

FARM AND POULTRY

HINTS, HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS

A Philadelphia surgeon has lately discovered that the inside membrane of hens' eggs can be successfully used as a substitute for human skin in grafting operations. The new skin formed by this method is finer than the old, but strong and healthy.

For folks who hibernate in latitudes where the mercury is likely to slip down to 20 or 30 below zero there is absolutely no investment that gives more generous or immediate returns than that put into a thirty-five cent soapstone. In the comfort which it yields it pays for itself every night it is used.

That this "watermelon stealin'" business is getting to be serious is shown in the discussion of the subject by a speaker before the recent meeting of the Western Fruit Jobbers' association held in St. Louis. Some one has suggested giving each melon a paper jacket, which would prevent the melons from being exposed to view and thus reduce the temptation to steal them.

If you would live long drink generous amounts of sour milk or buttermilk. Scientists have discovered that the family of bacteria that produce lactic acid—that is, cause the souring process in milk—have the power to destroy or neutralize another group of germs that are said to be responsible for the imperfect digestion of food in the intestines, which in turn is said to be the chief cause of old age decline.

All too often it is the same horse that receives scant feed in the stall that is left without a blanket on the village street in cold weather. Probably the chap who owns him gets three square meals a day and when in town warms his shins by the grocery fire.

Texas raises the largest number of turkeys of any state in the Union, but Rhode Island raises the largest number of large birds—the forty pound milk and chestnut fed kind—which grace the president's holiday board and which fetch 40 cents per pound.

The country auction sale sort of fills the place with the men which the neighborhood sewing bee does with the women folk. On the showdown, however, the bee is ahead of the sale in that some sewing gets done along with the visiting.

It takes something more in the way of encouragement to make hens lay when it is below zero than picking corn off the ear in the shade of a barbed wire fence. Treatment anywhere near approaching this is calculated to freeze the genital current in a hen's circulatory system. Anyway, it stops egg production.

In all latitudes where the Lombardy poplar will live there is nothing in the tree line that excels it as a windbreak. It has the advantages of growing quickly, being tall and occupying a minimum amount of ground space. In the Hood river valley, which is renowned as an orchard section, this poplar is very generally used for wind-break purposes.

A couple of farm lads we read of the other day had trained the old family tabby so that she was of a good deal of help to them in hunting rabbits. She would promptly run down any rabbit hole the boys put her into and was better than a ferret in that she did not stay in the hole if no rabbit was there. Here is a suggestion for other members of the not over-worked feline tribe.

A whole lot of supposedly honest folk who would be shocked if you would suggest they might take money from a neighbor's purse or property from his premises nevertheless consider it a clever bit of business if they can get a ride on the cars for nothing or exact excessive damages from a railroad or other corporation. Fundamentally the two latter instances are just as dishonest as the former, yet are winked at in the popular mind.

While it is of somewhat rare occurrence, one now and then runs across a case in which men are called upon to do things about the house usually considered as among a woman's duties to such an extent that it amounts to a positive imposition on the man, as well as a serious handicap to his own efficiency as a worker. We believe a man should be considerate and helpful touching the heavier work about the house, so far as his time permits, but because he is willing to help he ought not to be imposed upon.

Recently a patent has been granted to an inventor in Germany for a device in which a wire is used instead of a toothed saw in cutting timber. The device consists of a smooth steel wire which encircles the tree, the ends of which are fastened to the arms of a power machine in such a way that the wire is pulled back and forth quickly. The friction causes intense heat, with the result that a smooth groove is burned through the trunk of the tree. In operation this machine will cut a tree through in about one-half the time required to saw it by hand.

O FOR SUMMER!

If it was only summer how happy I should be!
I'd have no blamed old furnace a-tantaling me
With its black soot and ashes, its dust puffed in my face.
The brimstone and the thick smoke a-filling the whole place.
And all the kids a-yellin', "I am soot froze to death!"
Marlar always knockin', "That brimstone takes my breath!"
My hands all raw with blisters a-shovelin' that blame coal
And all my money goin' up that consarned stovepipe hole.

If it was only summer—oh, see that snow-drift high!
I cleaned that walk three times today and must again, oh, my!
My backbone is most busted; I'm on the verge of grip!
I got a fracture of the skull in that last awful slip.

The water pipes are busted; the twins both have the croup;
The plumber and the coalman have my neck in the loop.
Oh, how I wish 'twas summer! I'd let the skeeters bite.
I'd gladly roast and roast and roast and roast all day and night!
C. M. BARNITZ.

FERTILIZATION AND DEFERTILIZATION OF EGGS.

It is often a question with poultry raisers as to how soon eggs become fertile after mating chickens and how soon eggs become germless after matings are broken.

Two experiments here at Riverside with a White Wyandotte cock and ten hens carried on for ten days, in which the eggs laid were set and tested, will be of interest. On the third day after mating 28 per cent were fertile, on the fourth 40 per cent, on the fifth 50 per cent, on the sixth 60 per cent, on the seventh 70 per cent, on the eighth 72 per cent and on the tenth day 76 per cent.

Seventy-five to 80 per cent is considered an excellent average fertility for vigorous fowls under ordinary conditions, so that ten days may be considered time enough for excellent results unless the breed is a very large, clumsy type.

The male and hens were then separated and the eggs as laid were again set and tested to determine the duration of fertility after male was removed.

On the third day after separation 74 per cent of eggs were fertile, on the fourth 70 per cent, on the fifth 62 per cent, on the sixth 55 per cent, on the seventh 48 per cent, on the eighth 15 per cent, on the ninth 3 per cent and on the tenth day none were fertile.

FEATHERS AND EGGSHELLS.

When your fowls get rousy don't shut them up in a band box. Let them have fresh air, but no drafts. Remember this is the fresh air era when patients with respiratory afflictions sleep in the open, not in the oven as of old.

It is handy in some respects to take eggs to market in a box of oats, sell the eggs and feed the oats to the horse, but eggs are cleaner and look so much nicer in a handy crate, and such can be bought, the ten dozen size, for only a quarter.

The hen that lays is the hen that stays, should be the rule on every farm, poultry plant and in every back lot coop. If we could only get rid of the undesirable citizen as easily as the drone hen, the millennial dawn would surely move up a notch.

The Buff Minorca is the latest on deck, California the place of origin. We should like to get our judges together and examine them on old and recent breeds and varieties and their characteristics. Wouldn't they stunk kerplunk, and yet most of them advertise as expert judges of all varieties.

While the customs authorities have decided for keeps that a hen is not a bird, there was a scrap down at Atlantic City as to whether a hen is an animal when a Chinaman was arrested for cruelty to animals for not feeding and watering his flock. The magistrate made the hen an animal and fined the pigtail \$10. Next.

A Connecticut farmer near Hارتington contests the opinion of the customs court that a hen is not a bird by producing a hen on his farm that lays in a box placed in a tree and flies around the farm instead of walking. She may be one of those "baryard" pheasants that our city hunters shoot on the wing and pass off for the real thing.

"That hen's a ho!" exclaimed her owner. "She's a candidate for the ax. She's up the first to eat and scratches for feed the last!" We asked him to test her for eggs before sending her to chicken heaven. To his surprise he found she was the best layer he owned. We have never seen a great layer that wasn't a great eater.

The dropping board beneath the roost is such an easily arranged convenience no poultry raiser can afford to be without. It catches and saves all droppings at night and makes it so easy to clean up and save the valuable manure. Pens where the excrement is allowed to accumulate in the old bug-house way always smell and are insanitary.

The Rose Comb Barred Plymouth Rock is now being discussed with a vengeance on both sides the Atlantic, and there is a fight as to its admission to the standard. But why should it not be admitted? It comes straight from the Barred Rock and gets its comb honestly from the Dominique that was in the cross that made the Rock, and that's more than can be said of the hybrid single comb Silver Pencilled Wyandotte that was recently standardized into a Silver Pencilled Rock by the American Poultry association.

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It is estimated that if the cost of hauling produce to market could be reduced by means of better highways from 23 to 11½ cents per ton the farmers, gardeners and ranchmen of the country would be saved the enormous sum of \$250,000,000 annually. In some of the European countries which have good roads the hauling cost is but 10 cents per ton, while on some roads leading into London where motor trucks are in use the hauling cost has been reduced to as low as 4 cents per ton. If the "dollar" argument is needed to give the good roads movement a boost it would seem to be furnished in the figures quoted.

Grafting wax will be needed before long in the orchard work. An excellent wax is made by taking four pounds of rosin, two pounds of beeswax and one pound of rendered tallow. The three ingredients should be melted carefully together, but should not be allowed to boil. The liquid should be poured while hot into a pail of cold water and worked while submerged with greased hands, so that the mass will cool evenly. When cooled the wax should be taken from the water and pulled until it has a fine grain. The wax should then be molded into balls and put in a cool place. This wax is good for all purposes. However, it can be made softer by the addition of a little more tallow or tougher by increasing the amount of beeswax called for in the above recipe. The writer has found that an excellent way for keeping the wax soft in cool weather is to place it in an old flat bottomed kettle on an old soapstone, which can be heated occasionally.

BE GOOD TO THE HENS.

A hen can't lay unless it has an abundance of feed. Egg production isn't made with a one-grain diet, either. Hens like a variety in the menu, and they have to have it before many eggs are laid.

To be up in the front ranks in egg production, hens must have in their bill of fare grains of various kinds, animal food, green food, grit, and fresh water. Not much of a variety, but many poultrymen are asleep, and aren't furnishing their chickens with the proper feed stuffs. Yet such men do the most complaining about their hens not being on the job.

About an ounce of food a day is needed for every pound a hen weighs. This estimate is followed by many successful poultrymen. Enough lime is found in one pound of oyster shells for several dozen eggs. Clover hay, well cured, will furnish the green part of the ration. GOOD CARE IS NEEDED.

The welfare of chickens must be looked after during the growing period, as no amount of pampering and petting at maturity will compensate for neglect then. Preparation and foresight must be practiced as much in poultry culture as in the successful growing of a wheat or corn crop. The man making a mark in any undertaking takes a look ahead. The same applies in rearing chickens for egg production.

Winter eggs come from hens of a good laying strain, housed in large, comfortable quarters—well lighted and dry—and an abundance of food. If these requirements have been filled and still an egg production isn't forthcoming, look for lice or mites. Perhaps the pullets weren't hatched early enough, or the hens aren't getting exercise. Possibly they are too old to lay.

Don't overfeed the chickens, or the winter egg production will go glimmering. If the food gets down in the mud it becomes dirty, is wasted, and disease is likely to be spread. Make the hens scratch for their feed in cold weather. When hens are made to scratch, the losses from disease, especially cholera, are held in check during the shut-in periods of cold weather. Hens will be healthier, and the drones will be obliged to use up extra energy, which promotes a full circulation of the blood.

A SCRATCHING YARD.

Provide a scratching yard or a scratching shed in which wheat or oat straw is strewn at a depth of six to eight inches. Then throw the feed into the straw. Coarse chop, kafir corn, oats, and oats with other feeds, sugar cane, millet seed and chopped roots are suitable for feeding this way. It is likely that an open scratching yard would not be very satisfactory if near or in range of the farm dwelling, on account of the straw being blown about by the wind. Under such conditions it probably would be advisable to fence the yard tight with boards around the bottom.

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