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NEWSY FARM NOTES

By Agricola

WET SPOTS IN FIELDS

Sometimes while travelling through the country one notices in fields low places which are pools in a rainy season, and when dry produce little or nothing under cultivation. Such places have no satisfactory outlet for drainage, because the land rises on all sides. The soil is water-logged and cold, and the nitrifying bacteria, so essential to the successful growth of crops, have perished. Such a spot is not only an eyesore, but an evidence of neglect.

Many years ago an illustration of what could be done with such areas came under the writer's notice. A space of about a couple of acres on the Experimental Farm, of a swampy character, was renovated by the simple process of drilling three wells, four inches in diameter, down through the hard pan and rock to a depth of about 40 feet, and laying tiles as feeders to the wells.

If the smaller spots one notices were drained only by one or two "wells," without tiles, they would dry earlier in the spring and would be in a condition to support vegetation. The wells would require cleaning occasionally.

THE TIME TO FLOUGH

All writers agree that the best time to plough the meadow is as soon as possible after the hay is off, July or August preferably. Old pastures, too, giving little feed, should be treated in the same manner. Good practice also recommends the immediate rolling of the ploughed land, so that there are no air-pockets to prevent the sod from rotting, and a weakly harrowing to work the soil and conserve the moisture, and also to start weed seeds and kill the seedlings. Soil deprived of air, of warmth, and of moisture cannot give good crops, because the organic matter is not changed into a form suitable for plant food. If the ploughing is done later and under unfavorable conditions the texture of the soil is injured, and the effect of it is felt in the succeeding crops, perhaps for some years.

Now all this is perfectly sound in theory, but very difficult to put into practice, even in an ordinary summer. The ground is hard and dry at the season recommended, and the strain of ploughing it immense. In a dry summer, like the present the operation is impossible. Nevertheless for the reasons given above the careful farmer will not wait till the snow flies—which has been done—before performing this important task.

PLANTING BULBS

The time for planting spring flowering bulbs is nearing and flower lovers are consulting the fall catalogue with eager eyes. Many species of these bulbs have been specially "fattened up" for sale by the pinching out of previous flower-buds, and after they have expended their stored energy in the production of a superb bloom, they may as well be thrown aside. Others will not do so well the first season, but improve

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with time, and better still will multiply and form sizable clumps. Such are the crocuses; the winter aconites (Eranthis hyemalis) whose yellow butter cup-like flowers star the ground; the glory-of-the-snow, Chionodoxa lucillae, whose heavenly blue flowers I have seen peering out of a late snowbank; and the grape hyacinth, Muscari botryoides, a stiff sturdy little plant with spikes of dark blue flowers resembling miniature bunches of grapes. These are all very hardy and well repay the little care required to keep them clear of weeds. The tulips and narcissi are next to them in point of durability, and increase.

The worst feature of spring flowering bulbs is their unattractive foliage, which must be allowed to ripen if further flowers are desired, but this can be hidden by transplanting among them various annuals, of which perhaps the best is the Schizanthus.

THE CAPELIN

This important member of the finny tribe is known to science as Mallotus villosus, and as "capelina." It was well known to the Portuguese centuries ago. It is a northern fish found on both sides of the Atlantic. Dr. Gram of Norway, mentions that once off the Finmark coast, he saw shoals of capelin, followed by millions of atks fulmars and various gulls, and between these hordes above and predatory fishes and smaller whales below, the capelin had a perilous time.

On our side, its range is from Nova Scotia north to Greenland and the Arctic Islands; it throngs the Grand Banks which is one reason why cod abound there. Unlike the smelt it never enters rivers. Dr. Bean, while in Alaska, took 17 capelin from the stomach of a single cod. In 1818 Anspach gave a vivid account of a night scene at Conception Bay, Newfoundland. "It is impossible to conceive much more to describe the splendid appearance of the Bay and its harbors on such a night... Then its vast surface is completely covered with myriads of fishes of various kinds and sizes, all actively engaged in pursuing or avoiding each other; the whales alternately rising and plunging, throwing into the air spouts of water;... the capelins hurrying away in immense shoals to seek a refuge on the shore, where each retiring wave leaves countless multitudes skipping on the sand, an easy prey to the women and children, who stand there with barrows and baskets ready to seize upon the precious and plentiful booty; while the fishermen, in their skiffs, with nets made for the purpose, are industriously employed in securing a sufficient quantity of the valuable bait for their fishery."

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A Meal Ration For Stock On Pasture

(S. A. Porter, Dominion Experimental Station, Kentville, N.S.)

It is the experience of all dairymen that cows give their maximum flow of milk in the late spring and early summer months, when the grass is young and fresh, and of ideal condition for milk production, besides being plentiful enough to supply the needs of the animal readily. Under such conditions the feeding of grain will not stimulate the milk flow to any extent, and will not pay a profit unless the cows are heavy milkers, or are on official test. It will help, however, to keep the system in good condition to better withstand the shortage of grass later on. During the heat of summer, when the grass becomes older and not so nutritious or plentiful, the feeding of a grain ration is necessary in maintaining a milk flow and keeping up the condition of the cow, that she may do her best when the grass freshens up in the autumn. For this summer ration the following grains are suitable—wheat bran, ground oats, barley, cornmeal, cotton-seed meal, gluten feed, and linseed oil meal. It is almost impossible to make a grain ration that will balance pasture grass throughout the season, as in the early spring the grass contains much more protein than it does later in the season. In the early spring and summer the mixture can be made up with a relatively small amount of the high-protein feeds. If the flow of milk is not reasonably maintained it will pay to add more of these feeds and perhaps increase the amount of grain fed. If for any reason there is not sufficient grass to supply the necessary roughage it will pay to feed soybean crops or hay in addition to the grain.

The following are sample grain rations: for early summer 300 pounds of cornmeal, 100 pounds wheat bran, 100 pounds gluten feed, 50 pounds of cottonseed meal; for late summer, 200 pounds cornmeal, 150 pounds ground oats, 100 pounds wheat bran, 150 pounds cottonseed meal, 150 pounds gluten feed. In the early part of the season these grain rations can be fed at the rate of one pound for every six pounds of milk produced, and later, when the pasture is short, one pound for every four or five pounds of milk produced. While more attention is usually given to the feeding of cows, it never pays to neglect the young stock during the summer while on pasture. By long as the grass is abundant grain will not be necessary for young stock, but with the decline of the pasture other feeds should be given in sufficient quantity to keep up a steady gain of at least one-half pound per day. It is a mistake to allow dairy or beef heifers, or steers, to lose weight during the grazing season. During the fall months when the after-feed is plentiful grain feeding can be discontinued.

Growing The Dairy Heifer

(S. A. Hilton, Dominion Experimental Farm, Nappan, N.S.)

It is a well recognized fact among successful dairymen that the poorly developed heifer does not mature as quickly or become as profitable a cow as will the heifer that is properly grown, providing the inheritance for production is the same. Data collected at the Experimental Farm, Nappan, N.S. show that the feed cost of properly rearing a dairy heifer to one year of age is \$47.33. This is the average cost of rearing 81 grade heifers over a period of nine years. From one to two years of age, the cost is \$40.57. From two years of age to freshening the cost varies from \$8 to \$20, averaging about \$15, when heifers are freshening at 28 to 30 months of age.

This brings the average feed cost of a dairy heifer to over \$100, which means that if the breeder is to make a success of rearing heifers, he must first breed only the best and then develop the calves properly, so as to obtain maximum production when the heifers freshen.

It has been found at this Farm that it pays to feed whole milk for at least six weeks after the calf is dropped, then gradually change to skim-milk, at the same time adding a small amount of flaxseed jelly to the milk to replace the buttermilk. Skim-milk should be fed until the calf is six to eight months old, depending upon the growth obtained, twenty pounds a day being the maximum. Fall calves may be turned on good pasture the following summer, but spring calves should be hand-fed inside until the following year. The stomach of a young calf is not equipped to handle roughage

Ancient And Modern Weeds

Tenants of Weedy Farms Hanged in Scotland—The First Weed Inspectors.

(By Janet Munro, in The Farmers' Advocate.)

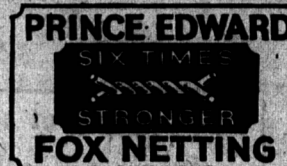
Evidently weeds were, are and ever shall be. Weed seeds have been found in the tombs of the Pharaohs. Much of the literature of ancient times and later was devoted to weeds so that the numerous pamphlets of our Agricultural Departments on the same subject are merely continuing the good work.

Browsing in a friend's library one day, I came across a motley old book on Farm Weeds with ancient spellings, precepts and superstitions, but, nevertheless, much sound wisdom, most of which is appended herewith. Continued on page 11

to any extent until it is six to eight months of age. During the winter months good quality clover hay should be supplied; also turnips or good quality silage and a grain mixture of 3 to 4 parts of oats, 2 parts bran and 1 part oil meal by weight gives excellent results and should be fed in small amounts as soon as the calf will take it. This may be increased to two or three pounds a day as the calf develops, that is at six months or so of age.

If the calf is well grown at one year of age it may be carried through to freshening on pasture during the summer and good quality hay and roots or silage in the winter. If the hay is poor, a pound or two of grain should be fed; crushed oats and oil meal are excellent at this time. The first year is the critical period, and many a good animal has been ruined during this period by improper feeding.

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