FOR FARMERS' STOCK BREEDERS AND GARDENERS

NEWSY NOTES

BY AGRICOLA

A NATURALISTS' CALENDAR.

October has in the main, two weeks of fine weather to begin with. The lanes are gay with the "ye.low-weeds" as we call the Golden-rods (Solidago) while the damp fields near the coast are covered with the pink and violet of the Asters — "Michael-mas Daisies," they call them in the Old Country, because they commence to bloom about the Feast of St. Michael (Sept. 29). White or hoar frosts now begin to follow clear days and (say the old folk) "three consecutive white frosts bring rain." Often the Aurora hangs a pulsating curtain across the northern sky, and bathes the landscape in a wierd, half-light. It forms a thin skin on the water troughs towards the end of the month. Mushrooms and toadstools seem to find this month best suited to their growth, and one may find many edible fungi among these humble vegetables.

Gales and earthquakes are more prevalent now, and one notices that the barometer, which has been fairly steady since April, becomes very irregular, as the graph shows. The earth, on account of its elliptical orbit, is nearer the sun in winter and gravitation pulls with greater force; hence the earthquakes, which, increase in intensity during the winter months.

By Hallowe'en, said the pioneers of our Island, all crops, potatoes, turnips, carrots and all garden truck, should be in the root-cellar: and truly they knew what they were talking about! As I've often observed.

Hallowe'en, 31st of October, is the evening preceding the Feast of All Hallows or All Saints. From the pranks played on this night I judge the occasion to have a pagan origin.

Noteworthy Aurora on Oct, 1, 1919. An awful day of rain and gale (50 m. p. h.); much damage done. Oct. 1, 1923. Potato digging general Oct. 1, 1929; half a crop this year. Potato digging Oct. 3, 1916. Torrential rains, Oct. 3 1929.

On Oct. 4, 1927, a flock of young robins was observed, probably congregating prior to leaving us. Eristalis tenax seeking shelter, Oct. 5, 1929: a large fly simulating a bee or wasp and creating a mild panic as it invades houses or schools in the Fall. Blackfish came ashore at Summerside, Oct. 5, 1930.

Electric storm, with hail, at 3 p. m., Oct. 6, 1921: aurora at night. Warm day, Oct. 6, 1928: temp. 68 degrees (shade) at 4 p. m.

Potato-picking, Oct 7, 1915. On Oct. 7, 1929, I gathered edible fungi: Clitocybe prunulus and C. orcella, also Boletus edulis.

Church Service Harrington on Thanksgiving Day Monday Oct. 9, 1916. Potato digging stopped by rain Oct. 10, 1919: much rain this month. Gale sweeps the Island, with much minor damage, Oct. 12, 1936: this gale general in Maritimes. Annapolis apple crop ruined. Note on Oct. 12, 1926, says "Leaves about gone from Birches and Maples."

About this time garden seeds are ripe—note on Oct. 14, 1917. A fortnight of disasters: Barn at Experimental Station destroyed by fire. Oct. 14, 1928: property burnt at Kinross on Oct. 22, and two fires at Vernon River Oct. 24? cause a total loss of about $37,000.

AURORA AND SUNSPOTS.

On the 24th, 26th and 27th, of April there were remarkable manifestations of Aurora or Northern Lights. The observer appeared to be looking up into a hollow dome whose central point was in the zenith, and whose supporting ribs or arches were columns of misty light. On the 27th, when the display culminated, sheets of radiance, like distant lightning, played across the southern sky, while the dome still hung in mid air. On the 28th, I decided to see how Old Sol was taking all this, and getting out the field-glass, soon found the cause of all the trouble—a large sunspot on what I imagine astronomers would call the north west limb of the sun. At this point I must quote from a correspondent who makes a study of such happenings and always has something instructive to tell us: I refer to Mr. Glen Currie, of New Wiltshire. "No doubt you noticed the brilliant display of Aurora last night (Tuesday) and also on Monday night. About 9:30 last night (27th) the whole sky here was covered with streamers dancing. At the zenith they would form into a group and remain motionless for a few seconds. Sometimes this resembled a crown in shape; sometimes it appeared like a capital U, turned out at the ends."

"These northern lights are due to a large spot on the sun which you may have seen. It was about the centre of the sun's disc on Sunday (Apl 25.) In this case the high winds came before the aurora which is not generally the case."

"In my last letter to you I mentioned a spot which was central on Jany. 31. It was again central March 1st. I did not observe its next appearance, but this present spot is certainly the same one. From Jan. 21 until April 25 there are 85 days. Dividing this into three periods gives a little over 28 days between returns of the spot. As this is greater than the actual time of the sun's rotation, possibly the spot has a small motion relative to the sun's surface and opposite to the direction of rotation. Hoping you may find this of some little interest to you. I remain. Yours truly, Glen Currie."

This letter is of more than a little interest. I have checked the dates of the last paragraph and suppose the missing date to be Easter Monday, a day not very suitable for observations, owing to weather conditions. For those who are not in the know, it may be remarked that the sun rotates on an "axis," just as the earth does, and its complete rotation at the solar equator is about 25 days. The period of rotation increases steadily towards either pole, where it is 34 days: and this is a proof that the sun is not solid. "The apparent movement of the spots across the face of the Sun (says the British Astronomer Royal) was correctly interpreted by Galiles as a consequence of the rotation about its axis; the rotation causes the spots to appear to move along tracks parallel to the sun's equator."

The influence of the sunspot did not end with the appearance of the aurora; interference with the telegraph service came on the 28th, as the wires were gripped by the excess current generated at the north magnetic pole. For hours at a time the wires were out of commission from the Atlantic coasts to the Prairie provinces, and well down, into the United States. The great gale of Apl. 29 was probably connected with this disturbance.

We have much still to learn about sunspots and aurorae. What unknown factor produced such a vivid display this time, when the three previous appearances of the sunspot got no such response? And why should these trouble makers recur at intervals of 11-1 years? Did this display affect radio reception? Is the Pacific Coast "immune"?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH (2)

In the Historia Regum Britanniae, which he composed about the year 1139, Geoffrey undertook to write the history of the Britons from, the time of their first King, Brutus, (from whom they took their national name) to the death of Cadwallader, the last British King. The twelve books of the Histoira are, however, a most interesting mosaic from the earlier histories of Gildas, Bede, and especially of Nennius; from his contemporaries, William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon; from Celtic myths, legends of Celtic Saints, Biblical history, and folk-tales of every land; from the Charlemagne cycle of stories, and last—the not least—from Geoffrey's own active and ingenious imagination.

The final result was twelve books of the Historia, of which the Arthurian cycle takes up five. The work is dedicated to Robert, Earl of Gloucester, a distinguished patron who duly rewarded the historian by the archdeaconry of Llandaff. In the dedication Geoffrey employs what "is now very generally regarded as one of the great ruses of literary history." He, in short, states that the Historia is a translation of an ancient British book "into the Latin tongue," a statement which must not be taken too literally: at any rate, no copy of the "ancient British book" has ever been found. The dedication takes up Chapter 1: and Chapter 2 contains a description of Britain as Geoffrey saw it.

"Britain, best of Islands, lieth in the Western Ocean, betwixt Gaul and Ireland and containeth 800 miles in length and 200 in breath. (These dimensions are from Bede's writings and are faulty). Whatever is fitting for the use of mortal men the island doth afford in unfailing plenty. For she aboudeth in metals of every kind; fields hath, stretching far and wide, and hillsides meet for tillage of the best, whereon, by reason of the fruitfulness of the soil, the divers crops in their season do yield their harvests. Forests also hath she, filled with every manner of wild deer, in the glades whereof groweth grass that the cattle may find therein meet change of pasture, and flowers of many colors that do proffer their honey into the bees that flit ever busily about them. Meadows hath she, set in pleasant places, green at the foot of misty mountains, wherein be sparkling well-springs clear and bright, flowing forth with a gentle whispering ripple in shining streams that sing sweet lullaby unto them that lie upon their banks. Watered is she, moreover, by lakes and rivers wherein is much fish, and besides the narrow sea of the Southern coast whereby men make voyage unto Gaul, by three noble rivers, Thames, to wit, Seven and Humber, the which she stretcheth forth as it were three arms whereby in her fleets."

With this description, which shows that Geoffrey possessed considerable poetic talent, and powers of close observation, we taken our leave of the Historia until next Saturday, when we will resume with the political features of the island as our author saw them.

A PUPIL TEACHER (1)

The new "Educational Horizon" promises to be a most interesting feature, bright, instructive, and inspiring. I wonder hoy many of its readers know what a "Pupil Teacher" is? I was one for four long years, and in a way it was an experience that I would not have missed "for worlds," as the saying goes.

I had passed through the various "standards" (grades) at the National School, which was maintained by the Church of England, at a central point to serve several villages. The Schoolmaster was a "grown man," generally married, who lived in the Schoolhouse adjoining the School, and had no overseer or trustee to worry him, except the Vicar. The two, however, were good friends, and while the salary could not have been large, the tenure was absolutely, safe. In the course of my school life. I had but two schoolmasters. I can now see that this was a great advantage to the scholars, seeing that the "Maistor" knew the character of the little rascals whom he ruled, and wisely guided their steps till they passed into the outer world. The first of these teachers was named Green: he was a man who somehow inspired awe, even among the little rough scholars from the mining villages, yet it was seldom he used the rod. But his tongue, I cannot help smiling when I think of the quiet, humorous way he "poked fun" at us, when we had broken his laws. It was great fun all right for all but the culprit, but there were times when I'd have preferred "the cane."

Most of my schoolmates were destined to the mine or the farm, and their education was elementary but thorough as far as it went. My grandfather, with whom I lived, had other views, so my studies were more advanced, and I had extra subjects." It was customary in those days to set great store on a knowledge of Latin, and I had many a tussle with the "Principia Latina" as the series of text-books was called. Tho' I never used that language commercially, I can still make a fair stab at the classics; and can see many beauties which are lost by translation. Old Euclid has been coming in for a lot of notice lately: well, I went through Books I, II and III, and do you know, I rather liked them. They were solely propositions, and theorems, and they made you watch your step! Practical Geometry was the application of mathematical instruments such as the rule, compasses, and protrator: I believe modern practice is to make a sort of hotch-potch of Euclid and Geometry, which to my mind is very unsatisfactory but then "everyone to his own taste!"

Dear me, I've quite neglected to tell you about that "Pupil Teacher." Well, you'll have to wait till next Saturday, as I must sign off, as the announcers say.

Treatment of Seed Grain to Control Smut Diseases

R. R. HURST, (Laboratory of Plant Pathology, Experimental Station, Charlottetown, P. E. I.

Wheat Bunt or Covered Smut.

(1) Clean the seed grain thoroughly before treatment in order to remove the smut balls. This work is assisted greatly by blowing the smut out with a strong blast of air in the fanning mill.

(2) Formalin, Copper carbonate dust or Ceresan are used to prevent bunt. Formalin costs only about 3-4 cents per treated bushel but since it moistens the grain seeding must be done at once. Add 1 lb. of formalin to 30 gallons of water, being sure to measure these quantities accurately. Place the grain in a pile about 4 inches deep and sprinkle with formalin solution. Shovel the grain thus treated into a new pile and sprinkle it over once more. This process is repeated until the grain is moist. Thirty gallons of solution does about fifty bushels of grain. Now heap the grain into a pile and cover four hours with bags dampened with the treating solution. Uncover and seed at once.

Copper carbonate dust is very effective, costing about 2 cents to treat one bushel, but sometimes has the disadvantage of clogging the drill should the seed become damp. It is used at the rate of 2 ounces per bushel. Treat the seed thoroughly in a tight mixer which can be constructed at small cost from a barrel, drum, or box. Treating by this method may be done several weeks before seeding. Should the treated grain cake in the drill after standing for some time it is advisable to rock the drill wheels back and forth before starting to seed, otherwise there is a danger of breaking or bending the working parts.

(3) Ceresan dust gives excellent control of smut, costs about 2 1-2 cents to treat one bushel, and does not cause drill trouble. It is used at the rate of 1-2 ounce only per bushel of seed grain and is applied also in a mixing machine.

Farmers using Ceresan treated seed should be cautioned to hold the seed in the pile for at least ten hours before seeding but it must remain uncovered during this period. It may then be seeded at once or held in storage four weeks. Copper carbonate and Ceresan are poisonous to livestock and humans and precautions should be taken accordingly.

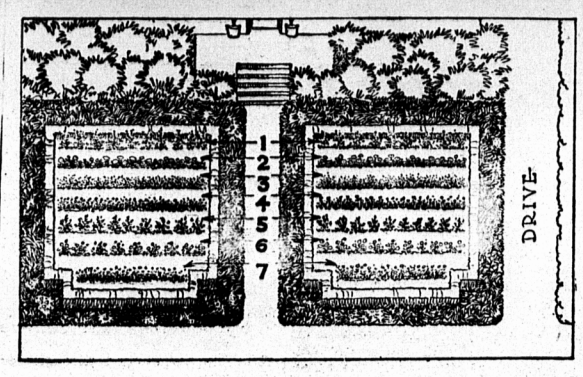
Covered Smut of Barley and Smut of Oats.

These smuts are controlled by the formalin treatment, 1 lb. of formalin to 30 gallons of water as explained above.

Smut of oats is controlled also by the "Formalin spray" method which has the added advantage of leaving the oats in a dry condition. Mix one pint of commercial formalin with one pint of water. Spray this mixture to 50 bushels of seed oats as it is being shovelled from one pile to another on a clean surface. It is then placed in a pile and covered with canvas or blankets for five hours. Sow at once or expose to the air several hours before storing.

Ceresan dust referred to above gives excellent control of covered smut of barley and oat smuts.

NOTE: Hulless oats (such as Liberty and Laurel) must not be treated with formalin. Use Copper Carbonate (2 ozs. per bushel) or Ceresan (1-2 oz. per bushel).



Inside Low Hedge Sow Border of Vinca Minor (Crepe Myrtle) Interspersed With Dwarf Rose Morning Glory and Forget-Me-Nots. Sow These Annuals in Rows: 1—Salvia Violet-Purple. 2—Purple Petunia. 3—Cynoglossum. 4—Chamois-Rose Phlox Drummondi. 5—Matthiola Biconis. 6—Zinnia Pumila Golden Ball. 7—Apricot Phlox Drummondi.

COMBINING HEDGE WITH FRONT YARD FLOWERS

(All over the world, except in the United States, flowers are planted in front yards. A fashion for lawn and shrubbery planting unrelieved by color has prevailed in American suburbs for a decade or more. With business recovery, and the dawn of a happier era, this fashion is being questioned. Our foremost garden authorities are agreed that the time has come to create a livelier, gayer setting for our homes. Mrs. Francis King, author, lecturer and practical gardener, known throughout the world for her gardening skill and taste, suggests in a series of six articles how front yard flowers can be planted.)

By MRS. FRANCIS KING

Author of

"The Well Considered Garden"

With hedged spaces of equal size on either side of a short walk this simple design is suggested, made by a low hedge which is to be thickly planted all around the inside with rooted cuttings of common myrtle, vinca minor, the earth between the little plants to be sown to forget-me-nots, with at least one packet of seed of dwarf rose morning glory.

Pink flowers will appear the first year, and if the morning glory sowing is repeated the second year the pinks and blues would flower together. For the centres of these beds, whose outline is broken at the corners to relieve dullness of pattern, sow at the back of each square a line of violet-purple annual salvia, next a line of purple petunia, then Cynoglossum, the Chinese forget-me-not, next phlox drummondi Chamois Rose, then a line of seed of matthiola bicornis that sweet-scented stock whose flower is nothing but whose scent at evening is everything. Another line now of zinia pumila Golden Ball, with one of apricot phlox drummondi and our planting is complete. If the lines of hedge are carried out, exactly as shown, there should be a distinction in this dooryard not often to be found.

Where for any reason a hedge of the dwarf apricot cannot be planted, use moss-curled parsley. This forms a fine green band enclosing the flowers.

Suppose the ground to be hot, sandy, dry; then scatter seed of the best pale-colored (not dark) portulaca within the boundaries of parsley or of hedge, nothing else in these spaces. A carpet of sweet clover will be there all summer.

ABBEY WILL OPEN FOR THE PUBLIC

LONDON, May 7—Dressed in the splendor of Coronation panoply, Westminster Abbey, will be open to public view from May 15 to June 5. Visitors will be taken through the annex up the centre of the nave and the choir, round the great platform where the Thrones stand and out by the east cloister door.

With the exception of members of home, dominion and colonial services, visitors will be asked to pay an admission fee. This will go to meet the cost of providing turnstiles, barriers and the necessary attendants and also reimburse the various charities and institutions which will otherwise suffer in consequence of the necessary cessation of all offertory collections in the Abbey for eight months.

Use Minard's for Dandruff.

The Garden Column

By JAMES H. BURDETT
Director of National Garden Bureau

Most Widely Grown Flower.

The flower probably most widely grown in gardens of the United States is the portulace, a first cousin of the worst weed in our gardens, pusley or purslane. Portulaca is a true succulent, with unlimited resistance to hot sun and dry spot in your garden where it is amount of water as well.

Plant breeders have worked on it for more than a hundred years, improving the size of its flowers and the brilliance of their colors. Sisgle and double forms now exist in white, yellow, pink and scarlet. One plant usually consists of six to eight sprawling stems, each of which develop a terminal cluster of many buds. They open in succession, giving a continuous show of color from mid-June until killing frost.

A sandy soil in full sun is best for this flower. Give it the hot, dry spot in your garden where it is difficult to grow other things. For front yard plantings, where the heat is reflected from pavement and building, it should do well. Water copiously once a week. Do not sow before the ground is warm

Annuals for the Flower Show

Good subjects for display in flower shows are found among annuals which are seldom used for that purpose. For example, the annual sunflowers, especially the new dwarf chrysanthemum flowered strain; the annual chrysanthemums, notably Morning Star, the largest of all; Calendula Radio, the Russian statice Suworowii, and the Sweet Sultan, or centaurea imperalis. All show flowers should be grown with plenty or room for their roots to feed in, without competition from weeds or other plants. By reducing the number of flowers to a plant, large blossoms may be produced.

A Lovely Creeper.

Anagallis ccerulea, the blue pimpernell, is a dwarf creeper with trailing stems with blossoms of a real turquilse blue. It should have a warm, sunny place and the seeds should be sown after the ground warms up, in the place where the plants are to grow. They flower freely and spread rapidly.

Nasturtiums Like Some Shade.

Nasturtiums are among the tenderest of annual flowers, and should never be sown until all danger of frost is over. Yet they do not like the hot sun, and are likely to thrive better in light shade in a place where they can be well watered. The new fragrant double strains have awakened new interest in this family. If you have tried some of the new hybrids with indifferent success do not let that discourage you from trying them again, especially the newest dwarf flowering type. They are being constantly improved.

Pyrethrums Are Improved.

Double pyrethrums are offered this year in strains of pink, red, salmon and white. There are also much improved single strains or rose, ruby and white. The pyrethrums, or "painted daisies," are among the most satisfactory perennials. They are easily grown from seed, and come into blossom with the tall iris, continuing until the peonies have finished. If they are cut back then, they will give a second crop of bloom. Desirable specimens are easily multiplied by root division. The new types make the family all the more interesting.

A Fine New Marigold.

Marigold Golden Eagle is a new introduction this year which many judges esteem highly. It is an improvement in Guinet Gold, with a deeper color, quite free from the marigold odor, and producing 100 percent double flowers of the carnation type. When marigolds of this type are used as cut flowers, it is difficult to distinguish them from carnations, though of course no carnation ever had such coloring.

Early Hardy Asters.

While most of the autumn flowering hardy asters have been bred from American wild flowers, much attention is being given abroad to an early flowering European species, the amelius strain. Hybrids of this species bloom in July and August, and produce bushy plants covered with small flowers. They are easily grown from seed.

(Continued on Page 16)

Canadian Garden Service 1937

BY GORDON LINDSAY SMITH

Undoubtedly the average amateur gardener loses more by rushing the season than in planting too late. One sharp frost in May will often completely ruin a promising early start or at least set the hardier things so far back that the later planted sorts will actually be ahead.

There is no objection whatever, in fact it is advisable to get some things started early. There is more pride in the first marigold or zinnia and more satisfaction in the first meal of peas or potatoes right from the garden at the door than in a dozen later on. But there should be a certain amount of judgment used.

The old caution against putting all the eggs in one basket certainly holds true of gardening. Many people urge that a portion only of each packet be sown on the earliest possible date, the bulk planted at the proper time and at least some seed held for possible misses or to replace destruction by rabbits, stray dogs and possibly over zealous children.

Spread out Season

Indeed in recent years garden experts have been going farther. Now they urge splitting the seed supply into four or five parts and saving a portion for sowing as long as possible after the normal season. In this way the harvest is spread over a much longer period. Fresh peas, lettuce, spinach, carrots and other good things will then be coming on almost continually all season and not with a rush followed by a famine.

Scientists and plant breeders have come to the assistance of the Canadian gardener by allowing him to extend the season still farther by introducing new and later varieties. It is is now possible, for instance to get Bantam type corn which will come to maturity weeks after the ordinal Bantam has passed the eating stave and the same is true of nearly all other vegetables. Indeed it is only by using these later varieties that one is able to extend the season of those vegetables like peas which must be sown early in order to get their maximum and essential root growth during the cool weather.

First Flower Sowings

First flowers to be sown are those very hardy kinds which would naturally reproduce themselves in Canada, such as Cosmos, California Poppy, Alysum, Calendula and Candytuft.

In the second group are the Zinnia, Marigold, Nasturtium, Stocks, Aster and Petunia, which do not stand serious frost, and on the tender things, which must be held back until all danger of freezing is over are the Dahlias, Cannas, and Gladiolus. As the latter are bulbs and do not come up until a week or so after planting they may be risked within a few days of the arrival of really warm weather.

Fruits for the Garden

Even in the moderately sized garden there is usually an odd corner where fruit may be produced. A cherry, plum or peach tree will not take up a great deal or room. Under garden conditions where it is possible to furnish more than the usual protection most things can be grown far north of their ordinary environment.

Certain trees, it is true, may succumb in a hard winter, but the trees are not expensive and are easily replaced. In the Prairie Districts certain very hardy apples cherries, plumbs almost innumerable berries have been orginated which will give abundant returns for the space occupied. Strawberries, gooseberries, currants, Saskatoon berries and cherries are all hardy.

Where space is very limited it is quite feasible, through grafting or budding to have several varieties of apples or pears on a single tree. —Canadian Seed Trade Association.

THE P. E. I. HEN IS ISLAND QUEEN

You have read of Maude on a summer's day
Who raked barefooted the new mown hay;
You have read of the maid on the early morn
Who milked the cow with a crumpled horn.

You have read of the lays, the poets' sing,
Of the rustling corn and the flowers of spring;
But of all the lays of tongue or pen
There is nought like the lays of the P. E. I. hen.

Long before Maude has raked her hay,
The P. E. I. hen had begun to lay,
And ere the milkmaid has stirred a peg,
The P. E. I. hen had laid her egg.

If Maude needs a new hat or gown
She doesn't hustle her hay to town;
But she goes to the store and obtains her suit
With a basketful of fresh "hen fruit."

If the milkmaid's beau makes a Sunday call
She doesn't feed him milk at all.
But beats up eggs into custard pies
And stuffs him full of a chicken fry.

Then hail! all hail! to the P. E. I. hen!
One of the greatest blessings of all to men.
Corn may be king, but it is plainly seen
That the P. E. I. hen is Island Queen.

—Edith McKenna, Newton Cross.

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