Soils and Crops

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

LEGHORNS AS MEAT.

The other day a customer asked me for a stewing chicken, and when I offered her a Leghorn hen she refused in no uncertain terms.

"I don't want a Leghorn!" she exclaimed in a tone that would have been appropriate had I offered her a turkey buzzard. I explained that I had nice plump Leghorn hens, weighing three and a half pounds dressed, that had been specially fattened for two weeks, and that if she wanted a Red she would have to take it right out of the flock without being fattened. That seemed to suit, so I culled out a small Red that night, dressed it and delivered it the next day. This fowl was not in as good condition for the table as the Leghorns which had been confined, but it was perfectly satisfactory to the customer. Evidently the name counted for more than a plump breast and juicy meat.

Some days later another customer, who conducts a high-class tea room, called me up and ordered twenty-five pounds of dressed Leghorn hens for the end of the week. When I delivered them I told her about the other woman who had preferred the unfattened Red to the finished Leghorn.

"I used to have the same prejudice," the proprietor told me, "until on several occasions I had to take Leghorns or do without. I soon found that a well-fattened Leghorn was preferable to a fowl of the larger breeds for my purposes. The flavor is just as good, and I can serve a leg and a piece of breast to a guest economically, which I could not do with a larger fowl.

These two incidents set me to thinking about the unreasoning prejudice against Leghorn meat that is fostered by undiscriminating housewives and cunning poultry dealers, at a cost to the poultryman of many thousands of dollars annually. Many housewives purchase by the eye or by the name; they will sometimes turn down Grimes Golden apples to buy Ben Davis because they are red, and refuse a Leghorn simply because they have heard someone say that it is not good. Dealers in buying from poultry keepers invariably offer less a pound for Leghorns than for Rocks or Reds, and sometimes refuse to handle them at all except at a considerable cut. This cut is not always reflected in the price to the consumer, especially in markets where the customer knows nothing of the different breeds of poultry, but it goes into the pocket of the dealer at the expense of the poultry keeper.

Yet Leghorn cockerels make better broilers than either Rocks or Reds. Maturing faster, they are well meated and possess delicate flavor, where the youngsters of the heavier breeds at the same age are gawky, scrawny and tasteless. I grow both Leghorns and Reds, and when it comes to a broiler for Sunday dinner it is a Leghorn that gets the ax.

On the other hand, the heavier breeds furnish better roasting chickens, as the mature cockerel is larger and perhaps juicier than the Leghorn. When it comes to stewing chickens, the size of the family should well determine the choice. A small family requires a three to four pound fowl, which is about the Leghorn weight. A Red or Rock of this weight is undersized and probably carries less meat in proportion to frame than does the small-boned Leghorn. The Leghorn then is the better buy. On the other hand, a large family requires a six-pound fowl or larger, and would find the larger breeds preferable, as there would be only one fowl to clean, whereas it would take two of the Leghorns to make the weight. Of course, if the Leghorns cost less a pound, the difference would again be in their favor, as there would be more drumsticks and second joints to go around. All things considered, I fail to see any need for a difference in price between Leghorns and Rocks and Reds of equal quality, except perhaps in the case of large roasters, which can be furnished by the heavier breeds alone.

We Leghorn men could increase our incomes many dollars annually by culling out all small-size individuals from our flocks and never marketing a bird that had not been fattened.

Fattening is easily done. I confine my birds to be sold in colony houses for about ten days previous to selling, and feed them, out of a trough, all they will eat of a mixture of three parts of yellow corn meal and one part of laying mash, mixed to a batter with buttermilk or even water. They get fat and take on a nice yellow color from the corn meal, and it pays big.

The Production of Good Combs.

A good stock of drawn combs is the most valuable asset that a beekeeper can have, especially if one is a producer of extracted honey. They are of particular value in a season when the honey crop is light, because they enable the bees to store what little nectar is available instead of using it for the building of new comb. Every beekeeper should endeavor to have a number of new combs drawn during a good season to replace any that may become damaged or broken.

A good comb is one that is straight and containing as few drone cells as possible. It must also be firmly attached to the frame on all four sides and strongly supported in the frame by means of wire. To produce such combs, the frames must first be tightly wired; No. 28 tinned wire is most commonly used. Full depth Langstroth frames should have at least four horizontal wires, larger frames will need more. It is important that a full sheet of foundation be used for every frame; this must be fastened to the top bars and the wires firmly embedded into the wax by means of an electric or spur wire embedder. The foundation may require trimming, as it must not touch the end or bottom bars of the frame by at least one-eighth of an inch or it will buckle after giving it to the bees. Foundation well fastened in the frame will not melt down or sag and the finished comb will not have distorted cells and will not break in the extractor if carefully handled. Bees will not work on foundation unless there is a plentiful supply of nectar coming in, therefore, it should only be given during a good flow. To get the combs well attached to the frames, the foundation should be drawn out in extracting supers, as bees seldom attached the combs to the bottom bars in a brood chamber.

When extracting the honey from new combs, first take only part of the honey from one side, reverse the comb and empty the other side; again turn the comb and finish the extracting; this will prevent breakage. If all the honey is extracted from one side without removing any from the other, the weight of honey on the inner surface of the comb will crack or even break out the whole centre. —C. B. Gooderham, Dominion Apiarist.

* The man who is putting a For Sale sign on his farm now has gone through the worst of it, and is offering some other man the opportunity to buy low and get in on farming on the comeback.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

RAINY DAYS.

To smile is an easy matter
When the sun shines bright,
And if everything around us
Is turning out just right.

But when the day is dreary,
When the dark clouds throng
And when trouble hovers near us
And things are going wrong,

It needs a hero's courage
To play a good game,
To take the bitter with the sweet
And still appear the same.

That's when good cheer is needed,
So let's change our ways,
And cultivate a smile or two
To have on rainy days.

—I M. Thomas.

BRUIN AND ROLLY PLAY DOCTOR.

"Ho, ho, hum—um," yawned Bruin one bright sunny morning. "The sun is up and I must be getting up, too."

As he was dressing he heard a flutter at the window and "Cheer-up, Chee—chee—ee," over and over again. Peeping between the curtains, he saw a little bird on the window sill singing just as hard as any little bird ever could. And how glad that little bird's song made Bruin feel.

"A lucky day it will be for me, when a little bird sings at my window like that," thought Bruin to himself.

Carefully he put down the curtain and hurried into the pantry for some crumbs for that little bird's breakfast. But when he got back with them the bird was gone.

Of course he had to tell his friend Rolly Rabbit all about it. But Rolly only laughed at him when he told him that this little bird would bring him good luck.

Now the real part of our story begins when Bruin was coming back from the Woodland grocery store that morning. He was nearing the bend in the road when a flutter in the bushes nearby made him stop.

"What was that?" asked Bruin to himself. "Guess I'll have to go over and see."

Carefully he tiptoed in among the bushes that he might not frighten it away with his clumsy feet. He looked and of a sudden he saw a flutter right by his big foot. He had almost stepped on a little bird. It lay so very still that Bruin picked it up. One little wing fell limp at its side.

"You poor little thing," said Bruin "your wing is broken. How did you ever do it?"

But the bird could only answer him by a faint little "che—chee," with a note that told how dreadfully it did hurt him.

"I'll take you right home with me and see what we can do for this," said Bruin.

Although the bird did not know the animal language, he seemed to understand what Bruin meant and nestled friendly in his arm.

"What have you there?" asked Rolly as Bruin came in.

"I found this little bird down the road, Rolly. It has a broken wing. And, do you know, Rolly, I think it is the same little bird that was singing on my window sill this morning," answered Bruin.

"No matter what bird it is, we must do something for it, quickly," said Rolly Rabbit.

So together they doctored the bird and mended the broken wing with tiny splinters and fed him everything that little birds should eat. In a few days he was so much better that he could sing to Bruin and Rolly for being so kind to him. It was not long before he could fly about the house. He would light upon first one shoulder and then the other and chirp and sing to them, but always in the strange bird-language that neither Rolly nor Bruin knew, but seemed in a way to understand.

Then one bright morning Bruin opened the door and the little bird flew out, but as he went he seemed to say to his two strange friends, "Thank you so much for what you have done. I'll come back to see you again."

Sore Shoulders.

Be sure that the horse's collar fits right but do not stop there. When resting the team in the field take a minute to wipe off the sweat under the collar; and at the end of the day's work try this method: Remove the harness from the team, bathe the horses' shoulders with a weak solution of cold salt water and then turn the horses out in the barn lot for a roll and drink. While your horses are enjoying this luxury put their feed in their mangers and in a short time each horse will come into the barn and find his own stall.

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THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

JULY 13

The Boyhood of Jesus, Luke 2: 40-52. Golden Text — Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.—Luke 2: 52.

INTRODUCTION—Nothing is told us of the early years of the boy Jesus, except what is related in this passage of Luke. In later times fanciful gospels came into existence, pretending to give narratives of the holy childhood, but the good sense of the church refused to accept these fantastic legends. How much more reverent and impressive is the silence of our canonical gospels! But while we cannot remove the veil of mystery from the early years of Jesus, certain things are clear. (1) The mind of the boy Jesus was in these years ripening to that perfect sense of sonship to the Father in heaven which afterwards forms the deep foundation of all his work and teaching. (2) Jesus grew up in simple and unquestioning acceptance of the duties which the home-life at Nazareth imposed. (3) He was in close contact with the life of nature, and saw in field and flower and bird and tree, the constant signs of the heavenly Father's wisdom, and of his care for all his creatures. (4) He went to school and synagogue at Nazareth, and there his mind would be constantly occupied with the revelation of the holy will of God in Old Testament scripture, and in the history and hopes of the Jewish people. All these instruments of education co-operated with his own spirit to the perfecting of that communion with God which is the divine secret of his life.

One other thing we may be sure of. There came no shadow of sin between Jesus and the Father in heaven. In the lives of men around him, Jesus saw alienation from God, disaffection, enmity, brokenness, guilt, failure. In his own perfect experience there was no cloud of this kind, but only and always an uninterrupted and unbroken fellowship, a joyous sense of oneness with the holy will and loving purpose of God. Here was a fact which must have imprinted itself indelibly on the consciousness of Jesus, and the meaning of which he must have deeply and wonderingly pondered. The evangelist tells us that as he grew he was filled with wisdom, which here means spiritual wisdom, and that every sign of God's gracious favor could be seen in him.

I. PASSOVER, 41-45.

Vs. 41, 42. When Jesus was twelve years old, Joseph and Mary took him up with them to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. The law required every pious Israelite to make a triple pilgrimage to Jerusalem every year, but in practice only one was possible for Israelites residing at a distance from the capital, and this would usually be made at the Passover season. Passover was the supreme festival of the Jewish people, commemorating as it did the deliverance from Egypt, and the birth of the Jewish nationality and religion. At this time Jesus was in his thirteenth year, the period of life about which every Jewish boy was expected to take upon himself the duties of the law and to become, as it was called, a *bar-mitzvah* or "son of the commandment." We read in Josephus that at the age of fourteen his knowledge of the Law was so full and exact that even prominent men of Jerusalem came to him for information. In the case of the boy Jesus, the solemn duties of this period would naturally be present to his mind, and would give the visit to Jerusalem a wistful significance.

II. JESUS AND THE DOCTORS, 46-50.

Vs. 46-48. Jesus, searched for by his parents, is found at length in the temple, sitting among the teachers of the Law, an eager listener and questioner. The familiar idea that he was consciously instructing the doctors, is founded on a misconception, for the sacred text says only that he was "hearing them, and asking them questions." What these questions were we are not told, but they must have had their origin in Jesus' own wonderful thoughts of God, and they were sufficiently astonishing to the trained scholars who heard them But imagine the astonishment of his parents—though in their case astonishment is mingled with reproach. "Child," said his mother, "how could you thus deal with us? Look at the anxiety your father and I have had in searching for you."

V. 49. The answer of Jesus is the earliest of his recorded words. "Did you not know that I had to be in my Father's house" (or "at my Father's business")? The words are remarkable (1) as the expression, thus early in the life of Jesus, of a necessity to which he surrendered himself, the necessity of always obeying the guidance of God as it revealed itself in consciousness (2) as a confession of his sense of God as Father. In Jesus' day it was not uncommon for men to speak of God as the heavenly Father, but none put into that name the wondrous depth of loving meaning which Jesus put into it, because no other shared his unique experience. Men spoke of God as Father, and yet did not see God clearly and rightly, and did not draw the proper inferences for their own lives. But Jesus lived in God, and his first task was to reveal to men what God is and means to be for man. This absorption in the thought of God takes precedence over all other interests and duties.

III. JESUS AT HOME, 51, 52.

Vs. 51, 52. Jesus, with all his unique knowledge, is the pattern of a boy's loving obedience to his earthly parents. His mother has joy in the recollection of all his words and deeds. V. 52 is famous as a statement of the "fourfold life" of the boy Jesus. Intellectually, physically, religiously, and socially Jesus grows in grace and in favor with God and man. We cannot, of course, divide life into compartments, or separate the intellectual, physical and social development of an individual from his religious development. Religious growth is the true foundation of right development in other spheres. Religious life must keep pace with our other acquirements or true development will be arrested.

APPLICATION.

My Father. We study to-day the portrait of a perfect boy. Jesus passed through all the experiences of childhood. He was born, lived and grew, loved by, and obedient to his parents. And just as his birthday was before his development from babyhood to boyhood, so there came the great day of his personal consciousness that he was at the threshold of a new larger life. His first recorded words are about that spiritual experience. Before this, most of his decisions had been guided by Mary. Those older than he was would say, "You must," and he would obey. But this day the guidance came, not from without, but from within. He made a great decision. No one could make it for him. An inner voice of duty, from God, taught him to say, "I must." A similar change came to little Samuel about the same age. His kindly teacher taught him to say in reply to the voice, "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth." Jesus gave to the voice a new meaning and its true and beautiful name. He said "my Father." After this his parents knew that their boy was growing up. What a happy world it would be if all boys, at that momentous turning point in their lives, would decide, as Jesus did, to do in all things the will of the heavenly Father.

Jesus entered upon the high pathway of fellowship with God. In God's favor he "increased." "He grew more and more to be such a young man as was pleasing to God, for he had more and more capacity to use God's grace and make it effective in his life." Open confession of religious life makes it easy and natural to know and obey God more perfectly.

When any young man has a healthy body, a trained mind, and a personal knowledge of God, he will soon find favor with men. Nature, travel, history, patriotism, industry, art and commerce will all provide open avenues for wholesome contact with fellow pilgrims, Jesus, the young man, four-square, being example, inspiration and hope to all who, in his name, chose to be about the Father's business.

Home Education

"The Child's First School is the Family"—Froebel."

Getting Up in the Morning—By Florence J. Ovens.

"G'by, Ma," called Norton in a stage whisper at the door of his mother's sleeping room. "Nat is outside waiting for me."

"Is Nat going to have breakfast with Philip, too " she asked.

"Yes, and Mother," his sunny face overcasting, "I couldn't find the extra fish-hooks."

"There is some change on the bureau," she said, "you had better take it; you may have a chance to get some."

After he had gone she lay pondering. It was only half-past five. Usually it was difficult to get Norton up at seven. "Nothing like the prospect of a fishing trip to stimulate the small boy's activity in the early morning," she mused.

How delightfully easy it had been! She had helped him to set the alarm clock the night before, and he had evidently obeyed its first summons. He had bathed and dressed himself without a word to anyone, and when he had come to her room his face had been just glowing with the joy of anticipation.

"I wish he could feel that way about his school," she said to herself. But on further consideration she had to acknowledge that he was fond of his school. It was simply that he had always depended on her, knowing that she would get him up in season. Not at all would he have liked being late. She wondered how it would do to give him the alarm clock and tell him that in the future he must depend upon himself in this matter. But she was afraid he would not get up in time for breakfast and she was not willing that he should go to school without it even as an experiment. Not being able to think a way out of this difficulty, she put the question aside. Nevertheless, from time to time, when she was annoyed by Norton's "laziness" in the morning there would come to her mind a recollection of his eager animated little face as she had seen it on the morning of the fishing trip. He certainly had felt the inner urge on that occasion and had responded. She felt certain that if she could supply a strong motive for his regular early rising he would respond to it. But there was so little for a boy to do when one lived in a flat.

One morning after she had experienced unusual difficulty in getting Norton up he said to her, "Ma, if you go to Uncle John's to-day will you ask him some questions for me about his radio?"

"Yes," she answered with a sudden inspiration, "and I will tell you what he says to-morrow morning at twenty-five minutes after seven if you are all ready for breakfast."

He grinned.

"Will you call me?" he asked.

"No," she answered, "but you may have the alarm clock."

He was ready at the appointed time. She kept this up. Each day she told him of something that she had to give, show or tell to him on the following morning. Once it was his new suit, once, only an unusual pencil; very often, and he seemed quite as well pleased, it was just a funny story All this time he was punctuality itself.

Finally one morning he said to her, "Say, Ma, I have a hunch. Let's have our surprises at night instead of in the morning. We'd have more time." Then, forestalling her objection, "Oh, you don't need to keep 'em for bait any more, I'll get up. Gee, there's no fun staying in bed half the day. A fellow misses a lot. Sure I'll get up." And he did.

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