

Agricultural Department

How Plants Provide for the Future

Each species of plant must, of course, solve for itself the problem, during the course of its development, whether its energies will be best employed by hoarding nutriment for its own future use in buds and tubers, or by producing richly-endowed seeds which will give offspring a better chance of getting themselves comfortably, and so surviving in safety amid the ceaseless competition of rival species. The various cereals, such as wheat, barley, rye, and oats, have found it most convenient to grow afresh with each season, and to supply their embryos with an abundant store of food for their sustenance during the infant stage of plant-life. Their example has been followed by peas and other pulses. By the wide class of nuts, and by the majority of garden-fruits. On the other hand, the onion and the tiger-lily store nutriment for themselves in the underground stem, surrounded by a mass of overlapping fleshy scaly root-leaves, which will call a bulb's attention to the crocus lay by their stock of food in a woody or fleshy stalk; the potato makes a rich deposit of starch in its subterranean branches or tubers; the turnip, carrot, radish, and beet, use their root as a storehouse for their hoarded food stuffs; while the onion produces each year a new tubercle by the side of its existing root, and this second tubercle becomes in turn the parent of the next year's flowering stem. Perhaps, however, the common colicolum or meadow-saffron affords the most instructive instance of all; for during the summer it sends up green leaves alone, which devote their entire energy to the accumulation of food-stuffs in a corn at its side; and when the autumn comes round, this corn produces, not leaves, but a naked flower-stalk, which pushes its way through the soil, and stands solitary before the October winds, depending wholly upon the stock of nutriment laid up for it in the corn.—From "Origin of Fruits," by Prof. Grant Allen, in Popular Science Monthly for September.

Picking Apples.

Hand-picking should always be resorted to, especially with winter apples, else the fruit will keep long or present a salubrious appearance when laid down in the markets for sale. Some few varieties ripen irregularly and should be gathered accordingly. In most cases the later varieties of apples should be left on the tree until they are fully colored, up to which they should be carefully hand-picked, only the sound, unspiced ones being taken. A bag with two of the extreme corners sewn neatly together, and slung under the left arm, is the most convenient thing to pick in, or when the picker stands on a ladder. When the fruit is all picked, the apples are carefully emptied into baskets conveniently near, and the bag filled again. When the fruit is picked, convey it to the fruit room, which should be a cool, dry and dark place, where it should remain until the fruit arrives for packing. While picking keep the apples in the shade after they are picked and before they are removed to the fruit room. While some persons, new to the business, do not think it makes much difference if the fruit is a little mixed, we have always found it best to keep the varieties separate, and to market them in the same way, even though the quantity be small. And this is why we have advocated standard planting; but a few varieties, and those the best; for when the trees come into bearing you will have enough of each sort to make a fair marketing, which would not be the case if many varieties, and those of each variety, were planted. In packing apples, they should not be handled until they are free from moisture or dampness on the outside, else they will soon decay, become damaged, and be unsalable. The barrel should be filled rather more than even full, and the head then pressed into place with a screw applicator for the purpose. By this means the apples will prevent from being bruised in handling the farmer in transportation.—Practical Farmer.

Hints to Housekeepers.

1. The leaves of the common "saw" laid in and around furs and woollens, will keep away moths without the trouble of carrying up the garments in paper and in bags. I have tried it successfully for six years.

2. Raw cabbage is much more wholesome and digestible than cooked cabbage, and should be eaten without vinegar. Cabbage is a very sweet vegetable, and is very palatable without vinegar, and one gets accustomed to doing without the acid. The vinegar really destroys or injures the flavor of the cabbage.

3. When there is danger in staining the hands from preparing fruit or vegetables, rub them with fresh lime.

4. Moths will infest the carpets in warm rooms in winter as well as in summer. A sure way to remove them, says the Ohio Farmer, is to pour strong alum water upon the floor to the distance of half a yard around the edges before the carpets are laid down. When sweeping once in a while, sprinkle salt upon the carpet.

5. A correspondent of the Country Gentleman gives the following recipe for keeping eggs through the winter, and says: "It has never failed during twenty-five years that I have used it. It is simply to set the eggs on end as soon as gathered, and keep in a cool place. I kept eggs laid in September until April, and they were just as nice as fry when, or any other use, as new eggs."

6. Tobacco smoke has saved all of the chickens, sick with gapes, so far—the one almost dead when the remedy was first applied seems cured. They have been smothered six times. A few live coals are put in an old iron pot, and a pinch of tobacco placed on them. As soon as the smoke begins to rise, the chickens, which have been previously placed in a basket, are put over the vessel covered with a cloth. They inhale the smoke, until they tumble over partially insensible, when they are removed from the basket. They soon revive, and the openings have lessened.

7. At the miller's convention in Indianapolis it was shown that whereas in 1870 only 66,000 bushels of wheat were shipped from St. Louis via the Mississippi river in 1871 over 800,000 bushels were shipped. The total shipments of grain via the Mississippi river when first in the history of the

Educational Department

Committee

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SCHOOL VISITATION.

The law makes it the duty of the Superintendent to visit the schools of his county. The object of the visit is for the purpose of increasing their usefulness, and elevating, as far as practicable, the poorer schools to the standard of the best. This law was made long before grading was thought of by anybody. Therefore, "the standard of the best," is here, very indefinite. It is supposed that there are some model schools in the county, and that these schools are to be made the standard to which the Superintendent is to elevate the poorer schools. No standard is laid down in the law. The best school in one county may be far different from the best school in another county. We have to go so far advanced in the work of organizing our schools, that in many of the counties of the State the schools are graded, and, instead of taking the best school in the county as the standard to bring the poorer schools up to, the standard is prepared by the County Board of Education, and it is expected that only the poorer schools in the county will conform to this standard. Our schools, in fact, are progressing beyond the wisdom of our present law. We longer trust to the uncertain standard of the best school, but a standard outside of all schools, which will devote its entire energy to the accumulation of food-stuffs in a corn at its side; and when the autumn comes round, this corn produces, not leaves, but a naked flower-stalk, which pushes its way through the soil, and stands solitary before the October winds, depending wholly upon the stock of nutriment laid up for it in the corn.—From "Origin of Fruits," by Prof. Grant Allen, in Popular Science Monthly for September.

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