

## Poultry Yard.

### Chickens and their Characteristics.

ONE OF GAIL HAMILTON'S most pleasant articles appears in the Atlantic Monthly for June, from which we make the following extract:

Little chickens, tender and winsome as they are, early discover the same disposition. When one of them comes into possession of the fore-quarter of a fly, he does not share it with his brother. He does not even quietly swallow it himself. He clutches it in his bill and flies around in circles and irregular polygons, like one distracted, trying to find a corner where he can gormandize alone. It is no matter that not a single chicken is in pursuit, nor that there is enough and to spare for all. He hears a voice we cannot hear, telling him that the Philistines be upon him. And every chicken snatches his morsel and radiates from every other as fast as his little legs can carry him. His selfishness overpowers his sense, which is, indeed, not a very signal victory, for his selfishness is very strong and his sense is very weak. It is no wonder that Hopful was well-nigh moved to anger, and queried, "Why art thou so tart, my brother?" when Christian said to him, "Thou talkest like one upon whose head is the shell to this very day." To be compared to a chicken is disparaging enough; but to be compared to a chicken so very young that he has not yet quite divested himself of his shell must be, as Pet Marjorie would say, "what Nature itself can't endure." A little chicken's greedy crop blinds his eyes to every consideration except that of the insect squirming in his bill. He is beautiful and round and full of cunning ways, but he has no resources for an emergency. He will lose his reckoning and be quite out at sea, though only ten steps from home. He never knows enough to turn a corner. All his intelligence is like light, moving only in straight lines. He is impetuous and timid, and has not the smallest presence of mind or sagacity to discern between friend and foe. He has no confidence in any earthly power that does not reside in an old hen. Her cluck will he follow to the last ditch, and to nothing else will he give heed. I am afraid that the Interpreter was putting almost too fine a point upon it, when he had Christiana and her children "into another room, where was a hen and chickens, and bid them observe a while. So one of the chickens went to the trough to drink, and every time she drank she lift up her head and her eyes towards heaven. 'See,' said he, 'what this little chick doth, and learn of her to acknowledge whence your mercies come, by receiving them with looking up.'" Doubtless the chick lift her eyes towards heaven, but a close acquaintance with the race would put anything but acknowledgment in the act. A gratitude that thanks Heaven for favours received and then runs into a hole to prevent any other person from sharing the benefit of those favours is a very questionable kind of gratitude, and certainly should be confined to the bipeds that wear feathers.

Yet, if you take away selfishness from a chicken's moral make-up, and fatuity from his intellectual, you have a very charming little creature left. For, apart from their excessive greed, chickens seem to be affectionate. They have sweet social ways. They huddle together with fond, caressing chatter, and chirp soft lullabies. Their toilet performances are full of interest. They trim each other's bills with great thoroughness and dexterity, much better indeed than they dress their own heads,—for their bungling, awkward little claws make sad work of it. It is as much as they can do to stand on two feet, and they naturally make several revolutions when they attempt to stand on one. Nothing can be more ludicrous than their early efforts to walk. They do not really walk. They sight their object, waver, balance, decide, and then tumble forward, stopping all in a heap as soon as the original impetus is lost, generally some way ahead of the place to which they wished to go. It is delightful to watch them as drowsiness films their round, bright black eyes, and the dear old mother croons them under her ample wings, and they nestle in perfect harmony. How they manage to bestow themselves with such limited accommodations, or how they manage to breathe in a room so close, it is difficult to imagine. They certainly deal a staggering blow to our preconceived notions of the necessity of oxygen and ventilation, but they make it easy to see whence the Germans derived their fashion of sleeping under feather-beds. But breathe and bestow themselves they do. The deep mother-heart and the broad mother-wings take them all in. They penetrate her feathers, and open for themselves unseen little doors into the mysterious, brooding, beckoning darkness. But it is long before they can arrange themselves satisfactorily. They chirp, and stir, and snuggle, trying to find the warmest and softest nook. Now an uneasy head is thrust out, and now a whole

tiny body, but it soon re-enters in another quarter, and at length the stir and chirp grow still. You only see a collection of little legs, as if the hen were a banyan-tree, and presently even they disappear, she settles down comfortably, and all are wrapped in slumberous silence. And as I sit by the hour, watching their winning ways, and see all the steps of this sleepy subsidence, I can but remember that outburst of love and sorrow from the lips of Him who, though He came to earth from a dwelling-place of ineffable glory, called nothing unclean because it was common, found no homely detail too trivial or too homely to illustrate the Father's love, but from the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, the lilies of the field, the stones in the street, the foxes in their holes, the patch on a coat, the oxen in the furrow, the sheep in the pit, the camel under his burden, drew lessons of divine pity and patience, of heavenly duty and delight. Standing in the presence of the great congregation, seeing as neverman saw, the hypocrisy and the iniquity gathered before Him,—seeing too, alas! the calamities and the woe that awaited this doomed people, a god-like pity overbears His righteous indignation, and cries out in passionate appeal, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

A little girl about four years old, and a little boy about six, had been cautioned not to take away the nest-egg; but one morning, when they went for the eggs, the little girl took it, and started for the house. Her disappointed brother followed, crying: "Mother! mother! Susy's been and got the egg the old hen measured by!"

## The Apiary.

THE BEE AS A PHYSICIAN.—In Marktstett, Lower Franconia, Bavaria, in the autumn of 1861, a bee is declared to have become an M.D.! Its owner, who was deaf, was stung by it in the eye-lid near the temple. He applied earth and water to the wound without effect, but at last fell sound asleep. When he awoke the church clock struck. He listened with surprise and counted the strokes. All right! The clock struck, and the bee-sting had given him back his hearing, which he had lost two years previously from the effects of a severe cold.—(*Regensburg Gazette.*)

CURE OF BEE STINGS.—From the *Prairie Farmer* we learn, on the authority of Dr. Bush, Chester Co., Pa., that one drop of strong spirits of hartshorn will in an instant remove the pain caused by the sting of a bee, wasp, or hornet. It should be at hand in every family where there are children. Smiles of gratitude, shining through the tears of distress, will often repay the thoughtful mind that provides and the quick hand that applies the remedy. He recommends the same article also for the removing of grease spots.

CONTRIVANCE FOR HIVING BEES.—Mr. Amos Taber, of Albion, has left at our office an apparatus for hiving bees, contrived and used by himself for several years with unvaried success. It consists of a board a foot wide and twelve feet long, elevated at an angle of about forty-five degrees, the upper end of which is perforated with holes about two inches apart, into which long corn cobs are inserted projecting downward. Bees when swarming readily alight upon the cobs, as they afford an excellent opportunity for them to hold on upon, from which they can be hived without difficulty or danger, as the board can readily be placed immediately under the hive. A sample of the contrivance can be seen at this office, and we regard it as a simple and practical affair—one which every bee-keeper can make and use himself with little or no trouble.—*Maine Farmer.*

BEES IN THE WALLS OF A HOUSE.—This is the produce of two hives of bees, which have had undisturbed possession of a part of my house for about seven years, viz., 224 pounds of honeycomb and bee-bread, as cut from five compartments between the "studs" of a lath and plaster house, and of which 224 pounds have been reserved for table: honeycomb, best, 43 pounds; second best, 9 pounds; honey, best, 60 pounds; No. 2, 24 pounds; No. 3, 9 pounds; wax, good, 4½ pounds; inferior, 1½ pounds; and bee-bread, (which contained a good deal of honey, and could not be drained off,) 73 pounds, which made about 8 gallons of excellent mead. About eight years since nearly 60 pounds of honey were taken from one hive; the second hive made its appearance two years ago.—*Rowland T. Cornold, in London Field.*

## The Household.

### The Game of Croquet.

WE have received from Messrs. Lash & Co., of this city, a sample of the above-named popular game, with explanations and instructions for playing it. In common with many of our readers, we had observed advertisements with the word "Croquet" figuring conspicuously in them, but beyond that, knew nothing about the matter. On examination, however, we are pleased to find that it is a very simple but interesting game,—such as we have no hesitation in recommending to the numerous households to which *THE CANADA FARMER* is a visitant. It is especially suited to rural households. Indeed there are few families in towns and cities that have the requisite space for it, as it is an out-door game, and requires a piece of smooth lawn about thirty yards in length to accommodate the players. It occupies far less room than cricket or base ball, is not so fatiguing as those games, and while not over exciting, has just enough interest about it to quicken the circulation and create a pleasant glow. Recreation is one of the demands of human nature. When wisely chosen and indulged within proper bounds, it adds to the charms of home, and helps to attach young people to it. "Croquet" meets the main conditions of a desirable recreation. It is a social game, engaging six, eight, or ten players at once. It is pursued in the open air. It is not rough, and, requiring but little exertion, is just the thing for the summer time. It is easily learned, but affords room for the exercise of considerable skill. At the same time it does not impose much tax upon the mind, but leaves it free to enjoy the scenery and the pleasant chat of friends. For the holiday time, for social gatherings, for pic-nics, and the like, it is excellent. Our space does not admit of a full description of the play, or a statement of the rules. These are furnished among the requisites for the game. "Croquet" sets may be made on a very plain and cheap scale, or they may be got up very tastefully. Messrs. Lash & Co. supply them at from \$5 to \$10 the set, including the book of directions. Being boxed, they can be sent to any part of the country quite safely, and so may be ordered by letter. We learn that a large number of sets have been sold the present season, and that the demand for the game increases as it becomes more widely known.

CHARACTER doesn't depend on diet. The acats thistles and nettles, the sharpest of food, and is the dullest of animals.

Women love to find in men a difficult combination—a gentleness which will almost invariably yield, with a force that will invariably protect.

AN able physiologist has written that one-fifth of the human body is composed of phosphorus. *Punch* remarks that this most likely accounts for the number of matches made.

TESTING EGGS.—Put them in water. If good, they rest upon the side. If one floats end up, you may be sure of a bad egg.

HOW TO GET RID OF MOSQUITOES.—The *Maine Farmer* says: "Mosquitoes love beef-blood better than they do any that flows in the veins of human kind. Just put a couple of generous pieces of beef on plates near your bed at night, and you will sleep untroubled by those pests. In the morning you will find them full and stupid with beef-blood, and the meat sucked as dry as a cork."

A SURE REMEDY FOR A FELON.—The following remedy is vouched for by the *Buffalo Advocate*, as a certain thing from its own knowledge: "Take a pint of common soft soap and stir in air-slacked lime till it is of the consistency of glazier's putty. Make a leather thimble, fill it with this composition, and insert the finger therein, and a cure is certain." This is a domestic application that every housekeeper can apply promptly.