

Canary Bird Breeding in Germany.

The United States consular clerk at Berlin says that third in money value among the articles exported to the United States from the consular district of Hanover during the last quarter were canaries. For more than a century canary breeding has rendered bare existence a possibility to many poor people in Germany, and has brought a competence to others. Fifty years ago the industry had grown to such dimensions that it became necessary to seek a foreign outlet for the trade. Salesmen were accordingly sent out, first through the Rhine districts, then to Belgium and Holland, and, soon afterward, to England. The German canary dealers soon succeeded in establishing a brisk trade with St. Petersburg, the birds being brought by carrier to Lubec, and thence forwarded by ship to their destination. Encouraged by their success, the German bird dealers, about the year 1850, began making shipments to New York. This proved a very profitable business, and after the introduction of steamship lines, birds were sent to South America and Australia.

Canary breeding in Germany has, from the commencement, been chiefly a home industry of poor people. The principal seat of the industry was formerly the Hartz Mountains, where the poor mountaineers, engaged chiefly in the timber and mining industries, were in great need. Almost every family then had in the sitting room, the bedroom, or the garret a breeding place for their birds. In the summer the food necessary for the birds was easily obtained, and before the winter came the dealer had purchased them. After the Hartz Mountains became more frequented by visitors desirous of benefiting by the pure Hartz air, the poverty of the mountaineers was diminished, and the canary industry fell off more and more. At present only fine singers are bred in the Hartz, and for these the dealer must pay a high price. The industry was then transferred to Eichsfelde, in the province of Hanover, where there are many very poor weavers. Nearly all of these are now engaged in breeding the cheaper varieties of canaries. The industry exists also in the poorer districts of Hesse, in the great Luneburg Moor, in parts of Westphalia, and among the Sudetic Mountains (Erzgebirge) in Saxony. In the fruitful districts of the province of Hanover, where there is not so much suffering, the business is not carried on extensively. In recent years large numbers of birds have been bred in the cities, chiefly as a pastime. The extent of the canary breeding industry is shown by the fact that about 250,000 canaries are bred every year in Germany.

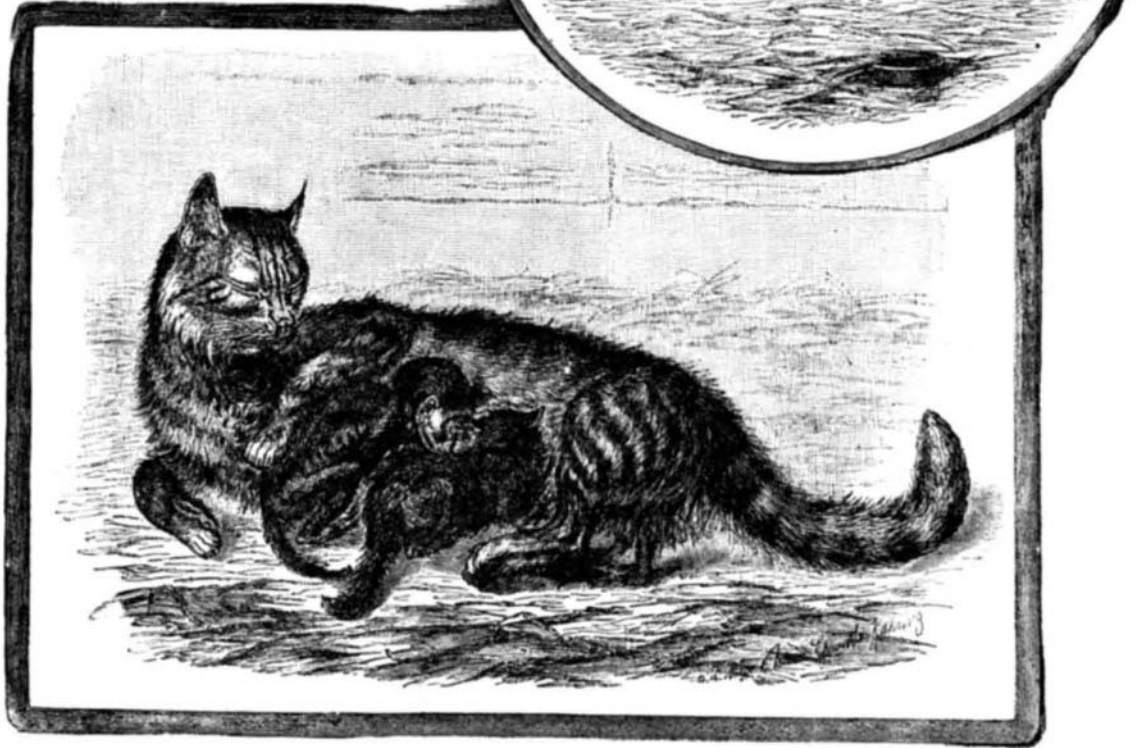
Among the foreign markets the first is the United States, which takes, in round numbers, 100,000 birds annually. Next in importance is the English market, which takes about 50,000 per annum. Then come Brazil, Chile, the Argentine Republic, and Australia. To these countries salesmen are sent with canaries every year. The remaining birds, especially the finer Hartz Mountain birds, are sold in Germany, where more value is attached to fineness of song, and where higher prices can be obtained than anywhere else. The average price for ordinary canaries is from three to four marks for males. Hence the canary industry adds about 1,000,000 marks per annum to the national wealth of Germany, and this amount goes chiefly into the hands of the poorest class. The growth of the industry is said to be due to two causes: (1) The German bird dealers have always been very enterprising, and (2) the canaries bred in Germany are said to sing better than any others. About two-thirds of the canaries exported annually from Germany to the United States are imported by a German resident of New York, whose German home is at Ahlfeld, in the province of Hanover, whither the birds are brought from all parts of Germany. At Braunlage in the Hartz this dealer has a factory which is capable of turning out every day the material for thousand bird cages. This material is given out to the peasants, who make the cages at home. From Ahlfeld the birds are shipped to New York *via* Bremen, accompanied by attendants. Each attendant has under his care about a thousand birds, each in its own wooden cage.

A FRENCHMAN, M. Branbelay, has succeeded in making pearls by simply boring holes in pearl oysters, dropping in minute glass beads, and then hermetically sealing the holes.

A CAT AS FOSTER MOTHER OF AN APE—A PICTURE FROM THE LEIPZIG ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN.

There are plenty of examples in the animal kingdom which prove that most creatures, whether mammals or birds, are capable of conferring their motherly love on the offspring of others as well as on their own. The hen gives the duck that it has hatched the same care that it gives its own chickens, the dog will act as foster mother to a young lion, and the long-eared Egyptian goat as nurse to a young panther. But the exhibition of motherly care to be seen in the well arranged Leipzig Zoological Garden (in charge of Mr. Ernst Pinkert) is new and peculiar, offering a pleasant scene to the lover of animals. A fine, great reddish-brown Angora cat has become foster mother of a very young ape. As the little thing lost its own mother when it was very small and was greatly in need of another nurse, it was given to the Angora cat. The experiment proved successful; the cat received the little orphan affectionately, and cares for it as well as for her own kitten.

The cunning little ape hangs, in the literal meaning of the word, on its tender mother, and is never left by her. Clinging by all fours to the shaggy fur of the mother cat, he accompanies her in all her walks, and the cat is not inconvenienced by her four-legged parasite. If he is torn away from this embrace, he immediately jumps, crying loudly, to his accustomed place. At meal time he enjoys the same rights as the kitten. It is a charming picture—the old cat with her little one, which she caresses fondly, and the little ape that likes



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so well to lie in her soft, warm fur. When the cat rises she takes her living burden, and walks around, wagging her tail, in the building belonging to beasts of prey in the Zoological Garden. Cats have been known to bring up squirrels, but this is the first time on record that one has acted as mother to an ape.—*Illustrirte Zeitung*.

The Record of a Walking Delegate.

The case of the Grand Central Hotel, on Broadway, is a typical one, which deserves careful attention. Tilly Haynes, a Boston hotel keeper, some time ago leased the Grand Central and came to New York to expend \$100,000 in the work of renovation, of which fully three-fourths was to go for labor. He made terms with his men which were mutually satisfactory. Work had hardly been begun, however, when the walking delegate appeared and demanded that the men should work only eight hours a day instead of nine. Mr. Haynes acceded. A week later the walking delegate came around again and said that some of the carpenters were working for \$3.25 a day, and that they must be paid \$3.50. This demand also was yielded to. A few days later the delegate informed Mr. Haynes that he had two stairbuilders from Boston, and that, although these men were union men, they could not work unless they had their union tickets changed and paid the fee for working in this city. This trouble was settled by the return of the offenders to Boston.

The next incident is told as follows:

"While the men were at work, the walking delegates entered the building and walked about through it at their pleasure, taking down the workmen's names and asking if they belonged to the union. One of the carpenters replied: 'None of your business.' The next day the delegate met the men when they came to work and told them a strike had been ordered. Some of the men shed tears and said their families were suffering, but all obeyed. Mr. Haynes next received a visit from the Grand Council, who informed him that their delegates must be respected. After consultation the council agreed that the man who had insulted their delegate and the rest of the men might go back to work, but the man must by Saturday become a full member of the union. Notwithstanding this, when the men came to work the next morning, the delegate declared that not one should go to work until the man who had insulted him was discharged. The difficulty was finally compromised by the man being given his wages, in order that he might immediately go and pay his dues and become a member of the union. It was three days, however, before he could get himself into regular standing, and during this time none of the men were permitted to work."

This was by no means the end of Mr. Haynes' troubles with the walking delegate. He had made a contract with a Boston firm to put in some new marble, and on learning this the delegate for the third time made the men quit work, though, upon Mr. Haynes' assurance that no marble from Boston was actually being laid at that time, they were permitted to resume work. Then Mr. Haynes learned that the delegates were going about among the men collecting \$1 from each for allowing them to work. When the marble from Boston arrived, the delegates refused to allow it to be unloaded, and when Mr. Haynes sought the protection of the police, the delegates called out all the carpenters and painters. Then the representatives of the steam fitters told Mr. Haynes that he would have to send his engineer back to Boston, and on his refusal the union fitters were made to stop work.

By this time Mr. Haynes decided that he had suffered enough from the tyranny of the walking delegate, and he decided to employ no more men who were the slaves of such delegates. He secured a full force of non-union men, whom he finds better workmen than the union men.—*Iron Age*.

Irrigation.

It has been demonstrated in California that surface irrigation is not the best method for orchards. The system is untidy, wasteful, and causes an unnecessary growth of noxious weeds. It also stultifies the tree growth, causing the roots to form in a ball near the surface. An orchard designed for market fruits should be irrigated by means of underground conduits or cement pipes. These are laid below the freezing point and made of sufficient dimensions to carry the requisite quantity of water within three or four feet of the tree. Small holes cut in the top of the pipes and covered by boxes to prevent the holes filling with earth, allow the water to percolate slowly out from the pipe and moisten the soil at the roots of the tree.

By this method the roots go downward, giving the tree a firmness to resist rain storms and withstand the effects of continued dry weather in case the water supply is temporarily exhausted. This system may be considered expensive, but the additional yield of fruit will justify such expenditure. The field of the future irrigated fruit market will be large enough to justify systematic underground tiling as well as piping. Drainages will be more extensively practiced as the market orchards increase, and although expensive, as it may seem, these orchards will be valuable, dividend-paying properties.—*Irrigation Age*.

RECENT experiments made in Germany go to show that asbestos paper is not only of no advantage in a floor as a protection against fire, but it probably aids the conflagration.