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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., 78 Adelaide St. W., Toronto.

Goose Raising for Profit.

Here is a branch of the poultry business that is not likely to be overdone, at any time in the near future. While there is doubtless an awakening, in many sections, to the fact that geese are very profitable yet a great many people imagine that they are hard to raise. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The fact is, that under ordinary conditions, geese are less difficult to raise than any other domestic fowl. Neither great skill nor expensive equipment are required.

Easy to Start

A few good, healthy stock geese and plenty of pasture are the most important requirements in making a start. Of course, shelter of some kind should be provided, but almost any dry shed will answer. During the winter months the birds do better when protected from the elements, especially at night. However, the goose is a hardy bird and can endure a great deal of cold without apparent suffering. In spite of this fact, we always have comfortable quarters for the geese, old and young. Geese are very thrifty birds and are free from lice. They are also free from disease. We have raised geese for a number of years and have never yet lost a single bird from disease.

We seldom lose a gosling. After a gosling is four days old, we consider it almost as good as raised. A few geese can be kept as a "side-line" by almost any farmer without interfering with other poultry, or in fact, with any other farm industry. They should not be fed or housed with other poultry, however, as they are more or less abusive, as a rule, especially when feeding. Those who admire water fowl should keep geese. We can get more genuine pleasure from a flock of geese than from any other poultry on the premises. They are easily managed and really seem to be more intelligent than any other fowl we have ever raised.

Pasture is Essential

As stated above, plenty of pasture is necessary. It is, in fact, the most important point to be considered. The goose is essentially a grazer; in fact, grass or roughage is as essential to a goose as it is to a cow. They are not over-particular in regard to the quality of the pasture and their downy coats yield a profit that should not be ignored, even in this day of "new fangled" inventions in the way of bedding. There has never yet been a time that we have had any difficulty in disposing of the feathers, at good prices. A well matured bird will yield about a pound of feathers in a year. Laying geese must never be picked until the laying season is over. We are very careful in handling the geese.

Right now is a good time to plan for goose-raising, if the work has not been done before. If the venture is to be a success, don't put it off until spring. Geese mature in February, as a rule, and new stock should be procured before that time. We have found it advisable not to disturb old mated geese. Once they are properly mated they will so remain, year after year, unless the ganders get quarrelsome. Some ganders will mate with one or two geese, while others will choose four or five. Young stock should be kept separate from the old mated birds at first.

Do Not Give Free Range

We learned, by costly experience, that where the goslings have free range it is impossible to control them after they once acquire the habit of running away. A few years ago when we began raising the China geese, (which are much more active than any other geese we have ever raised), a large swamp was fenced for the old birds. This pasture which is not at all suit-

able for other live stock, makes a very good range for a flock of geese during the greater part of the year. Coarse grass and weeds make good goose pasture. However, one must be on the alert for foxes and turtles.

As a range for goslings we use an apple orchard fenced and equipped with suitable houses. Young goslings must be protected from rats and other destructive animals. Also, they must have shelter at night and during hard rain storms. A cold rain will sometimes kill good-sized goslings, before they can be rescued. A gosling is easy to raise but must not get rain-soaked on the back. We keep the White Chinese geese at the present time and find that they have a number of good points not found in other geese. They are the same in every way except color, as the Brown Chinese. Both are very beautiful in appearance. White China geese have pure white plumage and their bodies are very graceful. Their long, slender, curved necks give the birds a swan-like appearance, which is always greatly admired. The feathers are of the finest quality and always bring the highest market price.

A Good Market Goose

These birds, while not so large as some others, are suitable for market purposes where very large geese are not wanted. While they are sometimes called the "Leghorn of the goose family," they are somewhat larger than common geese. It is not unusual for young birds to weigh fifteen pounds each when ready for market. They can be made much heavier if kept longer and fed a considerable amount of grain, but nothing will be gained this season by feeding large quantities of marketable grain.

We always try to have poultry in good condition before being sent to market, but have always been opposed to "stuffing," partly because it seems like "cruelty to animals" to keep fowls closely confined, and partly because we never have been convinced that it was very profitable.

We feed a reasonable amount of grain and always sell poultry of all kinds alive.

Geese require less grain from the time they are hatched until ready for market than any other fowl we know of. While we have always raised geese as a side-line, so to speak, we aim to raise about two hundred young birds each season. We use large, heavy chicken hens. Have never tried hatching with incubators, but have been told that it can be done.

Use Leg-Bands to Distinguish

However, we succeeded in raising 174 fine young geese and together with the old birds, which were twenty-two in number (seventeen geese and five ganders), we had a pretty nice flock.

We use leg-bands on the old geese as they sometimes get together during the latter part of the season and it is hard to tell old from young.

Sometimes the entire flock is allowed free range. Since cool weather began in October we have been feeding more grain than during the early fall because most of the birds now on hand will go to market soon. We have sold quite a number locally, to be kept for next year's stock. We never ship geese.

We have found the China geese to be excellent layers. Young geese will seldom lay as many eggs as mature ones, but an old bird will often lay from seventy-five to one hundred eggs in a season. One young bird laid fifty-four eggs last season.

Green rye is a good substitute for grass in winter. Geese must have some sort of roughage. They like clover hay, alfalfa and silage. We feed plenty of these during the winter. Also, grain twice a day. Raw vegetables, chopped, with bran added (also a little salt), gives variety to the ration. Provide good, clean water to drink.—A. W. G.

Be interested in everybody's troubles except your own.

The cellar is not the best place for squashes and pumpkins. A good cool room upstairs in the house is all right. But see to it that rats and mice do not gnaw holes into them. They like the seeds, and the only way you can be sure that they will not get them is to go into the trapping business, and stick to it till the last rat is under the spring.

Poultry

To make a good powder for lice on chickens mix three parts gasoline and one part crude carbolic acid with as much plaster of paris as the liquids will moisten. Allow the material to dry for a few hours and then place the powder in airtight containers. The powder should not be mixed or placed near a flame. It is necessary to hold the fowl while dusting and care should be taken to work the dust into the feathers thoroughly. Ten pounds of the mixture will treat 250 mature birds.

The head louse, which lives particularly on little chickens, can be exterminated with mercurial ointment or "blue butter." This contains about 50 per cent. of metallic mercury, which kills the head lice. Mercurial ointment is a stiff substance and should be mixed at the rate of one part to two parts of vaseline to apply easily. A bit of the mixture the size of a pea applied with the tip of the finger and rubbed into the feathers about the head will destroy the lice. It should not be used too freely.

Hoops

Weaning Pigs. Weaning is one of the most dangerous periods of a pig's life. Young pigs are often seriously injured if allowed to eat too much feed at one time. They should have access to corn and other grains while they are with their mother, so that when they are weaned they will know how to eat. Skim milk or buttermilk is desirable feed for pigs at weaning time. The milk should be fed in the same condition at all times, either sweet or sour, otherwise digestive disorders are likely to be caused. The feeding trough should be kept clean.

Care should be taken that the pigs are not overfed. Overfeeding will stunt their growth. One of the greatest secrets of success in the rearing of weaning pigs is the frequent feeding of small quantities of food at any one time. Usually the pigs are large and thrifty enough to wean at the age of six to eight weeks. They should have access to forage such as alfalfa or clover, if at all possible.

The Dairy

The following are the necessary requirements for first-class dairy production: 1. Sterilized, i.e., strictly clean, dairy utensils. Boiling hot water or live steam must be used to attain the standard. 2. Clean cows. The udders and teats should be washed if badly soiled, or wiped with a damp cloth if slightly soiled. Flank and bellies should be brushed to remove loose hairs and dirt. 3. Small-top milk pails with cover half over the opening. 4. Immediate cooling of the milk to 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

The cow that drops her calf before her time is a proper subject for suspicion and should not be allowed to run with the other cows. Machine-milking should not be forced too fast. Allow the cows a reasonable amount of time to get adjusted to the new method of milking. Carcasses of animals dying on farms should be cremated or buried. Exposed, they are not only unsightly, but may spread contagious diseases.

What Farm Activity Pays You the Best?

Keeping books pays as well on a farm as in a bank, a railway office or a factory. Many large farms have a regular bookkeeping department. The average size farm does not need such an elaborate system of account books any more than it needs three or four binders, seven cream separators, nine churns, or five hay loaders. The size and detail of the system depend on the acreage of the farm and the amount of business the farm does.

Some person on the farm can learn how to conduct a set of books for the farm. Then only a few minutes a day, or once a week, will be needed to keep a set of farm account books. Here are several important things a farmer knows if he keeps a set of books: How many dollars' worth of foodstuffs sold off the farm last year? How much money was cleared on the farm last year? What crops are not paying? How did this year's profits compare with last year, two years ago, five years ago?

A farmer will be able to check up every item of farm expense such as seed, poultry, cattle, and hogs, their cost and the value of their product to the farm.

Another pleasing and profitable thing about a set of farm books—one can take an inventory at the end of the year of all the live stock, the implements, the buildings, the grain on hand, and all of the equipment and know just where the farm stands financially.

The Commission of Conservation has issued a very simple yet comprehensive farmer's account book which will be sent free to Canadian farmers who ask for it, stating at the same time how many acres they work. The supply of these is limited and the rule of "first come, first served" will apply.

"A sneer is the apology for argument made by a man who does not understand."—G. H. Morrison.

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The Sunday School INTERNATIONAL LESSON DECEMBER 1.

Lesson IX. Joseph. Sold by His Brothers—Gen. 37. Golden Text, Prov. 10. 12.

Verses 1-17. The first seventeen verses of the chapter supply the main motives of the story. Joseph's brethren were alienated from him, first, because of the favoritism of their father; this was a persistent source of trouble in the family; his own excellence of character was a rebuke to them; and they were stirred to envy by his dreams of pre-eminence. Envy working itself out is the key to this lesson.

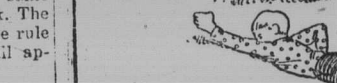
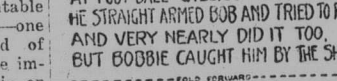
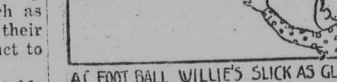
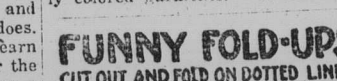
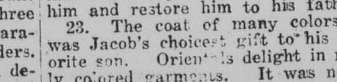
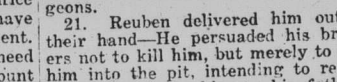
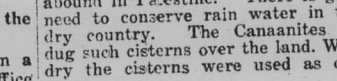
18. They saw him afar off—Joseph was in search of his brethren in obedience to his father's concern for their welfare. He found them at Dothan. 19. Behold this dreamer cometh—This reference to the dream of pre-eminence leads to the spiritual story. The term was applied by the brothers as a derisive nickname, an expression of hatred, but it calls attention to the spiritual character of Joseph. He was a dreamer, or rather seer; he had the gift of rare clarity of vision, an earnest desire to know the things of God. Insight and wisdom became his because he sought to know the things of God. He possessed gifts of a high order, like Daniel, and used them because he kept his soul pure.

20. Let us slay him—The sight of Joseph stirred up all their envy. "How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds makes the ill deeds done." He who harbors malice will find a chance to do an evil deed. Into one of the pits—Underground cisterns are abundant in Palestine. There is great need to conserve rain water in that dry country. The Canaanites had dug such cisterns over the land. When dry the cisterns were used as dungeons.

21. Reuben delivered him out of their hand—He persuaded his brothers not to kill him, but merely to cast him into the pit, intending to rescue him and restore him to his father. The coat of many colors—It was Jacob's choicest gift to his favorite son. Orientals delight in richly colored garments. It was not a

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AT FOOT BALL WILLIE'S SLICK AS GLASS HE STRAIGHT ARMED BOB AND TRIED TO PASS AND VERY NEARLY DID IT TOO. BUT BOBBIE CAUGHT HIM BY THE SHOES.



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Scrofula.

Forty or fifty years ago it would have been difficult to find a person of average intelligence in this country who did not have an idea of what was meant by the term scrofula. Nowadays the term is so seldom used that the average person is ignorant of its meaning, showing that words like scrofula, prevail, become obsolete, and are forgotten. Fifty years ago scrofula was thought to be a real disease like mumps or chicken pox, and the scrofulous person, old or young, had a thick, swollen neck with running sores. As now recognized, scrofula is an irregular collection of symptoms, without any definite disease history. When we speak of scrofulous gland nowadays we usually mean tuberculosis in the lymph glands of the neck, when we speak of scrofula deema we mean various kinds of skin eruption of tubercular origin. Scrofulous blood used to be regarded as impure blood causing acne and other eruptions and was the excuse for giving children sulphur and molasses, senna, stillingia, sarsaparilla and other remedies supposed to be required for an annual spring cleaning. It may be said that scrofula stands for tissues and organs which easily get out of order and get well slowly. Sores on a scrofulous child heal slowly, run indefinitely and when healed are followed by others in the vicinity. Scrofulous children have weak mucous membranes, catarrh of the nose, mouth and ears, adenoids and enlarged tonsils. The glands of the neck and elsewhere in such people are large and often the seat of running sores. Such people resist disease badly and are always catching diseases that have the possibility of being cured. A scrofulous child is almost sure to have had parents or grandparents who had the same trouble or else tuberculosis or syphilis and if a child with this tendency lives amid bad hygienic surroundings he will almost to a certainty develop scrofula.

The germs of tuberculosis are most frequently found in such cases attacking the glands of the neck and

the skin and causing swellings and eruptions which are only too common. Scrofulous children, often have intestinal catarrh with enlarged abdominal glands, diseased bones and joints and in almost all of them the tubercle bacillus will be found, they are also sufferers from all kinds of ear diseases. Two kinds of children are described as scrofulous in the writings of half a century ago, one being pale with tender, white skin, large veins, flabby muscles and quick intellect, the other with red face, thick nose and lips, and dull intellect. Beware of patent medicines for such troubles. The sins of patent medicine makers in imposing on the public, especially the poor, in advertising and vending their nostrums for scrofula are many and if there is to be retribution for such sins I hope they will get it good and proper. Good food, plenty of sleep, out of door life, a daily bath, a well ventilated home and school, these are the best means for fighting scrofula. Three drugs have been found effective in treating scrofula, iodine, cod liver oil and iron, and they should be given not only in a form in which they can be readily assimilated but in one which will make them acceptable to the sensitiveness of children.

Questions and Answers.

S. E. B.—1—Are there certain foods which are beneficial when one is suffering from a torpid liver? 2—Please mention a good medicine to restore such an organ to its normal condition. Answer—1—I suppose you mean by a "torpid" liver, an organ which is not secreting the proper quantity of bile. If that is due to an obstruction by gall stones, of course the obstruction must be removed; if it is merely a feature in the general condition, an abundance of simple, easily digested food would be all that you would require. 2—You must remember that this department is not for the purpose of treating individual cases or providing prescriptions. If you need a medicine to affect your liver, your physician is the proper person to furnish it.

Cleaning Old Barrels.

Old barrels should be used cautiously. If they have contained no material which has permeated the wood, they may be cleaned by the use of steam, hot potash lye obtainable from wood-ashes, or crude potash secured at drug-stores. They must be treated repeatedly, and thoroughly rinsed and drained. Barrels in which sauerkraut or molasses has been stored can be cleaned by first scalding well with boiling water (letting the water stand in them till cold); then fill with cold water, and throw in a large quantity of live coals from a wood fire, leaving the coals uncovered. Another and better method is to raise the barrels with a strong solution of oil of vitriol and water.

This is the gospel of labor— Ring it, ye bells of the kirk: The Lord of love came down from above To live with the men who work. Henry Van Dyke

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