GIVING POTATOES A START.

Practical Statements Based on Repeated Experiments with Sprouting the Tubers.

In reply to the query, "Would it be safe and practical to start potatoes in a loft over the kitchen fires or four weeks before the regular time to plant them, then mark out and set them by hand, the start of enough for an acre of early potatoes to be made in paper boxes or pots?" some New Yorker gives this reply, which is replete with valuable points to the potato grower:

The only advantage we know of from starting the eyes of potatoes by placing them in warm, light rooms is that we find out in this way which are the strong, which the weak eyes, which the "blind" or dormant eyes, and even the best of us is fallible enough in ascertaining as to the potency of the eyes. For instance, if we place whole potatoes of a given variety in the sun and warmth or a room for three weeks or more before the planting time, the sound eyes will sprout first. Some of the others may sprout feebly, some not at all.

This sprouting propensity varies greatly with different varieties. In some kinds every eye will sprout vigorously and in a few days. In other kinds only one or two eyes will sprout, as if these were controlled—dominated—by the dormant eyes of the tuber. Again, we may take two tubers of the same variety. Let us cut one in four pieces, the other not at all, and place all in light and warmth. The whole tuber with no to most varieties, sprouts strongly at the end or apex portion.

The end piece of the four which contains the end eye will be the first of the four to sprout, but these sprouts will not develop as soon or as vigorously as if the end and place had had been secured from the rest of the tuber, while the eyes of the other three pieces will sprout sooner and grow more vigorously than if they had remained a portion of the tuber. This has been our repeated experience. We do not attempt to account for it. Perhaps a comprehending would be that all the eyes are connected with the cambium layer which exerts its strongest developing power at or near the apex in the stems of most other plants as well as in the swollen stem of the potato tuber.

We are therefore of the opinion that, whenever only a few eyes of a whole tuber will develop if it be placed in a warm light room, some of the eyes of the same tuber would have yielded had it been cut in pieces and similarly treated. The only real advantage we know of from starting the eyes of seed tubers before planting, is that we may in this way be enabled to select only eyes sure to grow.

A long, slender growth of the eye is never desirable—such as that which occurs in damp, warm cellars. The seed piece is exhausted prematurely with the growth of the eye, and the shoot has not to support it when planted until it can throw out self supporting roots. Pieces started in bits of sod, pits or boxes would no doubt prove a trifle earlier than pieces not so treated, but we would not try the plan with any hope that the increase in earliness yield would pay for the trouble.

The Game Fowl.

The merits and demerits of game fowls as relates to the average poultry keeper are thus briefly summed up by the agricultural editor of the New York World.

The varieties of the game are legion, and therefore readers must be content with a description embodying the general qualities of game fowls. Their merits are many. They provide the best flavored flesh and the richest eggs of any breed. For delicacy of flavor the flesh is beyond comparison.

These fowls do not have to be fattened, but if provided with a good run—which is for them a necessity—may be taken off their roost for the table. They are first class layers of eggs, small in size, it is true, but fine in quality. The best layers among the games are the black breasted reds and red Choklee Pyles. The black reds, by the way, are general. It is considered the best of the many varieties for ordinary use, though fancyers may prefer the dark winged varieties, the Pyles, spangled white and others.

In elegance of shape, in hardihood, in hold and fearless spirit, no other fowls can equal the games. They make excellent mothers and are good sitters.

So much for the good points. Now for the drawbacks. The eggs of both birds and eggs is small, which of itself makes games an impossible breed for domestic purposes in general, or to those whose purpose is to supply the market. The breed requires ample range, without which they do not thrive well, being active foragers and very pugnacious. In enforcement the game fowl will not up so well as many other varieties. Their chances decided to games require high fences.

TREATMENT OF STALLIONS.

Some Excellent Horse Sense From a Successful Breeder.

I owned the Duke of Perche, and in the 18 years I owned him he never got as low as 31 scores in foal in one year, while he did get as high as 130 colts in a single year. He served a large number 7 mares every year I had him and died when not 20 years old from stomach and bowel trouble. He had served at mares that year, and the last five served within the last week of his life all got in foal.

I used all the various ways of heating and using this horse. I moved him during the season the first three or four years I had him, drove him on the road one or two seasons, and then in the fall he would commence heating, heating and kept a couple of windows broke another stallion and him to break with, and another two wheeler but a rope ride kept him from two to four miles a day.

Finally the last few years I gave him a big box stall and let him do water twice a day, and that was all the exercise he had, yet he never knew what it is to life this from last years. Neither were his colts a very same strong or vigorous, and I have some always strong, then bring it right in one year before that one year lost.

Therefore I have come to the conclusion that many of the whims and fancies as practiced by stallion owners are some from modern, and that their stallions are rare and remain sexually and functionally instead of an account of them.

I firmly believe that the best and safest way to handle and stallion of the heavy breeds is to give him a large box stall with a door in it so he can go in and out, with some in his stall and the lot fenced with wire that the air may circulate freely, and then let him run enough in very cold or rainy weather when he should be kept in, and a horse that has not stop enough to exercise himself all to needs without chasing with a whip and never to feed to his but sustained it.

I believe also that the chore we follow where the mares are to be right, and therefore should have I marks when they are in heat, be in with days or seven hour after feeding. There can be no use from time great or rule laid down for all to follow. I have had mares that would never get in foal till the colts were two months or so old, and others that would get from the month to month they would always go in foal, but when allowed to go by for that time could not be got in foal again until after the colt was weaned.

Neither do I think it wise to examine mares, except in several cases perhaps and I know and the best doubt that many abortions have been caused and loss of service occasioned by examining them at from three to four weeks after breeding than have ever been gained by such examination, especially by the ordinary stallion keeper. I have never been able to learn by observation or otherwise any way to tell whether a mare was likely to breed or not except by having her served by the horse. Many times I have thought I would be able to tell other horses and other mares, but I could not tell, and the opposite to all other indications and written regarding care of stallions and horse breeding in general. One needs to have a lot of good common sense and use it.—H. Wadsworth in Breeder's Gazette.

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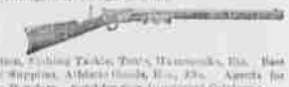

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