will eradicate witch grass from the garden? 2. How would you treat potato blight?

Answer:—1. Witch or quack grass is exceedingly troublesome since it propagates by running root stalks just under the surface of the soil. Small pieces of these roots will begin to grow wherever dropped, hence the area afflicted with this pest may be rapidly enlarged if care is not taken to collect every bit of root stock possible, and to dry and burn it when the ground is being worked in early spring. The only thing that can be done for quack grass in the garden is to keep its growth down by continual hoeing. Various methods to eradicate the pest have been suggested. One is by smothering it out. For this pur-

pose a thick seeding of rape is probably the most successful crop to grow. Thickly sown millet is also very effective. 2. Late blight of potatoes must be treated by careful spraying with Bordeaux mixture. This mixture consists of 5 lbs. copper sulphate, 5 lbs. lime, 50 gallons of water. The lime and copper sulphate must be dissolved separately. A gallon of water will dissolve a pound of either copper sulphate or lime. When the material has been dissolved mix in the proportions indicated, and spray the potatoes every ten days or two weeks from the time they are five inches above the ground. If any plants have gone down early from blight attacks, care should be taken not to store stock from such plants with healthy potato stock.

W. W.—1. What can I do for cutworms? They are cutting off my tomato plants. I wind them with paper but they crawl up the paper and cut them just the same.

Answer:—For controlling cutworms, the Maine Experiment Station gives the following advice:—
"Control cutworms with a poison bait. This is very easily made up of white arsenic (can be bought at any drug store) some molasses and something such as bran with which to make a mash. Mix the white arsenic and the bran material while dry and put the molasses into a cup or a bucket of water to dissolve. Then add enough of this sweetened water to the bran to make it just moist throughout. Place a teaspoonful at the base (not touching) of each plant affected and near the base of adjacent plants. Where the damage seems to be along an edge bordering a piece of grass-land, put some down near each plant along the border.

Use the following quantities:—
For gardens of 1/4 acre or less use:—
Bran (or substitute) 1 quart
White arsenic 1 teaspoonful
Molasses 1 tablespoonful
Water to moisten
For 1 to 2 acre gardens use:—
Bran (or substitute) 10 lbs.
White arsenic 1 lb.
Molasses 1 quart
Water to moisten

Many people add to this poison mash the juice and crushed pulp of some fruit that happens to be handy, such as grape fruit, apples, tomatoes, oranges, cantaloupes, etc., which have "just one bit," and it is considered by scientific people to be a very good practice. This poison bait is cheap, easily mixed and easily applied. The fact that it is a very old remedy which was standard many years ago has given a sufficient test of its reliability. One of the best features of the poison is that as soon as the worm has fed he crawls into the ground from which he never emerges so that the birds do not eat the dead cutworms.

Hoos

Thousands of pigs die a week or two after birth from mismanagement of the sow. The cross, constipated, flabby sow may kill and eat her pigs at once, or have little milk for their nourishment. If the sow is heavily fed just after farrowing, her milk kills her pigs, or they scour and fail to thrive. The careful man will let the sow have only lukewarm water to drink, without feed, for the first twenty-four hours; after that he will feed very lightly for a week or two. He will avoid making corn the exclusive feed during pregnancy and after farrowing, and will provide a patch of clover, peas and rape, clover or alfalfa, for the sow and pigs.

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Poultry

While it is possible for vermin to live the entire year when conditions are favorable, they seem to do their most deadly work in June. Houses that are cleaned once a week and fumigated every month, are seldom infested with vermin.

The writer has found that the use of tobacco stems in the nest boxes, instead of hay or straw, is in itself one of the best insecticides. Even in setting hens tobacco stems are used exclusively, with the result that when the chicks are hatched there are no lice present to sap the life out of them.

A good whitewash is made as follows: Take one pint of Zenoleum, three quarts of kerosene, five quarts of milk of lime, mix all with an equal amount of water. Milk of lime is obtained by slaking enough lime with the water to get five quarts of creamy consistency, to which the other materials are added. It is better to apply the whitewash with a spray pump than a brush, as the force will drive the mixture deeper into the crevices. Zenoleum used in the spray will kill the bacteria and fungi, kerosene will give the paint a clean appearance.

A good dog and a faithful cat are excellent guardians, and when these animals are well trained there will be very little loss from hawks, crows, rats, weasels and minks. Rats will not harm chickens after they are half matured, so long as some grain or other feed is lying about. They never loiter about a building where there is no place to hide. It is therefore wise to guard against hiding places.

The Wartime Garden.
The gardener's best friend is the hoe—so keep it going. Nothing has done more to further the science of farming than the discovery of the fact that if you keep stirring up the soil around a plant it grows and produces better.

GOOD HEALTH QUESTION BOX
By Andrew F. Currier, M.D.
Dr. Currier will answer all signed letters pertaining to Health. If your question is of general interest it will be answered through these columns; if not, it will be answered personally if stamped, addressed envelope is enclosed. Dr. Currier will not prescribe for individual cases or make diagnosis. Address Dr. Andrew F. Currier, care of Wilson Publishing Co., 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto.

Infant Feeding No. 1.
This subject is of great importance at all seasons, but especially so during the heat of summer when the sensitive digestive apparatus of babies is thrown out of equilibrium.

It would seem unnecessary to urge that every mother who is able to nurse her baby should do so.

The food which is supplied by her body is the natural and proper nutriment for her child.

Occasionally it is not nutritious and cannot be used, somewhat more frequently it is insufficient in quantity and has to be placed out with cows' milk, rarely it must be suppressed in the interest of the mother's health or life.

It is a sin against society, against nature and against God when a woman with an ample supply of breast milk deliberately elects to suppress it to suit her convenience.

It is next to procuring an abortion, which so many women do merely because it is inconvenient to have babies and bring them up.

I appeal to every honest, decent, woman who has a baby or is about to have one to see that her baby is nourished at the natural source, so far as it is within her power.

If this source fails the next best thing is to get a wet nurse, or if this is impossible to use the milk of animals.

The milk of asses and goats has curd or casein which quite resembles that in human milk, but such milk is usually hard to get and hence we must usually resort to cows' milk, preferably from cows that are dry fed.

Grass fed cows often eat plants

There is no necessity to hoe deeply—an inch is enough. Hoe every seven days at least and always after rain or a watering in order to break up the crust which forms. This is because the dust or "mulch," as it is called, which is formed by the breaking up of the surface soil into fine particles, keeps the moisture around the roots of the plants from evaporating.

Thinning should be going on continuously these days. The war gardener must show himself to be merciless in getting rid of all weaklings for they serve no purpose other than to sap for themselves the strength which should be reserved for the stronger plants. It stands to reason that, if too many plants are trying to take nourishment from the soil, none of them will thrive as it should. Ordinarily in thinning it is better to pull out the plants in the centre of the bunches which have come up together.

In districts where grasshoppers are abundant, farmers and gardeners should co-operate and arrange to fight the insects at the same time. As soon as they are noticed to be destroying crops, either of the following mixtures should be used early in the morning, about the time the insects begin to move about after their night's rest: (1) Bran, 20 pounds; Paris green or white arsenic, one-half pound; cheap molasses, 2 quarts; oranges or lemons, 3 fruits; water, 2 to 2½ gallons. The bran and poison are mixed thoroughly in a wash tub while dry. The juice of the fruit is squeezed into the water and the pulp and peel are added after being cut into fine bits. Then add the molasses and when the whole is thoroughly mixed, pour it over the dry bran and poison, stirring constantly so as to dampen the bran thoroughly. The other mixture is as follows: (2) Sawdust, 20 pounds; Paris green, one-half pound; salt, one-quarter pound; water, 3 gallons. The quantities given here would make sufficient for a fair-sized community and it might best be handled in this way.

MOTHER-WISDOM
There is a Right and a Wrong Kind of Fatigue in Children.
By Helen Johnson Keyes.
Of course children must be tired sometimes and if they rest quickly, then after a night of sound sleep, or after a wholesome meal followed by a period of thorough relaxation, all is well. Indeed, fatigue of this kind is actually healthful. Particularly at that time of life during the teens, when we call adolescence, the body and mind work best through periods of hard, fatiguing activity, followed by profound relaxation and indolence. All patients should be shown to adolescent boys and girls who choose to get through their tasks in this manner, although their parents it may be somewhat irritating and inconvenient.

There is, however, a fatigue which is dangerous and which should be met at once with proper remedies, for the longer it is allowed to persist the more difficult it is to overcome. The symptom by which it may always be known is the lack of power the sufferers have to become rested again. It settles down on them like a permanent condition of weakness and discouragement.

Children suffering from this dangerous fatigue awaken irritable in the mornings, have poor appetites and little interest in anything which they do. They perform their home tasks and their school work in a blundering, inattentive way. It lays them open to diseases of all kinds and makes recovery from these diseases more uncertain, slower and less complete. Morally, it leads to dullness, indolence and failure all along the road.

The explanation usually made for fatigue and nervousness in children is that they are studying too hard. As a matter of fact, this is seldom the cause and if they are taken out of school, little improvement occurs unless in addition to removing them from their studies a number of other changes are made in their manner of living.

I believe that if you will search your memory and experience you will decide that among all those run-down youngsters whom you have seen taken out of school, the only ones who have improved have been those who at the same time were sent away for visits or put on diets or made to sleep on porches. The truth is that hard study will not hurt any normal boy or girl if it is done under healthful, happy conditions.

Yes, it is trying conditions under which school life often proceeds, which usually result in dangerous fatigue and nervousness—sometimes running on into that twitching disease, known as Saint Vitus' dance, or into tuberculosis. The causes are threefold and lie in the faulty hygiene of the home, the poor hygiene of the school and the system of marks or competition which are often pushed to a senseless and truly criminal excess.

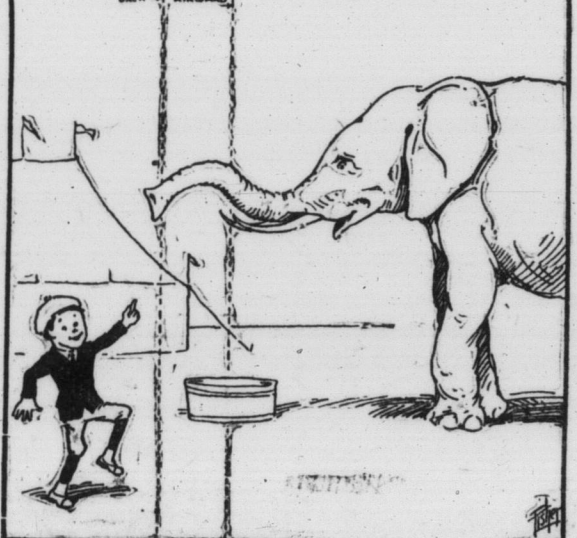
Children frequently start off the day with insufficient breakfasts, arrive at school chilled and perhaps with wet feet and are provided with a murderous basket-lunch of pickles, ham, cake and candy. What wonder that their heads ache and that they believe that their studies—which are indeed difficult and painful under these circumstances—are the cause of their ill health! They feel far too sick to eat supper but are hungry by bedtime so they eat a generous slice of pie before sleeping. A bad digestion makes a person feel cold so probably they do not open the windows very wide and the pie, plus the poor ventilation, produces restless sleep. So they go, from

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.
M. K.—Have been advised to rub my baby girl, who is four weeks old, every other day with olive oil, in order to strengthen her bones. Is it desirable?

Answer:—It will do no harm, but I think coconut oil is preferable, it is less greasy and it has nutritive value, as well as the olive oil.

FUNNY FOLD-UPS

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When Willie saw this funny beast,
He gave a mighty shout
"Who ever saw an elephant
With just a pig's snout?"

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The Superior Sex

"You are late again," said Clara as I entered. "What is it this time?" I explained the reason. A certain amount of tact was necessary, for my wife does not care for any remarks that reflect upon her sex.

"Owing to the present abnormal state of things, my dear," I said, "our office is almost entirely staffed by women. In many ways this is an improvement. Their refining influence upon the dress and deportment of the male members of the staff is noticeable. But there are, I regret to say, certain drawbacks. Admittedly our superiors in many respects, in others they are not, I am afraid, equal to the situation. Take, for instance, matters of detail where you—I mean they—should excel. I asked Miss Philpott to write a letter—"

"Did you post that letter for me this morning?" asked Clara. "If Mrs. Roberts doesn't get it, she won't know where to meet me to-morrow."

I told Clara that I had posted the letter, although naturally I did not remember doing so. A man who has hundreds of petty details to deal with every day develops an automatic memory—a subconscious mechanism that never fails him.

I explained this to Clara. "Not once in five thousand times would it allow me to pass the pillar box with an unposted letter in my pocket. Perhaps it is the vivid red—"

"And perhaps your vivid imagination," said my wife. "Well, I am glad you posted the letter, for Mrs. Roberts, as you know, never received the one you posted ten days ago."

"I took that matter up with the local postmaster," I said. "He explained to me that letters are now almost entirely sorted and delivered by women, and he was afraid mistakes sometimes happened. And just to satisfy you about this one, which I put as usual in my breast pocket at the back of my other papers—" I produced the contents of my pocket. As I expected, the letter was not there.

"Why do you carry so many papers in your pockets? What are they all about?"

"Candidly, my dear, I do not know. Without the element of surprise, life would be unbearably monotonous. That element I deliberately carry with me in my breast pocket. When a dull moment comes I empty my pockets. It would surprise you—"

"Nothing you do surprises me," said Clara. "Now go upstairs, please, and make yourself tidy. Have a dull moment—not more than one, for dinner is nearly ready—and get rid of those papers."

Although my wife has not a logical process of thought, at times she makes sensible remarks. I took her advice. As I anticipated, I had some surprises.

A few important business memoranda, a sugar form, two income-tax demands, a number of private letters and an unpaid coal account made up the collection. There was really nothing I could part with. Luckily, I found two duplicates of the coal account. These I could spare. As I opened one of them, Mrs. Roberts's letter fell out of it.

I had just time to catch the post. I managed to reach the front door unobserved. My wife opened the dining-room door to tell me that dinner was ready. I told her I had forgotten to post a very important business letter. "A most unusual occurrence," I said.

"Mary can post it for you. Dinner's on the table," Clara extended her hand for the letter. I explained that it was so very important that I could not even trust Mary.

"Mary's sex is, of course, against her," said my wife, "but I'll tell her to hold the letter out at arm's length. You can see her all the way from the window and watch her put it in the pillar box."

A little candor is sometimes necessary, I find. "Strangely enough," I said, "the five-thousandth chance has come off. It is the letter I forgot to post ten days ago."

"I know you did," said Clara. "You left it behind, and I posted it myself." Here I saw that I was going to score. "Then what is this?" I asked in triumph.

"This," said Clara, taking it from me, "is the letter you forgot to post ten days ago."

Christian Character.

That over night a rose could come
I one time did believe,
For when the fairies live with one
They wilfully deceive.
But now I know this perfect thing
Under the frozen sod
In cold and storm grew patiently
Obedient to God.

My wonder grows, since knowledge came

Old fancies to dismiss;
And courage comes. Was not the rose
A winter doing this?
Nor did it know, the weary while,
What color and perfume
With this completed loveliness
Lay in that earthly tomb.

So maybe I, who cannot see
What God wills not to show,
May some day bear a rose for Him
It took my life to grow.

Poultrymen should grow a ton of mangel beets for each 100 hens for succulent feed for winter.

Sheep Notes

There is a tendency for farmers to keep their lambs until they weigh 100 pounds or more, instead of selling them when they reach a weight of seventy-five to eighty pounds and bring the top market price.

Packers will not pay the top price for lambs no difference how fat, if they weigh over eighty pounds. The reason is because the best cuts of meat can be obtained from the smaller carcasses.

In addition, the one who sells March lambs in June or July when they have attained seventy-five or eighty pounds, instead of waiting until fall to dispose of them, avoids the danger of disease in the last two summer months. Lambs make very small gains during this period. They make the cheapest gains under five months of age. They can reach the necessary weight by the last of June or middle of July if fed liberally with grain, pasture crops and milk from their mothers.

The marrow from the soup bone makes a pleasant addition to soup.