

A Record in Egg-laying.

A Washington despatch, dated Sept. 24th, states: The world's champion hen has just laid 291 eggs since October 5th, 1905. She is finishing strong and steady and will pass under the wire with a round 300 eggs to her credit for the year.

This hen belongs to E. W. Starnell, Alexandria, Va., and has been officially recognized by the Department of Agriculture on account of her record as entitled to the egg-laying belt. The former record, held by a Salt Lake City hen, was 267 eggs in a year. The Mormon hen is thus put into the selling plater class by the Virginia model of poultry industry.

Mr. Starnell figures that except for the moulting season his hen has produced an egg every twenty-four hours throughout the year. She is not much for looks, couldn't be told at a glance from any common ninety egg to the year hen, but for industry she is the world's model hen to date.

May her flock increase is the benediction of the Department.

Suggestions from an Expert Poultryman.

The following remarks upon poultry-keeping were addressed by H. L. Blanchard, of the State of Washington, to the members of Farmers' Institutes in British Columbia:

"I deal in poultry chiefly for egg production, and the money I have lost was because I did not start right. What do we find in keeping poultry? Why, some hens don't lay 100 eggs a year, some will lay 200 a year, and doubtless you have proved that it costs as much to keep a poor-laying flock as a good one. I am sure you will find it quite a job to buy a good-laying flock; people won't sell them any more than they will their best dairy stock. It is not a good plan to take eggs for your sittings from your flock promiscuously, unless known to be good layers. This matter of selection of hens for egg production is found out only by study. A hen that won't lay in the fall, after moulting, is not, as a rule, worth her keep.

"I have hens that are netting me \$3 per hen per year, and a hen that won't yield more than \$1 a year is not worth much; and my observation here in British Columbia is to the effect that poultry is more valuable than with us; every farmer should have at least 100 hens; I can see nothing to hinder it; and this amount, at \$2 a hen a year profit, is quite a nice little thing. The same attention in detail is needed in poultry as in dairying, or anything else, to get the best results. Poultry must have good quarters, not necessarily expensive ones. I built a new house last year, at a cost of \$240, for as many hens. This cost covers all the fencing and a running faucet, conveying fresh water clean through. There are eight rooms, with a runway for each room of 30 feet wide and 100 feet long. The largest cost was that of labor. Now, if I had to build this in the East, according to climatic conditions, the cost would have been greater.

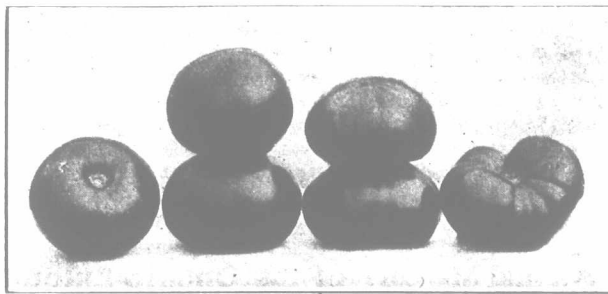
"It is a bad plan to crowd too many hens together. I never allow more than 25 hens in a properly-constructed house of 10 by 15 feet. The house I use, and what I find the most convenient, is the continuous one, as against the Cullander plan. I have also experimented several times, and find that fowls kept within a moderately limited range have done the best, but they must be supplied with egg-producing food, good scratching places under cover, with plenty of gravel and straw litter, as exercise is indispensable to secure the best results."

A question was asked here, "What would people do with their eggs if all were as successful as you?" Mr. Blanchard replied: "There is no fear of overproduction in this line, for fifteen years, at least. The importation of eggs last year was in the neighborhood of \$300,000. Egg production in Washington is five times higher than ever before, and the price was never better than last year, and I can safely say that persons embarking in this branch can figure on a good trade for the period I have named, and this may not be said of other callings in this age of competition. There is no section so favored in this respect as this Northwest country."

Mr. Blanchard here depicted on the black-board what plans he adopted in building poultry-houses, both for cleanliness and accommodation. "Wide perches, of two or three inches, laid flat-ways, are good for chest expansion," he said. "Now, a few words on vermin. These never, or very seldom, trouble my poultry-yards. I wash underneath and both edges of my poultry-perches with carbolinum, as well as using a little in the whitewash, and I know this will prove effective for two years, and perhaps for a good many more, if a good dust bath be provided. I adopt the plan of hanging everything from the rafters. The continuous house I built is one, I say, of eight rooms, and the inner doors are hung to open each way, with two windows 3 x 6 feet in each compartment, hung inside to swing back to the wall; and for glass I now use muslin inside, and the outside frames are covered with wire netting. I have observed that these muslin-made windows are fully as warm as glass ones. I have tested

this by placing buckets of water in various houses, and I had more thickness of ice where glass was used than where muslin existed."

Mr. Blanchard here stated that his daughter looked after 600 hens, with an average of three hours' work a day. "Now," he said, "with my years of experience and profit, I have not bought more than 300 pounds of beef scraps. This is, with me, quite superfluous, though I have nothing whatever to say against beef scraps; they are good, if you have to buy anything. A good balanced ration is all that's needed. I grow a good crop of wheat, oats, barley, corn—in fact, sufficient for my purpose—and I feed a mixture of half wheat and barley, and quarter oats and corn, all mixed together in these quantities, and all the green food necessary. And, with this ration, and the houses kept clean, and a pure running supply of fresh water, it is rare to have any disease; and if we discover any fowl suffering from an ailment, it is isolated, and if no response is made for the better after a couple of days, by a change of diet, its head is chopped off and buried, hen, head and all."



Improved and Unimproved Earliana Tomatoes.

APIARY.

Bees vs. Horses in Law.

As reported in "The Farmer's Advocate" for Oct. 4th, a case of general interest to beekeepers and farmers was disposed of at Osgoode Hall, Toronto, when an appeal was dismissed, with costs, in an action where judgment had been given in a lower court against a beekeeper for \$400 damages and costs, through a team of horses being stung to death.

Beekeepers would do well to bear this case in mind when locating apiaries or moving bees to take advantage of the large buckwheat fields in some localities. The bees should be set as far as possible from any field where horses are to be used, or, if impossible or impracticable to get them far enough away, the apiary, if consisting of say a hundred or more colonies, should be broken in two or more sections, which should be set at some distance from one another. The whole danger in these cases seems to be from the "massing" of bees. The bees from a dozen hives passing over a field would be very unlikely to disturb horses, but, increase the number of hives to a hundred or more, and the bees, from some reason, whether rendered abnormally irritable through crowding on the flowers, or by the continual roar of their numbers, or some other unexplained reason, will be much more liable to attack any living thing in their line of flight, especially horses, for which they have an especial dislike. And they appear more apt to make trouble when working on buckwheat than at any other time, as most accidents of this kind happen when the bees are working on this flower.

If the beekeeper finds his bees crowding in flight low over a grain field which the owner wants to cut, he should make some arrangement whereby the work may be done at night, or some other time. In extreme cases, it might even pay the beekeeper to buy the grain on the field and let it stand, rather than take chances. In case the bees kill a man's horses, as did the ones in the story, let the owner of the bees make the best reasonable settlement possible, and don't let him be persuaded by any shyster-lawyer that he is not obliged to pay anything unless he feels like it.

E. G. H.

Inspection of Apiaries.

Ontario beekeepers desiring the services of the inspector of apiaries should address their requests to the Hon. Nelson Monteith, Minister of Agriculture, Toronto, giving nearest railway station and distance of apiary from station.

The annual meeting of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association will be held in the York County Council Chamber, in the City of Toronto, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, November 7th, 8th and 9th, 1906. The programme presents a very practical and interesting bill of fare.

GARDEN & ORCHARD.

Tomatoes Improved by Selection.

A SPLENDID ILLUSTRATION OF THE VALUE OF SELECTION IN HORTICULTURE.

The accompanying cut was produced from a photograph sent to G. H. Clark, Seed Commissioner, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, by G. A. Robertson, a prominent young fruit-grower, who lives near St. Catharines, in the Niagara Peninsula, Ont.

Mr. Robertson is very enthusiastic about the value of selection in seeds, as well as in live stock, to the farmers of Canada. He believes that much of the farmer's success in future will be based on his ability to select and follow up that selection to its logical conclusion. He thinks we are just touching the fringe of discovery in the application of this principle to the development of farm crops, fruits and vegetables.

He bases his conclusion on his experience in growing tomatoes for a number of years. For commercial purposes, he divides tomatoes into the two classes of early and late. The late varieties have been well developed to be good yielders, as well as being good in type, color and flavor. In these essential points, the late varieties excel the early kinds. The ideal Mr. Robertson was aiming to achieve was to secure these virtues in any early variety, knowing that if this could be done it would prove a money-maker.

It is well known that late tomatoes usually bring 25 cents to 30 cents per bushel, while the early fruits of the earlier varieties often sell as high as \$3.00 per bushel. These are usually from the early or first-ripening clusters, while the later clusters ripen with the earlier clusters of the late varieties, and, on account of their lack of shape and quality, are sometimes unmarketable in competition with the late varieties, usually of better quality and more perfect in shape.

Mr. Robertson for a number of years has been trying such early varieties as the Ruby, Dominion Day, Chalk's Early, Jewel and Earliana. Of these he has come to favor the two latter varieties. The Jewel embodied most of the desirable features he was aiming at, but it was a little late in ripening.

For the last three years he has been working with the Earliana, and, through careful selection, he has secured a strain which has become quite fixed in character and has most of the desirable features of the Jewel, but it is much earlier.

The cut speaks for itself. The original type of Earliana are those on the right. They show the deep creases, irregularity, lack in depth, and, what is not reproduced in the cut, the unevenness in ripening. Those to the left are the Improved Earliana—the result of careful selection to secure those desirable qualities of smoothness, prolificness, even ripening, firm flesh, and early maturity. Such tomatoes will sell even in competition with the best late varieties.

Mr. Robertson says that often he has eight and nine good-sized tomatoes growing in a cluster, and that his whole crop this year was much better than in any previous year, in that his percentage of rough, flat, unmarketable tomatoes was greatly lessened, many vines having full crops without any ill-shaped fruits.

Mr. Robertson is so convinced that this work pays that he is applying similar methods of selection for the improvement of his other crops, and he is sure to win. Experience counts.

Handling the Apple Crop.

In commercial orcharding, the business end of the enterprise—that of marketing the crop to the best advantage—is second in importance only to that of producing fruit of the best quality.

It is in this particular that there is the greatest need for improvement at the present time. There are hundreds of apple-growers who can grow first-class fruit to every one who can place it on the market when and where it will bring the best price. The growers who can make the most out of their apples are those who keep in touch with the best markets at home and abroad. During the shipping season these men watch the market reports daily, and unless prices are satisfactory, they hold their fruit until good prices prevail. The great majority, however, of those who have apples to sell wait for some buyer to come along, and sell for whatever he chooses to offer, usually from fifty cents to a dollar per barrel, or a lump sum for the crop on the trees. The latter plan is nothing less than gambling in apples, and in either case the grower seldom gets one-half what his fruit is really worth if it were properly handled.

The remedy for this state of affairs, and what is going to put the apple trade on a better business basis, is for the growers in each apple-growing section to unite and form a co-operative association, through which the grading, packing and marketing of the fruit may be accomplished.

During the past year a number of these associations have been formed in various parts of