

POULTRY

The Correction of Vices

Feather pulling, egg-eating, drinking or eating filth are three common vices in hens. A hen with any of these habits is a dangerous proposition. Other members of the flock will acquire the vices from her, unless the trouble is immediately checked. Feather pulling is a vice that is particularly liable to develop in a flock kept in close confinement and given little exercise. A flock kept in those conditions is apt to be on an unbalanced ration. The fowls crave for meat or green food and seem to take to pulling feathers of each other. Sometimes in extreme cases, the hens peck a victim to death, seeming to be set wild by the taste of blood, if by chance any is drawn in pulling the feathers. If the vice reaches this stage, feather pullers should be killed and used on the table. If it is only just starting separate the ones that are learning the trick from the rest and try solitary confinement awhile for the culprits. The best way is to correct the ration by introducing some meal and green food and by providing larger space for the bunch to exercise or scratch in.

Egg eating generally starts from the hens investigating a soft shelled egg that may be dropped and broken on the floor, or from eggs broken in the nest. Sometimes hens get the habit of egg eating from being fed egg shells, or take to eating eggs in the nest to satisfy the craving for lime or grit. The remedy is to prevent over-crowding on the nest by providing more room for layers, or by darkening the nests, which will lessen crowding. Also by providing grit and lime for the fowls to use. A nest with a canvas bottom and a hole in the center through which the egg when laid drops through to a drawer beneath, will prevent hardened sinners from making away with their product. Such nests should have a soft cloth or some chaff underneath the canvas for the egg to fall upon. The safest remedy is to use confirmed egg eaters on the table.

Fowls occasionally indulge the habit of drinking out of barn yard pools or puddles of stagnant water, or devour excrement and filth. Such practices are likely to bring on digestive disorders and diseases of various kinds. The only thing to do is to keep the hens out of the way of temptation and prevent them from satisfying their abnormal cravings. Proper feeding and good management will usually save flocks from acquiring any of these vices.

The Enemies of Fowls

Among the enemies of fowls, coyotes, skunks, weasels, and certain predaceous birds are the most common. Along with them go the domestic cat, dogs once in a while, other meat eating animals, wild and domestic, and human thieves. In certain parts of this country the coyote's depredations are a rather serious drain upon the profits of the poultry business. These animals will commit their villainies in broad daylight, and where fowls are allowed to run out, a coyote is liable at any time to make off with one before a man realizes what has happened. And it takes quite a few hens to keep a coyote's appetite satisfied. Poultry authorities are agreed that the best way to get rid of this fowl enemy is to poison him. Theoretically this is all right. Strychnine set out in pieces of flesh will make short work of the coyotes if you can get them to eat it. But that's where the trouble comes. The coyote prefers to prepare his own meal in his own way.

Skunks, weasels and such like get in their work mostly at night. They can be trapped sometimes, but not very often. A skunk can be fixed if its burrow is found, but the trouble is to find the burrow. Where such pests prey upon the flock the best way of preventing loss is to keep all entrances to the poultry house closed up at night with wire netting, screening or shutters of some kind.

A dog about a farm, if he has been properly trained, will keep hawks and other birds or animals away in the daytime, and guard the flock against molestation at night. If the poultryman is any good with a gun, he can use it to good advantage in decreasing the number of predatory birds and animals in his neighborhood. Whenever it is found that the hens are being carried off, the poultryman should not rest until he has put a stop to it or spent some time trying to anyway.

Bumble Foot

Fowls roosting on high perches sometimes injure their feet in jumping down from the roost to the floor. An abscess forms on the sole, which becomes hard and calloused, and a condition known as bumble foot results. The disease, if neglected, may extend upward in the leg affecting the joints and ultimately causing death. A fowl that has once had bumble foot is of little more use. The lameness is liable to return at any time and birds suffering once from this disorder very rarely become profitable producers again. The best way is to prevent trouble by making the roosting perches low and all on the same level. The ordinary way of putting the roosts up, one above the other, like the rungs of a ladder is the easiest way of laying things out for trouble of this kind. The hens crowd up to the top perches on going to roost, and when they come down in the

morning jump from one perch to another. Hens of light weight breeds, such as Leghorns can make the descent every day of their lives without injury to the feet, but heavy weights like Plymouth Rocks, Wyandottes or Cochins are liable to put their feet out of business by the performance, and the Scotchman's adage about the horse holds equally true with the hen, "no foot no hen."

Frequent applications of crude petroleum is a good remedy for bumble foot in the early stages of the disease. If the trouble is neglected it becomes necessary to open the abscess by making two cuts across each other in the form of an X. The matter is then washed out with warm water containing a little carbolic acid, and carbolated vaseline applied daily to the wound until a cure is effected. The hatchet treatment is used by poultrymen of experience with rather more satisfactory results than any kind of doctoring.

Teaching Chicks to Roost

Chicks of Leghorn and other light weight breeds will begin roosting of their own accord when six or eight weeks old. Chicks of the heavier breeds often do not roost until taught to do so by the keeper. The general practice is to keep chicks of medium sized breeds on the floor until about three months old, and chicks of the largest breeds a month or two longer. Unless the floor is kept clean and the chicks well bedded, it is better to teach all to roost early. If suitable wide roosts are used; there is no more danger of crooked breasts than on the floor, and many poultry men think the general advantages of getting the youngsters on the roost where they cannot crowd and huddle in corners, and are not soiled by their own and each other's droppings, more than compensate for what keel bones are twisted.

Often chicks can be taught to roost by putting in low roosts and placing with them one or two old hens or chicks that are in the habit of roosting. If this plan cannot be tried, or does not work, a wide board should be placed close to the wall, about a foot from the ground, and the chicks placed on it after dark, night after night, until they will go to it of their own accord. After that, a wide roost, the regulation distance from the wall, may be substituted for the board.

HORTICULTURE

Fruit and Flower Show next Month

An effort is being made by the Western Horticultural society and the Winnipeg Florists' association to stimulate interest in plant, flower, and fruit culture by holding a horticultural exhibition in Winnipeg on September 3rd, 4th, and 5th. The prize list makes arrangements for the awarding of \$1000, in premiums, the money being divided as follows:

For flowers \$320; for fruit \$200; for vegetables \$350, also \$80 in prizes for the best collection of vegetables by horticultural or agricultural societies, first \$40; second \$25; third \$15. \$50 is also set apart for the honey display.

Competition is limited to the province of Manitoba on account of the provincial government making a money grant. No exhibitor may make more than one entry in each class, and no exhibitor may compete as both professional and amateur.

F. W. Brodrick, of the Manitoba Agricultural college is managing the show and is furnishing enquirers with whatever information they desire. This show is one of the best chances we have of demonstrating the suitability of Manitoba for fruit and flower production, and incidentally removing the impression that the province can grow nothing but wheat.

Planting on the Open Prairie

I am interested in planting forest trees and want your advice on the subject. I have selected land having a southeast slope on the bank of a small creek. This summer I have had it broken and it is being disced well. What kind of trees or seeds would be most suitable to plant, and where could I get them? Where and when could I get the sugar maple, soft maple, hackberry, linden seed or trees?

Sask.

Mrs. McC.

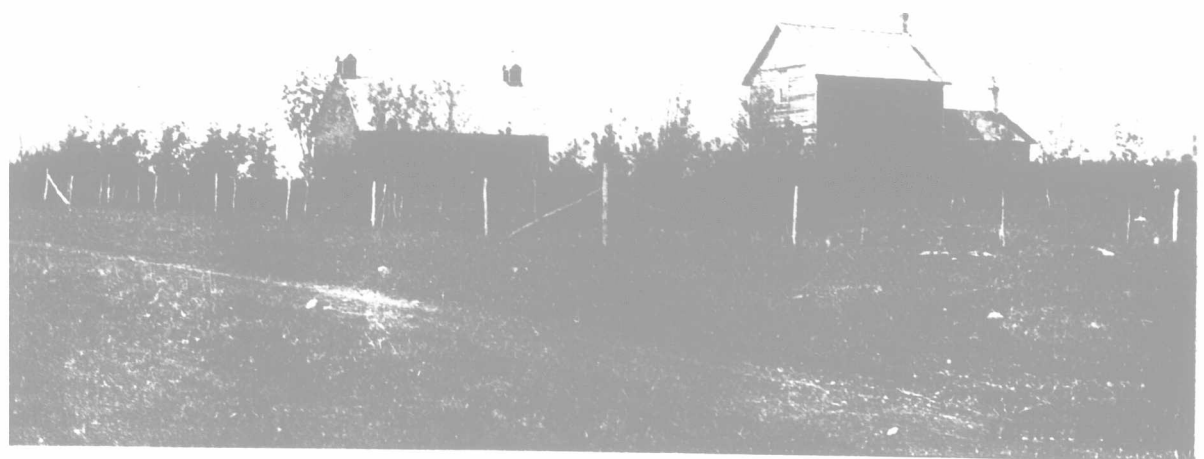
It is to supply trees for such purposes that the forestry farm at Indian Head has been established. In connection with this farm men are kept to inspect the ground that applicants for trees have prepared, and while inspecting offer suggestions as to how it might be improved. If it is desired to get trees through the forestry farm, (which by the way, are free) application should be made in plenty of time to have the land inspected the year before the planting is done. We could not say whether or not the inspection could be made this year as the work of each inspector is laid out early in the season to save as much travelling as possible, but application might be made at once. Suggestions as to varieties will be given also, but if the land is fit, and you want to start the plot before the forestry farm can supply the stock, then get the trees from a nursery or from a clump of woods near at home. It would not be worth while to raise the trees from seed, you would be farther ahead to wait one or two years for a supply from the forestry farm.

Our correspondent lives at Kronan, which is south of Regina, and quite a distance from timber. But a good supply of native trees might be got from the Wascana creek west, or by going north to the Qu'Appelle valley. Any trees growing naturally in these valleys would stand a good chance of growing in a cultivated plot.

If it is decided to order from a nursery we would suggest starting the plot with willows. There are several varieties and they are our most rapid growers, covering the ground and breaking the wind. Russian Golden, the acute leaved willow, Russian laurel, and white are among the best varieties. Then for deep moist soil there is the cotton wood, a rapid grower and hardy. Along with these hardy, low growing willows it is well to set larger trees in a position so that the willows and cotton woods will shelter them from the winds and sun. Of the large trees, Manitoba maple, native green ash, Balsam poplar or Balm of Gilead, native birch, native elm and native larch or tamarack, and evergreens, such as spruce and the hardier varieties of pine, may be grown with a little care. The hard maple and the soft maple of eastern Canada are not hardy in the west. Lindon or basswood can scarcely be recommended for general planting as far west as Regina, but it grows well in eastern Manitoba. These same suggestions will, of course, apply if the trees are secured from the forestry farm, but the inspector from first hand observation would be able to make more useful recommendations.

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The United States has now reached that point where the growth of forests is but one-third of the annual cut. There is timber enough in sight yet to supply the country's needs for twenty-five or thirty years at the present rate of use. America uses five or six times as much timber per capita as the European nations.



FARM BUILDINGS AND GARDEN: PROPERTY OF EDWARD MILLS, CARLYLE, SASK. IN A COUNTRY OF BARE PRAIRIE, TREES ARE A DOUBLE BOON.