



What Farmers Want to Know

By W. F. MASSEY

Hotbeds and Cold Frames

"WHERE can I get a bulletin on the making of hot beds and cold frames?"

The Kentucky Experiment Station, Lexington, Ky., has issued a well illustrated circular, No. 11, on hotbeds and cold frames, which I suppose they will send on application.

Growing Cannas From Seed

"SHOULD cannas grown from seed planted this fall be transplanted in the spring?"

You might transplant the young plants when they first appear, but it is better to plant the seed thinly in rows and let them grow an entire season. Then you can find which are worth keeping and can use the roots for planting beds.

Bamboo

"CAN bamboo like fishing rods be grown here?"

There are many varieties of bamboo, and our native reeds belong to that family. Some varieties of bamboo are rather tender, while others are hardy as far north as Philadelphia. *Bambusa Aurea* is a good variety and can be had from Florida nurseries or others perhaps. Reasoner Bros., Oneco, Fla., can supply many sorts.

Grapes and Persimmons

"WHERE can I get the Munson Hybrid grapes? At what age will our native persimmons come into bearing from seed?"

You can get the Munson grapes from the Munson Nursery, Denison, Texas. Could not possibly say how long it will take persimmons to come into bearing from seed, as I have never grown them in that way. Probably eight or ten years.

Abruzzi Rye

"WILL Abruzzi rye cross with common rye if sowed in fields some distance apart? When should it be sowed to get the best seed?"

All the cereal grains like wheat and rye are self-fertilizing and seldom cross to any great extent. Sowed in fields any distance apart they will not cross at all. Sow early in November on well prepared soil, making the surface as fine as possible, and put the seed in with a wheat drill for the best results. Set the drill to sow five pecks an acre.

Bedding Material

"I AM in the butcher business and farming too. I fatten cattle every winter, and would like to know if the shavings from a planing mill will make as good bedding as pine straw—that is, will they make as good manure?"

No, the shavings will make rather poor manure, far inferior to pine straw, and still more inferior to wheat straw or cottonseed hulls. I have to buy my manure, and I always avoid any made with shavings or sawdust, for I find either detrimental to the manure.

Broomsedge Field

"I HAVE a field on this place which has been lying out for years and is set in broomsedge. Would it be well to fence it off for hogs? Want to grow truck crops on it in 1918."

The hogs would get little out of the broomsedge this winter, and if you want to get the land ready for truck crops the best thing you can do will

be to turn the broomsedge under deeply, harrow in an application of lime, and sow to rye. Turn the rye under in spring and sow to cowpeas with some acid phosphate. Then you will have a good crop to turn under and prepare for truck with heavy use of fertilizer.

Early Irish Potatoes

"YOUR advice in regard to the disastrous crop of early Irish potatoes in 1915 was so good that I avoided it, while many of my neighbors disregarded it and lost heavily. Last spring you advised planting, and some of those who got 'burnt' the season before were afraid, and I made a good thing by taking your advice and planting heavily. Now, I would like to know your opinion in regard to the coming season. Is the prospect good for the early Southern crop?"

A MESSAGE FROM A SOUTHERN NOVELIST.

Decide Definitely on Your Goal and Then Work Steadfastly to It in Spite of Temporary Defeats—This Week's "Success Talk for Boys"

[Many eminent statesmen, scientists and educators have written "Talks" in this series. This week we have a message from a distinguished novelist—a Southern novelist, Henry Sydnor Harrison. Mr. Harrison is a native of Tennessee, having been born at Sewanee, in 1880. His "Queed" and "V. V.'s Eyes" are two of the worthiest and most successful modern American novels. Next week's "Success Talk" will be by Dr. Lyman Abbott.]

IN RESPONSE to Editor Poe's request that I name one or more qualities that I believe will help you win success as men or farmers, I should mention: (1) a clear perception of what it is that you want to accomplish, and (2) steady perseverance under whatever discouragement.

The first of these seems to me very important, because divided or uncertain efforts seldom get anywhere, and unless a boy can state definitely to himself what he is aiming at, the chances are that he isn't aiming at anything, or else is aiming at so many things that he isn't likely to hit any of them.

But perhaps most of you have already made up your minds what you intend to do, or get, or be, and then the second point becomes more important than anything else. For whatever is worth doing or getting or being is sure to be hard to do or get or be, and that means that there will be obstacles to be surmounted and discouragements to be faced down. No one is likely to accomplish anything in this world who cannot look beyond temporary defeats and see still shining and beckoning before him that goal, that final accomplishment, which he set before himself in the beginning.

I want to add that few things in the life of the South seem to me more significant than the work that some of you boys are doing on and for the farms. This is a work, and here is a goal, big enough for any boy or man.

Two good seasons seldom follow each other in the truck growing business. After a very successful season, like the last, it is usually wise to be cautious. But the prospect for the coming season is good, for potatoes are very short in the North, and potatoes are selling high all over the country. The chances now seem to be that the Northern markets will be bare of old stock and there will be room for the early crop of the South at good prices. I will watch the market reports and note any changes, but at this time it certainly promises well for the early Irish potato crop if it is not overdone.

Trying Vinifera Grapes

"I AM trying all the grapes I saw in California and the leading hardy grapes of California and Arizona. I have, also, the seedless grape, Thompson's seedless. All will fruit next year, and I will then report about them. I also have the Malaga grape grafted on Diamond roots."

I do not want to discourage you, but the California vines are certain to fail with you, especially on their own roots, for the phyloxera insects in our soils will soon destroy them. Those you have on the Diamond may last longer if well sprayed to prevent mildew. I do not know the Thompson seedless grape, but have known the old Seedless Sultana for many years.

None of these grapes succeeds long in our climate unless grown under glass.

Lice on Turnips

"THE lice are eating the leaves of my turnips, mustard and collards. What shall I do for them?"

As I have often said on this page, tobacco in some form is the sovereign remedy for plant lice or aphides of all kinds. You can dust the plants over with tobacco dust from a smoking tobacco factory or you can make a strong decoction of tobacco stems in hot water and spray with this when cool. Or you can get the concentrated extract of tobacco in the form of sulphate of nicotine under the name of "Black-leaf 40," sold by seedsmen, and dilute this for spraying.

Pimiento Pepper Again

"PLEASE give me more information in regard to the pimiento pepper, its growth and advantages?"

The Pimiento pepper is a medium-sized pepper, perfectly smooth and not wrinkled, and of a conical form.

wasting in the winter winds. The best plan is to turn the peas under early and sow crimson clover after harrowing in a dressing of lime. A winter cover should be one of living plants that will take up and store away the nitrates that would be washed from the soil in winter, and restore them in the form of organic nitrogen in the spring and clover is the best winter cover because it will gain more nitrogen from the air. But when too late for the clover always sow rye, for while it will add no nitrogen from the air as clover will, it will save the loss of nitrogen from the soil in winter and return it to the soil in spring when turned under.

And in the case of rye, the time for turning under is important. Too many allow the rye to grow up and get strawy. In that state it decays more slowly and may do harm in dry weather to the following crop. Rye should be turned under when not over knee-high. It is then sappy and will decay rapidly and make no trouble. Though I have not grown it, the general report is that the Abruzzi rye is a great improvement over our common rye.

House Plants in Winter

PLANTS that are to be kept in pots in the house in winter should now be gone over. Those that have been in pots all summer will be benefited by turning them out of the pots and shaking off some of the soil and then returning them to the pots with some fresh soil.

The soil I use for pot plants in winter was prepared last spring. I made a stack of grass sods cut two inches thick, laying them grass side down and covering them with manure, building up the heap in this way with alternate layers of sod and manure. This was chopped down during the summer and well mixed. When I use this it is rubbed through a sieve with half-inch mesh, rubbing the sod roots through to make the soil spongy and mellow.

The great fault of flower lovers is that they are apt to use larger pots than needed. It is far better to start a plant in a moderate sized pot and then shift it when that pot gets well filled with roots, to one only a size larger.

Another fault with many is that they do not water the plants properly. We dribble a little water on the pot every day, and it looks moist while all the lower part is dust dry. Never water a plant till it is evidently in need of it, and then give water enough to go clear through the pot. Always put some broken potsherds in the bottom of a pot of any large size to furnish drainage, and put a little coarse material over this to insure drainage.

Liquid manure will help plants at times, but should never be used unless the pot is well filled with roots. Otherwise you may sour the soil. If earth worms get into a pot, pour some clear lime water on it and they will come to the surface and can be picked out.

Some plants will not bloom till the roots are crowded. Bulbs like the amaryllis will grow in a pot too large for them but will not bloom till they have gotten the crop crowded with roots. Hence in potting these bulbs it is best to put them in a moderate sized pot and get the roots cramped and they will bloom.

To bloom hyacinths and other Dutch bulbs in pots, they must be potted firmly with the top of the bulb just at the surface. Then water and put them in total darkness until the pots are filled with roots, and then you can bring them to a sunny window and let the tops develop, but if you bring them at once into the window you will fail to get a good bloom for the roots must be well developed first.

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I notice that one of the seedsmen catalogues it under the name of Glory pepper. It is the sweetest pepper I have grown. The plants grow about three feet high and this summer gave me a wonderful crop from June till frost. We have been cutting them up and boiling them and eating them as greens all summer. They are just the right size to make stuffed pickles, and I have dropped all other sweet peppers.

Keep the Land Covered in Winter

IPASSED a field recently where the owner had Sudan grass in rows about 20 inches apart. He had cut it the third time, and now the frost will kill the grass and he will have no winter cover. With the grass in such rows (and the rows are the best way to grow it) he could have sowed crimson clover, and the late growth of the grass would have been merely a protection to the clover, and it would have made up for the loss the soil has sustained from the grass cut. This getting of clover on the land in winter is one of the most important matters in the improvement of our soils. Bare land in winter wastes fertility, and the sooner our farmers understand this the more clover we will see growing. Some have an idea that a crop of dead peavines on the soil will make a winter cover. But this is simply a mulch and will be