

**Asparagus -- Wild and Cultivated.**

The asparagus belongs to the natural order of Liliaceae or Lilyworts, so that when we exclaim against the Japanese custom of eating lily bulbs as a vegetable, we must not forget that our own select vegetable is closely allied to the fragrant lily and likewise a family connection of the classic asphodel, the flower of departed spirits. The mountain asparagus gathered by Invenal's bailiff wife was the wild variety, as popular in Rome as that cultivated in the gardens of the Ravenna, or Nesis in Campania, and frequently referred to by the Apicii Luculli and other equally renowned connoisseurs of Roman days. In England "the habitat of the wild asparagus is marshy ground near the sea, productive also of rushes," hence its name of sea asparagus, and in a botanical work of the seventeenth century we read: "Sperage found in sundry places as in the marshes near Bristow. I found it growing on the cliffs at the Lezard Point, in Cornwall," where a tiny islet is called Asparagus Island—A-spear-grass-island. As salt air and soil seem to conduce to the growth of the wild variety, many gardeners use seaweed freely as a manure on the beds, and add salt in the proportion of two pounds to the square yard. In every country of Europe it grows freely, even to the banks of the River Euphrates. On the salt steppes of Russia and Poland it is so prolific that the horses and cattle graze on it, so that it is veritably "grass"; but it is to France we must turn to find it cultivated to perfection and sold at a price within the reach of all purses. The Parisian artisan can feast on it freely for half a franc, and the poorest student in the Quartier Latin gets a dainty plateful for a quarter of a franc. But to the British workman, and indeed to the great mass of the people, it is still the "select vegetable" at a prohibitive price. Our most popular variety is the *Asparagus Lativus* of Linnaeus, but the *Asparagus Albus* is most freely cultivated in Canada.

**POULTRY.****Management of Poultry.**

[Compiled from a paper by Mr. J. Hartley, Brant Co., Ont.]

**Varieties.**—The sorts of poultry for the general farmer are those which have a reputation for having good business habits. The Plymouth Rock is a contented bird, can be retained within a reasonably low fence, is always thrifty, looks well when dressed, is a reliable sitter, a careful mother, and producer of a high average of eggs with reasonable care. The Leghorns are beautiful birds, great layers, but are too small for market. A cross between the Brown Leghorn and Buff Cochins, or between the White Leghorn and Light Brahma, gives fine, profitable birds.

**Management.**—The conditions for success in poultry raising are: Warm, light, and dry quarters, clean water, wholesome food, and a moderate range. My cold-weather ration for 30 hens consists of as much finely-cut hay as can be grasped in both hands, two quarts of bran, and the refuse from the table for the last 24 hours. This is scalded, usually and fed in the morning. They get grain, usually wheat, with an occasional feed of barley and corn, at noons and evenings. They get warmed water twice a day, which is liberally taken.

They should be kept well supplied with coal ashes, and receive ground bone twice a week. Hens should scratch for their grain, which keeps them healthy and prevents egg-eating. The house should be cleaned twice a week, and given a sprinkling of fresh lime. To keep the fowls free from vermin, sprinkle the roosts once a week with coal oil and turpentine, supply plenty of coal ashes for dust baths, and whitewash the house once a year.

To keep up the stock to a high standard the hens should not be kept till over four years old. In the early part of March select about eight of the best hens and mate them with a male possessing as many as possible of the points desired to be perpetuated. Only the eggs from this pen should be set. This care will pay well for the doing. There is no profit in the haphazard system of management.

**To Break Up a Sitting Hen.**—I use a light frame two feet square and two feet high. I cover the top with a board, and around the four sides I have wire netting, about two-inch mesh. I put this frame in the yard among the other hens and enclose the criminal in it. She can see the flock, and while endeavoring to gain her liberty she forgets her broody habit. A day or two in the box is enough.

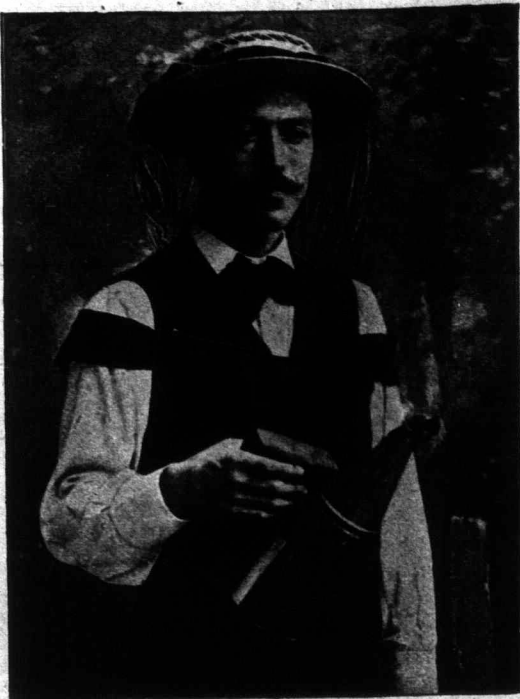
**The Poultry House.**—A flock of 50 hens is as large as is profitable in one pen. A house 8x20 or 25 feet, with liberal yard room, is about right. The hens should be confined each day until they are through laying, so that absolutely fresh eggs will always be secured, and an honest man's reputation is thus saved from question.

**The Poultry-keeper.**—The man who allows his hens to roost in cold quarters, exposed to winds and storms, gets eggs only when they are cheap, and decides that hens do not pay. The poultryman who builds an expensive house, keeps a large number of high-priced fowls, spends his whole time and a lot of money on them, rarely finds poultry-keeping an unqualified success. But the man who exercises common-sense and good judgment in housing, feeding, and attending to the details, not as a separate industry, but as one branch of farming, is usually able to get enough out of it to largely keep the house in groceries.

**APIARY.****Quieting and Manipulating Bees.**

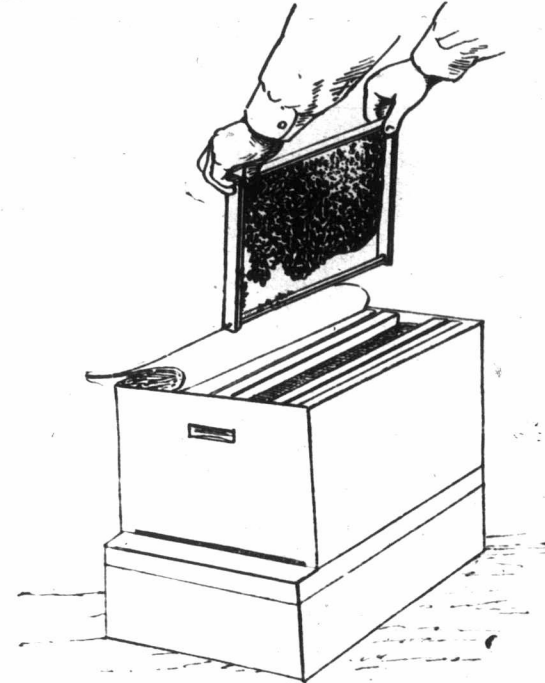
The demeanor of bees toward an individual depends largely upon his bearing and treatment of them. Langstroth, in his excellent treatise, "Langstroth on the Honey Bee," says:—

"Let all your motions about your hives be gentle and slow; never crush or injure the bees; acquaint yourself fully with the principles of management, and you will find you have little more reason to dread the sting of a bee than the horns of a favorite cow or the heels of your faithful horse."



[Use of veil and bee smoker.]

Most bee manipulators, however, grow somewhat indifferent to stings, since in time they become so inoculated with the poison of the bee that the pain of the sting is less severe and the swelling slight. But to avoid the sting is, with some of the races more recently introduced into this country, simply a question of care in manipulation and a free use of smoke. It is not meant that the bees should be stupefied with smoke, but merely alarmed and subjugated, and whenever they show any disposition to act on the offensive recourse is to be had to smoke. It is not necessary that the smoke should be from a particular source, but that from certain substances, as tobacco, subjugates them more quickly, while burning puffballs stupefies them for the time. There are some objections to these substances which do not apply to wood, either partially decayed or sound, and as the latter when in a good smoker holds fire best and is very effective, it is advisable to keep a good supply at hand. Seasoned hickory or hard maple are best, though beech, soft maple, etc., are good. The most improved bellows smokers, when supplied with such fuel sawed five or six inches long and split into bits a half inch or less in size, will burn all day and be ready at any time to give a good volume of blue smoke, by which bees of most of the races now cultivated in this country are subdued at once.



[Manipulation—removing comb from hive.]

With Italian or black bees a puff or two of smoke should be given at the hive entrance, and the cover and honey board, or quilt, removed slowly and carefully, smoke being driven in as soon as the least opening is made and the volume increased enough to keep down all bees as fast as the covering is removed. The smoker may then be placed on

the windward side of the hive to allow the fumes to pass over the top and toward the operator. The frames may then be gently pried loose and lifted out carefully without crushing a bee if it can be avoided. Crushing bees fills the air with the odor of poison, which irritates the bees. So also when one bee is provoked to sting, others follow because of the odor of poison.

Too much smoke will often render certain manipulations difficult; for example, when queens are to be sought out, or nuclei or artificial swarms made, volumes of smoke blown in between the combs will drive the bees from them so that they will cluster in clumps on the bottoms of the frames or in the corners of the hives. A little observation and judgment will enable one to know when the bees need smoke and how much of it to prevent any outbreak on their part, which it is always best to forestall rather than be obliged to quell after it is fully under way.

The frame hive as now made—with metal rabbits and arrangements for surplus honey, and quilts instead of honey boards—reduces propitization to a minimum and renders the danger of irritating the bees by jarring when manipulating much less. As a prerequisite to rapid and safe manipulation perfectly straight combs are necessary.—[Frank Benton's Manual of Apiculture, issued by U. S. Dept. of Agriculture.]

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.**

[In order to make this department as useful as possible, parties enclosing stamped envelopes will receive answers by mail, in cases where early replies appear to be advisable; all enquiries, when of general interest, will be published in next succeeding issue, if received at this office in sufficient time. Enquirers must in all cases attach their name and address in full, though not necessarily for publication.]

**Legal.****SALARY OF SCHOOL TEACHER.**

"READER":—"In 1894 I signed a contract with school trustees to teach at their school for 1895. And I taught during 1895 and continued on under the same contract for 1896 and taught till May, when I sent in my resignation, to take effect on 30th June. Under the contract my salary was to be paid as follows: The grants as received, and the balance at the end of the year. I now want to know when should my salary be paid to me?"

[If you resigned, against the wishes of the trustees, in June, being in the middle of the term of your contract, you would not be entitled to any salary for 1896, as you have broken your contract. If, however, your resignation was assented to by the trustees, you can collect the proportion payable by the contract, namely, the grants as received, and the balance at the end of the year—31st December.]

**GRAVEL FOR REPAIRING ROADS.**

T. W. P., Grey Co., Ont.:—"What right has the municipality to take gravel off my place for repairs to roads, and who is to control the entrance to the pit?"

[The rights are given to the municipality by the Municipal Act: 1st. To purchase the land, if it chooses to do so, entirely. 2nd. To search for and take gravel, etc., without purchasing the land, upon the conditions that the right of entry upon such lands, as well as the price or damage to be paid, shall, if not agreed upon by the parties concerned, be settled by arbitration. A corporation acting under this provision must, by the by-law or by the notice to the owner, define the quantity of gravel required, and the arbitrators should fix the value of the quantity required, and also fix the amount to be paid for the right of entry to take the same away.]

**Veterinary.****ABORTION IN COW.**

T. W. P., Grey Co., Ont.:—"My cow slipped her calf at about four months. The casing that held calf had whitish matter all over it in patches as large as a fifty-cent piece. Will you please give your opinion on the matter in the ADVOCATE?"

[There is good reason to believe that prolonged milking during pregnancy is a fruitful cause of abortion. The placental membrane, or, as you call it, the casing, owes its white color in the case you mention to the effort on the part of nature to be rid of the foetus. The patches, as you call them, are the cotyledons or membranous tufts which connect the foetus to the parent, and they become white, in cases of abortion, owing to the loss of nutrition.]

DR. WM. MOLE, M.R.C.V.S., Toronto, Ont.]

**Miscellaneous.****PLANTAIN (Plantago major).**

"READER," Toronto, Ont.:—"Kindly identify and prescribe method of eradicating the enclosed weed? It has overrun two lawns in Toronto, totally displacing the grass."

[We find the specimens sent us to be the common plantain (Plantago major). It is too well-known to need a minute description. It grows about dwellings and on the edges of paths where the grass has been much trodden. It is a simple perennial, having broad, smooth-edged, oblong, dark green leaves. The seed, which closely resembles some of the clovers, grows in spikes upon straight stems, growing up from the root. No doubt the lawns in question received the plantain seed when the grass seed was sown. The only plan