

RURAL TOPICS

SOME NEW IDEAS IN BREEDING.

Work in plant and animal breeding may seem rather widely removed from a campaign for improved method of agricultural education and more of it; but these may be said to be specialties, perhaps hobbies, of Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Willet M. Hays. The transition from one to the other is not, however, difficult. It is easy to imagine a liberal man, himself making discoveries, evolving new methods, and wanting to disseminate the information most widely. How better do this than stimulate educational systems to include the subject under which these experiments are conducted. Working upon this theory, then, Professor Hays, has become one of the most distinguished breeders and improvers of agricultural species and varieties and at the same time a strong and practical advocate of an increase in agriculture teaching in the common schools.

In the breeding propaganda Professor Hays takes a long step ahead. Not only may plants be improved or changed in their constituency but these changes directly affect the animals which feed upon them.

"Thus, if we change the percentage of sugar in sugar beets," he says, "we can breed the lean meat thicker on the breds, hams of hogs and steers. If the percentage of protein and fat can be increased in a variety of corn, we can breed a class which will excel in a combination of lean and butter production."

Professor Hays' ideas of breeding are that we should be thoroughly utilitarian. He does not think much of fat stock and fancy shows. He says: "Instead of the most intelligent being displayed in breeding ornamental plants and fancy pet animals, the highest science and art should be extensively employed in breeding those staple crops and domestic animals which represent so much of our wealth production. States could well afford to inaugurate a system of live stock pedigree records based on performance, measurements, fecundity, etc. County co-operative associations might record the individual characters, somewhat as is done in the Island of Jersey, with cattle, and the State might properly pay for supervising, recording and tabulating the centenary records of qualities and performance."

"Under our present system we are losing all knowledge of valuable blood of too many animals of peculiar power and value, and we are emphasizing the blood of too many animals which can win out their form in the show ring, but would fall in a contest on the block, at the milk pail, or on the work team. We base too many breeding records on the show and too few on the intrinsic merit."—Indiana Farmer.

SOILING EXPERIMENTS WITH COWS.

Very interesting experiments with cows in Germany extended through fourteen years, seven of pasturing and seven of soiling. During the first seven years forty to seventy cows were pastured each year, and a separate account was kept with each cow.

The lowest average per cow was 1,355 quarts, during the third year of the experiment, when seventy cows were kept, and the highest 1,941 quarts, during the seventh year, when forty cows were pastured. The greatest quantity given by one cow was 2,933 quarts, the average increase during the last four years being from 1,400 to 1,941 quarts.

The average per cow for the whole seven years of pasturing was 1,582 quarts. In the soiling experiments twenty-nine to thirty-eight cows were kept, and the lowest average per cow was 2,930 quarts, in the third year of the soiling experiment, when thirty-eight cows were kept, and the highest average per cow was 4,000, during the seventh year, with thirty-five cows. The highest quantity given by one cow was 5,110 quarts. The average per cow for the whole seven years of soiling was 3,442 quarts.

The yield of the same cows is compared for different years. One of the cows gave, during the first year, 3,326 quarts, during the fourth year 4,570 quarts, and during the seventh year 4,900 quarts. Another cow gave during the first year 3,293 quarts, the fourth year 4,483 quarts, and the seventh year, 4,800 quarts.

During the summer the green food given was clover and vetches. The most noteworthy feature in this experiment was the great increase in the milk yield of the stall-fed cows from year to year.

Not only did the cows remain healthy during the seven years of soiling but the persistent high feeding, oil cake, rye and bran having been given in addition to the succulent food, produced a steady increase in milk.—Weekly Witness.

FARM NOTES.

Fancy points come largely from the breeding, while good development is the result of breeding and feeding combined.

The value of manure is increased in proportion to the earliness of the period when the plants derive their first benefit from it.

Timothy hay cut in August is poor for winter feedings. The more

clover mixed with the timothy, the more valuable will the hay be for feeding to cows.

The dairy cow requires five times as much of the carbon in her food as of the protein, because she must from that, produce both heat and energy.

A good apple orchard adds greatly to the value of any farm property and brings in a more certain profit, everything considered, than any portion of the farm.

The fall is the best time at which to make a start with standard-bred birds. This however, is also true of every other season—winter, spring and summer. Now is always the best time.

Some hens will lay an egg once in a while during the molting period, but nothing should be expected other than that a large majority of them will not lay from the time they begin to molt until they have finished.

During the molting season, poultry need the very best feather food that can be supplied. Linseed meal of good quality is a good thing to use; it combines to good advantage with the other feeds, and so aids digestion, and helps to build bone, muscle, feathers and fat.

Dairy workers, test out the cows of low production; and fewer workers will do the work and make more net profit.

LAYER AND THE LOAFER.

There is a startling difference in the productivity of different hens, even in the same flock. By trapping it has been found that some of the likeliest looking hens in a flock are often its poorest layers. In any flock that has not been carefully selected, there are sure to be some hens which do not lay more than one or two dozen of eggs per year, while other members have surprisingly large records. These are actual facts and not theories and a trap-net in any untested flock will show this wide variation in prolificacy.

How to tell the layer from the loafer is a hard nut to crack. The singing, energetic hen with the bright red comb, is usually laying, but not always is this so. The only infallible way at present is to catch the hen in the act by means of the trap nest. But the busy farmer has not the time to be examining trap-nests four or five times a day, keeping a careful record of each individual hen in the flock. Many utility poultry fanciers do this, however, and the ideal way for the farmer to do is to get stock of his favorite breed from one of these men and then retrench his blood lines every year or two with fresh stock from the same source.

I do not know of any sure method to tell the lays from the non-layer except by observation of their performances. I have spent time and money in effort to tell in advance which hen will lay and which will not, but in vain. The old system of examining the lay-bones (located directly under the vent of the hen) is pretty reliable for telling which hen is laying and which is not laying at the time the examination is made, but aside from that it is only guesswork; sometimes it hits and sometimes it misses. If the bones are close together the hen is not laying, while if they are spread apart so that two or three fingers may be inserted between them, this shows that preparations have been made for the passage of eggs.—Epitomist.

MILK POWDER.

The manufacture of milk powder has now reached a stage where the process is considered a success in a business way, and the trouble is to find a satisfactory market for the product. The greatest field seems to be in the sale of the powder made from separated milk from large creameries. The skim milk can be bought at a price which brings the milk powder to a very low cost. For wholesale purposes it can be packed in bags like flour at very little cost for handling and light cost for transportation as compared with the liquid milk. Large quantities are expected to be used by the biscuit and cracker manufacturers; also by the bakers and confectioners in the manufacture of milk bread, cakes and pies and such products. As it will keep for any length of time, it should find a market on shipboard and for other uses where a supply of fresh milk cannot be had. It is believed that a large business can be built up without interfering to any great extent with the market for fresh milk.—Weekly Witness.

USING MORE LUMBER.

It is a striking fact that though lumber prices have been steadily going up during the last half century, the per capita consumption of lumber has also been going up. In 1850, according to the best figures obtainable, the average consumption to each person in the country was 250 feet; in 1900, 460 feet, and in 1907, 480 feet. This illustrates what has been found true the world over—that with industrial progress the demand for wood becomes greater and greater.—American Cultivator.

There is a lot of poverty on Manhattan Island, but the assessment rolls gives \$2,000 in taxable property to each inhabitant.

THE CHAMPION OF THE AIR.



—Cartoon by Berryman, in the Washington Star.

TORTURE CHILDREN WITH HOT IRONS.

Charity Agent Reports Harrowing Cruelty to State Wards in Illinois—Stabbed With Forks—Hair Torn Out and Limbs Broken Also Among Crimes Against Little Ones—Many Sold For Money—The Rev. Mr. Virden Relates Instances of Persecution by Foster Parents and Public Institutions.

Chicago, Ill.—How the wards of the State have been abused and tortured was the subject of a sensational recital by the Rev. Charles Virden, agent of the State Board of Charities, to the State Conference of Charities, held at Rock Island. His paper was entitled "The State Visitation of Children," and said, in part: "During the last two years I have personally handled approximately 550 special cases. Most of the children are well cared for when placed in family homes. The bad cases are exceptions. For example, I have found them tortured with hot irons, stabbed with cooking forks and scissors, limbs broken, hair torn out by the roots, lashed until black and blue from head to foot, faces cut and scarred and eyes blinded.

"Numerous other cases of crime against children in the form of assault have been prosecuted, and in the three years of my incumbency few of these offenders have been sent to the penitentiary and numerous jail commitments and fines have been imposed.

Many Children Sold. "There has been a wholesale traffic in children in Illinois. I have a receipt in my possession for a child who had been sold for a stipulated price.

"One of the most distressing cases occurred in Quincy, Ill., where a child was taken from its mother, a young girl, when less than an hour old, placed in a market basket, absolutely nude except for a covering of an old piece of quilt, carried about the streets and offered to any one who would accept it. The infant finally was given to a woman who had been a pensioner on the county for a number of years.

"The evidence showed that this was at least the second child that had been sold from this institution.

WORLD'S RUTHLESS WASTE.

British Scientist Shudders at Big Steamers' Coal Consumption—No Substitute Yet

London.—Henry E. Armstrong, professor of chemistry at the City and Guilds of London Central Institute, addressing the annual meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute at Middlesbrough, said it was difficult to keep calm when he reflected upon the ruthless way the world's stores of timber, iron, coal and oil were being used up. It made the scientist shudder to see the indifference displayed in all civilized lands to the inevitable consequences of such waste in the nowise distant future.

No comment was provoked by the fact that the steamers Lusitania and Mauretania devour daily a thousand

or more tons of coal while crossing the ocean. This extravagance was gloried in as an engineering achievement when it ought to be anathematized.

The public comforted itself with the belief that science would discover a substitute for coal, and therefore felt no compunction in recklessly destroying the capital won from the sun in past ages, but science could not at present support the illusion. Professor Armstrong earnestly urged serious scientific study of economical methods of fuel consumption, outlining the direction such study ought to take.

SIGNS OF A COLD WINTER.

A Close Observer of Nature Tells What is Coming in the Way of Weather

New York City.—"There's no use talking, it's going to be a hard winter, no matter which Bill is elected," said the wise young man who had just returned from his vacation in Pike County, Pennsylvania, with a luxuriant crop of tan and freckles. "I forgot I ever knew so much about the country until I got out there again. I was born and raised in the country, and I'm proud of it.

"How do I know it's going to be a hard winter? Well, here are some of the sure signs, and I surprised the farmers when I sprung my knowledge on them:

"A heavy crop of nuts. You never saw the like of the butternuts, hickory nuts and chestnuts that there are going to be in less than a month now.

"A big fruit crop and an abundance of wild grapes; the woods are full of this little wild fruit of the vine, and

they will be delicious when the frost touches them.

"Heavy husks on the corn. The farmers say that's a sure sign.

"Wasps and hornets building their nest nearer the ground than usual.

"The cricket and katydid orchestras working overtime; that's a sure-enough indication of an early winter, too.

"Dome Nature is a good and thoughtful provider for all the little folk of the forest and field, you know; that's why there is such a big crop of nuts and wild grapes and fruit—so that the squirrels, the mice and the birds won't go hungry through the long winter. I tell you what, there is nothing hit-or-miss about the indications I have mentioned. All you have to be is a close observer of nature to know what is coming in the way of weather."

Wills Husband a Dollar in Four Installments.

Chicago.—One dollar, payable in monthly installments of twenty-five cents, is the bequest given Andrew Heckler by his wife, Catherine E. Heckler, of Portland, Ore., whose will was filed in the Probate Court here. In the will Heckler is referred to as "the individual who married me in 1905 in San Diego, Cal., and who got from me thousands of dollars and when he could get no more deserted me." The estate consists of personal property.

Sending 800,000 Return Postals South to Get Work For Aliens.

Washington, D. C.—The distribution of aliens to be promoted by the Bureau of Information of the Department of Commerce and Labor. Secretary Straus has issued orders to start the work at each immigration station, and the bureau has begun the enormous task of getting in touch with farmers, manufacturers and other employers in the South to learn what help they may need. This work will require the sending out of 800,000 return postal cards.



AMUSEMENTS FOR CHILDREN.

The new kind of toys, a reaction against the rather foolish Teddy bear, promise well, both as to the entertainment they furnish the child and their educational value. Indeed, in the eyes of the progressive-minded, it is the educational side of the matter only that is looked at. But that does not matter as long as a good time is insured. Children are always willing to have what they want, if they don't know it. The ordinary child does not indeed need inducements to learn its Mother Goose rhymes, but surely a nursery whose walls are adorned with pretty-colored prints, depicting the adventures of "The Wise Man of Gotham," "The Man Clothed All in Leather" or "Little Jack Horner," each with its explanatory verse beneath is made more attractive. How delightful on a stormy day are the books where children can point to their hearts content or copy pictures by cutting out colored papers to make pictures either "out of one's head," if one has imagination, or like simple illustrations in books. There are also cardboard furniture, colored most delightfully, that can be cut out of or put together by small fingers. By the way, are the paper dolls quite out of fashion? They once were very dear to the hearts of little girls; now they are never mentioned. Arts and crafts come into play in the way of diversions for little folk. There are little looms now to be had, which cost but a trifle, and are yet large enough to make it possible to weave rugs, covers, spreads and carpets for doll-houses, and it is more fun than stringing beads. And stringing beads has by no means gone out of fashion, neither have the old-fashioned amusements, such as mud-pies, make-believe tea-parties and other diversions.—Springfield Republican.

THE LADY OF THE SUIT-CASE.

Mrs. McAllister, of Florida, going through a two months' tour of Europe with only a small suitcase for luggage, furnishes a fresh and pertinent example of what a woman can do when she will. She has beaten all the guide-books on a point of practical, personal interest. Content is justly hers, with satisfaction at her feat of turning custom-house scepticism to admiration.

This Florida traveller set about her purpose without ostentation. She offered to the women's club of Miami no preliminary resolutions favoring the one-skirt-and-one-hat idea in connection with "the grand tour." She brought before the State Federation of Women's Clubs no trumpet-sounding declaration of equal rights with men to the comforts of trunkless tripping. In her own determined way she set out as the woman going to see, not to be seen, and the globe-trotting honors of the hour are hers.

There are thirteen items in the table of contents of Mrs. McAllister's suitcase. A lucky number, the resultant of a rational process of elimination. "What shall I wear?" asks the ordinary woman, planning for Europe. "What can I do without?" asked the tourist from Florida, and everything she omitted was gain save to the luggage-transfer companies.

This single-suit-case tour of Europe is a longer step toward the emancipation of a sex than is the mobbing of Commons or clamor from a cart in Union Square. Courage to defy the unwritten canons of first-cabin society is in itself almost a qualification for the suffrage.—New York World.

FASHION NOTES.

Gray is a favorite color in millinery, and is found combined with many hues.

Have you ever thought of using a set of handsome shirt waist pins to fasten your long veils?

The popular soutache braiding is done either in the simple back stitch by hand or on the machine.

Topaz and amethyst are the favorite colors this season, but nothing is more fashionable than the pearl ones which are linked together with tiny brilliants.

Ribbon girdles are quite out of date, they having been supplanted by the wide soft silk sash with long fringed ends, tied on the side, two knots, one at the waist line and one half way down the skirt.

Suede leather with a conventionalized cut-work design through which shows the contrasting color of the silken lining makes a dainty bag in which to carry handkerchief and purse.

A last season's dinner gown takes an up-to-date appearance by adding a jacket of all-over lace cut on graceful lines and finished with a binding of satin.

Such short sleeves as appear on the new gowns this season are in the nature of oversleeves and are left open to display close shirred undersleeves of some transparent material.

Quantities of white soutache interspersed with black silk balls trim a stunning gown of white. Accessories, sash, hat, etc., are black.

The very dark new shades of silk

and velvet are almost as effective on light gowns as the touches of black and strike an entirely new note.

Dainty jabots are quickly made by hemming a rather coarse net by running in and out with a very narrow ribbon of color, then laying the net in a full box plait.

DELICATES LIFE.

TO EVANGELISM. Miss Jennie Smith, the well known railroad evangelist, who conducted a series of tent meetings in Richmond, Va., has a history full of unique and unusual incidents. For ten years she was an invalid, unable to move without assistance. Notwithstanding her helpless condition, she spent a large part of her time traveling from place to place. Having relatives and friends broadly scattered throughout the country, she frequently made long journeys on trains, coming in contact with many train operatives. As she could not rely upon her own strength to insure her against the inconveniences and dangers of travel, she necessarily looked to the men in charge of trains for aid. She says they were very kind to her, handling her cot or wheel chair always with the utmost tenderness, and paying her every other attention which a helpless traveler could need.

As a result of their kindness, she became very strongly attached to railroad men, and lived with the almost single hope that she might some day repay them for the service. "Then," she said, "after spending a whole night in prayer, my affliction was removed in the twinkling of an eye."

From that time she began the work in which she is now engaged. For the last 15 years, with whatever bodily discomforts and hardships she has gone from ocean to ocean working in the interests of railroad men.—New Haven Register.

WOMEN OF TODAY.

At a "coming out" ball in a metropolitan city a few years ago the debutante and her grandmother both danced in the cotillon. They were both slender and graceful, both beautiful dancers. To the casual observer they differed in these respects: The debutante had auburn hair, the unlined face of the "undeared girl," and talked haltingly. The grandmother had white hair, lines in her face, and talked fluently. That they should both be dancing aroused no particular comment.

Today numerous American women play tennis until forty—play golf and quieter games until sixty. Not long ago a New York society woman who is close upon sixty was told by her physician that she must not hereafter walk over twenty miles in a day. Plenty of English sportswomen "follow the bounds" until past fifty years of age.—Appleton's Magazine.

DO IT YOURSELF.

Depending on others is like a cake minus baking powder; you can always count on a fall down.

The girl who does it herself need never lose beauty sleep wondering if it be done.

As well put faith in the weather with invitations out for a garden party as to feel dead certain of others doing that promised task.

What you do yourself may not be well done, but, at least, you are off the anxious bench.

As well count on the unbonded lace collar to cling back of the ears as get the dependent habit.

Knowing how to do things yourself and doing them makes you as indifferent to the whims of others as a dead beat to debts.—New York Press.

FOR TALL GIRLS.

Here is an interesting extract from "The Secrets of Successful Dressing," which appeared in the Royal Magazine:

"The tall girl may add a large hat to her attire, which, if worn by her small sister, would bury her beneath it. Far too often the Amazon, so greatly embarrassed by her superfluous inches, makes the mistake of abjuring picture millinery in favor of tiny, flat, pill box toques that seem to cry aloud: 'I am so tall already that I must not add one-half inch to my stature!'"

"The hat need not, indeed, have eccentric feathers sprouting erratically from it, on every side as well as upright, nor should it be aggressive as to color; that would be absurd. But it should be artistic as to line. The very tall girl may also wear a feather boa, or one of the big Pierrot ruffles that frame a swan-like throat so prettily."

FOURTH COURT OF THE SEASON.

Their majesties of England's last court, the fourth of the season, will ever be remembered by the splendor of the jewels and the exceptionally lovely toilets in evidence. Her Majesty's beautiful gown of gold-embroidered net was glittering with gems, and the Princess of Wales also wore many diamond ornaments. Lady Richard Wellesley was presented by her mother-in-law, the Duchess of Wellington, and wore her wedding dress with a diamond tiara, while Princess Eydna Odeschalchi looked exceeding well in a gown of pale willow green with a train of silver tissue. Lady Constance Stewart-Richardson's dress was of the Cleopatra genre, fashioned of cloth of gold draped with gold-sequin net and caught with barbaric clasps.—Tatler.

You could never shake a woman's belief that what a burglar would really like to get would be the baby confessor the New York Press.