

## EXPERIENCES

All subscribers are invited to write for this column. For each accepted article we give 30 cents, either in subscription or advertising. Make your articles brief and write as often as you like.

**To prevent Mice Gnawing Trees.**—One of your subscribers wishes to know how to prevent mice gnawing small fruit trees. I would recommend wrapping with tar paper or tin. Take a sheet of tin and wrap around the tree, but not against it. Press the tin into the ground and have it as high as you think advisable. Generally a good soaping of the trees will keep the mice from gnawing them, and also clear of worms. I am a reader of *The Ranch* and like it very well. Enclosed please find 50 cents for my year's subscription.—Emlen Hampton, Chelan County.

**Homemade Mutton.**—Now that the meat strike is on the farmer who has a flock of sheep to draw on for his meat supply, can snap his fingers at the butcher, and also be sure that he is eating no "embalmed" meat. It requires no great amount of time or skill to dress a sheep or lamb, and when there is an icehouse (which should be on every farm), it can be kept for a week. We have an ice box made by a local carpenter under our direction, that does this. Where the family is not large there is no difficulty in getting the neighbors to take the extra quarters. I find they are generally glad of the opportunity; or two or three can exchange. For years an uncle and I each killed a sheep every other week during the summer and divided the carcass. Even when they are not kept for profit, a few can be bought in the spring and run in the orchard or some convenient place and make a meat supply to draw on for the summer and fall.—E. Van Aalstyn.

**Raising Turnips and Beans.**—I will here give you one of my experiments in raising turnips. Nearly every person sows turnips the 25th of July, wet or dry. My brother, in Pennsylvania, worked for an old German who would sow his turnips on St. Jacob's Day, which is July 25, and he would repeat these words in German, "Jacob, big head," at each alternate step as he went across the patch. I can raise big turnips without saying anything. I prepare my ground in April, when I sow oats. I plow the ground well and harrow once, then sow the seed and harrow again, and I always have turnips and lots of them. We have not had so dry a season in Eastern Washington for twenty-five years. This is what old-timers say, and yet I have had turnips by the wagon load. I have some to pull yet. They come in handy when the pasture is dry and when one has milch cows. Here is the way I raise my white soup beans. I take three five-pound lard pails, cut a cross in the bottom two inches in diameter and bend the points down. Now place one at each end of my grain seeder and one in the middle, so they will be about three feet apart. Fill the pail with beans and lay sacks over the other holes. By going once around I have planted six rows. In twenty minutes I can sow an acre. I sow about the 10th of May. When I have the beans planted I also plant corn for fodder the same way, on summer following. When the time comes to sow wheat I will have the beans and fodder out of the way. I think that I am just that much ahead, and the ground is kept clean by cultivating the corn and beans.—E. Keuster, Spokane County.

**Angora Goats.**—"How long can I use the same billy in the same flock of Angora does?"—Subscriber.

Answer—By right you should have

another billy every year, but when you keep your young does in a separate pasture, so they are not bred before they are one and one-half years old, you can use the same billy for two seasons. Were this done, your Angora will grow much larger and the whole flock will look nicer; in fact, it is a shame to let the young does bring kids before they are quite or nearly two years old. In most flocks the young does bring their first kids when they are not quite one year old, and this is one reason why most of the Angora goats are smaller than they naturally should be. Concerning the exchanging of your billies, you can do this with your neighbors or other goatmen. If you cannot find anyone to exchange billies with, I will accommodate you in this respect; having already done this for the last twenty years, I find that it pays well, and the express charges are cheap in proportion to the benefit there is in it. The express companies have passed a rule by which all shippers of goats have to sign a contract to protect themselves against exorbitant prices on Angora goats, in case of accidents in transit; but during all my shipments in fifteen years not one accident has happened with any of them. The contract that express companies want you to sign is as fair as it can be, according to my judgment.—H. T. F.

### A Reasoning Horse

Hardly a day passes but the newspapers have something to say of the wonderful mental performances of "clever Hans." "der kluge Hans," as Herr Von Osten's stallion is called. Indeed, some wordy controversies have been waged over him. Some hold that he actually reasons; others skeptically assert that his intelligence is simply the result of ingeniously concealed trickery on the part of his trainers. An investigation conducted by scientists, however, would seem to indicate that the horse is really what his owner claims him to be, an intelligent four-footed animal, capable of making simple arithmetical calculations, and even of ratiocination. Dr. Heinroth, of Berlin Zoological Gardens has this to say of Hans' wonderful feats in a recent number of the *illustrierte Zeitung*:

"For many years Herr Von Osten, who was at one time a tutor of mathematics, has made it his task to determine the intellectual possibilities of a horse. His first stallion, with whom he succeeded in doing remarkable things, died at the end of eight years. Hans' his second acquisition, has been under his care for four years. Von Osten has no desire to sell the horse or to display him for money in public. He is instructing him in the interest of science alone.

"In my presence Von Osten asked the horse to add such sums as 6 and 2 and 4 and 3. The horse indicated the correct answers by stamping with his right fore-hoof. It is to be remarked that during the calculations, Von Osten feeds Hans with carrots. Von Osten declares that without the carrots the horse would refuse to work. Hans has never felt the touch of a whip. This, after all, is not very strange; for as Von Osten puts it, carrots are to Hans, simply what honors, titles, rank and money are to men.

"I asked 'What are the multiples of 12?' the answer came almost immediately. Sums such as 72 plus 14 are correctly given. The actual words (in German) 'What is the difference between 43 and 6?' were read, and the answer immediately pawed. No numerals appeared on the black board. Surely, this is more than the trickery of training. It should here be mentioned that questions can be put by any bystander. Hans is able to convert common fractions into decimal fractions. He can also tell by the clock. If he is asked, 'It is now 40 minutes after 12; how many minutes will

elapse before one o'clock?' he immediately answers with twenty strokes of his hoof. These are simply a few among a great number of questions that were put.

"Hans knows the coin of the realm and the value of playing cards. King, Queen, ace and the like are differentiated by the hoof. He picked out a badly worn German 50-pfenning piece from several coins. From a number of pieces of colored cloth laid upon the ground he will select any color he is ordered to choose. 'Is it green?' you ask. Five strokes of the hoof is the reply; and the fifth cloth proves to be green. The colors may be changed in any manner; still the horse will pick out the correct one."

Dr. Heinroth concludes his article by stating that he is quite convinced of the impossibility of any deception. He has questioned the horse in his stall in the absence of its owner, and he received answers as clear cut and as precise as those given in the presence of Von Osten.

### Bleaching Cherry

A correspondent writes:

"We have a fine lot of celery ready for bleaching. It is on level ground, not in trenches. We would like to hear from some of the readers of *The Ranch* as to the best method of bleaching it, also the best way of keeping it for winter use."

The celery can be bleached either by throwing dirt up as much as possible with the shovel, or by setting boards on edge on either side of the row and filling it with leaf mold or dirt. Use care to keep the plants upright while banking. If it is intended for market, it is better to bank only every other row, or every third row the first time and then another lot of rows in one or two weeks so as to have a succession. If kept very long after being bleached it is likely to deteriorate. In some sections of the country, it is not safe to bank up the celery too early, as there is danger of rust when banked in hot weather. Some growers report very satisfactory results by using leaf-mold packed between boards set up on either side of the row.

We do not know much about keeping celery for winter use. A Minnesota grower of considerable experience is reported as using the following method: He selects a place in the field where the celery is raised and plows a strip of ground eight feet wide and any length desired, and then down the center of the strip he digs a ditch deep enough to set the celery upright so that the tops will just come even with the surface of the ground. He sets the celery in this trench, packing enough dirt around the roots to hold it in position. When this trench is filled, dig another one eight to ten inches from it and throw the dirt from this into the first trench, and so on. When freezing weather comes on he covers the celery with six inches of dirt and allows this to freeze nearly through, then covers with long manure to prevent the frost going in any deeper. He claims that celery buried in this manner will keep nicely until spring. For keeping only a small amount we would try packing it in a box right side up, and pack closely; place this in a cellar and sprinkle the tops of the celery every ten days to two weeks.

### Notes on Poultry.

In order to get the greatest number of eggs, the hens must be in a healthy growing condition, neither fat nor poor. Either extreme will retard the formation of eggs.

Charred bone, as well as charred corn, is good for poultry, for the sake of the charcoal, which is very healthy for them, purifying the blood and aiding digestion. But this charred stuff does not possess the food value of the raw bones, on account of the animal oils contained in the latter, which are

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consumed in the charring process. Fresh bones, when ground, are the most valuable, being full of animal matter.

Don't use air-slacked lime or ashes for a dust bath. They will bleach out the shanks.

There is quite as much art in getting summer eggs as in getting winter eggs, and, taking into consideration the diminished cost of food, the flock that lays through the summer will prove nearly if not quite as profitable as winter layers. Eggs are always a fair price in midsummer owing to the difficulty in getting fresh eggs.

The naked chicks that are found in every flock at times are those that require a larger proportion of animal food than they are getting. Give them a special diet of animal food and they will quickly feather out.

Green cut bone should be fed with caution. A little of it insures health, quick growth, and more eggs, but too much will bring on bowel trouble. For growing chicks a teaspoonful may be mixed with a quart of mash three times a week.

This is a good time to start the breeding of pure breeds. Stock can be bought now at half the price it will cost in the spring. It is not too late to get a few chicks from a pen or trio, and the birds will be acclimated before another breeding season.

Careful breeders keep the grass cut short about their brooder runs from now on. The chiggers in long grass and weeds are responsible for many deaths in late hatched chicks.

Separate the weak chicks of the older hatches from the vigorous. They are run over and robbed by their more sturdy brothers and will become runts unless given special care.

It is important to watch the water supply in warm weather. Keep drinking fountains under the shade of trees and since the upper part with boiling water and soda frequently. The fountains become poisonously sour in a short time.

The growing stock will do much better if cockerels are removed. When eggs are no longer needed for hatching separate the males from the flock.

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