

Scientific and Useful.

HOW TO START BULBS.

Take empty tin fruit cans, place them on a hot stove to take the rim off that is generally left on when opened, punch a few holes in the bottom, plant those bulbs you wish to start for early blooming, wet them thoroughly and keep them so until above the surface. Place them on the mantle over the kitchen stove, and the bottom heat will soon show you the young sprouts. Earthen pots will answer as well. If you wish to start a large number, as soon as one lot is started, replace them with another. Don't expose the young plants too early to the cold air.

HOW TO KEEP HAMS.

Every season more or less hams are destroyed by insects, or rendered too unpalatable to be eaten by decent people. By following this method the insect can be kept at a distance, and it is very simple, and within reach of almost every farmer in the country: After the meat has been well cured by pickle and smoke, take some clean ashes free from bits of coal; moisten them with a little water so that they will form a paste, or else just wet the hams a little, and rub on the dry ashes. Rubbed in thoroughly they serve as a capital insect protector, and the hams can be hung up in the smokehouse or wood chamber without any danger of molestation.—Country Gentleman.

LEMON CHEESE.

Dissolve one ounce of gelatine in a pint of water for an hour, add for ounces sugar, and the rind and juice of a large lemon, and simmer over the fire till the gelatine is entirely dissolved; strain, and when nearly cold beat into it the white of an egg thoroughly beaten. Wet the molds with water and put it in them. When turned out it will look like snow. This is a grateful dish to invalids.

HONEY-MADE CANDLES.

Many of our readers in the country will find that candles can be made economically by mixing a little melted beeswax with the tallow to give durability to the candle and to prevent its "running." The light from the tallow candle can be improved in clearness and brilliancy by using small wicks which have been dipped in spirits of turpentine and thoroughly dried.

HOME ORNAMENTS.

A pretty mantel-piece ornament may be obtained by suspending an acorn by a piece of thread tied around it, within half an inch of the surface of some water contained in a vase, tumbler, or saucer, and allowing it to remain undisturbed for several weeks. It will soon burst open, and small roots will seek the water; a straight and tapering stem, with beautiful glossy green leaves, will shoot upward, and present a very pleasing appearance. Chestnut trees may be grown in the same manner, but their leaves are not so beautiful as those of the oak. The water should be changed once a month, taking care to supply water of the same warmth; bits of charcoal added to it will prevent the water from souring. If the little leaves turn yellow, put one drop of ammonia into the utensil which holds the water, and they will renew their luxuriance. Another pretty ornament is made by wetting a sponge and sprinkling it with canary, hemp, grass, and other seeds. The sponge should be refreshed with water daily, so as to keep it moist. In a few days the seed will germinate, and the sponge will soon be answered with a mass of green foliage.

HOW BIRDS LEARN TO SING AND BUILD.

What is instinct? It is the "faculty of performing complex acts absolutely without instruction or previously acquired knowledge." Instinct, then, would enable animals to perform spontaneously acts which, in the case of man, presuppose ratiocination, or a logical train of thought. But, when we test the observed facts which are usually put forward to prove the power of instinct, it is found that they are seldom conclusive. It was on such grounds that the songs of birds were taken to be innate, albeit a very ready experiment would have shown that they result from the education they receive. During last century Barrington brought up linnets, taken from the nest, in the company of larks of sundry varieties, and found that every one of the linnets adopted completely the song of the master set over him, so that now these linnets—larks by naturalization—form a company apart when placed among birds of their own species. Even the nightingale, whose native song is so sweet, exhibits, under domestication, a considerable readiness to imitate other singing birds. The song of the bird is, therefore determined by its education, and the same thing must be true as to nest-building. A bird brought up in a cage does not construct the nest peculiar to its species. In vain will you supply all the necessary materials; the bird will employ them without skill, and will oftentimes even renounce all purpose of building anything like a nest. Does not this well-known fact prove that, instead of being guided by instinct, the bird learns how to construct his nest, just as a man learns how to build a house.—Popular Science Monthly.

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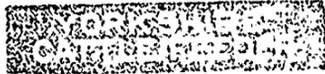
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