

INTERESTING GOSSIP FOR FLOWER LOVER



The Lilacs Are Among Our Most Popular and Ornamental Flowering Shrubs, and Hardly Any Garden or Park is Found Without Them.

(By BESSIE L. PUTNAM.)

Many times I have been asked how to make the Crab cactus bloom. If this is identical with, or closely allied to, the Humming Bird cactus, a rich soil composed of loam with a little sand is good for the plant.

See that the drainage is good. During the warm weather treat it like the geraniums, watering almost as much and feeding it once a month with weak liquid manure or other plant food. The buds should form in the autumn, and from Thanksgiving to Christmas the normal plant is covered with blossoms.

The rest period differs with the various species, but it can be easily determined with a little observation. The spray varieties almost uniformly like a sandy soil.

Let it rest during the winter, watering it just sufficient to keep it from drying. A cellar is, as a rule, too damp for wintering it. Preferably let it remain in the living room.

Those who like a profusion of bloom will find it hard to clip or pinch back all the lateral branches on the chrysanthemum, yet this is just what the professional grower does to produce the mammoth show blossoms.

There are myths and notions prevalent regarding many plants, among them being one that the Kalfe-blade cactus, one of the broad-leaved type, will not bloom until it is seven years old.

Whatever may be the magic in the number seven, it has no force in this case; for, while it is true that many of the cacti are slow to attain the blooming size under ordinary cultivation, when conditions are just suited to their growth their flowers are produced much sooner.

While it is true that there is a check when potted, still, the great thrifty foliage is compensation for temporary halt in growth, and really, you will have larger, stronger and more robust plants from the same slips by the outdoor method.

Now is a good time to stick some slips into the ground for winter blooming. Plants grown in rich garden soil make a more luxuriant growth than when started in pots.

As a rule, when a cactus shows signs of making a new growth it is safe to water it moderately. During the periods of rest it should have only enough to keep it from drying up.

Phlox and many other annuals grow straggling if allowed to flower and form seeds in their own sweet way. To keep the bed slightly one must con-

tinually pick and prune. It is a part of nature's plan to make us generous with her most beautiful gifts.

If you have been so unfortunate as to have a vase or porch box filled with plants which clash in color scheme, cut out the offending members. Scarcely a day goes by that we do not see the scarlet geranium and the crimson petunia growing side by side.

This is an offense to good taste. The petunia can be easily transplanted or cut out entirely and started as a slip, making some spot beautiful, while now it detracts from the appearance of the collection.

The florist may know all about raising thrifty plants, but he not infrequently errs in their arrangement.

SERIOUS MISTAKE IN BUYING SEED

Most Satisfactory Results Obtained in Selecting Variety Adapted to Locality.

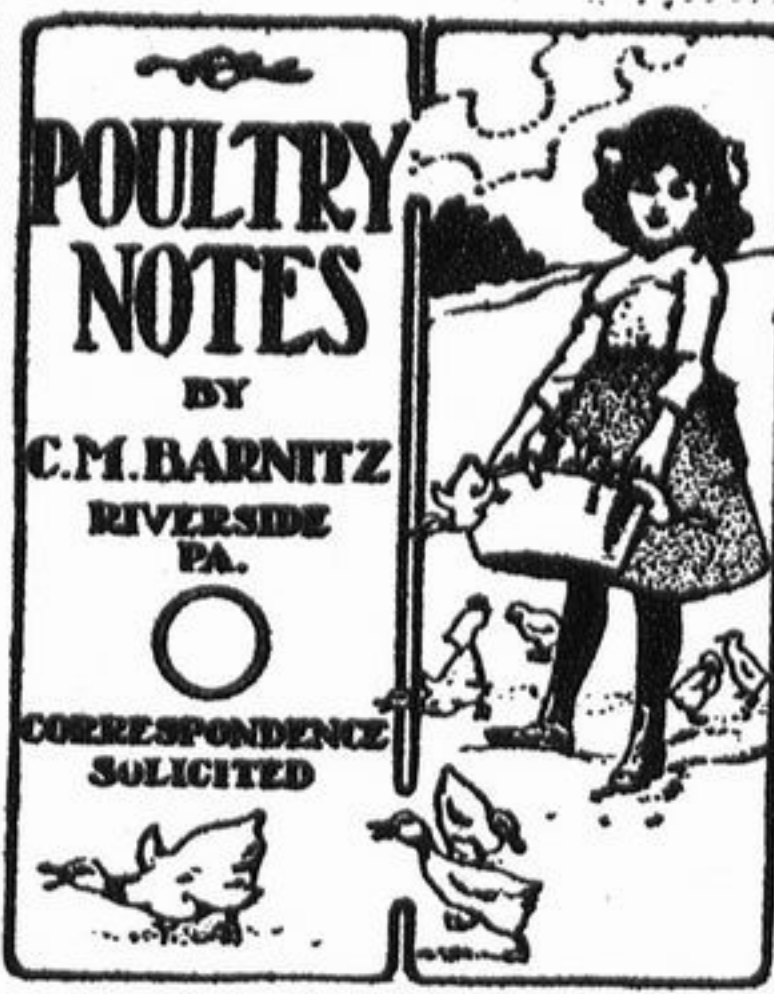
(By R. G. WEATHERSTONE.)

We make a serious mistake when we buy seed corn that has been grown in some distant locality and plant it for our general field crop. It is better to grow a new variety for two or three years in our seed plot and tested out and get it acclimated before we plant it extensively as a field crop.

It is well known that the corn crop must have certain climatic conditions in order to give a profitable yield and we who live outside of the great corn belt must devote more or less study and attention to the selection of varieties that are best adapted to our climate and soil if we make the crop profitable on our farms.

I have always obtained more satisfactory crops of corn by selecting my seed corn from some variety that has grown in my own locality for years. A variety that has been grown in a locality for a few years is already acclimated and by intelligent seed selection it can be bred into a more prolific character that will reach maturity in the climate where it has been perfected.

Changing seed corn is not a good practice. So far as changing is concerned it may be necessary for us to change in order to get better foundation stock, but when the stock is once obtained we should stay by it and try and improve it.



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KILLING BUGS ON BIDDY.

Killing bugs on Biddy is a pestiferous proposition, one that many don't indulge in and one that many others don't indulge in enough to qualify as experts.

Some get round the bughouse job by sprinkling louse powder on the hen while in the nest, placing bug killer, moth balls, tobacco, sulphur, slaked lime, in the nest or greasing the hen with lard with the idea that she will grease the chicks.

But why take lazy halfway measures with these crawlers that are so



Photo by C. M. Barnitz.

DUSTING BIDDY.

destructive, breed so fast, have so many hiding places in the feathers and resist so many so called insecticides? The most effective method is to treat each fowl individually, to apply the louse powder by hand.

Just take your hen by the hocks so she can't jerk and break a leg and hold her head down over a newspaper, and her feathers will fall open. Start with the tuft, the louse incubator; get the powder down to the skin; work it in around the roots of the tail between body and thighs, on thighs, back, cape, back, head, throat, wing quills; work it down to skin all over the fowl, then shake your hen gently over paper and release her quietly lest she fly around and shake off the powder. We find the louse machine next in effectiveness and recommend it for big flocks.

It is easily made, dusts five or six hens at once, does quick work and does not injure fowls. It is simply a

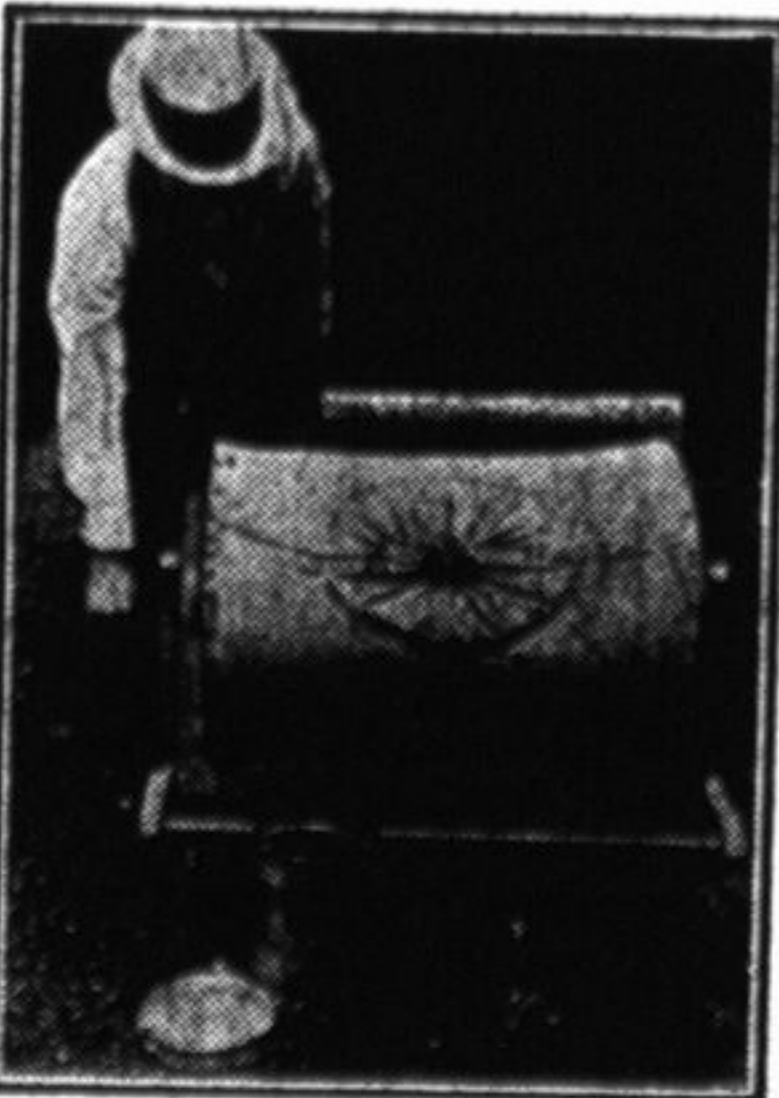


Photo by C. M. Barnitz.

TURNING THE LOUSE MACHINE.

revolving canvas drum in which the fowls turn in contact with the powder.

Good louse killer is hard to buy. Much on the market is worthless, some injurious. Persian Insect powder is the best sold, especially fine for chicks and poult, but rather expensive for big flocks.

For new readers we repeat our louse killer recipe, and we find no better for old stock:

One pint gasoline.
One-half pint crude carbolic acid.
Four pounds plaster paris.

Stir the mixed liquids into plaster, screen on to newspaper and let stand two hours, then can for use and use in moderate quantity.

DON'TS.

Don't buy much cracked corn at a time. It soon molds, and that's deadly. Grind your own and save money and mortality.

Don't change methods as soon as you read what great success some other fellow has had with another. He may be lying to induce buying.

Don't do others, but do your part with all your might, art and heart.

Don't think silk is dormant when fed on the dropping boards. It becomes dust, and every moving wing sends it into the lungs with its destructive microbes.

A MODEL FOR YOU.

Five a big stuffy hen that's a dandy. She always does her best. She doesn't sport any fancy frills Nor wear a rounded crest.

But when she scratches she crooks her toes.

And the dickens is to pay. You'd think she'd scratch the barnyard And the garden all away.

And when she lays—oh, my, what eggs! And she lays when eggs are high. Her eggs are firsts—you bet they're best— And make swell pumpkin pie.

And when she hatches—oh, goodness me!— She sits till the crows come home. But, oh, the chicks that she brings out! They're dandy and then some!

And when she's in love she's in love, oh, my!

She has roosters by the score, And, like the seaside summer girl, She's always hunting for more.

Oh, no, Sir Staggard, don't go to the ant For lessons in industry! The ant's not in it with the hen. Just take that tip from me.

The hen brings in a billion a year. You bet she is a prize!

So go to Biddy and learn the trick, And then do thou likewise.

C. M. BARNITZ.

THE POULTRY DOCTOR SAYS—

Doping all the hens in a flock because one dies or is sick is a peculiar and foolish method of some fanciers. This generally puts the whole bunch off their feed and stops laying, and these conditions confirm the dope fiend's funny opinion that they've all got it, and so he dopes them again. It's far better to remove the sick fowl, clean up and disinfect, study the flock and especially to scrutinize one's methods closely, for it's often what is fed and how it's fed that brings sickness among the flock.

"Cholera" is a term often applied to poultry disease in summer, but there is mighty little cholera among the fowls of this country. These intestinal troubles, this indigestion, that somewhat resembles cholera, have their cause mostly in rank, rotten yards, lack of shade and greens, dirty drinking water, hot sleeping quarters, multiplying lice and mites and feeding too much heat, fat producing corn in warm weather.

The plaster droppings of ducks that soon cover the whole surface of a yard should be systematically removed during the development of the ducklings or serious results, such as intestinal or rheumatic troubles, develop or the stamina of the stock is lowered.

We have seen 100 ducks die in two days, and an investigation showed it was not the feed, as supposed, but the microbial mess through which the quacks waddled every day and which fertilized the desert air with its awful stench.

Unless very hungry, hens will not of ten fill up on mash that is too wet, because they seem to know it is not wholesome. Same with a mash where moldy ingredients are used. Both mean intestinal irritation and scores.

Feeding small chicks and turkey poultis sloppy feeds is a cause of much mortality on farms. The majority of poultrymen feed nothing wet to chicks. To be right a mash must not only be composed of good grain products, but should be crumbly and of such consistency as not to stick to the handa.

FEATHERS AND EGGSHELLS.

The Iowa State college at Ames now holds free poultry clinics, where poultry diseases are diagnosed and investigated. Solomon didn't live in the age of progressive poultry culture or he wouldn't have said, "There's nothing new under the sun."

Lice and cholera germs flourish most in hot weather, and both by a little work may be prevented. Running for remedies and cleaning up when a flock is down with contagious disease is certainly a ridiculous and fruitless proceeding and exhibition of how not to do it.

The country boys and girls of Minnesota are taking a poultry census of the state for the state agricultural college. These young people will make a thorough job of it. It will be the first complete poultry census taken, and we advise other states to follow Minnesota's lead.

In every neighborhood there are always some who point the long finger when any one tries to farm or dairy or raise poultry or fruit by advanced methods. These weeping Jeremiahs who are always prophesying failure for progressive people generally arrive at their conclusions from facts in their own unsuccessful personal experience.

One hundred and twenty-four students made a specialty of poultry culture at the University of Missouri the past term. Fifty-eight Missouri counties and six outside states were represented.

A feast today and a famine tomorrow will upset the digestion and egg production of any hen. This method neither works with hen nor man.

A male bird is often rendered sterile by the strain attending too much exhibiting. Eggs from your pens, whether set in incubators or under hens, should be tested for fertility. This will often save time that would be wasted in setting worthless eggs and also selling eggs that can't hatch.

The beginner is often disappointed when he discovers every egg doesn't hatch a winner. He may buy a setting of eggs for \$20 and not get a perfect from the lot. He learns later that phenomenal birds are not the rule, that his best breeders do not always breed true and that ancestry will show. Just the same with humans, where a red headed baby may be traced back to a great-great-grandmother without another brickbat between.

C. M. Barnitz

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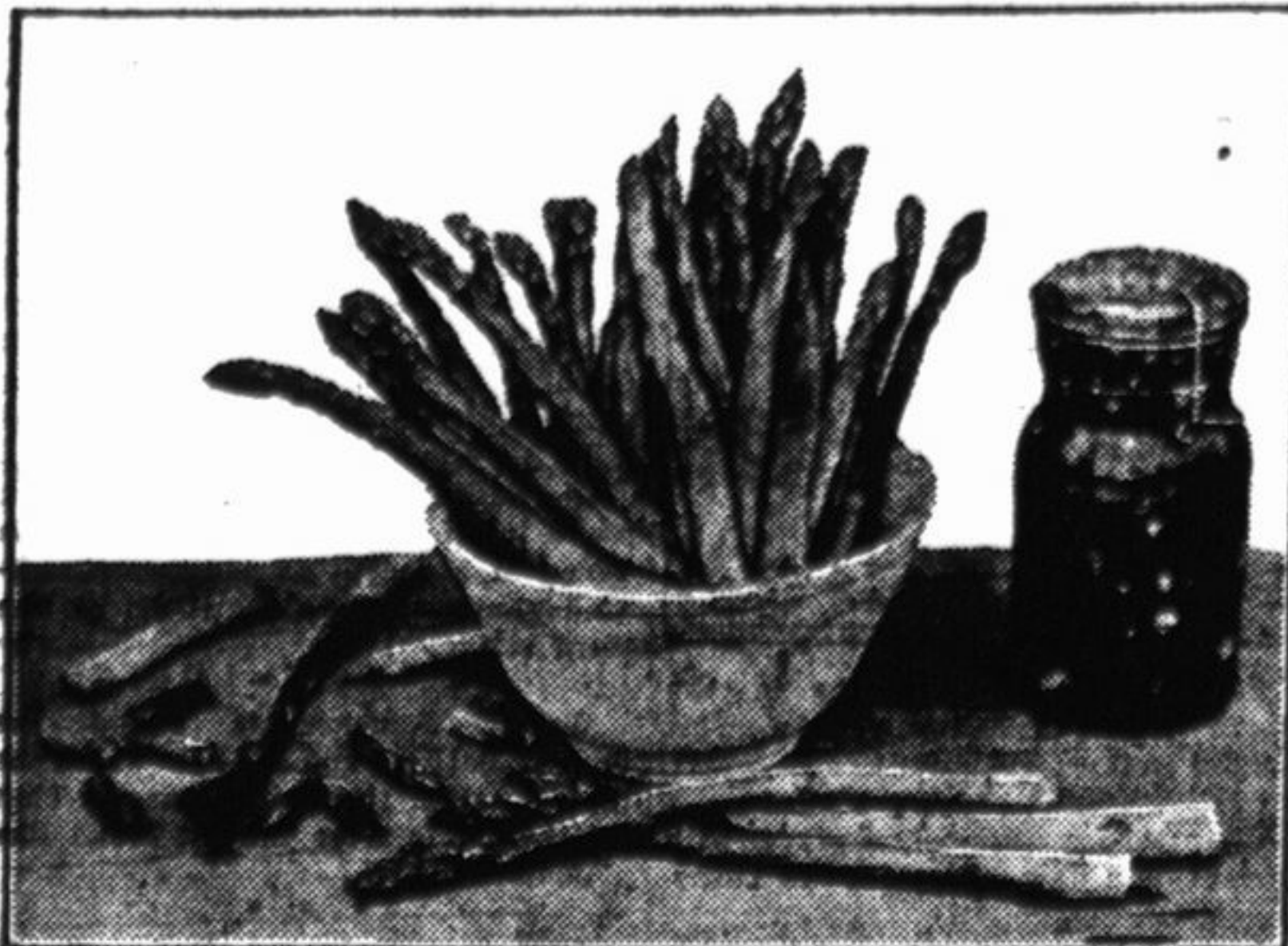
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SUPERIOR ASPARAGUS ALWAYS IN DEMAND



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Asparagus, being a rather rugged plant, will live, and in a measure thrive, on almost any kind of soil, even under neglect. It is a deliciously succulent vegetable and much enjoyed by discriminating palates.

If the land selected for an asparagus patch is exposed to the south or east, and of warm loam, the earliness of the crop is assured. It demands the same attention as other close-planted vegetables, and if given such care, strong plants will then be the sure outcome. In cutting, be very careful not to injure later shoots or the crown of the plant. Use an asparagus knife for cutting. To save the seed, strip the scarlet berries off the stalks by hand, put them in a barrel and wash them with a wooden pounder, to separate the hard black seeds from the pulp. Wash them in plenty of water to clean them, pouring off the pulp and skins; dry them and save for future use.

Even with all sorts of vegetables in abundant supply and cheaper than ever, there is never any danger of a asparagus article of asparagus going out of fashion. Be sure and can some—it keeps well and is desirable in the winter when the southern markets are asking fancy prices.