

AGRICULTURAL HINTS

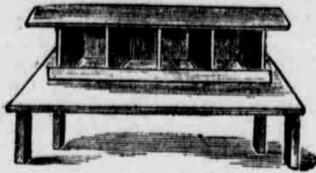
REMOVABLE NESTS.

They Are Easily Cleaned and Can Be Removed at Will.

The more inconvenient the nests of the poultry house, the more probability that the cleaning will be neglected. This means a harbor for lice and this, in turn, forebodes disaster and ruin to the poultryman. Removable nests seem to be the best solution of the difficulty, for in this manner the wash used for cleaning can penetrate every crack and crevice of the nests.

The plan which I give has been used for years in my poultry houses, and I have found it economical, convenient and easily carried out by anyone who can use a hammer and saw. I use the regular siding, one foot wide, such as is used for barns, etc.

The foundation for the nests is like



NESTS IN POSITION.

a table. It is made of two boards as long as you wish your row of nests to be. Five feet is a good length and will make four nests, but it may be readily made twice as long if desired. Nail a stout piece two feet long at each end of the long boards, on the under side. To these two pieces are nailed the four boards for the legs. This table fits closely up against the side of the hen house and must stand firmly.

To make the nest, take one board the length of your table. Mark it off by lines about 14 inches apart, the first one about two inches from the end. Now upon each line nail at right angles a board, sawed by line, one foot square. This practically finishes the nests, as you will see when you settle them in place, with the top of



NESTS REMOVED FROM TABLE AND INVERTED.

the table for the bottom of the nests and the side of the henhouse for the back. A thin piece of board two or three inches wide must be nailed along the lower edges of the squares to hold in the straw and eggs. I have used two laths, laid side by side, when nothing else was handy. The dimensions I have given are for hens of medium size; perhaps they would be too small for Brahmas and Cochins—especially the sitters.

It takes only a short time to remove these nests—and the table also, if necessary—into the yard and give them a bath of boiling hot soapuds with a broom or long-handled brush. Then a coating of lime and water in which a little disinfectant or coal oil has been stirred, or a wash with lice paint, and you can feel that your duty has been not only done, but well done.

We all know that food and water are necessary to the life of our poultry, but not until we realize that cleanliness and absolute freedom from vermin are fully as necessary to their health and speedy growth, will we make poultry keeping a profitable and satisfying success.—Ohio Farmer.

Turkeys for the Farm.

The common black turkey is as good a general purpose turkey as any, with the possible exception of a cross of American black with the mammoth bronze. Do not attempt to raise the cross of the wild turkey with the tame for it will only result in a half wild bird which can never be kept within proper bounds. Large fields for feeding by day and well-ventilated houses near the fields for roosting by night are necessary to make turkey raising profitable. It is essential that the house for the turkeys be near the fields over which they feed, with no trees between, or the chances are they will roost in the trees instead of in the house. In the winter, house warmly and feed out of doors, scattering the grain thinly over the ground to make the turkeys take the necessary amount of exercise.—Prairie Farmer.

Some Facts About Bees.

In a colony of bees about swarming time there are three kinds of bees—a queen, the workers and the drones. The queen is the mother; the workers, of course, do the work, while the drones are the gentlemen of leisure. As a general rule there is but one queen, from 20,000 to 45,000 workers, and the drones will number from a few dozen to as many hundreds; but these gentlemen of leisure are very short-lived—but few of them ever live to see their mother and sisters safely quartered for the winter. The life of a worker is about 45 days of actual working time, or about 80 days from the time the egg is laid until the bee has died from overwork, if there has been a flow of nectar.—Journal of Agriculture.

Some people have an idea that a hog will cut its throat if it attempts to swim. It is not true. It is a good swimmer.

WORN-OUT FARM SOIL.

It Can Be Improved by Plowing Under Green Crops.

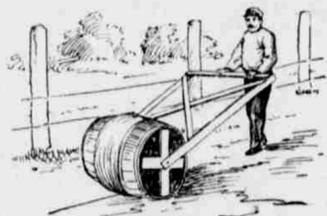
Soils that have been in long culture, without having been in clover or the grasses, or received periodical dressings of barn-yard manure, have been deprived of the greater portions of their mold. And, as is also an admitted truth, that mold is an indispensable ingredient in every productive soil, it stands to reason that, when in the course of improvident culture, it has been extracted, it is essential that it be restored. The question, then, how shall this restoration be brought about, is one of full interest to every farmer. Those who have ample resources, who have full supplies of animal and mineral and vegetable manures, who have the materials on their land to form composts, comprising the elements in question, need look no further for the means of restoring the needed constituents to the soil. But those who are differently situated, who have but little manure and are but ill-supplied with the raw material to make compost, must turn their attention to the best means of placing such matters in the soil as will form mold. The growing and plowing in of green crops is often advised, and we here repeat that advice. No soil can be truly productive unless both organic and inorganic plant foods are present. The air can supply a portion of the organic food, as clover roots can by their tubercle bacilli convert the unavailable nitrogen of the air into available plant food. This can be done only while the plant is growing.

What kinds of crops should be cultivated and plowed in? This question must be solved by circumstances. The facility with which seed may be obtained, the facility with which plants selected can be grown on these poor lands, their cost, etc., will determine to a great extent which shall be used. Chief is red clover, valuable for pasturage and equally so as a fertilizer. Clover is first and no doubt the best mortgage raiser there is, for it surely does restore the fertility of the land. As mentioned before, it supplies the nitrogen supply as none other can. I know farms that would raise scarcely anything, which in course of four or five years' treatment with clover, and with proper rotation, have become very valuable as crop-producing farms. Clover is a good crop for green manuring. Rye and rape are likewise recommended, but clover undoubtedly stands first.—Charles W. Burkett, in Farm and Fireside.

WIRE FENCE REEL.

It Does Not Require Much Skill to Make One at Home.

For a homemade wire fence reel simply convert an empty barrel into a hand roller. Across the open end, two pieces are nailed at right angles and in the center of this, as well as the bottom, a hole is bored to admit an iron rod. The push frame can be made of light pieces of hard wood braided across and on the under side a staple or hook is inserted to carry a can or paint bucket with



WIRE FENCE REEL.

tools, staples, etc. This may be suspended from the rod just inside the open end of the barrel by means of an S-shaped wire, but is not quite so convenient. In removing wire, one end is stapled to the barrel and then it is a simple matter to push the contrivance before you. In this way the wire is not dragged through the dirt and so does not gather much litter. If it is a temporary fence, it is frequently necessary to move it but a short distance and then it can be pushed all the way, but if the removal is to a greater distance, the rod can be taken out and the barrel, with its coil of wire, lifted into a wagon.—J. M. Shull, in Orange Judd Farmer.

AMONG THE POULTRY.

When eggs are kept for hatching they should be turned half over three times a week.

From now on until spring mature fowls bring higher prices than at any other season.

Clover contains more of the necessary elements for egg production than grain, but it is a bulky food.

The guinea fowls come the nearest to being self-supporting of all the kinds of fowls in domestication.

Ground bone is one of the best forms in which to give lime to laying hens; but do not give it in the food.

When the weather is damp the ducks are as uncomfortable as the hens, and always seek a dry place at night.

During the winter, when the weather is damp and the yards are often muddy, sulphur should not be given to the fowls.

The fowls should be fed as late and as early as possible now, so that the time between supper and breakfast will not be too long.

Sifted coal ashes and dry road dust in equal parts makes one of the very best materials for dust baths.—St. Louis Republic.

FARM AND GARDEN.

POULTRY YARD HINTS.

A Few Reliable Health and Disease Indications.

When fowls are judiciously fed, made to take exercise, and their quarters kept clean and free from filth, there is comparatively no trouble with sickness, except in cases of contagion.

When the combs and wattles of the fowls are of a bright red color, it indicates the condition of good health.

When the fowls are busy scratching, the hens laying and singing, and the cocks crowing, these are signs of good health.

When you can enter the hen house after dark and hear no wheezing, it proves there are not any rumpy fowls in the flock.

When the manure is hard, and a portion of it white, it indicates a healthy condition of the digestive organs.

When the edge of the comb and wattles are a purplish red and the movements sluggish, there is something wrong.

When fowls lie around, indifferent to their surroundings, they are too fat, and death from apoplexy, indigestion or liver complaint will result unless the trouble is corrected.

When the fowls are restless and constantly picking their feathers, they are infested with vermin.

When young poultry, especially ducklings, appear to have a sore throat, and swallowing is difficult, it is the symptom of the large gray lice on the neck.

If the fowl has a bilious look, with alternate attacks of dysentery and constipation, it is suffering with liver complaint. A lack of grit, overfeeding and idleness will cause this trouble.

A hospital should be a part of every poultry yard. As soon as a fowl gets ill, remove it to the hospital and commence doctoring it at once. The trouble with far too many is that they wait until the disease is in its advanced stages before giving medicine. A very sick fowl is difficult to cure, and when cured it is seldom of value afterward.—Rural World.

SQUABS FOR MARKET.

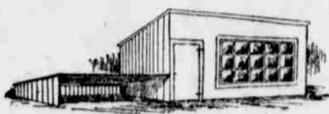
How to Raise Them Successfully on the Poultry Farm.

At this season squabs are very high and frequently bring 50 cents each at retail. The wholesale price ranges from \$2.50 to four dollars a dozen. A pair of pigeons will produce from six to ten pairs of squabs a year. They are not profitable if permitted to fly at large, as boys, hawks, and other enemies destroy them, but can be made to pay if kept in a suitable building with a wire-covered yard. A house eight by 12 feet, and a yard 100 feet long, 20 feet wide and 12 feet high, will serve for 20 pairs. The food should be wheat, bread, cracked corn, fresh meat (chopped), seed of any kind, finely-chopped grass and clover, ground bone, etc. A box of ground meat, one of ground bone and one of pulverized charcoal should be kept conveniently for them, with fresh water at all times. Put high and low roosts across the yards, and hang a salt codfish for them to pick at will. A point in keeping pigeons is that the sexes must be equal, as an extra male will break up the matings. Only an expert can tell the cocks from the hens when the birds are quiet. They must be kept clean and free from lice.—Farm and Fireside.

CHEAP BUT USEFUL.

A Comfortable Poultry House and Scratching Shed Combined.

The design of poultry house is one containing large windows to admit plenty of light and heat during the day. It may be of any size. A feature is the small and low shed, which is intended



COMBINATION HOUSE.

simply as a resort in the winter for scratching. It is made low, not only to cheapen the cost, but also because it is a better protection against winds than one that is higher. The shed has a ground floor, and should contain leaves or cut straw, into which a handful of millet seed should be thrown as an inducement for the hens to scratch. The roof and sides of both the house and shed may be covered with tarred paper or some similar roofing material, which will permit of the use of cheap lumber in its construction.—Farm and Fireside.

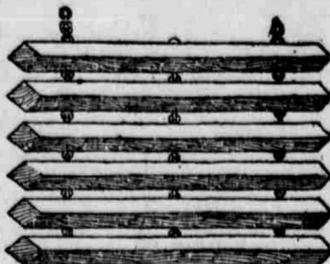
The Use of Fertilizers.

You cannot, by the use of commercial fertilizers alone, make your land rich. Indeed, if they are ignorantly applied, the result will be the impoverishment of the soil. If you add ten dollars to your bank account and check out \$20, you know the result. In like manner, when you use a small quantity of your fertilizer, it grows a vigorous plant, which enables it to gather fertility from the soil largely in excess of the materials added by the fertilizer. Judiciously used, they are a great boon to the farmer. But I repeat, the best method of using the phosphates and potash salts is on the pea and clover crops. It insures, as a rule, a fine crop of these renovators.—Southern States Farm Magazine.

RUBBER AND EVENER.

Good Implement for Preparing Land for Seeding.

In preparing land for corn culture, the land rubber illustrated herewith may be made at home at but small cost and will prove to be an effective implement. It consists of six pieces of four by four scantling, seven feet long, loosely bolted by the corners. Three bolts are in each piece, an eye in each end of the bolts and so connected as not



FOR PREPARING LAND FOR SEEDING.

to hold each piece of scantling rigid. One bolt is placed in the center; the others one foot from each end. Chains from the outer bolts of the front scantling are brought together and serve as a place of attachment for the whiffletree. The front cutting edges of each scantling are protected and their efficiency aided by having them bound with flat iron two inches wide and one-quarter inch thick. This size rubber is found to be heavy enough and well adapted for ordinary work, but if made of pine or any light wood it will require weighting.—S. N. Cox, in Farm and Home.

TANNING FUR SKINS.

An Operation Requiring Some Care and Experience.

Soak the skins until soft, remove superfluous flesh and soak in tepid soft water one hour. For each skin make a solution of one-half ounce of borax, three-quarters ounce saltpeter and one-half ounce globular salt. Dissolve or moisten with soft water sufficient to spread on the flesh side of the skin. Put on with a brush, taking into consideration the varying thicknesses of skin and apply accordingly. Keep in a moderately cool place for 24 hours, when the skin is to be washed clean. Then take one ounce sal soda, one-half ounce borax and two ounces hard soap, melt together, taking care not to bring to a boil. Apply the heated mixture to the flesh side and keep in a warm place for 24 hours. Wash the skins clean and apply two ounces saleratus, three quarts hot soft water, four ounces alum and eight ounces salt. Dissolve in water. When sufficiently cool to allow handling without scalding the bare hand allow the skin to remain in this mixture for 12 hours. Afterward wring out the moisture and allow 12 hours to dry. Finish by pulling and working and finally by rubbing the flesh with sandpaper or pumice stone.—G. H. Hapgood, in Farm and Home.

AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

Cultivate the corn before it is up. Get the implements ready for spring work.

Clover will run out the common weeds.

Alfalfa is not satisfactory in the middle west.

On poor soil sow wheat a little thicker than on good.

Orchard, timothy, blue grass and clover make a good pasture.

Wire fencing is so cheap that there is no excuse for lack of fences.

Fermenting and heating in the mow are what make clover hay dusty.

Black loam earth, in a dry state, is just as good an absorbent as plaster.

If cattle are turned on topped dressed pasture before the grass gets a good start and before there has been a good rain, it will be offensive to them.—Western Plowman.

Beginning with Poultry.

A writer advises a beginner if he has \$1,000 to put only half of it into the poultry business at first. We would advise him to start with little or no capital—at most, very little. Get a few hens and hatch the flock. One does not need costly henhouses, bone cutters, incubators and so on to start with. Many of the most profitable flocks have never seen anything of these luxuries. Most farm flocks are kept in the barn with the other stock, though shut away from it, and as to bone cutters, etc., no barn flock needs them. Woe unto the one who starts with a large capital. One of the strongest points in favor of poultry keeping is that it requires very little capital.—Dakota Farmer.

Modern Agricultural Training.

Education in all branches of farming will in the future be universal. Europe has dairy schools, and short courses in agriculture are being given at nearly all of the experiment stations in this country. The Rhode Island station now has a poultry department, in which pupils are taught the merits and characteristics of the breeds, fowl anatomy, diseases, artificial incubation and the brooding of chicks, chemistry as applied to the foods of fowls, construction of poultry houses, growing green foods for poultry, etc.

DIVIDED SILK PETTICOATS.

Frills and Lace and Rosettes of Many Colors on Lingerie.

Evening petticoats, to give them the old-fashioned name that has been ousted by the more modern "underskirt," are quite regal in their magnificence this winter, and rich brocades, and the finest glaces are trimmed profusely with lace and chiffon frills. An evening skirt that deserves mention is of heavy satin duchesse in an ivory shade, with a bottom flounce of killed ivory lace, with two frills of accordion-plaited chiffon falling over that again, their colors being palest green, with faint rose-pink forming the upper flounce.

A ruche of frayed-out green and pink silk finished the top of the flounce, and above this again were vandyked rows of valenciennes lace insertion laid alternately over green and pink satin ribbon of the same width. The insertion was laid off with a narrow lace beading, through which was threaded bebe ribbon of pale green and pink, which broke out at intervals into pretty little fussy rosettes of the two colors blended.

Yet another pretty garment to be seen is of rose-red glace silk of the richest description, with two foamy flounces of killed glace, covered in their turn with killed rose-red chiffon with an edge trimming of cream lace headed with insertion.

A black brocade, with pattern of fleur-de-lis and their leaves, has an under flounce of heliotrope killed silk, covered with two flounces of plaited black lace, threaded with heliotrope and green narrow ribbons, and headed with a wide black lace insertion that gives opportunity for the introduction of heliotrope satin ribbon, which is finished at intervals with hanging bows. A pale blue glace silk skirt, with a plain flounce of the same, is made beautiful by this flounce being covered with inch-wide frills of cream plaited chiffon edged with blue velvet bebe ribbon.

Divided skirts for evening wear are very pretty garments in satin or rich silk, with the legs very wide, and fully frilled with lace, chiffon or killed silk, and to those who delight in divided skirts these garments are just the prettiest wear possible, for they do not look very different to ordinary skirts, on account of their very full frills at the edge. But to insure the proper and elegant fall of the outer skirt, there is nothing to surpass a well-hung petticoat with full outstanding flounces.—St. Paul's.

NOVEL VALENTINE DINNER.

A Unique Affair as Enjoyed by a Sojourner in Denmark.

In Denmark our well-known snow-drop, one of the earliest messengers of spring, has been since olden days held sacred to St. Valentine.

On that auspicious eve the Danish lover sends his lady a bunch of snow-drops (vinter-gjacks, winter-jokes they are called, because they peep out while it is yet winter, and try to coax people into thinking spring has come), with a card attached, bearing a verse or sentiment and as many pin-pricks as there are letters in his name. If she cannot guess the name from this clew she is fooled (gjakket), and at Easter must pay the sender a forfeit of colored eggs.

This quaint bit of folk-lore was used in a novel Valentine dinner.

The invitations, bearing a bunch of painted snow-drops in one corner, bespoke our presence at a "Danish Valentine dinner."

Cherry and white are the national colors of Denmark, and these had been used with beautiful effect in the dining room. The ferns were banked with dainty effect. The menu cards were shaped like hearts, tied with a knot of cherry ribbon and edged with painted snowdrops.

Across the top in gold letters was the word "welbekomin" (may it agree with you).

It is the custom in old Danish households for the hostess to shake the hand of each guest leaving the table and say: "Welbekomin;" but our hostess found it too long a mouthful, so it was written above the menu instead.

At each place was a tiny heart-shaped cup of cherry crepe paper, holding a little bunch of snowdrops. The ices were in the shape of hearts with a candied cherry in the center of each. Heart-shaped cakes were iced in pink, and mingled in the salad were tiny hearts cut from slices of red beef.

When we were all assembled in the parlor the little daughter of the house came in, dressed as a fairy, with a basket, from which she gave us each a square white envelope inclosing a card.

A knot of snowdrops was tied in one corner with cherry ribbon, while below was a verse and numerous pin-pricks. We were asked to guess from these the name of the one who was to take us in to dinner.—Sharlot M. Hall, in What-to-Eat.

Biscuits Honore.

Put into a basin about four ounces of powdered sugar, flavored with vanilla, and the yolks of four fresh eggs; work this to a white froth, then add about a tablespoonful of chopped almonds, the same quantity of pistachios, and about three ounces of well-dried and sifted fine flour; to this add very lightly the whites of the eggs beaten to a snow, and about a tablespoonful of melted butter. Put this mixture into a buttered mold, or into several small ones; bake in a moderate oven and serve cold.—Boston Herald.