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communications to Agronomist, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto

"DIE-HARDS" OF HOG TRADITION.
Some people object to what they call propaganda in favor of the bacon hog, and claim that they can raise the hog more economically. In five years' experimental work with six breeds, both fat and bacon type, we have been able to pick out any one breed better than others for production. As a matter of fact, the bacon hog has more influence than any other upon this point.

Statement was made by Professor F. C. Poole before the Western Dairyman's Convention. He is the case as Professor of Animal Industry at the Ontario Agricultural College.
There is a still weightier reason for the objection to the bacon hog, that the lard hog as a paying line for farming in Canada is "at the end of the rope," but the field for the bacon type is only just being opened. This is not a new position, but the fact needs renewed and ever new repetition so that the farmers may not be misled. The market for a hog—that is, the farmer's product as it leaves the farm—can only be wide and assured when the market for the outcome of that hog—that is, the packer's product in the form of bacon—is also wide and reasonably assured. Only in the home market is there room for the lard type and even that is declining because of the growing taste in Canada for leaner bacon, with close trimming to remove the fat and with consequent waste. Supply has already nearly overtaken the permanent demand.

Packers must more and more look to the export field as the only one in which they can expect enlarged trade. For the English bacon trade, only our select hogs of definite bacon type will serve the best buyers.

Those who "object to what they call propaganda in favor of the bacon hog" may choose for themselves either the continued raising of a hog of which there are already too many and so choose entering into still keener competition among themselves, or they may take the more businesslike way of dropping their prejudices and changing the types of their hogs to conform to market prospects. The average farmer will have to choose for himself whether he will listen to the somewhat insidious propaganda of those who "object to bacon hog propaganda"—the die hards of the old tradition—or examine the reasonable evidence of the public statements made by men who handle the product after it has left the farmer's hands. These, in the last resort, must be the men who will pay him either a high price or a low according as his hogs suit or do not suit their customer's demand. A definite premium for the right type is already in force and is being generally paid by packers, who ever may now be intercepting that premium on its way to the farmer. That should be enough to prove the good faith of the packing industry in urging a greater production of the bacon hog, not simply because it differs from a lard type but because millions of consumers after the packer insist on getting a lean, not a fat, bacon.

Seeds for Sale
Foot County is noted for its high-quality seeds. Foot Seed "True, Brampton, Ont. is the very centre of this district. It has large quantities of the following: Variegated and Special Alfalfa, Red Clover, Alsike, Sweet Clover, Timothy, etc., which are sold direct to farmers, any part, in any size lots. Write at once for prices.
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For your protection, the Safety Halter should be now supplied with blue and red running through it, instead on the genuine. They cost no more.
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The Turkey and Its Peculiarities.
The wild turkey is a native of North America, and years ago ranged from Canada to Mexico, and throughout the vast forests that extended thence to the northwest, along the courses of the Mississippi and the Missouri, and to the Rocky Mountains. As civilization advanced and the population increased, the wild turkey decreased and is now only a few specimens are gradually becoming extinct.

The wild breeds (known as the North American, Mexican and European) live on worms, insects, berries, seeds and grass. They flock together in October and direct their course to the fertile plains through which large rivers flow. Then they disperse in small flocks, eating the fruits of the cultivated lands, and if hungry during the winter, are apt to enter farmyards in search of food.

THE MATING SEASON.
Early in spring the hens leave the cocks, actually shunning them, and on their trail, and loudly express their anger or love, whichever it may be, in that soft strain peculiar to the cock, expressed by the word "gobble." The disposition of the female is, as a rule, more mild and gentle than that of the male. When leading out her brood of young to collect their food, though so large and apparently so powerful, she affords them very little protection against the attacks of any rapacious animal that may approach for themselves, and does not prepare to defend them.

With our domesticated turkeys, laying starts in spring. They hide their nests in some retired, obscure place. The hen sits with remarkable perseverance, and if not removed will almost perish with hunger before entirely leaving the nest. She generally lays in the morning, and often continues daily, until from fifteen to twenty eggs are laid in a season, governed according to the age of the hen. Young hens lay fewer eggs than older hens. In the second laying the hen hardly ever exceeds ten or fifteen eggs.

BEST AGES FOR MATING.
The best matings are either two-year-old cocks with pullets, or a cock with two-year-old hens. One service of the gobbler is sufficient for each setting of eggs, and a single male can take care of from fifteen to twenty hens. While the gobbler has a greater influence on color and shape of the progeny, large hens are needed to produce big turkeys.
Turkeys are more creatures of habit than any other of our feathered fowl, and will come home to roost at night if one will make a practice of feeding them, however lightly.
In the selection of breeding stock, the aim should not be for great size. For active vitality and sure breeding, selecting hens, one must not be influenced by great weight. Good form, fine stout legs, square bodies and breasts are needed. Practically the same is true in the male. It is important to have an unrelated male in the flock, as inbreeding will do much harm.

POULTRY
There are two main points to be considered: First, the selection of birds that have the characters desired; and secondly, a further selection from these of birds that can produce offspring as good as or better than themselves, so says Professor W. R. Graham of the Ontario Agricultural College.
Many are of the opinion that "like begets like." In general, this is true, but it is true for general and not for particular qualities. It is true that a male White Leghorn mated to a White Leghorn female will breed chickens that are White Leghorns, or that have white plumage, yellow legs, and white earlobes. But of these offspring there will be no two chicks exactly alike. We find large and small Leghorns; most of them never go broody but some do; some lay large eggs, others small eggs. And we find a great variation in the number of eggs produced by different hens.
Selection is made on the basis that like will produce like, but experience has taught all breeders that to secure uniform superiority, they must carry on the selection through generations of poultry. If we select birds that have laid better than 200 eggs in twelve consecutive months and mate these to a male, of singular strain, we do not expect to get all daughters that will lay 200 or more eggs a year, but we do expect upon the average a better production than had no selection been made.
The reading habit is a profitable one to cultivate.

The Ice Supply.
It is a difficult matter to carry on dairying during the summer season without a supply of ice. Indeed, unless one has a particularly cool cellar, a supply of ice adds greatly to the comfort of any household during the heat of the season. The storage of ice is a very simple matter; any unoccupied corner of a shed will serve for the purpose. A rough board enclosure ten feet square and eight feet high will hold enough ice to provide 50 pounds per day for 130 days, after allowing for a reasonable amount of wastage. The smaller the quantity stored, however, the larger is the proportion of waste.
Provision must be made for the drainage of an ice storage. Unless the soil underneath is of open texture, it is well to cover the floor with a few inches of gravel. A foot of sawdust should then be put on to receive the ice. The ice should be taken from a pond in blocks which can be built up into a solid mass. A foot of sawdust on each of the four sides and an equal quantity on the top will preserve the ice even through a long hot period, provided a roof protects the ice from the sun and rain.
Plans of ice storages of small and large dimensions are contained in Bulletin No. 2 of the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa. Reference is made to ice wells, which are used in some parts of the Western provinces. These are dug about 12 feet deep and a diameter to suit requirements. A well six feet in diameter, filled six feet in depth with ice, is said to hold about four tons.

United States Millers Need Our Wheat.
The Northwestern National Bank Review, published at Minneapolis, Minnesota, pays high tribute to the quality of Canadian hard spring wheat in the following quotation from their December issue:
"Flour mills in this city are running at one-half capacity or less, and the output is booked almost entirely for domestic trade. Canadian mills, on the other hand, have been reporting as large an export demand as they can handle. Even at the high rate of duty it is being found desirable to bring wheat across the border to Minneapolis for domestic use, though the amount is not large; there was a noticeable increase during November. Imports into this district—chiefly, if not entirely, for manufacture in Minneapolis—are reported by the Customs Service at Duluth as 11,987,631 bushels during 1920; 8,763,687 bushels in 1921; 843,165 bushels in 1922; and 1,010,123 bushels for the first eleven months in 1923."

Potato Disease Investigation.
Investigational work carried on by the Department of Botany of the Ontario Agricultural College during the past six years has brought out the following facts:
That selected, certified seed potatoes give much better results than the uncertified seed potatoes which have been commonly used by the farmers of this province in the past.
That Northern Ontario seed potatoes give as good yields on the average as those imported from the maritime provinces.
That in certain sections of old Ontario excellent seed potatoes can be produced by continued selection and roguing.
Powdered Skim Milk.
The comparative values of powdered skim milk and powdered buttermilk were found to be about equal in experiments carried on at the Ontario Agricultural College. The average total gains per pig were 121.6 pounds for those fed on the skim milk powder and 122.8 pounds for those fed on buttermilk powder. Although the feeding value of these products is good, the market price for hogs and the high cost of the skim milk and buttermilk powder makes its use prohibitive as live stock feed.

We Have an Asparagus Bed
BY MARGARET HENRY.
The third fall it was very bushy and rank and we cut the stalks with a scythe and later burned them.
The fourth spring the bed was a mass of nice fat stalks every morning and we arranged to sell it to the grocers and hotels. The early crops sold for 20¢ a bunch, later it was 15¢, then 2 for 25¢ and at the end of the season it brought 10¢ a bunch. We cut it every morning with a knife, going just below the ground. It was sorted, all inferior or spindly stalks being thrown out and then tied in bunches for the market. If we could not take it to market every day, we put it in the cave with a damp cloth over it.
The first year we sold over \$15 worth besides using it nearly three times a day on our table and giving lots away to our friends. It has been more profitable each year and the nice thing about an asparagus bed is that it will grow better as it gets older. Now it requires almost no care. We try to keep the weeds out in the cutting season, later they are smothered out by the stalks.
Asparagus has almost no insect enemies or diseases that prey on it. We fork it up as soon as the frost is out in the spring and put well-rotted manure on it in the fall after we cut and burn the stalks following a killing frost.

A St. Patrick's Day Party
In Honor of Pat and His Pig
BY MYRTLE JAMISON TRACHSEL

A pasteboard pig bearing the verse given below might be used to summon the guests. A pig cut from an advertising page could be used as a pattern.
Shure and ye must be comin' along To celebrate the Day. Ye may talk about pigs in the good old brogue, So plaze don't stay away. March 17th. (Time—Place—)

You might let an old Irish motto, hung up in a conspicuous place, greet the guests as they arrive. The letters should be in green on a white card, with a band of green crepe paper pasted smoothly along the edges to represent the frame. The motto "Gaid Mille A Fialthe" ("A thousand welcomes to all") will probably need to be given verbally in English. Shamrocks, potatoes, pipes, Irish hats, and pasteboard harps might be used as decorations too. But plenty of cut-out pigs are necessary, for this is to be a "piggie" party.
The brogue of old Ireland—the speech of the evening—will keep the minds and tongues of the early guests busy while others are arriving. To make true Irishmen of the guests, they should be given an opportunity to kiss the "Blarney Stone" the first thing.

The stone in this instance is a pyramid of stones. Some of the "stones" are pieces of taffy candy, colored moss-green and wrapped in bits of paraffin paper with twisted ends. Others are bits of pebbles or small rocks wrapped in the same manner. The guests, in turn, are blindfolded and allowed to kiss the Blarney Stone. Then they are told to take a piece as a souvenir. Should they draw a piece of taffy, they are in luck; if they have a stone, they may be allowed to try again later. Of course, any amount of blarney is permissible after one has kissed this famous stone.

"Poor Piggie" is a variation of an old game that never fails to bring screams of laughter. The players are seated in a circle. A boy is asked to be the poor piggie. He gets down on his hands and knees before one of the young ladies and squeals in his most pathetic manner. While he squeals, makes faces, and does anything else becoming a pig, the girl must show her appreciation by continuously stroking his head and murmuring

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR
THE GREEDY MOUSE.

Late one afternoon Rolly Rabbit and Bruin sat reading the latest edition of "Woodland News."
"Little Glennie Squirrel, who lives near Woodside, fell out of a hickory nut tree and broke his leg. Doctor Woodchuck set it for him and he is now doing nicely," said Bruin, reading a part of the latest news.
"Too bad for such a little fellow. Perhaps we can get over to see him tomorrow. Here it says that a robber held up Jimmie Fox and stole his gold watch and chain, when he was returning from Glenwood. That is not far from here. We must be careful, Bruin," said Rolly.
Then a gentle "tap, tap, tap."

When Rolly opened the door there stood a little mouse with his clothes all ragged, his face dirty, and with a very hungry look upon his thin face.
"Oh, please, Mr. Rabbit, I'm hungry. Could I please have something to eat? It is little I have eaten for several days," begged the little mouse.
"Come right in, poor little mouse, and we shall see what we can find," said Rolly kindly.
Soon a bountiful meal was prepared for the hungry mouse, and how he did eat. When he had finished, his little stomach was so full he just could not eat another crumb. With an envious eye, he looked at the remaining food and Rolly's well-filled cupboard. He wished he could eat more.

"Oh, Mr. Rabbit, thank you so much. Already I feel much better," said the mouse.
"You are welcome, Mousie. I am always glad when I can share with others," answered Rolly. And Mousie went on his way.
Late that night Mackie Mouse (for that was his name) met an old friend, Billy Mouse. He, too, was very hungry, just as Mackie had been that afternoon.
"I know where there is a lot of good things to eat," said Mackie Mouse.
"Do show me where," said Billy Mouse. "I am nearly starved."
Right then Mackie began to feel as if he could eat a little more himself, so off they started for Rolly's house. Quietly they tip-toed clear around the house, but they could find no way to get in. "Let's climb in the bedroom window. It's not closed," whispered Billy.
"All right, but we must be awfully quiet," answered Mackie.
In a very few minutes they were both nibbling cheese and all the other goodies. Suddenly they heard a noise.
"Run, Mackie, run," said Billy, in a hushed voice.
"Yes, but where?" asked Mackie.

"That noise was in the bedroom and we can't get out the window."
"Here is a knot-hole, we will run in here for a while until everything is quiet," said Billy.
But right in that little knot-hole Rolly had set a trap for naughty thieving mice, so that was the last of Mackie and Billy Mouse.

Underground Garden Irrigation.
Where the natural rainfall is insufficient for intensive gardening purposes one of the best and most effective ways of furnishing the moisture to the plants is by underground irrigation. This will be found advantageous for three reasons. In the first place the water thus supplied reaches the roots, where it is wanted, and there is a minimum loss by evaporation. In the second place water is saved, and in the third, there is no crust to form on top as there is when the water is applied to the top of the ground.

When the ground is plowed in the spring it is gone over with a lister, forming alternate ridges and furrows. These will differ probably ten inches in height. It will be necessary to go again over the ground with the lister, and the second covering should result in furrows twenty inches deep, or better. In these two-and-one-half-inch tile is laid. If the furrows are rather close together the tile need be laid only in every other one. They are simply laid, with the joints as close as possible. The far end of each is plugged with concrete or clay. The front ends are finished off with a T section and another section, added to bring the inlet well above the top of the ground. Then the ground is leveled again and planted in the ordinary way.
If water is poured into one line for a few minutes it can be filled. It will then soak into the ground in all directions. Thereafter the water is added only when necessary to keep the subsoil in the proper condition. In the fall the lines need not necessarily be removed, but left for use the following year.

It has been conclusively proved at the Dominion Experimental Station, Cap Rouge, Quebec, that well developed heifers, over six months of age, carrying a reasonable amount of flesh, are better wintered in an open front single board shed than if closely housed.
These are the days when the fruit man should get into the orchard and cut out the blight cankers from trunk, limbs and branches.
Good books are worthy friends for any man. They help you forget yourself; one of the hardest but most beneficial things one can do.