

made at lower temperatures than 65 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit, but the process requires more time.

Fruit-crop Reports Pessimistic.

Reports from those interested in the marketing of the large apple crop this year indicate that there is a great deal of pessimism concerning prices for winter apples. Some growers believe that better prices will be the rule in the spring, while many others do not look for any improvement unless the war is speedily concluded and industrial conditions improved as a result. Any of those who take the risk of holding their output until spring are advised by the best authorities to hold nothing but the highest grade of Number 1 fruit. It is possible that as the season advances prices may improve slightly for the very highest quality of apples. Very little can be lost by holding at least some apples, providing they are of the best grade. Present-day prices are so low as to yield the grower a very small return, scarcely enough to pay him for growing and placing the crop on the market. The Western market as well as that in the Old Land is poor. A car of Ontario apples recently sold in Winnipeg for the extremely low price of \$2.00 per barrel, but arrived two days later than the agreement called for, whereupon the wholesalers notified the shippers that they could not pay more than \$1.75 per barrel, and the shipper had to pay the freight. This does not look good for the Western trade. Car lots of fall apples have been sold at from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per barrel. We hear that winter apples in small orders and even up to car lots are going at from \$1.75 to \$2.55 per barrel.

It seems plain that the only fruit which our fruit growers' associations and growers generally should attempt to put on the market in shipments is the highest quality of goods. Poor fruit will bring the market down so low that good fruit will be sold at a loss. Packers should take especially careful pains with the work of packing the fruit. It should be graded more severely than ever before. It seems hard to have to do this in times of poor market and such low prices, but it is necessary to save the situation. A vigorous campaign should be waged in every city, town and village in Canada in order to put the apple in its proper place as an article of diet in the homes of this country. Eat more apples.

POULTRY.

Where do You Feed the Hens?

The hen that lays in winter is the hen that pays her board bills promptly. A great deal of the success gained in making hens lay is due to feeding properly, but at the right time and in the right place. It is the common practice on many farms, where hens are considered more or less as an expensive sideline, to throw the feed, consisting of whole grain only, down on a bare floor or on bare ground and allow the hens to eat at will, not forcing them to do any scratching for their feed. It is natural that a hen should scratch, but she will not do it unless forced to, and if her feed is easily accessible without hard labor she will take the easiest means of obtaining it.

A method of feeding which is giving good results and one which successful poultry keepers recommend, is to feed a mixture of whole grains late in the afternoon or just before the hens go to roost. This mixture is placed in a trough, so that they can obtain their fill quickly and easily. After the hens have finished their feeding, any grain that may be left in the trough should be emptied out into the litter of the pen, and with it should be thrown the morning feed of whole grain. The litter, which should be fine straw several inches thick, should be forked over and stirred up to cover all the grain. Doing this the night before insures that the feed is there when the hens come down in the morning. They are very often up before their owner, and the morning is the time for them to be busy. It is a treat to see them turn and re-turn the litter for the grain. Unless too much is fed not a kernel will escape to be wasted. They get it all, and in the effort get the exercise which keeps them from becoming lazy, overfat and useless boarders. Many feeders might well take advantage of this cheap and efficient method of exercising their birds.

Besides the whole grain a dry mash of rolled oats kept in a hopper so constructed as to be a self-feeder, can be profitably kept before the laying hens at all times. There is nothing to beat rolled oats in the way of a handy mash, and they go a long way toward winter egg production. Most farmers keep a few cows and so have skim-milk for the hens, but comparatively few recognize the value of this by-product in poultry feeding. It serves as a drink, although some prefer to have clear water also in the pens, and it also takes the place of expensive meat food.

We have great faith in skim-milk because we have seen its results.

Then there is green feed. Nothing hinders the farmer with his cabbage, turnips, mangels, and opportunity to sprout oats from supplying green food in abundance to his fowls all winter long, and yet many hens never see any from fall to spring, and their owner wonders why he doesn't get eggs. Hang a mangel or a head of cabbage just where the hens must jump a little in order to eat it and watch them take exercise, and get a necessary article of diet at the same time.

A little grit and oyster shell completes a very satisfactory, economical and valuable winter ration for laying hens. Try this method.

FARM BULLETIN.

False Alarms.

By Peter McArthur.

A couple of weeks ago I did a lot of blowing about the great luck I have been having with my corn and other things, but I think I said at the time that luck is not a thing to be depended on. Well, it isn't. Just now I am suffering the keenest disappointment because luck has been against me. I guess I never told you, but one of the great ambitions of my life has been to own a comet. Other people want the earth, but a comet is good enough for me. The man who owns a comet owns prosperity that is safe from trespassers, and he can entail it to his descendants without any trouble. When Halley's comet was in sight a couple of years ago one of my friends named Halley got a great deal of satisfaction out of life while the family comet was in sight. He used to give private views of it to select parties, and, altogether, he acted much like a landed proprietor. Now I have come within an ace of having a comet of my own by right of discovery, but luck was against me. You know if you want a comet it is much better to discover one yourself than to try to buy one. Bill Nye once tried to buy a comet from "an astronomer in reduced circumstances" and had all kinds of trouble. After he had "viewed the property" through a telescope and examined its tail, they went to a lawyer to have the necessary papers drawn. When they explained their needs the lawyer grew very indignant, and among other things of an insulting character that he said to the humorist was that what he wanted was not a comet but "a nursing bottle attachment to the Milky Way." Having that in mind I never tried to buy a comet, but I have always kept an eye on the starry firmament in the hope of finding one. A couple of nights ago I thought my patience had been rewarded. A rising wind had loosened the tent flap, and I got up to fasten it. While at this chilly job I happened to glance up at the sky and was startled to see as fine a comet as a man could wish to own. It was such a one as Milton had in mind when he said that Satan

"Like a comet burned,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge,
In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war."

As I had not seen anything in the papers about a comet being in sight I wrote at once to the Department of Astronomy of Toronto University to see if anyone had put in a claim to this one, and this is the disappointing answer I got:

Dear Mr. McArthur:

This comet was discovered on December 17th, 1913, by Delavan at the La Plata Observatory, Argentina, and I believe has not been identified with any previous comet. It reached its perihelion on October 26th, and should be visible for some time yet. With best wishes, very sincerely yours,

C. A. Chant.

From this you see it is a brand new comet, and I was only a few months behind in discovering it. In case you wish to see it you will need to get up shortly before daybreak. Look towards the east, where you will see the dipper standing on its handle. The comet is a short distance east of the bottom of the bowl of the dipper.

In olden times comets, on account of their unusual appearance and their infrequency were regarded as dire portents, foreboding disasters. Even when I was a boy, and that does not seem so terribly long ago, a comet caused many wise shakings of heads and grim prophecies. But comets are now about as well understood as other heavenly bodies, their orbits have been fixed, and the date of their appearances figured out. They have lost their malign character, and have merely a scientific interest. At such a time as this, when we are being horrified by a war for which there is no precedent in history or adequate forecasts in prophecy, there may be a tendency among some to see in this comet the fore-runner of worse things to come. To harbor such morbid thoughts would be absurd. There is no ground

for supposing that any appearance in the sky in any way affects human events. For my part I incline to the opinion of Hotspur, as reported by Shakespeare. Owen Glendower, the magician had been boasting and Hotspur answered him.

"Glendower: 'At my nativity
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
Of burning cressets; and at my birth
The frame and huge foundation of the earth
Shaked like a coward.'

Hotspur: 'Why, so it would have done at the same season, if your mother's cat had but kitten-ed, though yourself had never been born.'

So if you happen to see the comet some morning before sunrise or some evening just after sunset—it may be seen at both times, under the bowl of the dipper, though in the evening you will need an opera-glass—do not be alarmed. There is nothing about it more terrifying than about the planets that are seen every evening in the south and west, and which foolish people have been mistaking for airships.

* * * *

Speaking of airships, they have been very frequent of late, but on examinations most of them have turned out to be fire-balloons sent up from the different fair grounds. I have never seen an airship, but I have been assured that if one really crossed the country at night it would waken everybody for miles around. The engines of an airship make a horrifying noise that can often be heard before the airship itself is sighted. We have enough to sadden and terrify us just now without inventing bugaboos. Another thing I wish to warn people against is the sensational American papers that are now having so great a scale in Canada. I have read several, having accounts of both victories and disasters, and there was not a word of truth in either—as was shown by later news. The American sensational papers manufacture news when they have not got it. I remember that at the time of the Spanish war I happened to be calling on the telegraph editor of one of the New York Yellows. While we were talking the editor in chief came rushing out of his room.

"Anything for an extra?" he asked.

"Not a word."

Turning to a stenographer he at once dictated a circumstantial account of the assassination of the American Ambassador at Havana. And with that material they issued an extra that had not a word of truth in it. On another occasion the managing editor of the same paper was lunching with a friend when a newsboy came through the restaurant selling extras. Buying one the editor read an account of a battle that was told in huge type on the front page. Turning to his friend he remarked pensively,

"I wonder if that is true?"

He had been away from his office for an hour, and he could not believe the news in his own paper. So do not let toy-balloon airships, or comets, or American extras frighten you. Keep cool, and wait until next day before you believe any bad news you hear. It may not be true.

Urged to Produce More.

The following message of Hon. G. H. Murray, Premier of Nova Scotia, to the farmers of that province, contains some points for all Canadian producers.

"The war now raging is certain to cause a heavy decrease in the production of foodstuffs in Europe during 1915. All the able-bodied men of France, Germany, Austria and Russia are engaged in fighting. The principal grain fields of Central Europe are being destroyed by marching armies. Little of this year's harvest will be saved, and practically no preparation can be made for next season's crop. The grain fields of Europe in the hands of women workers will yield only a small percentage of the grain required for European consumption. The same condition applies to all other farm products employed to sustain life in man and beast. Whether this war will prove to be of short or long duration it is certain there will be a very serious decrease in the supply of fodder in Europe, for a long time to come. It is stated that of the 650,000,000 quarters of wheat yearly produced in the world, 350,000,000 are grown in the countries now at war.

"No man occupies a more important place in the present crisis than the farmer. The food supplies available will probably enter into the final success more than any other condition. The farmer, therefore, who means to produce all the food supplies that he can on the farm during the next year is just as useful a patriot as the farmer who shoulders his gun and goes to war.

"You should devote this autumn to the task of preparing your farms for the very largest crop that it is possible to raise. In so doing you can be of inestimable assistance to the Motherland while developing the agricultural resources of this Province and materially adding to your own incomes. Nova Scotia, owing to its comparative nearness to Europe, is a natural base of supply for the products that will be most sorely needed. Agricultural experts who have looked over this province have always been impressed

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