

The Apiary.

Clipping Queens' Wings.

Some bee-keepers, who appear unable to place themselves in the position of a farmer, or in fact anyone who has but little practical experience with bees, and yet keeps a few hives for pleasure and profit, will often advocate the clipping of queens' wings. Now let us look at the question in detail. The object of clipping a queen's wings is briefly to prevent her leaving the hive with a swarm. The queen, *by an experienced hand*, may be caught at the entrance and caged. The old hive may be removed and the new one put on the old stand, and the queen placed in a cage and put upon the combs or foundation in the new hives. The swarm finding that they have lost their queen will return to their old home, or rather the place where their old home was, and which is now occupied by the new hive, and they joyfully enter and remain with the queen. All this is well, and the ease with which the swarm has been hived pleasing, but we are supposing that all will be rightly done. But how is it with the novice? How many find it difficult to detect a queen even in the hive when all is quiet, and how many will point to a drone even and say, "There she is." Let the reader answer for himself. Enough to say there are many who will not be able to detect the queen as she issues with the swarm, and not being able to fly she will hop or run out from the hive and be lost from the swarm, and often the swarm returns having lost its queen. Again, as one must watch the bees all the time, the presence of the bee-keeper is required when the swarm issues, and he must be there to tell from which hive the swarm issues, or he may again lose his queen. In this way valuable queens may be lost, and the swarm returning to the hive, has to wait till the young queens may emerge from the cell, when a dozen young queens may go out with the swarm, and the bee-keeper has after all to hive his swarm with the queen; for her wings will not have been clipped. The colony has lost the use of a laying queen from the time that a swarm emerges until the young queen has become fertilized and is laying. This latter may or may not prove a disadvantage, depending upon the time the bees swarm and the duration of the honey season. If the queen is lost four or five weeks before the honey season closes it is a loss, as the worker bee hatches in 21 days and becomes of use one or two weeks after she hatches.

Of course there is an advantage in clipping, it may be argued, and the advantage is that should a swarm issue and not be seen, the queen may be lost but the swarm will return. So it will; but what then when the young queens hatch the swarm may leave with them, and you may all the time be lulled into false security and think the clipped queen is still in the hive.

Clipping queens' wings is all right if you are an experienced hand and can watch your bees and look for the queen the moment a swarm commences to issue. Under these circumstances clip by all means, and now how shall you clip? The bees are very keen at detecting a foreign scent, and especially dislike it if on a queen, therefore you should avoid touching her person any more than necessary. Therefore, after having found her take her by one wing and clip it half off if you can. If you cannot, to advantage, cut

this wing cut the other half off. Some will, without thinking, imagine the wings clipped on both sides would be better, but such is not the case. If the bees show an inclination to pile on the queen to sting her to death, smoke them and shake all bees off a comb and let the queen run on it; by the time the bees reach her she will be calm and normal in her movements, and all danger will be passed.

It will also be remembered that a queen is impregnated when on the wing, and only once in her lifetime. Cases have been known where a novice has clipped a virgin queen's wings to keep a colony from leaving the hive. This means the destruction of the colony, for the queen cannot take wing to be impregnated, and she being unable to produce anything but drones, the colony must perish; therefore, be sure your queen has been fertilized before you clip her wings.

Poultry.

Feed.

Now that chickens are a few months old they may be safely fed all the milk, sweet or sour, that they will make use of. There is no better so'd food than wheat; give the growing birds a plentiful supply of it. Pullets that are expected to lay early should not have corn or any other fattening food, as it retards the development of the organs, but chicks intended for the table may be fed bountifully with it. Milk is an excellent egg producer.

Disappointments

Very many, indeed, are the victims of *hen fever*, and it is very amusing to note the progress of the victim. He sees a neighbor selling a pair of fowls for five or ten dollars and concludes that is about the easiest and shortest road to wealth he has seen or heard of; counts on a hundred pairs of fowls for five hundred or a thousand dollars. Of course, any person can raise fowls, and if you suggest poultry literature to him, it is ridiculed. Well, what is the result? He gets a setting of eggs or a pair of fowls, and by the end of the second year he has a large stock of pure bred fowls for sale; but, alas, time passes and no sales. He has, if he advertises, frequent applications, but his replies betray an ignorance of poultry breeding that leads anyone, but the very novice, to the conclusion that his stock is inferior, and if a *true fancier* tells him where he stands, he decides at once that Mr. Fancier is jealous of his fine stock, and when the selling season is over he decides that there is a ring in the poultry business, and that unless a man is in it there is no money to be made. There is not one man in ten that has the taste requisite for a successful fancier, but there is no valid reason why any person, not too lazy, should not be successful with fowls for eggs and market. The duties in connection with the latter are more mechanical. The fancier is not generally as successful in egg production as many farmers, as he has such a love for his fowls he is very apt to overfeed them, and thus, to a great extent, destroy their usefulness. There are ten failures among fanciers of fowls due to overfeeding where there is one from not feeding enough; while with the farmers it is the reverse, or, at least, the failures are in the other direction, they do not feed enough. To get the best results from fowls they should have unlimited range in the warm weather, and in the winter warm quarters which are absolutely dry, moisture being very conducive to roup and kidney diseases. We find the lack of care is the cause of most of the disappointments to the farmer.

Correspondence.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.—1. Please write on one side of the paper only. 2. Give full name, Post Office and Province, not necessarily for publication, but as guarantee of good faith and to enable us to answer by mail when, for any reason, that course seems desirable. If an answer is specially requested by mail, a stamp must be enclosed. Unless of general interest, no questions will be answered through the *ADVOCATE*, as our space is very limited. 3. Do not expect anonymous communications to be noticed. 4. Matter for publication should be marked "Printers' MS." on the cover, the ends being open, in which case the postage will only be 1c per 4 ounces. 5. Non-subscribers should not expect their communications to be noticed. 6. No questions will be answered except those pertaining purely to agriculture or agricultural matters.

Correspondents wanting reliable information relating to diseases of stock must not only give the symptoms as fully as possible, but also how the animal has been fed and otherwise treated or managed. In case of suspicion of hereditary diseases, it is necessary also to state whether or not the ancestors of the affected animal have had the disease or any predisposition to it.

In asking questions relating to manures, it is necessary to describe the nature of the soil on which the intended manures are to be applied; also the nature of the crop.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the views of correspondents.

An Enemy of the Currant.—What Strawberry Shall I Use?—*Strawberry Fertilizer.*—1. Please tell me of a preventative or a remedy for the currant worm, not the one which attacks the leaves, but a small white maggot which is found in the fruit, causing it to rotten prematurely and fall to the ground. It has infested our currant bushes for the last seven or eight years, causing a great loss of fruit. 2. I have the "Sharpless" strawberry. It grows very large here, some of the berries measuring seven and a-half inches in circumference, but it does not keep well. Is there any other variety which equals it in size and flavor, and is as good a keeper? What is the best fertilizer for strawberries?—M. E. T., Murray Bay, Q.

[1. The insect is probably the one commonly known as the gooseberry fruit worm, which, besides attacking the gooseberry (as the name indicates), is very destructive to the currant. The remedies for this pest are described in Prof. Saunders' "Insects Injurious to Fruits," as follows:—"The most satisfactory method of destroying this insect is by hand-picking, and its habits are such that its presence is easily detected. Any berries found coloring prematurely should be carefully examined, and, as the larva slips out and falls to the ground very quickly, watchfulness is needed to prevent their escape in this manner. Where neglected they often increase to an alarming extent, and in some instances half the crop or more has been destroyed by them. It is recommended to let chickens run among the bushes after the fruit has been gathered so that they may devour the chrysalids. Any leaves or rubbish under the bushes should be gathered and burned, and a little lime or ashes scattered over the ground in their place. Dusting the bushes freely with air-slaked lime early in the spring, and renewing it if washed off by rain, will also, in a great measure, deter the moths from depositing their eggs on the young fruit then forming." 2. We do not know of a strawberry equaling the "Sharpless" in size and flavor and surpassing it in other respects. Read our article on strawberries in next issue. 3. As a general rule the strawberry, being a gross feeder, requires a general fertilizer, such as compost or farmyard manure. On soils which are rich in vegetable matter, a dressing of bone dust and ashes, in the proportion of one part of the former to three or four parts of the latter, is a very good application. The heavier the soil is the less of the ashes will be required.

Transplanting Grapes.—Quack Grass.—I transplanted three large grape vines this spring, as described by you in the *ADVOCATE*. They are all growing, two of them doing extra well, and one of them likely to ripen fruit this season. Enclosed find a specimen of grass, which I call Quack Grass. 1. Is it very troublesome? 2. How can I get rid of it?

[1. It is one of the most troublesome weeds that Canadian farmers have to fight. 2. Read our answer to E. T., Clinton, Ont., in this issue.]