



What Farmers Want to Know

By W. F. MASSEY

I Do Not Know

THERE are a great many things I do not know. Sometimes I can hunt up printed information from some one who knows better than I do, but at times I am stuck and do not know where to look, as when a man asks me how to skin a porpoise and render the oil and cure the hide. I have to say that I have seen porpoises many a time playing in the ocean, but never saw one skinned or made into oil, and I really know less about porpoises than I do about chicken raising, and that is very little.

Agricultural (?) Salt

"I HAVE four tons of agricultural salt which I intended to mix with cottonseed meal for corn, but was disappointed in getting the meal. Can I use the salt by the side of the corn, and how much per acre?"

Common salt is chloride of sodium, Chlorine is poisonous to plants, and soda is not used by plants to any extent except perhaps by plants that grow on the seashore. If I had the four tons I might put it heavily where I wanted to kill something, but I would not use it as a fertilizer. I had rather say how little than to say how much to use an acre.

Transplanting Root Crops

"IS IT a good practice to transplant beets, carrots and turnips?"

We usually get more plants of these in the rows and thinning is needed. Then rather than throw away the thinnings of beets and carrots I would transplant them. I have known rutabaga turnips to thrive from transplanting, but never knew it tried with the ordinary flat turnips. But I did once see a man transplant radishes and they grew. As a rule I would prefer to use plenty of seed and get a good stand. If I failed to get a uniform stand I would transplant from the thick spots to the vacancies.

Peru Shanon Pea

"PLEASE give me through The Progressive Farmer all the information you can in regard to the Peru Shanon pea."

I have heretofore, I believe, told all that is needed to be known about this plant. Peru Shanon is simply a new name coined for a very old plant, the Yard-long bean. This is *Dolichos Sesquipedalis*, a native of the West Indies, and remarkable only for the length of its pods. It has no advantage as a forage crop over ordinary cowpeas. In fact, I would give the cowpeas the preference, and certainly would not pay \$4 a pound for the so-called Peru Shanon.

Floral Inquiries

"WHEN is the best time to plant Cyclamen, and tell me how to plant and care for it? Will the Cardinal climber do for an annual porch climber? What is the best perennial vine for a porch? Will the Antigonon leptopus succeed in a shady place?"

Cyclamen bloom only in early winter. The bulbs are planted in the early fall in pots suited to the size of the bulbs. They should be watered carefully, and keep the water off the tops of the bulbs, as it may rot the flower stems. After blooming they are dried off and started again next fall. They need a temperature of about 60 degrees at night. There is no prettier annual climber than the Cardinal climber. It will run about thirty feet and be covered with scarlet flowers. The seed should be plant-

ed after the soil is warm and right where the vine is to grow. The *Akebia quinata* is one of the best evergreen perennial climbers. I have never had the Antigonon to thrive in a shady place. Give it full sun. It makes a large tuber and will stand the winter in your section if covered with manure, and it is one of the prettiest fall-blooming vines.

Mixing a Fertilizer

"PLEASE give me a formula for mixing shell marl with acid phosphate and cottonseed meal for tobacco, cotton, Irish potatoes and soy beans."

Better leave out the marl. If your land needs lime, then use a ton of the marl an acre after plowing and harrow it in well. Never mix lime in any form with materials like cottonseed meal and acid phosphate. After liming the land well you can mix the acid phosphate and cottonseed meal and make as good a fertilizer as we can now get if the mixture is made of equal parts of each. This can be

THE BUSINESS FARMER'S CALENDAR: FIVE THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK AND NEXT

DRY weather is no excuse for stopping the cultivators. Keep them going, running shallow, and you will be surprised at the way the crops stand the drouth.

2. If dry weather or any other cause has kept the stubble-land from being planted to a second crop, let this be the first job to have attention as soon as rain comes.

3. Over the lower South and the Southwest, dry weather has in many cases prevented the setting of potato slips. This is another job that should have immediate attention as soon as the ground is in shape. Plants may be put out as late as the first of August in the lower South.

4. Plan occasional picnics, fishing parties or ball games. Such simple and wholesome amusements do much to keep the young folks in love with the country.

5. Keep up the fight on the boll weevil wherever the pest is present, picking and destroying punctured squares.

used in varying amounts on the crops named.

Trifolium Arvense

"I AM sending a plant. Please tell me its value as a soil improver or pasture. It seems to be a legume and I found it on a very poor spot. Will crimson clover grow where this does? When should this plant be sowed? It was on land where cotton grew last year and must have started in the fall."

This is a true annual clover, *Trifolium arvense*, called Rabbit Foot clover from its gray, downy heads. On sandy soil where I live it grows abundantly and on rich land makes a dense growth. It will inoculate the land for crimson clover, but as compared with crimson clover for soil improvement it is not worth sowing. In fact I do not think that the seed are in commerce. It has always been very abundant here on every spot of waste land or uncultivated places. It starts in the fall and matures about the same time as crimson clover and dies.

Pear Blight

"I HAVE a fine pear tree which is dying with blight. Please tell me how to prevent it."

As I have often told in these columns, the only thing that can be done for pear blight is to watch the trees and on the first appearance of blight cut out ahead of it to sound wood. Let alone, it will keep on growing down the limb and may kill the entire tree. Watchfulness will save trees that neglected would have died. Have a weak solution of carbolic acid at hand and dip the knife blade in this every time a cut is made

to prevent transferring any infection. Blight starts in usually at the blossoms, probably carried on the feet of bees, and grows downward. If you watch the first signs of the shriveling bark next the tips of the shoots and cut out ahead of it before the bacteria have extended far, you can save a great deal that is now lost.

Several Inquiries

"I AM thinking of planting my early crop Irish Cobblers to make a winter crop and for next spring's seed. When is best time to plant?"

"2. Why do you hill up early potatoes?"

"3. What variety of mulberry is best and longest bearing?"

"4. Is it necessary to stake raspberries? How many canes should grow in a hill and how dispose of the rest?"

"5. In pruning grapes, do you continue cutting back to the crotch and make new arms?"

"6. Tell me how and when to spray the Husk tomatoes to destroy the worm that gets inside the husk?"

"7. At what age should the *amaryllis Johnsonii* bloom?"

"8. Can you tell us how to get rid of the English sparrow?"

1. This I have answered elsewhere.

to remain by heavy manuring and fertilization. An undisturbed root will grow faster than a transplanted one, and if I were going to use roots I would never use one more than one year old. 2. Cut asparagus right down on the crown of the root, taking care not to injure other shoots just starting. 3. Shoots coming from weak buds will of course be spindling. 4. Better sell them and not try to keep them, but grow a late crop. In the house with a temperature of 38 and total darkness they can be kept till fall. 5. Sweet potatoes should be stored in a specially constructed house with deadened walls and means for heating up to 85 or 90 degrees after the potatoes are in, till they have dried off from the sweat they go through after storing. After that 50 degrees is high enough. They would rot under conditions that would suit Irish potatoes.

Bulbs After Blooming

"WILL the seed that grow on hyacinths come up if planted? Would you take the bulbs up now or leave them in the ground all summer?"

Under proper management the hyacinth seed will grow, but it will take patient work and time to get blooming bulbs from the seed. Better leave that to the Dutch. I take up my hyacinths, narcissus and tulips when the tops are about two-thirds turned yellow, cut the tops and roots and put the hyacinths in boxes of dry sand to cure and, then store the different varieties in paper sacks in the cellar till fall.

Growing Peanuts

IT SEEMS that with one accord farmers threatened with boll weevil this season have determined that peanuts are the crop to take the place of cotton. The strange thing is that whenever anything threatens the cotton crop all the growers want another crop to take its place as a one-crop plant. They seem to utterly fail to understand that there are hundreds of thousands of prosperous farmers who never saw a cotton plant and yet make a living and money from growing wheat, corn, oats, legumes and livestock. Men who farm with these grain crops and maintain the fertility of their soil with legumes and their use in feeding and return the manure to their land can grow these same crops as profitably in the South as in the North and without any cotton, or can put cotton into the rotation and get what the boll weevils do not.

No one crop is going to make success where you fail with cotton, and the sooner the cotton farmers get to real farming the more independent they will be of the boll weevil. The man who is a farmer in the best manner does not fear the loss of the cotton crop, even if it is a total loss, for his eggs are not all in that one basket, and the man who simply adopts a new crop with the cultivation of which he is unfamiliar, will find himself no better off than with cotton, for peanuts are just as liable to fluctuation in price as cotton.

There can be no objection to any one in the South taking peanuts into a rotation with corn, cotton and grain. I was last year in a section where they plant peanuts and corn, and corn and peanuts year after year, and the farmers are not as well off as a class as those in sections where no one ever grew a peanut, but have farmed successfully with corn, wheat and clover. It is not the crop that makes the farmer, but the farmer who makes the crop, and with good rotative farming there is money to be made in any of our American crops and the only men who go into hysterics over damage to the cotton crop are those whose whole interest is tied up in the one crop—who are planters and not farmers.

Some More Questions

"I HAVE about 200 three-year-old asparagus roots, which I wish to transfer to another garden. How and when should I do it? 2. What is the correct way to cut asparagus? 3. Why do some shoots grow long and spindling? 4. What is the best way to store early Irish potatoes? 5. What is the best way to store sweet potatoes? 6. I have a concrete apple house in which I maintain about 38 degrees temperature. Could this be used for either crop of potatoes?"

1. I would not transplant three-year-old asparagus roots at all, for you can get asparagus sooner from seed sowed where you want the bed

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