



MODERN FARMER



NEWSY NOTES

By Agnola

The Plant-Hunters (I)

There are but few real gardeners who have not seen the Regal Lily (Lilium regale) but I venture to say that not one in ten knows where it came from, nor who introduced it. Its discoverer was an Englishman, Dr. Ernest Wilson, who spent his life in wandering through the remote regions of Western and Northern China in search of the wild and beautiful plants. "Chinese Wilson," as he was affectionately termed, was probably the greatest of modern plant-hunters.

Plant-hunters like Hooker, Handel-Ross, Wilson, and Fraser, have risked their lives in the forbidding places of the earth, the wilds of the Himalaya Mountains, the mystic land of Tibet, the bleak stretches of East Russia. With camels, mule packs, and skin tents, they have faced untold privations and hardships, all for the sake of a few pockets of rare seeds or a few sacks of bulbs; but they have enriched gardens all over the world.

The Regal Lily is good, but perhaps not the best of Wilson's discoveries. He himself thought that to be the finest in 1901, of the "Chinese Beauty Bush" (Kolkwitzia amabilis), Wilson found this magnificent shrub growing on a mountain, 12,000 feet above sea level, in the province of Zueph, China. So rare is it, that only this once in eleven years of traveling in that country, did Dr. Wilson see this bush.

However, he managed to get a considerable quantity of it, which he sent to England. It all germinated, and one healthy seedling was taken to the U. S. and planted in the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. All the Kolkwitzias on this side of the Atlantic are descended from this one seedling. This, out of all the dozens of rare and beautiful plants he discovered, is the only one that Dr. Wilson wished to have named after himself, but the authorities at Kew had already named the genus before realizing this desire.

Though this horticultural genius had escaped death many times in far-away regions of the earth, he brought up his last breath on October 15, 1930, when his automobile plunged down a forty-foot embankment near Worcester, Massachusetts.

Another great naturalist and plant-hunter, Reginald Farrar, was born in England, and died in Upper Burma, in October, 1920, while plant-hunting high in the mountains of that almost unexplored land.

Farrar was a specialist in "Alpine" plants and the pioneer of the "rock-garden" movement, the "rockeries" of our immediate ancestors. He was very discriminating in his specialties, and never sent home seeds of plants he had not seen in bloom; thus no ugly or worthless plants were amongst his introductions. At least one plant bears his name, the beautiful hardy perennial Aster Farrarii, whose deep violet rays surround a disk of rich vermillion orange. But I believe U. S. botanists have decided to call the species by some other name. I tried to grow this plant without success; the climate, or perhaps the soil, did not agree with it.

Both Dr. Wilson and Mr. Farrar have left numerous records of their pilgrimages. Dr. Wilson's best books are "Plant-Hunting" and "China—Mother of Gardens." The former describes his seven trips through Africa, the Tropics, and the Far East, to China, Korea, Japan, and India. The latter is the fascinating story of his Western China expeditions to Tibet. Mr. Farrar's two best books are "On the Eaves of the World" and "The Rainbow Bridge." Ernest Hooker, who died in January, 1912, at the age of 94, was for many years Director of the Royal Gardens, Kew, in succession to his distinguished father, Sir William Hooker. In his earlier days he had an adventurous career. In 1832 Sir Joseph left England on board H. M. Ship Erebus as surgeon and naturalist, accompanying Sir James Ross's Antarctic Expedition. Such expeditions, hazardous as they are today, are child's play when compared with those of a century ago. During the hardship of the voyage young Hooker unwaveringly set himself the task of minutely recording each day's investigations, and making exact drawings of his discoveries. Four years after his return from southern latitudes, he and a friend, Dr. Campbell, set out to explore the flora of the Himalaya Mountains, Eastern Bengal, and the Khasia Mountains. On this trip the two explorers were captured by the rajah of Sikkim on the borders of Tibet, thrown into prison and subjected to many indignities before they were released—and before their lives had been threatened time after time.

Chief among Sir Joseph's published works is the "Student's Flora of the British Isles," an erudite book of which the present writer is happy to have a copy. Up to perhaps forty years ago the descriptions in this book were used in Canada for the identification of all weeds and plants that had been introduced from "Europe," which meant in general, the British Isles. The scientific names, too, were taken from "Hooker." But with the advent of such text-books as the Manuals of Gray and Britton, the names were, for the most part, changed because of minor differences in the structure of the plants, often of very trivial nature. The writer has some further plant-hunters to discuss, but these must wait for another week.

Odds and Ends

The Hills of Normandy. The American troops have cleared the Cherbourg peninsula, won St. Lo and Coutances, and have now have the enemy on the run, while the Canadians and British are masters of the situation. The loss of the invasion coast given in the "Guardian" of June 20th, you will see why. Before the British and Normandy lines lie the Hills of Normandy from which the Germans have been driven on every movement of our troops. The loss of men and material in this sector must be greater than we suspect.

St. Lo. The Windsor Tribune says that someone queried its copy desk, "Who is this Saint Lo after whom the town of St. Lo was named?" The desk was not stumped. Right off the news editor replied: "Oh, he's the Indian name of the poor Indian, whose untimely mind—"

Hmm. Why didn't he finish the story? An irreverent wag once leaves him bare behind!"

Poetry in this war. In one of my dreams for right now with his almost beautiful timid-like features, peculiar ears, nose and white hair, and a blueish redness, large brush, quite large white tip. Some say they do not like the "Norwegian," that they are more liable to mortalities from birth to growth time, and even that they are not so prolific as the other foxes. They are so much to be true, although perhaps the present year has been an unusual one and by the law of averages the LaForest may win out. We have no fault to find with the LaForest type either as our pellets marketed through the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders' Association brought very satisfactory prices and we have had no difficulty in raising this type of platinum and very good average production.

Just now a lot of people are talking about platinum but we have had no personal experience with them and at first had a great antipathy to them, but we are beginning to like them and we suppose we will have to follow the crowd and get into them to more or less extent, so as to be able to market them as pellets in a few years when the European markets really do develop.

R. J. Gilroy of Gilroy Bros., of Oakville, Ontario, is spending a few weeks vacation here at the seaside and has even after a very short stay, acquired a good Prince Edward Island fox. Mr. Gilroy is one of the really live wires in the fox game in Ontario and he and his

brother are the largest producers of pearl platinum there. Three years ago after studying the possibilities of this new type, they decided they were the coming fox. They went out and purchased the finest that could be purchased from this start have built the largest herd of pearls in Ontario.

They are just now specializing in the production of glacier blue platinum, which were first developed by George A. Calbeck of Summerside. Fox ranchers who have an opportunity should have a talk with Mr. Gilroy because he has a lot of good practical information to impart, and is always willing to do so.

We are pleased to see in the Canadian Silver Fox and Fur magazine, the Master's degree, awarded to Lowell W. Hancock, newly elected president of the Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders' Association, and a write up giving highlights of his life, most of which we had not previously been familiar with. We are proud of his contribution to fox breeding here warrants us in quoting from our Toronto contemporary...

Born November 11th, 1900, at Bethel, Ohio, Mr. Hancock spent his boyhood days on a farm. He graduated from Stivers High School, Dayton, Ohio, in 1917, and entered Ohio State University from which he graduated in 1922 after majoring in animal husbandry. He received a Bachelor of Science degree, besides half credits towards his Master's degree. During his years of University education, Lowell took an active part in student organizations, including dramatics, music and sports. He was captain of the club for three years and track and country teams. He was captain of the latter during his senior year.

At the tender age of fourteen, he read a story about silver foxes, and in this through the vertebrae in "The Ohio Farmer," learned that foxes were being raised in captivity. This started him thinking about ranching, and during his years at university, he studied all available information on the subject. Incidentally, it was his interest in ranching foxes that decided what course at the university he would take for his preparation to be able to apply the knowledge gained on scientific feeding and breeding to foxes.

In 1923, he purchased his first foxes from John A. Lee, Summerside, P. E. I., Thomas Corwin, Michigan, U.S.A. He worked on the Michigan ranch, and later was instrumental in the organization of the Ohio Fox Breeders' Association, acting as secretary for the first year. In 1924, he purchased 100 foxes, this time from Peter G. Clark and then spent the first six months of 1925 on Mr. Clark's ranch at Summerside.

Mr. Hancock started his own ranch at Delaware, Ohio, in October, 1925, and in this time raised foxes. Immediately thereafter he returned to the Michigan ranch, and dragged along for the next ten months. Three adults were born, and in this time he remained by the summer of 1927. So he closed out the Ohio ranch and returned to the Michigan ranch, which he bought in 1928. Starting once more, this time with seven pairs, Mr. Hancock by 1930 had increased the number of animals to one hundred and fifty. Then his temper cooled in once more, and when the shooting was over, Lowell was left with thirteen diseased, wrecked animals.

Having had his fingers burned twice, Lowell decided that another line should be started, to tide him over until he could build up his fox ranch once more, so he went into the poultry business for several years. Naturally, he was interested in feeds and feedings, not only for foxes but also other classes of livestock, and in 1931, this led to his organization of the International Fox and Animal Products Limited at Summerside. This firm has continued to grow since that time, and in June, 1942, he was president of the Prince Edward Island Fox Breeders' and Exhibitors' Association. He is married and has one son and two daughters. In the

well, it is nice to look back on the good old days but we can say

to those who are in the business now that we never in those days thought for one moment that silver fox pellets would ever sell at an average of \$16 as they did in 1940, or even at \$45, which they did at their peak in January, 1944. It is perhaps one of the best illustrations of the effects of the law of supply and demand, proving that scarcity of desirable articles means high prices.

Just a word of warning. Hot weather is not over yet and August, popularly known as the "month of the dog days," can be a severe month on foxes, so we would advise fox farmer friends to see that their foxes are kept cool, and that water kept in front of their foxes daily, pens, feed racks and marking pens, and every precaution possible be taken against flies, especially the house fly, which is a pest of foxes. The fox business was certainly booming.

We asked Dr. Frank for some particulars about Rosebank Fur Farms and he told us that he established them in 1914 and bought 24 pairs of silver black foxes from Russell Cullton, Alberton, and Percy Turner, the latter stock being from the celebrated Montrose ranch. In 1916 he made a shipment of foxes to Japan valued at \$23,000. That of course helped considerably in paying the expenses of the ranch that year and left some profit. The Doctor says that 1918 was also a good year for pellets and he received some high prices. Now, unfortunately, he has suffered from the ranks and is tearing down the fox pens and permanently retiring from fox farming to devote all his time and energy to popularizing Schwarzwalder and grocery store adjustments.

TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox Farming



The rain the past week and the coolness which engendered has not been an unmitigated blessing. It was resented by our farmer friends because it interfered with the curing and storing of the hay. To a fox rancher it came as a great relief because the extreme heat which characterized the previous weeks had a deleterious effect on many foxes. White diarrhoea showed up all over the province—in fact all over Canada—and anaemia developed, mostly in the platinum foxes. The usual symptoms of the latter were a listless, dullness of the eyes and a gradual wasting away and the foxes which were not in an advanced stage of debility they rallied and came through and we have recommended our friends to continue the treatment until the middle of September.

No doubt this form of anaemia which the platinum foxes are prone to is something the same as that exhibited by little pigs, which our farmer friends know so much about and which they treat with several doses of iron by hydrogen. Or what may be called, reduced iron. This technique has been mastered and the treatment has been so effective that it is a procedure used by every good pig farmer.

In our own case we anticipated trouble with platinum foxes a year ago and started feeding iron in our foxes, and in this through the vertebrae in "The Ohio Farmer," learned that foxes were being raised in captivity. This started him thinking about ranching, and during his years at university, he studied all available information on the subject. Incidentally, it was his interest in ranching foxes that decided what course at the university he would take for his preparation to be able to apply the knowledge gained on scientific feeding and breeding to foxes.

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Care At Harvesting Fruits, Vegetables Saves Heavy Losses

OTTAWA, Aug. 1.—Fruit growers and market gardeners are doing a splendid job in connection with wartime food conservation. Much loss of valuable food may be caused by careless storage or shipment by careless handling at harvest time, says W.R. Phillips, Division of Horticulture, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa.

While great care may be taken with the marketing and storage of potatoes it is alarming to see the tubers intended for table stock which have to be discarded during the season. Close examination of these tubers shows the most serious defects are caused by bruising. These injuries could be avoided by careful handling. If potatoes are dropped, the skin is often broken and the tissue bruised, making excellent material for rot to develop. These tubers should be discarded, and other stored vegetables, such as cabbage, cauliflower, celery and other stored vegetables, should be handled with care. They are actually living material composed of many minute cells. Rough handling may result in breaking many of these cells, causing an area of dead tissue and bringing about food loss.

The need for careful handling of fruits is even more necessary and for that reason greater care is usually exercised. In spite of this, considerable loss takes place every year as a result of careless handling at harvest. Bruises inflicted at picking, on the wagon to the packing house, or in the grader and in the truck, often prevent loss. No set rule can be laid down to correct these problems. It is just a matter of using common sense. Picking in baskets for tender fruits, on grading tables and in the truck, should be done in a proper type of disking equipment prevents loss in root crops. Proper distribution of the farm help has been known to prevent loss. When a man fails to realize the importance of careful handling he will do less damage.

Methods for Moving Colonies of Bees

The preparing of colonies of bees to be moved and the moving of bees to and from an out-apiary is one of the most difficult jobs that confronts a beekeeper. Many methods have been tried at the Dominion Experimental Station, Kentville, N. S., says E. D. Craig, Head Beekeeper, where practically all the colonies are moved out of the orchards during the bloom period to avoid poisoning from the arsenical sprays.

All preparation for the moving of colonies is completed the day before the colonies are to be moved, by first fastening the bottom board of the brood chamber using six 1/2 inch galvanized wire staples, two on each side and two in back. If the colony has either a full depth or shallow super on it, six staples will be all that is necessary to fasten it securely to the brood chamber. Two are put in each side and two in back, about two inches from the corners.

The cover is then removed from the hive and double-screened beehives are placed in the middle of the escape board is put on it, and fastened with four 1/2 inch nails. The beehives are removed and in their place a small piece of wire screen is tacked over the two openings. The cover is then placed on the hive. These operations can best be accomplished in the middle of the day when the bees are flying freely.

In the evening when all be activity is ceased, the entrances are closed by nailing over them a strip of wood two inches wide, 1/2-2 inches thick and the exact lengths of the entrance, two 1/2-4 inch nails, one in each end will hold these securely, but not driven in all the way so they can be removed with the least trouble when the colonies are placed on their new stands. To allow for ventilation the front of the cover is raised up by placing a two inch block under the front edge. The colonies are then ready to be moved to their new location the following morning. Before the colonies are lifted on to the truck the covers are removed, making a solid block of hives when the loading is completed, and there will be little chance of the moving on the road. Providing the hives do not completely cover the bottom of the truck, the covers of the hives are used to fill up the remaining space, making it impossible for the load to shift.

When the bees arrive at their new location and are removed from the truck to their new stands a cover is placed on each hive just before the entrance block is taken off. This can best be removed by prying it up gently with a hive tool and at the same time use smoke



This photo captures the moment when the bees are being moved from the old hive into the new one. The person is using a hive tool to carefully lift the cover and transfer the bees to the new stand. The background shows a typical apiary setting with several hives.

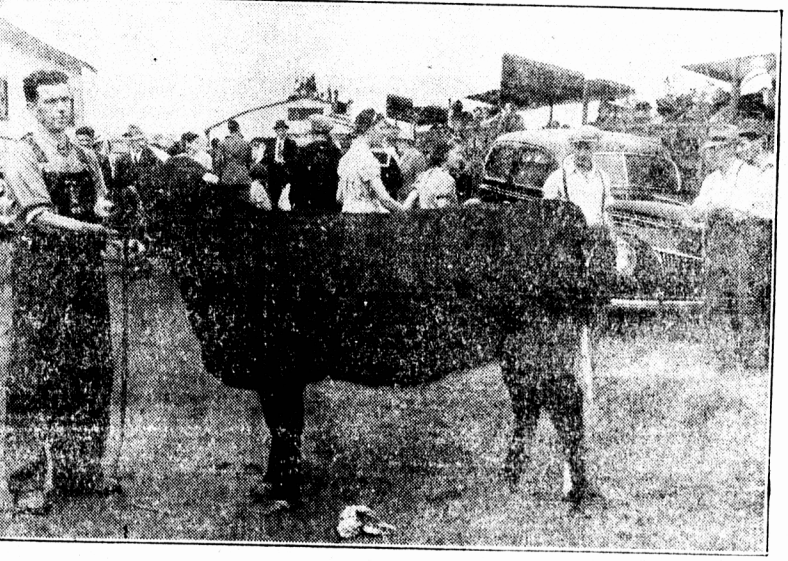
Genuine Norwegian Platinum Foxes

Wilfrid L. Todd, Boston, Mass., the original American breeder of Norwegian Platinum Foxes will be on the Island from Aug. 8th to 20th. Those interested in this superior strain of platinum foxes may contact me through Carrol Delaney, My Island representative, Summerside, or the Clifton Hotel, also Charlottetown Hotel.

Norwegian - Cody - Corbin - White Forest Platinum Foxes. Todd strain White Face Silvers.

WILFRID L. TODD, 577 Washington St., Boston, Mass.

Two Prize Animals of the Many Exhibited at the Provincial Exhibition in Recent Years



Start Now Building Humus To Keep Garden Fertile

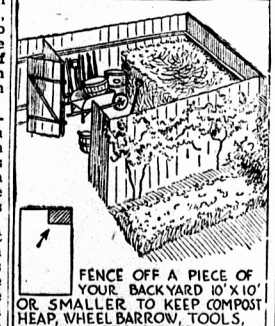
So long as gardens are grown in soil, the more humus one can add, the better the garden is likely to be. The fact that plants can be grown without humus, in tanks of nutrient solution, does not mean that humus can be dispensed with in soil.

Every gardener knows the pleasure he feels in working with a black soil, spongy in texture, which never cracks or crumbles, which allows the spade and hoe to pass through it easily, and remains moist like a sponge after excess water has quickly drained away.

These are all good qualities, but they are not all that come from abundant humus content. Humus plays an important part in the chemical reactions which take place in the soil. It helps unlock from clay, the mineral part of soil elements which the plants need but cannot get without the aid of humus. Constant renewal and building up of humus content should be carried on and one of the best ways to do this is by making a compost pile.

Through which all plant debris and other organic waste matter may be transformed into humus.

Place the compost pile in a secluded corner. Shrubs may be used to shield it from view. The plant material to be decomposed should be put down in layers, with thin layers of soil between. A few handfuls of lime and complete plant food should be sprinkled in the plant material as it is put on the piles. A small quantity of decayed material or manure scattered through the pile will hasten decay. The compost pile should not be allowed to dry out.



Allow the composted material to decompose quite thoroughly before using it.

The use of complete plant food increases the humus content of the soil, since it encourages the growth of both the top and the root system of plants. A certain percentage of the root system decays each year. This decomposed vegetable matter becomes a part of the soil. Experiments have shown that a considerable percentage of humus is added to the soil in this way.

Decay of compost will be hastened if a tumblerful of balanced plant food is scattered over each layer of compost a foot thick and 10 feet square. The pile should be kept moist by occasional wetting down.

Shorthorn Exhibitors ATTENTION!

Through a grant from the Maritime Shorthorn Association the Prince Edward Island Shorthorn Breeders' Association will provide the following special prizes:

GROUP OF THREE ANIMALS any age or sex shown by any exhibitor who has never previously shown at Charlottetown—1st, \$5.00; 2nd, \$4.00; 3rd, \$3.00 and \$2.00 for all additional creditable entries.

JUNIOR HERD—One male and three females all born after June 30, 1942 previously shown in individual classes and all owned but not necessarily bred by exhibitor.

SENIOR HERD—One male and three females born before July 1, 1942 previously shown in individual classes and all owned, but not necessarily bred by exhibitor.

PROGENY OF DAM—Two animals previously shown in individual classes either sex not necessarily bred or owned by exhibitor.

In the last three classes \$12.00 in prize money will be allocated in each class.

8-5-2i.

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