

HOME AND FARM.

This department of THE CRITIC is devoted exclusively to the interests of the Farmers in the Maritime Provinces. Contributions upon Agricultural topics, or that in any way relate to Farm life, are cordially invited. Newsworthy notes of Farmers' gatherings or Grange meetings will be promptly inserted. Farmers' wives and daughters should make this department in THE CRITIC a medium for the exchange of ideas on such matters as more directly affect them.

EXCLUSIVE GRAIN DIET FOR FOWLS.—There is no more wisdom in confining poultry exclusively to a grain diet than in keeping animals on a food devoid of bulk. In the growing season, then, hens eat grass, grain, seeds, and insects, and in winter they may be given more bulky food than they usually receive, and at a less cost than that of feeding grain exclusively. If clover hay be finely cut, boiling water poured over it, and the mess well sprinkled with a mixture of ground grain, and seasoned with a little salt, they eat it willingly, and it affords an agreeable variety. The clover also largely assists in supplying albumen to the eggs, while the health of the fowls is promoted by the food not being very concentrated. No doubt some may consider such feed as suitable only for a cow or horse, but it is also good for poultry. If hens are kept on corn they become exceedingly fat, and as unfit for laying as an over fat animal is for breeding, but feed them on a variety which contains more of the flesh-forming elements than carbonaceous, and they give better results. As the stock should be kept warm and comfortable, so should the fowls. It is much cheaper to provide suitable quarters than to keep them from freezing by stuffing with corn. They will also eat dry hay, if cut into short lengths; but it is better to feed it moistened and warm.—*American Agriculturist*.

WHY SALT STOCK?—Every farmer is accustomed to salt his cattle, but not every one knows why he does it, unless it is because the stock like it. But a moment's thought will show where the advantage lies. As soon as food enters the stomach, the natural tendency is at once for fermentation to begin, and there arises a contest between this tendency and the digestive powers. And if these powers are vigorous and the process of fermentation is checked or intercepted, then no bad results will follow, the food will be digested and salt will not be needed, though at any time this will assist in the process of digestion. Salt keeps food from decaying until it can be digested and assimilated, and prolongs the time to allow the digestive organs to complete their work, and if food is taken in excess, as often happens when stock is in pasture, salt given frequently will be of much advantage. And further, salt is a preventive of worms. When fermentation sets in, the conditions presented are favorable to the existence of worms in the intestinal canals, and may possibly be engendered by the process. Consequently it should be a rule with stockmen to keep salt before their cattle or within reach when they need it, and cattle will obey the demands of nature and supply the want as needed.—*Rural Canadian*.

The following is from the *American Agriculturist*, but may be of interest to Nova Scotia fruit growers:—

FRUIT IN GREAT BRITAIN.—On account of the great severity of last winter, and the unusual drouth of the past summer, it was generally predicted that the crops of fruits of all kinds would be very poor. Carefully gathered statistics from every fruit-growing district in the three kingdoms, show that with many kinds the returns are more favorable than was thought possible, and that with apples, the fruit in which American fruit-growers are most interested, the report is generally a full average crop. If this shall deter shippers from sending abroad a lot of trash, it will be of great benefit to the fruit trade, and help to restore the high reputation American apples formerly enjoyed. In that country, as well as at home, good, sound, well-packed, high colored fruit of the best varieties will sell readily, however abundant the home supply may be. Unless the fruit meet these conditions, better keep it at home, as it will not this year pay the freight, and ought not to. Shippers cannot beat John Bull upon fruit twice, and those who send the dry, sweet Camfield to England, where sweet apples are nearly unknown, and label it Baldwin, cannot successfully repeat the rascally fraud. Formerly apples bearing the brands of well-known shippers, sold upon the well-established reputation of the packers. Of late years so little regard has been had to honesty in packing, that purchasers have insisted upon having the contents of the barrels turned out into a large tray for inspection. The fruit in both London and Liverpool is usually sold by auction soon after it arrives.

EGGS IN WINTER.—If many winter eggs are expected, the appliances and materials should be provided before winter arrives. It is bad policy to commence rigging up after winter comes. If the houses are all perfected, and the hens fed up to the laying point at the start, there will be little trouble in keeping it up during the entire winter.—*American Agriculturist*.

BEGINNING.—A good many men are deterred from starting out in the work of improving their farm stock through the supposition that it is necessarily a matter of very great expense. True, it may be made a very costly affair, if one is so disposed, or if it is undertaken without judgment; but this is by no means an inseparable accompaniment of improvement. Of course it is very nice, and under some circumstances it is advisable, to begin with both males and females of pure blood; but for all practical farm purposes the same end can be reached, though in a slower way, by a much less radical process. The introduction and judicious use of a single male, succeeded from time to time by another, will in a few years practically revolutionize the character of the stock on a farm. When observing shippers see an intelligent farmer buy a good bull or a pure-bred male pig, they confidently count on him being prepared, in due course of time, to sell

them better hogs and better beeves. It is only necessary to follow up a beginning thus made to within a reasonable period enjoy all the benefits to be derived from selling good stock for other than breeding purposes. With good males to start with the course is plain and the end certain. If it is designed to go into the business of producing stock to sell for breeding purposes this plan of course will not work; but the cost of working into good stock for farm use is not great enough to justify long waiting by anyone who understands the use and value of good blood.—*National Stockman*.

The most essential thing with young chicks is warmth. In winter the young chicks require much attention, but it is the extra care required that renders them salable at good prices. The hen must be kept in a dry, warm place, and must not be allowed to roam with her brood at this season. She must be so situated that every chicken can go under her wings whenever it desires, as a few minutes' exposure to severe cold will surely prove fatal, sooner or later.

Never feed chicks during the first twenty-four hours after hatching, as the food simply taxes the digestive organs, and gives no benefit; as nature makes provision for it. Even thirty-six hours is not too long a fast. Then crumble hard boiled egg with coarsely ground oatmeal. Feed this for only one day, as the eggs cause bowel disease, if continued. When the chick is two or three days old, it may receive bread soaked in milk, cold rice that has been cooked, finely chopped meat, chopped onions, and a regular food composed of equal parts of ground oats, corn meal, and shorts, with a little salt as seasoning; the mixture to be cooked and crumbled for them. Do not attempt to raise chicks on corn meal, either cooked or raw, as they will not thrive upon it alone, unless with other food. The young of all birds feather very rapidly from the start, and the chicken is no exception; but as the parent birds are given animal or insect food, the chicken should have a share also, at least three or four times a week, as well as being fed otherwise four times daily. Screenings, fine gravel, ground shells, and bone meal should be kept within their reach all the time, and as soon as wheat can be eaten it should be substituted for the screenings. As dampness is fatal to chickens, the drinking water must be so given that the chicken can get no portion of its body wet, and it should be kept growing from the start.

OUR COSY CORNER.

The *Dorcas Magazine*, published in New York at 50 cts. a year, furnishes us with recipes that are always to be relied on.

STUFFED TOMATOES.—Select large, smooth tomatoes; for a dozen there will be needed a cup of bread-crumbs, one tablespoonful of butter, one of sugar, a teaspoonful of onion juice—obtained by peeling and grating an onion—a tablespoonful of salt and a little pepper. Cut a thin slice from the top of each tomato, and, with a small silver spoon, scoop out all the soft part that can be spared without spoiling the shape. Mix this pulp with the other ingredients and fill the tomatoes with it; then replace the slices taken from the top of the tomatoes, put them in a granite-iron or earthen baking dish and bake them slowly three-quarters of an hour. They must be removed to a platter with a pancake turner, so as not to destroy the shape.

ESCALLOPED POTATOES.—Take medium sized potatoes, pare them and cut them in slices a little thicker than for Saratoga potatoes; let them lie in cold water an hour or more, then dry them. Butter a pudding-dish and put a layer of potatoes in the bottom, season them with salt and pepper and put bits of butter over them, and put in another layer, and continue in this way until the dish is full. Make a sauce, using half cream and half milk, thicken to the consistency of ordinary sauces, and pour over the potatoes till the dish is almost full. Finish the top with bread-crumbs and bake in a moderate oven from one to two hours.

The brooches and pins of to-day are a commentary on the sudden change of mind in the world of women. Most of us have read of the era of sentiment, when a rose or a blossom was thought the most charming of ornaments, and a pressed flower was warranted to recall events that were supposed to be experiences of the heart. All that is changed now. The flower is still worn at the throat, but it has been granted everlasting life—it is wrought in enamel or precious stones.

The violet in purple, white or black enamel, with a diamond dewdrop on it, is not entirely new, but it is very popular. The brooch of a large, deep-colored Russian violet wrought with much care in sapphires mounted in iron is, however, as new as it is unique. At a little distance it is hard to distinguish it from an enamelled violet, but on examination the care with which the gems are set and the artistic effect produced by the iron setting is fully appreciated.

Carnations, both double and single, are formed of garnets, and daisies have a yellow diamond for a heart and petals formed entirely of white enamel. Ivy leaves are of emeralds, and primroses of tiny topazes. In nearly every instance the round brooch effect is produced by these flower pins, the slender green stems being retained on the enamelled flower alone.

Brooches formed of enamelled coins are for wear with cloth gowns, and people who collect the coins endeavor to have them as odd as possible and with a history. Slender gold pins, with heads of pearl, topaz, amethyst, sapphire or ruby, are liked, and, as many of them may be worn, one entire wealth of the dainty luxuries can be displayed at once. But the wise woman will not waste money on these tiny stones; instead, she will devote it to the purchase of—what! A violet made of sapphires.