Efficient Farming

THE VALUE OF WINDBREAKS IN OUTDOOR WINTERING.

The importance of a good windbreak cannot be over estimated where colonies of bees are wintered out of doors, since, for protection from the prevailing winds, it is as essential as packing.

Although well-packed, colonies which are subjected to a heavy wind blowing on them for a few hours will have their temperature reduced considerably; in fact, well-packed colonies which are exposed to the cold winds may die while those having less packing but better protection from the winds will survive. When we think of our own houses in wind-swept areas and of the difficulty of keeping the temperature up in the best constructed ones, we will appreciate the necessity of providing adequate protection from cold winds for our colonies.

Windbreaks may be natural or artificial, and the artificial ones may be either temporary or permanent. Natural windbreaks are considered to be the better. For good natural protection the apiary may be located in the lee of a grove of trees, young timber, an evergreen hedge or on a side hill slanting from north to south, along the top of which a hedge or fence is located.

Artificial windbreaks may be temporary fences or hurdles, such as are used by the railroads, in which the boards are placed horizontally with intervening spaces of 1½ to 2 inches. They may be permanent fences in which the boards are placed vertically with the above mentioned spacing between them. The object of the openings between the boards is to allow some of the wind to pass through, thus preventing a tendency to rise and roll over the fence top into the apiary. The height of these fences should be approximately eight feet and if possible, placed on all four sides of the apiary. Buildings, as a rule, should not be relied on to break the wind, for they may only divert it and possibly make matters worse. Apart from its advantages in winter, a good windbreak facilitates examinations in the summer, when without it, strong winds would retard the work.

Sir Gilbert Parker

Anglo-Canadian author, who suffered severe injuries when knocked down by an automobile at Aiken, South Carolina.

TRAINING OUR CHILDREN

As Bobby and Mother reached the conclusion of a confidential talk, Aunt Ellen came into the dining room and caught a few words of the conversation. She looked mildly disapproving, and as soon as Bobby was off for school she remonstrated with her niece.

"When I was young, Alice, children were never allowed to bring home tales about school and the teacher."

"You mean, don't you, that they were never allowed to repeat them to their elders? I'll warrant the children discussed the day's events among themselves and not always to the teacher's credit, either."

"Oh, well, of course children will—"

"To be sure they will," laughed Bobby's mother. "As long as they are creatures of intelligence they are going to think about what happens in school, and as long as they think, they are going to talk to somebody about the things they are thinking of. Refusing to listen to a child's comments and questions does not stop his thinking, it only leaves him to draw his own faulty conclusions."

"Just the same," the older woman protested, "I think it is wrong to encourage a child to find fault with his teachers."

"So do I, and I am sure I have never been guilty of doing that. But when I see that some problem is puzzling Bobby I do try to help him solve it, whether it concerns school or other things."

"This noon he told me that Miss Larson had been unfair. I suspected one of those cases in which a child does not perceive all that lies back of a punishment or reprimand, so I encouraged Bobby to tell me the whole story. I do not think he felt that he was being encouraged in fault finding.

"It was as I had suspected. While I could see the reasons for Miss Larson's action, Bobby in his inexperience could not possibly be expected to. If he noticed the incident at all, he could not have done otherwise than misjudge his teacher. I talked with him a long time about it and at last his manly little soul caught the larger vision. For the first time he has sensed the truth that there is something bigger and more important than the individual—that is, the welfare of the group. He went back to school satisfied with his beloved Miss Larson again and with something added to his ideals. If he and the other children discuss the incident of the morning among themselves Bobby will, I am sure, present Miss Larson's side of the question and stoutly defend her. So I am well pleased that Bobby brought his little grievance to me, and if Miss Larson could know the whole story, I am sure she would agree with me."

Aunt Ellen was only half convinced but hesitated to say so.

"Well," she remarked at last, "I don't think you have a very easy task ahead of you if you are going to try to help Robert solve every problem that troubles him all through school."

"Oh, as for that," replied the young mother, "I never for a moment imagined that being Bobby's mother was going to be an easy task, but I am finding it one that is truly worth while."

Stale bread, free from mold, has a feeding value equal to wheat for hens.

As an investment, the hen leads. The fact that the stock is always in demand, the shares are accessible to those whose means are limited, and the dividends are declared with regularity, make her a leading and favorite stock in the markets of the world.

To clean harness, first soak thoroughly in a washtub three-fourths full of warm water containing a handful of sal soda. Scrub each piece with a brush, one end of the piece placed over the tub so that the dirty water will run into the tub. While harness is still wet, apply harness oil with a rag or sponge.

Poultry

It is a relatively simple matter to dress a goose. The bird should be hung up, hit on the head with a short club to stun it, and immediately stuck in the back of the mouth just as a chicken is killed.

When through bleeding, the bird is dipped in scalding water for a moment, and wrapped in a sack until the steam penetrates the feathers, which should then come off without difficulty.

The goose to be picked is hung up by the legs at a convenient height, which leaves both hands free. The coarse feathers are dropped on the floor. The down and fine feathers should be saved, as they meet a ready sale.

A handy arrangement for saving feathers is a tall bushel hamper from which the bottom has been removed, and placed upside down on the floor near the picker. A clean cotton grain bag is hung inside the hamper, and fastened open at the top with three or four clothespins.

The feathers to be saved are dropped into this, and the bag is then hung out in the wind and sun until its contents are thoroughly dried and aired.

Preserving Poultry Manure.

It often is necessary to hold poultry manure for a considerable length of time before it can be applied to the land. How to hold it with a minimum loss in fertilizing value is important.

The quantity of manure which can be collected and saved varies with the breed, age and sex of the birds as well as with the ration fed. Available data seem to indicate that it is safe to estimate a hen's night droppings at from thirty to forty pounds a year.

On the basis of a hundred-hen flock this means an annual poultry yield of nearly two tons of fresh manure, which is by no means an inconsiderable quantity. The method of preservation should be aimed at preventing a large loss of nitrogen, converting the product into a more nearly complete fertilizer, and so improving its mechanical condition that it can be applied with a manure spreader.

As has often been pointed out, hen manure is a one-sided nitrogenous fertilizer. Furthermore, as usually managed, perhaps half or more of its nitrogen is lost before it is applied to the land. This waste can be prevented by storing the manure in a dry place and mixing with it something that will hold the nitrogen and some dry material to act as an absorbent.

The Maine Experiment Station has recommended acid phosphate and kainit as materials which will prevent the loss of nitrogen and also help to balance the fertilizer so that it is more nearly complete.

For example, it is pointed out that a mixture of thirty pounds of hen manure, ten pounds of sawdust, sixteen pounds of acid phosphate, and eight pounds of kainit would carry about 1.25 per cent. nitrogen, 4.5 per cent. phosphoric acid, and 2 per cent potash, which used at the rate of two tons per acre would furnish 50 pounds of nitrogen, 185 pounds of phosphoric acid, and 80 pounds of potash.

Feeding Hardy Perennials.

One year my sister planted several clumps of peonies. They grew two years and bloomed nicely, but after that they refused to bloom at all. I suggested a good mulching of rotted manure with plenty of bonemeal added, and the foliage became dark and lustrous and the plants set buds by the dozens. It was a case of starvation. All hardy perennials that spend years in the same spot need frequent feeding to do their best. Some will bloom on, but they will be enough finer if fed, to make it worth while.

Poultry manure is ideal as a top-dressing for the hardy border, but more organic matter is needed. Mulching with rotted manure and straw from around an old strawstack serves and is not objectionable. Most perennials hide the mulch soon in the spring. Bonemeal may be mixed with the rotted mulch or it may be sprinkled about the plants and worked into the surface soil.—Agnes Hilco.

Progress in Hog Grading.

During the past fiscal year, it is stated by the Hon. Mr. Motherwell, Minister of Agriculture, in his report of the work of his Dept., hog grading in practice has been so well established that packers' buyers and live stock commercial men of the various stock yards have become definitely acquainted with the official hog grades. Shipping agents and drovers through the continued grading of hogs at all marketing centres have learned the weights and types of hogs designated to the various grades. Farmers also, through contact with buyer and shipper and through the medium of meetings and demonstrations, have come to realize more and more what is required in the select bacon hog both from the standpoint of type and finish. This knowledge on the part of trade has permitted of steps being taken to simplify the grading methods at stock yards and packing plants. Similarly the fact that farmers and drovers are now acquainted with the grades of hogs has permitted of the buying and selling at many country points on a graded basis with general satisfaction to producer and buyer. The grading system has proved itself a practical method of trading in hogs and it has the further advantage of greatly improving the quality of the hogs of this country. Hog grading statistics, it is claimed in the report, show the percentage of select bacon hogs to be 14.97 per cent. in 1923. But these statistics, it is further stated, do not tell the whole story in so far as analyzing the figures pertaining to the marketing of commercial hogs. The infusion of bacon hog breeding has typified the type of the thick-smooth hogs to a marked degree. Quite a percentage of these are now approaching the select bacon standard and in consequence thereof produce a much better carcass. The average finished weight of both the select bacon and thick-smooth hogs indicate that farmers are paying close attention to the correct market weights.

A Fire Extinguisher May Save Your Home.

"Now, where are you going to put it?" asked the fire extinguisher agent. He had driven 20 miles over our country roads, car packed with the useful cylinders, at the beginning of his day; but he had left one, or two, or three in almost every farmhouse at which he had stopped.

On my lawn he had crumpled some paper, soaked it with gasoline, and had touched a match to it. But the fierce blaze vanished as if by magic, when the swing of the red tube had scattered the chemical on it. Not even the young grass was scorched. I was convinced.

"Why," said I, answering his question, "in the kitchen, I think. It's almost the only place where a fire would be likely to start, now that we have the electric lights. Why not hang it near the stove?"

"By no means!" he told me. "You want a stout hook to hang it from, and you want it close to the door leading into the kitchen. The best place is right on the door-frame. You see, if it's near the stove, and fat boils over and catches fire, or a coal falls out and sets the floor afire, you have to chance burning yourself before you can reach it. That's where half the mistakes in placing an extinguisher are made. Folks don't stop to think where fires may start, and how they'll get to the tube without risk."

Silver Fox Inspection.

In his report of the work of the Department for the past fiscal year, the Hon. W. R. Motherwell, Minister of Agriculture, stated that during the silver fox inspection season which began about the middle of Spetember and ended the middle of January, about 10,000 foxes were inspected, tattooed in the ears for identification and duly registered in the office of the Canadian National Live Stock Records. That brought the number of registered foxes up to the end of March last, beyond the 20,000 mark. The inspection of foxes and their registration in this manner is claimed by the Minister to be doing much to stabilize the industry as it is a guide to beginners who are assured when they purchase a duly registered fox that they are getting an animal of at least fair quality and bred to type for a number of generations.

Bedtime Stories

Are You Kind to Pussy?

Active cruelty to an animal is a very dreadful thing. It is not only dreadful, but cowardly. We do not believe that any of the boys and girls who read this column would be guilty of deliberate cruelty to their pets, but unintentional cruelty is just as hard to bear.

Do you like having your hair pulled? No? Well, your kitten does not, either. Neither does he like having his tail pulled, as the tail is a very sensitive part of his body.

Would you like, when you are curled up sound asleep in bed, having someone dump you roughly on the floor, because he wanted the bed? Certainly not! Then do not do it to the cat or dog. If you must have the chair or cushion on which they are sleeping, waken them gently, and place them on the floor.

Do you mind the day you had a bilious headache from eating too much candy? How would you have liked daddy to have pulled you off the sofa, tossed you in the air, insisted on pulling you about, and making you play? Why, he wouldn't do such a thing! No, but you do it to poor Muff sometimes. Cats have their off days when they do not want to play. Perhaps their little tummies feel sick and upset, and they want to just be quiet and sleep. Do not make them play, or drag them about. They hate it just as much as you would.

How would you like to wait and wait when you were thirsty, or have what was left of this morning's breakfast served up to-morrow, after it had grown quite sour and nasty? How disgusting! Yes, of course, but did you wash out the cat and dog's dish and give them fresh food this morning? And did you put fresh water in their drinking cup? How would you enjoy it, on a very cold day, to be sent out to play in the yard, then to have mother lock the door and go upstairs, forgetting all about you, while you shivered and cried at the door for a couple of hours? Mother never does such a thing! No, but that is what you did to poor little Fluffy. You took him from a warm cushion and put him out in the yard. Then you forgot all about him, while he wailed pitifully to get in. Never forget that animals who live with people grow like people, and dislike discomfort as much as you do. You are to them what mother and dad are to you. They depend on you for care. Do not be a piker and fail them.

She Did a Good Job.

What a wonderfully complete job nature did when she invented and manufactured milk. So far as our knowledge goes, it appears to be the only product she made solely as a food. The wiseacres have fallen far short of reproducing it artificially.

In this wonder-work she seems to have gone so far into the endless realm of her creation when blending so delicately all the elements of this outstanding panacea for making strong and revitalizing the human body, that her strength and skill could not compound another equally nutritious and health-restoring product.

Fortunately, we find the leading races of men depending more and more upon this oldest of foods. But the maximum of its usefulness is still a long way off; and it will require more and more of education and promotion to attain the fullest benefit of nature's seeming excess when she put milk into the mouths of men.

Keeping Fresh Meat in Winter.

I am wondering if some of the readers of your paper would be interested in my method of keeping fresh meat in winter. This method can be used only when there is snow. This is how I do it:

First, I see that the meat is frozen hard. Then, in the bottom of a barrel, I lay a thick layer of clean snow and on it a layer of the meat. Care is taken to keep the meat away from the staves of the barrel and to fill this space with well-packed snow. Another layer of the snow is then added and on this goes the second layer of meat. This process is continued till the meat is all down, or the barrel is nearly full, when a good thick layer of snow is put on top. A heavy cover should then be placed over the barrel to keep dogs and cats from getting at the contents. The meat can be taken out as needed, but in doing so make certain each time the meat is removed that the top is again covered with a thick layer of snow. Place the barrel somewhere in a shady nook where the contents will be kept cold.—R. S. J.

As a compliment, the Lord Mayor of London is always an Admiral of the Port of London.

Australian apples sold at the British Empire Exhibition totalled up to a weight of over 1,500 tons.

Speaking at a grocery trade luncheon, Lord Leverhulme visualized a time when grocers would be asked for "a quart of electricity" and would be able to "supply the right kind to drive a mangle or do the cooking."

Britain's smallest house is at Conway Quay, North Wales; it has a frontage of 6 ft., is 10 ft. 2 in. high, and measures 8 ft. 4 in. from front to back.

CANNING MEAT THE YEAR ROUND

BY JOSEPHINE WYLIE.

The butchering season on the farm usually begins with the first steadily cold weather, when the porkers are killed. But it is not necessary to wait till this time for the meat canning supply. Fried chicken out of the can is quite as good as the freshly prepared, and it is certainly desirable to extend the season of this famous farm dish.

Fryers are at their best for canning when weighing from three to four pounds, although they may be canned much younger, according to family tastes and traditions.

Chicken for canning is prepared in much the same way as for immediate serving, except that the stick end of the drumstick is cut off to facilitate packing in the jar. The breast bone is cut in two crosswise if large. Roll in flour and brown well on both sides. A tablespoonful of butter added to the fryings will give the meat a delectable golden brown color. Season with salt and pepper and pack hot into the jars, pouring over any excess fat. Livers and necks are not canned.

Quart jars or No. 3 tin cans are cooked ninety minutes at fifteen pounds' steam pressure or three hours in the boiling water bath. In the case of the latter the water should be at a bubbling boil all the time.

Chicken fricassee may be made from the cockerels or year-old hens. Cut the chicken up as for frying, or the meat may be cut from the bones. Roll in flour, season and cover with water in the bottom of the pressure cooker or in a kettle. This is cooked until the flour and liquid have made a gravy over the meat, which takes about ten minutes in the pressure cooker or a half hour at boiling. Pack into the cans at once and cook the same length of time as for fried chicken.

DELICIOUS PORK RECIPES.

Plain boiled chicken is put into the jars uncooked but is not at all plain when opened and served up hot with dumplings and cream gravy. This sort of canned chicken makes delicious salad and is also usable in sandwiches and chicken pies. Salt and pepper are added to the meat and the jars are filled with boiling water or stock made by cooking the feet and perhaps the tips of the wings. This will form a jelly on the meat and can be used as an aspic jelly or for gravy or broth. This requires ninety minutes cooking under pressure or three hours in boiling water.

With corn husking well under way the first pork butchering takes place, for huskers require plenty of meat. There are almost as many ways to can pork as there are methods of cooking it. The loin and rib chops are fried brown on both sides and canned with the pan gravy and grease poured over. Quart-size cans and jars are cooked sixty minutes under fifteen pounds' pressure or two and a half hours in boiling water.

Canned spareribs served up with sauerkraut are tantalizing to smell and better to eat. Cut the ribs in sections, two or three ribs to a section, or roll them to fit the cans. Add seasoning and fill the jars with boiling water. Process eighty minutes under pressure or three hours at boiling temperature.

Hams and shoulders may be roasted or boiled and then sliced and canned, or the meat may be first cut into sizable pieces before cooking. This is better when the meat is roasted than when boiled, as so much more of the meat juice is lost in the water. This is canned in the pan gravy or stock. There is usually enough of this to cover the meat if water has been added during the roasting, but it will keep without being covered if thoroughly sterilized for sixty minutes under fifteen pounds' pressure or two hours in boiling water. The loin may also be roasted and canned.

Cook the feet and hocks from one porker till the meat drops from the bones. There should be just enough water to cover at the beginning. When cooked remove the bones and add one tablespoonful of mixed spices and a half cupful of vinegar and simmer for half an hour. Pack hot into cans and cook forty minutes under ten pounds' pressure or eighty minutes at boiling. This is a delicious meat dish sliced and served cold. When canned in tin cans this meat comes out in nice jellied cylinders all ready for slicing. Otherwise it can be heated and remolded.

PRESERVING BEEF.

The pressure cooker and the other canning paraphernalia won't have a chance to get rusty or even need dusting off, for there's fresh beef in the house by December or, at the latest, February. There's no end to the list of good things to be canned here, roast beef in brown gravy, steak, meat rolls, beef birds, Swiss steak, beef stew, croquettes and Irish stew.

The club and porterhouse steaks can be canned with the bones left in, but it is best to remove the large sirloin bones. Sear steaks and without waiting for them to cook season and pack into cans and pour on the hot pan gravy.

Cook fifty-five minutes under fifteen pounds' steam pressure or two hours in the water bath.

Round steak, cut in inch-thick slices, is used for making the meat rolls. One cut will make four pieces for rolling. Finely minced onion and a slice of bacon is placed on each and the whole rolled up and tied firmly with a string. Brown in hot fat on all sides and pack into cans with the pan fryings. Cook in the cans the same length of time as for steaks.

Beef birds are made like veal birds with dressing rolled and tied up inside. Round steak is used for this, and the method of handling is the same as for meat rolls.

The round is also used for Swiss steak. Place meat on a board and pound flour well into it with the edge of a saucer. Sear on both sides and just cover with water and allow to simmer for half an hour.

Finely chopped onion may be spread on the meat at the beginning of the simmering process and tomato juice and pulp may be used instead of water. This is processed the same length of time as for steaks.

Flank steaks may be rolled with dressing on the inside or smothered in the following fashion: Sprinkle the bottom of a well-greased baking pan with onion and parsley and on it place the flank steaks. Brush over the meat with a little egg slightly beaten with water, and then spread some more of the chopped onion and parsley on top. Add stock from boiled meat or bones, just barely covering the meat. Place in a hot oven, uncovered, and bake thirty minutes. The stock may be thickened now or when the cans are used. Small new potatoes cooked and added to the thickened gravy and poured over the steak will make this an excellent one-dish meal. Carrots and turnips may also be used.

Beef stew may be made from the lower part of the round, the shank or the less choice but very nutritious cuts as the brisket, neck, plate or navel. This is packed in the jars cold in chunks or cubes, seasoning added and a bay leaf placed across the top and the jars filled with boiling water. Cook three hours in boiling water bath or ninety minutes under fifteen pounds' pressure.

THE USE OF LEISURE

It is said that one of the seven great objectives in education is the training in a worthy use of leisure. This is becoming an objective of greater importance as the trend of the age is toward greater leisure. Modern machinery is enabling one to do his tasks quicker than in the days of crude methods. Thus, the working day is shorter for the working man, and even for the farmer, we believe.

But regardless of whether it is or not, there is a period of farm leisure which we are now approaching. It is the time when outdoor farming activities must usually be confined to the doing of chores and other necessary daily duties. It is the time when constructive activity can be greatly replaced by thought. The use of this time is what should receive consideration. It should be made valuable to us individually and to our work.

Leisure has helped to accomplish many things. More than one great man has made it help him get an education, many prominent authors have written their best books during the time free from other activities. Leisure has helped many gain fortune and fame; it has also taken many to the dregs of despair and the mire of life because they did not know how to use it.

Time is the most precious element in our lives, for it is what we do with our time that determines what we get out of our lives.

It would be inappropriate for us to suggest what one should do with his time this winter, but we write this suggestion regarding the use of leisure as a reminder that it can be wasted, it can be worse than wasted, or it can be made useful, helpful and interesting. Your use of it will determine what you get out of it.

Dust Bath in Winter.

Leaves make light scratching material better than straw, and it is surprising how large a quantity of dry leaves can be stored in a couple of barrels or a large box.

Some farmers save dry earth for their hens' winter dust bath. This is work that does not take much time and it is certain that hens need a chance to dust themselves fully as much in winter as in summer. There was a time when farmers didn't take much stock in the winter dust bath, and one winter when the dust box was empty for quite a while, and was filled again with loose dirt found in a shed during a warm spell, the way in which those hens tumbled over one another wanting to roll in the dirt at once, opened our eyes to their needs in this respect. They were simply wild to get into dirt and make it fly. Some say that hens will not use this dust bath in winter after it is provided, but experience taught differently.

It is said that coal or wood ashes placed in a dust box will cause scaly leg. This is a mistake, but no doubt the dirt is better than ashes for a dust bath.

Exercise produces warmth, provides pleasure and promotes health. Therefore, it is well to let hens hunt in a deep litter of straw for all their grain. Hens love to scratch. They do it intuitively.