

Soils and Crops

Address communications to Agronomist, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto.

The Hatching of Turkeys.

The turkey hen begins seeking a location for her nest some time before she is ready to lay, and if nests are provided for her in suitable places about the farm buildings and yards she will usually accept them.

I secure good-sized dry goods boxes and large barrels, such as salt barrels, and place them along the fence and in corners of the turkey yards. These are covered partially with brush or cornstalks to hide them and make them look attractive. A deep nest of hay or straw is made inside and a nest egg is provided. I also make nests inside, in each corner of the turkey sheds, leaning up boards to hide them. It is not unusual to have each of the four corners occupied by a setting turkey at the same time.

Eggs should be gathered every day and placed in a cool, well aired room, (never in a cellar), and turned occasionally if kept very long. Eggs can be kept three weeks and hatch well.

As I sell for breeding stock and want early hatching birds, I use only the first laying of eggs from each turkey hen. There are always more eggs than the turkeys can cover and some of them are placed under good reliable chicken hens but when they hatch they are given to the turkey hen to brood as she is the natural and best mother.

I manage to have them all hatch at about the same time (within two weeks if possible) as they develop better and are more easily cared for if they are all about the same age.

However, if one has a large range and time to give especial attention to those of different ages, a larger flock can be raised from the same number of birds. If the first hens laying are

not allowed to set they will usually lay again in a very short time. The first eggs can be placed under chicken hens and before they are ready to hatch there are likely to be other turkey hens wanting to set. After "trying these out" on some nest eggs for a few days, to prove their worthiness, give them the eggs incubated by the chicken's pen. Even though she has been setting for a few days, she is ready to welcome the little poults when they hatch.

By hatching all remaining eggs in the same way, giving the poults to the last hens setting, one can usually manage to have turkey mothers for all. If each mother is given a large roomy house to shelter her brood she can nicely cover and care for sixteen to eighteen little ones.

I usually place about fifteen eggs under a turkey hen and nine under a chicken hen, depending, of course, on size of eggs and hens, but it is best not to have the nest too crowded at hatching time.

Incubators are sometimes successfully used in hatching turkey eggs but they require different methods of handling from chicken's eggs.

As a rule, the turkey hen will take proper care of herself while setting but occasionally there is one, especially among the pullets, that will take the matter too seriously, not being willing to leave the nest for food and exercise. These should be taken off and shut out from the nest twice a week and for at least twenty minutes each time. They will eat quantities of grass, dandelions, etc., but do not seem to require much food. Give soft food or small grain (never corn) and see that they have access to fresh water.

SPOLIATION

Colony houses are so useful that they are worthy of a trial on more farms. I find an eight-by-ten house to be ideal for a stove brooder which protects from two to three hundred chicks. The houses I have used have been ten feet wide and eight feet deep but the new ones will be eight feet wide and ten feet deep. This additional depth makes it possible to put the brooder quite a distance back from the window. When colony houses of that depth are used for brooding during the summer, it is best to have an opening in the back for ventilation.

When colony houses are used for brooding there is much less fire risk than when the brooders are placed in larger buildings. Colony houses can be moved if new soil is needed for the growing stock. They can be placed near the farm home early in the spring when the brooders need attention. Later they can be hauled into the fields or orchards where the growing poultry will have fine range conditions. Portable roosting sections of two-by-two pieces can be made to fit into each other as soon as the chicks are weaned and ready to roost.

Colony houses are easy to move when built on skids. These skids can be made of eight-by-two planks. Nail two planks together and bevel the edges. That makes a good skid for one side of the house. Then make the other and use the two skids connected by two-by-fours as the foundation for the floor boards.

The best colony houses have a glass window in front and a smaller opening above the window for ventilation. When the curtain is down on rainy days the window furnishes enough light for the chicks.

Agricultural Statistics.

The Dominion Statistician, Ottawa, has sent out a special appeal to farmers to make returns to him of the extent of the areas sown to the principal field crops and the number of farm live stock by means of card-board schedules which are being distributed, or will be supplied on application. It is explained that these statistics are required only for official compilation to make national returns, and will in no way be used for purposes of taxation. The reasons for the returns are: That reliable and accurate total statistics may be at the disposal of farmers, who will thus be enabled to regulate their crops and live stock and also to quote their crop prospects when applying for credits. Not only do governments require accurate

knowledge of the country's general resources in order to hold the balance fairly between all classes; but Canada being the third largest wheat growing and second largest wheat exporting country in the world, needs to be in a position to make accurate reports of production in order to return similar reports from other countries. Other reasons are that those who market the country's productions may be informed of exact conditions so as to be able to sell to the best advantage for the producers; that those seeking profitable openings for enterprise may know local conditions; and to sum up, so that agricultural statistics may be furnished on the highest trustworthy authority and the mischief caused by inaccurate statements issued from interested motives may be checked.

Fertilizing Strawberries.

To get real results on a small-fruit crop, fertilizing must not be delayed too long. Nitrate of soda in mild solution may be applied with profit to strawberries as late as when they are blooming; but I wish to suggest a much simpler treatment, which I have found to give wonderfully fine results.

Since top-growth on strawberries is not desirable, fertilizers rich in ammonia should not be used. What the strawberry wants chiefly, is potash. The best and cheapest form of potash that we have is wood-ashes. This natural fertilizer, if applied properly and at the right time, is truly a wonder-worker. Those who care to have the foliage of their plants a rich dark green may add to the ashes a little plain soot. In applying the ashes I use the following plan:

In late March or early April, when the last of the winter rains and snows are beginning to leech into the slowly warming earth, I scatter over the mulched rows of berries wood-ashes that have been sifted to remove impurities and bulky matter. I am careful not to let the ashes fall in handfuls over the crowns of plants. But in avoiding smothering of the crowns, I am not miserly in the application. On a garden patch 15x40 feet I have used with astonishing results four bushels of wood-ashes at a time.

About a month later, when it is time to get the mulch off, I lift it carefully aside; then, as soon as the soil is workable, I rake in a second but lighter application of ashes, trying, without disturbing the roots of the plants, to get it in as close to them as possible. Then the mulch is returned to the rows and about the plants, but, of course, not over them.

This fertilizing in the early spring is the very best insurance I have been able to discover for a phenomenal yield of strawberries in the home garden.

Dicky's Comfort.

When Easter Day came for the second time in Fluff's life he seemed as much excited about it as a fuzzy yellow toy chicken can be. He remembered last Easter Day, when he had stood at Dicky's place on the breakfast table. Would there be another chicken this time, he wondered. He dreamed the coming of a new pet—a Fluff with none of his fuzz worn off, looking all neat and spick and span.

If Fluff had known what was coming, he would have flopped right off the nursery mantelpiece to the floor. But he did not know, and so he stood in his place and waited for Dicky to take him down for their morning game together.

Presently, while Fluff waited on the mantelpiece and Dicky sat on the floor and gazed at his Easter cards, Uncle Richard came striding in with a box under his arm.

Uncle Richard had not been long home from overseas, and he still wore his uniform. Yet in spite of his buttons and his straps he sat down, "chickety-click," on the floor beside Dicky.

He held out a box. "There, old man," he said. "That's your Easter gift, all the way from Switzerland!"

Dicky grasped the box and tore off the wrappings while Fluff stared from his perch on the mantelpiece. The boy pulled off the lid. "Why, it's a peacock!" he cried.

They set the toy peacock on his feet. He was a gorgeous bird, with a long neck and a beautiful tail. Uncle Richard turned something in the side of the toy, and then—step—step—step—away the peacock marched, straight across the floor! Presently he stood still and spread his splendid like a beautiful fan.

"Oh! Oh!" Dicky gasped. "Make him walk again," Uncle Richard! "Make him walk again!"

And again the peacock walked. Fluff's little black eyes almost popped out of his head. He saw that his day was over, but he was not in the least jealous. Was not this glorious peacock more worthy of Dicky's love than a shabby yellow chicken? Still, he could not help feeling sad and a little lonely.

Just then Uncle Richard glanced at the clock. "Who's going to walk to church with me?" he asked.

Dicky jumped up and put his new pet carefully on one end of the mantelpiece. "I'll look at you again when I come back from Aunt Mary's this afternoon," he said.

All that long day the toy peacock stared proudly at Fluff, and Fluff blinked timidly at the peacock.

At last when evening came a tired little boy dragged himself into the nursery.

"I did want to look at you some more," Dicky said, "but I'm so sleepy!" The words ended in a long yawn.

Five minutes later Dicky was in bed. "Never mind," his mother whispered; "you'll wake bright and early and play with your beautiful peacock."

On the high mantelpiece the peacock smiled proudly at Fluff, and Fluff looked meekly and admiringly at the peacock.

Then they heard the dreamy voice again. "All right," it said, "I'll play with the peacock to-morrow, but please hand me my Fluff chicken now!"

Then Fluff smiled proudly at the peacock; he could not help it. And the next minute he was in the bed beside his master—Youth's Companion.

He is a wise dairyman who sets a trap to catch the first well-informed cow-tester that comes his way.

If for no other reason, a dairyman should feed his cows alfalfa and other legume hay to provide the animals with plenty of lime for bone making. Cows from cows so fed are strong. Otherwise they are emaciated because they have been obliged to use bone materials from their own bodies to rear their calves.

EASTER MESSAGES IN FAIRYLAND.

Down under the brown earth, in gardens where the cold never penetrates, live the fairies. Yes, there they live, and are happy as the days are long. Yesterday, as they all lay curled up in the hearts of the flowers, a shrill whistle sounded and, like so many jack-in-the-boxes, out popped heads from every flower.

No wonder! Right on the heels of that whistle skipped the fairy postman, the dearest sort of a little fellow, all dressed in brown, with shimmering blue wings. Over his shoulder hung a huge bell like a flower, just overflowing with dainty pink, blue and green letters. Most delightful letters, girls and boys, written with dew on flower petals and cunningly sealed with honey. The next time you see a crumpled flower leaf you'll know it's a fairy letter and perhaps—oh, a very perhaps—you may read it.

The postman waited till the fairies had settled down cozily to read their mail, then the little rascal blew such a sharp blast on his silver whistle that the whole company nearly tumbled from their flowers.

"Listen!" cried the mischievous sprite when they had in a measure recovered, "there is a great, big, stiff letter lying against the post office 'cause it's too big to go inside. I don't know whom it's for and I don't know whom it's from, but who will help me carry it to the queen?"

"I'll do it!" cried all the fairies together. Mercies! What curious creatures these fairies are!

"Come on, then!" cried the postman. And, half skipping and half flying, the whole company trooped after him. When they reached the post office—a giant jack-in-the-pulpit—there stood the monster letter. Truly an enormous letter, just about the size you or I might write. But think how tiny fairies are!

"Come," laughed the postman, "let's carry it to the queen!"

With a great fluttering of wings the little gentlemen fairies seized the edges of the letter, first inviting some of the little lady fairies to ride. Then away they flew gayly to the great fragrant rose, where the queen lay napping. But the fluttering of wings awakened her, and when she saw the giant letter she was as curious as the rest.

"Open it! Open it!" she cried, rosy with excitement. And an obliging young woodpecker, who had heard the queen's request, flew down and slit it open with his long bill.

Then with great difficulty the letter was dragged from the envelope and two fairy guards stationed upon the edges to keep it from blowing away.

"Read it! Read it!" cried the whole company, hopping up and down with excitement. The court scribe stepped forward and peered knowingly at the writing.

"Ahem," began the scribe in some embarrassment, "er—really, your majesty, I can make nothing of it!" And, really, boys and girls, I don't see how he could, for this writing was so fearfully large! Why, one letter alone was as big as a fairy!

"The wise men! How about the court ladies, and a dozen ran off to fetch them straightaway or some way. The wise men were studying the signs through a monster telescope for signs of fairies on Mars and were not pleased at the interruption, so they came grumbling and growling, and one not wishing to lose any time brought the telescope along, pausing every few minutes to squint through it at the sky. The queen was provoked by their slowness in obeying her commands.

"Here!" she cried imperiously to the old fellow lagging behind, "read this letter at once or you shall be

stung by the fiercest bumble-bee in the kingdom!"

This so startled the old wise man that the telescope turned a complete somersault. He caught it nervously and without noticing that it was upside down pointed it tremblingly at the huge letter. Then to the amazement of every one he read in a deep though shaky voice:

"The Easter Bunny wishes all of the fairies a very happy Easter, and has left some surprises in the secret tree hollow known to the queen."

"Oh, oh!" cried the fairies, "isn't it lovely?"

"Let's go for the surprises!" laughed the queen, and gave the old wise man a little hug—she was so pleased. And he, the foxy old dear, pretended that he knew all along that squinting through the wrong end of a telescope was the proper way to read a giant letter, and he explained to the other wise men that if looking through one end made objects large, looking through the other end would make them small.

Well, well! I don't know about that!

Recipes for Easter Cakes

Easter would not be Easter without its dainty and delicious Easter cake and any of the following recipes will make one fit to charm the palate of the most exacting.

Easter Cake.

Put one-half cup of cocoa and one cup of sugar into a bowl and add one-half cup of water. Beat the yolks of two eggs, add these to the cake, with one teaspoon of baking-powder sifted with one-half cup of flour. Season with vanilla, fold in the stiffly beaten whites of the eggs. Line two jelly tins with paper, pour in the mixture and bake twenty minutes. Dampen a cloth in cold water and lay over kitchen table, set cake tins on this three minutes before removing cake. Dust top of cake very liberally with confectioners' sugar and lay second cake on it. Frost top, sprinkle liberally with coconut and decorate with small colored candies put on in the shape of narcissus blossoms or an Easter-bell.

Snow Cake.

Beat the whites of five eggs until dry, then beat in three-fourths cup of granulated sugar. Sift together one-fourth teaspoon soda, one-half teaspoon baking-powder, and one-half cup flour. Add any fruit seasonings or vanilla, but do not heat after sugar is beaten into egg. Pour half the mixture in gem pans and over the top lay very thin shreds of citron and

thin slices of candied cherry. Over these pour the remainder of the mixture, dust top with pulverized sugar and bake.

Lily Layer Cake.

Cream together three-fourths cup of shortening and one cup sugar. Beat the yolks and whites of two eggs separately and add to the sugar, stir in one-fourth cup milk and one and one-half cups flour sifted with one round teaspoon of baking-powder. Line two jelly tins with paper, put in the cake dough and bake. Frost with white icing.

Fruit Squares.

Cream together one cup shortening and one cup of sugar. Add two beaten eggs and four teaspoons of milk. Put two tablespoons of preserved cherries, two of chopped candied peel and two of chopped figs through meat grinder. Stir these into the cake with sufficient flour to make a stiff batter, sifted with two teaspoons baking-powder. Spread on floured board and pat down until about three-fourths inch in thickness. Cut in squares, bake in moderate oven and frost with the following: One cup of brown sugar put in saucepan and cooked until melted, adding a little sweet milk to prevent burning when first put over fire. Cook until it spins a thread. Beat the white of an egg into the mixture and spread on the baked squares.

13 APR 1927

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THE SUNDAY SCHOOL EASTER LESSON

St. John 20: 19-31. Golden Text—The Lord is risen indeed. St. Luke 24. 34.

Time and place—Sunday, April 9, A.D. 30; a house in Jerusalem.

Connecting links—Mary Magdalene had told the disciples of her wonderful experience.

I. Joy, 19-23.

Vs. 19, 20. The same day at evening; the evening of that never-to-be-forgotten day of our Lord's resurrection, which gave its foundation to the Christian hope. Doors shut, fear of the Jews. The disciples already felt that they were marked men. Association with Jesus had made them objects of suspicion to the Jewish authorities. Came Jesus... Peace be unto you. Jesus appeared suddenly. Then to calm their startled bewilderment, He speaks the gracious word of peace. Shewed his hands and his side. His glorified body revealed those marks by which He could be unmistakably recognized. Disciples glad; a joy that was never to leave them again, but was to be the key-note of all their missionary labors.

Vs. 21-23. Again peace... The first on the very ground which had been taken up a week before. He is not faithless, but faithful; not faithless, as well as faith, process. Thomas must choose an astrous course. Thomas said: "My Lord and my God!" is not for a moment to that Thomas actually put the test. Seen... believe... Faith that rests on sight can be, course, genuine faith, and fully accepts Thomas' eagerness. But there is a higher faith, faith, which does not demand the sense of sight and touch. That kind of faith, Jesus calls "blessed" the word which he applied to Peter's confession of his Messiahship. Matt. 16: 17.

Variations of Live Stock Market.

The Live Stock Branch at Ottawa advises of an unusual... of calves to the markets in Canada as detailed in the weekly reports. The unavoidable result has been a decline in prices. The Toronto market report for March 9 notes a dollar drop on the first day of the week, and the Montreal report in recording heavy offerings says, "It is very early in the calf season, and if drovers and farmers persist in marketing quantities of common, unfinished veal, prices are likely to sink to a very low level." Montreal is a veal-eating city but a better quality is demanded. From January 1 to March 2 there was received at Toronto 8,623 calves against 5,443 in the same period last year and at Montreal 6,627 against 5,475. Last year the prices on March 9 were in Toronto \$16 and in Montreal \$13. This year on the same date they were \$14 and in Montreal \$11. It is worthy to note that prices are invariably higher in Montreal than in Toronto, the difference usually ranging from 50c to \$1.25. Cattle, calves and sheep all range higher in Toronto. On March 9 cattle at Toronto were quoted at \$9 and at Montreal at \$8. Sheep were at \$14.50 and \$11 respectively. Cattle were down compared with the same date last year, but sheep were slightly higher in Toronto but down in Montreal.

Greatest Waves.

The greatest waves known to be those of the Cape of Good Hope where under the influence of the west gale they will so often reach a height of 40 feet.

Says Sam: The fellow who is good at farming has a good mind and his body made of time, and in the same

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