Contributions Late

Almost every week one or more contributions dealing with our "Topics for Discussion," arrive too late for the competition. Last week three letters dealing with the manure problem arrived on Wednesday morning, March 2. This, it will be observed, is but seven days prior to the date of issue, whereas it is stated in our columns every week that we require ten days. For some parts of THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE copy can be received up to a couple of days before the date of issue, but for the particular section in which the topics appear longer time is required, especially when several letters have to be read carefully in order to make awards on their merit. Late arrivals miss the competition, but most of them are used in future issues and paid for at regular rates to contributors. However, we prefer that all letters should come in good time.

POULTRY

Packing Eggs for Hatching

It is a well known fact that eggs for hatching sent by post or rail frequently give poor results. The fault lies sometimes with the eggs, but still more frequently with the system of packing adopted. The aim should be to avoid not only broken shells but also to prevent injury to the delicate membrane enclosing the yolk, as an egg may be completely spoiled for hatching without a trace of fracture appearing on the shell. This can be prevented by using a package of moderate size and weight.

Of the many patent egg boxes some of the best are too expensive, others are too small, and a still greater number too fragile. The popular cardboard boxes are objectionable. They undoubtedly save labor in packing, and are light in weight, but their initial cost, the number of breakages that occur whenever they are used, and the fact that so few people return them, make these boxes an expensive item for the small poultry keeper.

After trial of many different kinds of package, nothing has been found to compare with a plain wooden box 11 x 7½ x 3¼ inches (outside measurements) made of the very lightest boards. Divisions of wood or cardboard are not necessary; they add to the cost without increasing the efficiency. Boxes should be bought from the manufacturers in pieces; that is, the wood, should be cut to the exact size ready for nailing together, the nails being supplied with the wood. The advantage of buying in this way is that the cost of carriage is less, and the pieces can be packed in a sack, and are, therefore, far less liable to damage in transit than the made-up boxes would be.

To pack a dozen eggs, a layer of hay is placed at the bottom of the box. Each egg is first wrapped in a piece of newspaper and then in a strip of soft hay, after which it is placed on end in the box. A box of the dimensions given holds twelve eggs in four rows of three eggs each. It is most important that the eggs should stand on end, and that they should be so tightly packed that they cannot move when the box is roughly handled or shaken. The proper amount of hay to use is easily determined with a little practice. The lid should be tied on, never nailed, and no label is necessary, as the address can be written with indelible pencil on the white wood. The danger of having valuable high-priced eggs broken or interfered with when sent in a box that is tied only, and not nailed, can be overcome by screwing down the lid.

Every vendor of eggs for hatching should be provided with a stamp and a bottle of endorsing ink to stamp every egg sold. By this means, any attempt to substitute inferior eggs on the journey or to claim falsely for the replacing of infertile eggs can be detected.

In order to get best results, all eggs for hatching that have been sent a journey should be unpacked and allowed to rest on their sides for twenty hours before they are placed under the hen.

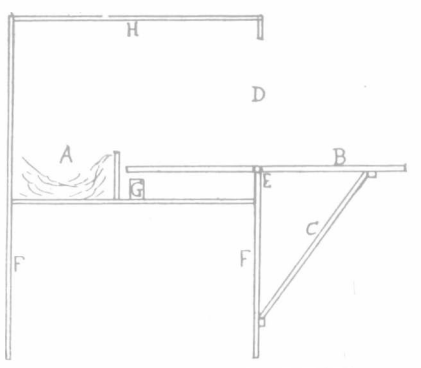
Hatches from Hens Only

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE :

The method I have formerly followed in securing my hatching eggs has been to pen up one or two lots of hens with selected males for the breeding season. I have never used any but purebred stock, and have always felt it necessary to cull severely to get my breeders. I have tried to get male birds each year from the same strain, but not too closely related to those used the previous year. I find there is more even progress in improvement made thus than when varying the strain from year to year. Prepotency is just as likely to be lost by strain crosses within a breed as by crosses without, but, of course, it is not appearent in appearance and other visible qualities as much as it is in prolificacy. early maturity and economical use of food provided.

I have never used trap nests yet, because I have not been so situated that they could get the required attention, but have always been of the opinion, and am more strongly so each year, that it is the only plan whereby systematic progress can be made. I have always tried to use only hens for breeders, and as far as possible selected those that, as far as I could judge, were among the best producers in their pullet year. However, there is always considerable guesswork about this. I know in my own case, and I believe I am more than ordinarily observant in all that pertains to feathered stock, and I have made up my mind this is the last year I will breed from my stock without a trap-nest system.

In connection with this subject I have just been reperusing Edward Brown's report on the poultry industry of Denmark, and he lays great stress on the effect trap-nesting, combined with a system of never breeding from any but two-year-old birds has had on the average of production in that country. The pullets are trap-nested their



SIMPLE FORM OF TRAP NEST

A is the nest. The hen alights on B and walks to inner end of same. B being hinged at E, her weight raises the outer end of B and releases the support C, which is hinged at its upper end. As the hen steps into the nest the inner end of B being the shorter goes up and closes the opening. The top H is used as a lid for removing the hen.

first year, and a small proportion of them is kept over for stock birds the next year. This system is imperative on what are termed "breeding centers," which are ordinary farm flocks that, provided the owner shows a fair profit on his poultry work and follows out certain plans as ordered by the central poultry expert for the district, are bonused by the government at the moderate rate of from twenty to thirty dollars per year conditional on the place being always open for inspection and strict accounts kept of all expenses and incomes in connection therewith. This small bonus is highly valued, however, as it carries with it the approval of the government, and gives the owner a larger demand for his eggs and surplus stock for improvement of his neighbor's flocks. In one important point Mr. Brown finds the Danes have surpassed both English and American breeders. They have not only paid great attention to number, but also to size of eggs, and the result is that a very large proportion of their output runs 17 and 18 pounds to 120 eggs.

One point outside this discussion, Mr. Brown lays great stress on the great amount of chopped alfalfa used for poultry feed all over the country and considers it to be a very important help to them in making a profit on poultry at the by no means high prices they get for eggs. I enclose herewith sketch of the trap nest used in Denmark. It is about the simplest I have seen yet.

B. C.

HORTICULTURE

B. C. Fruit Notes

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing a well known interior horticulturist, but who for various reasons does not wish his name revealed. He had just returned from a trip through the Okanagan Valley, then down to Kamloops, Ashcroft and as far as Nicola.

"Having had an opportunity to study the situation pretty closely what one thing most impresses you with regard to the fruit industry?" was asked.

"The great increase in the orchard acreage. Everywhere large areas of land are being prepared for spring planting, and nurserymen report being sold out of all leading varieties. In the district around Kamloops Wealthies are particularly popular, and one nursery has been sold out of this variety for several months. One company placed an order for five thousand trees of this variety. This company has ordered over twenty thousand trees for spring planting. The land is being subdivided and sold planted instead of in the rough, but this is only one instance of the development that is going on. Everywhere the orchard acreage is increasing by leaps and bounds."

"Taking the whole country, both the Kootenay and the Okanagan, what do you find is the most popular variety of apple to plant?"

"The Jonathan, emphatically. It suits the climate, comes into bearing earlier than the Northern Spy, and brings a good price. The Northern Spy is well thought of, but as it is somewhat longer in coming into bearing the preference is given to the Jonathan."

"What about fillers? What proportion of the orchardists are planting fillers?"

"In the Okanagan they are being planted in almost every case. All the large companies use them. They do not appear to be so much in favor in the Kootenay, but the tendency seems to be for more and more of the growers to use them. I believe that in time almost every man who plants an orchard will plant fillers."

"What varieties are mostly used for fillers?"

"Wealthies and Wageners. They come into bearing early and will bear heavily for several years. When planted with Northern Spy or Jonathan they can be cut out at the end of ten or twelve years, or about the time that the Spy or the Jonathan are beginning to bear quite heavily, and the size of the trees makes it necessary that the fillers be cut down."

"Outside of the varieties you have mentioned what varieties do you find to be the most popular?"

"Rome Beauty, Gravenstein, Cox's Orange Pippin, Yellow Newton Pippin, McIntosh Red and Grimes' Golden. There are other good varieties, but these have been found to be better than others. The growers are concentrating on the varieties best suited to their particular localities. One thing I find that rather surprised me is that some of the big dealers on the prairies are complaining that they cannot get enough early apples such as Yellow Transparent, Duchess of Oldenburg and Red Astrachan. Growers generally have been planting very few of these, because they will keep such a short time, but it may be that more attention will have to be paid to those early varieties if the market is to be supplied at the beginning of the season.

"What about irrigated and unirrigated land? Having seen orchards on both kinds of land which do you consider the most favorable to the growth of good sound fruit?"

"That is a hard question. Where the rainfall is sufficient the unirrigated land is preferable. But where there is the least doubt about there being sufficient rainfall the grower will do well to try to arrange or provide for irrigation. But the land has to be watered carefully. Just as much harm results from too much water as too little. I find that it is generally conceded that it takes about as much time to look after one acre

A. B. SMITH.