

BEES AND POULTRY.

BEGINNING WITH BEES.

"A man up a tree" has been writing on the above subject in the *N. Y. Tribune*. Some of his advices are wise, and some otherwise. The first suggestion to one determined to make bee-keeping his "life-work," but "entirely ignorant of the art," is, to "begin with a few colonies—from two to six is enough." The second is, to "procure some good, reliable work on bee-keeping, and study it with care."

These counsels should be reversed. A person who has serious thoughts of making apiculture his "life-work," should study a good bee-book first, that he may get some idea of the amount of knowledge to be acquired, and that he may judge of his own aptitudes for the business. Tyros, generally speaking, suppose that the principles of bee-keeping are few and simple, easily picked up, and require but little thought and application. One of this class attended a convention of bee-keepers, listened to a single evening's discussion, and went away convinced that it was useless for him to attempt to master the ins and outs of apiculture. He had not the requisite application. It has been said of Queen Victoria that she could never learn to sing, for three reasons: 1st, she had no voice; 2nd, she had no ear; and 3rd, she had no application. The latter was the true reason. With application, anyone can become a singer of some sort; and with application, anyone can become a bee-keeper on a small scale. But application alone will not make a *prima donna*, nor will application alone make a man qualified to be an extensive bee-keeper. He must be possessed of certain natural qualifications. There must be quick perceptive powers, quiet and steady perseverance, self-control and coolness of nerve, business promptitude and sagacity; last, but not least, a degree of imperviousness to bee-stings. A person peculiarly sensitive to bee-poison, whose flesh swells enormously, and whose blood fevers quickly under its influence, may keep a hive or two for scientific investigation and interest, but would be courting martyrdom to make bee-keeping his "life-work."

One hive, generally speaking, is enough to start with. The probabilities are that the beginner will lose that, through some error of management. The loss of one hive will not be so discouraging as the loss of "two" or "six." If he does not lose his first hive, his bees will probably increase quite as fast as his knowledge and experience. If they do not, he can buy more hives when he feels competent to take care of them. Localities need testing as well as bee-masters, and a few hives will suffice for that.

This "man up a tree" advises a beginner to make himself familiar with his bees, in order that they may know him personally, and find out that he is their friend. Considering that during the honey season, when we have most occasion to handle bees, their average life is not over three months, there is but little chance to cultivate friendship with them. Besides, the first smell of you they decide whether to treat you as a friend or a foe. No kind treatment that you can give them will ever change their dislike of you into love. Be gentle with them always; but gentleness will

not conquer their aversion if they have taken a "sconner" at you. It is people who are bee-loved who should make a "life-work" of apiculture. The most that others can do is to let the little insects know from the start that they have their master.

This writer says, "Care and prudence, with occasional mishap, will cause the beginner to lose all dread of the business and of his bees." Well, that depends on how much they hurt him. If he is thick-skinned, and his blood so cool that bee-virus cannot heat it up, he will soon come to care no more for a bee-sting than for the prick of a pin. But if he is thin-skinned, and bee-poison injected into his blood is like the mixing of seidlitz powders, his respect for the business end of a bee will continue unabated to the last day of his life.

Here is some good advice:—

"He should indulge no hopes of suddenly becoming an expert, or rapidly accumulating a fortune at this business. There is no short cut to success here any more than anywhere else. If pursued rationally and perseveringly, he will, in the course of some years of faithful apprenticeship at the business, gain ability to handle and manage from 100 to 1,000 colonies of bees. He cannot possibly manage this number at first successfully, any more than he could conduct large manufacturing industries without having previously studied and worked at the business.

"Unfortunately no one industry (except, perhaps, mining) has been brought into so much disrepute as bee-keeping, by all sorts of characters undertaking to carry it on on a large scale without adequate previous experience or study. The very ignorance of the many who keep a few bees has made the business a fruitful field for the operations of quacks and quack vendors of all kinds of so-termed wonderful hives and queens. This is all the more unfortunate because bee-keeping can be made as legitimate and honourable and successful, and is so made by many, as any other avocation."

This writer advises beginners to pick out their own pathway to knowledge and success, rather than serve a "personal apprenticeship to a professional." He admits that "the latter has its advantages," but considers that the most successful bee-keepers have been self-made. This may be quite true, but has it not been because bee-keeping has only of late become one of the fixed or exact sciences? Apprenticeship to mere "professionals" may not be worth much, but there is no way in which an observant mind can so soon or so thoroughly acquire a mastery of this business as by spending a season or two with a thoroughly practical bee-keeper. In time, no doubt, apprenticeship to this business will be the usual thing, as in the case of any and every other. Perhaps in "the good time coming" this may rank among the learned professions, and B.M. (bee-master or bee-mistress) be as common and proper an affix to people's names as M.D. or M.A.

WINTER CARE OF POULTRY.

It don't take a great deal of time to put the poultry in comfortable condition for winter. The hennery should be made tight, so that the wind cannot blow into it, and at the same time there should be sufficient ventilation. A draught on the fowls will be very likely to

cause them to take cold, giving them snuffles or roup. It is better to avoid all such disorders by taking pains to make the hen-house warm and free from draughts. A box of coarse sand should be provided in order that the hens may have the needed gravel for their crops. There should be a supply of plaster (sulphate of lime) on hand to scatter over the manure occasionally to absorb the escaping ammonia. A box should be filled with dry dirt and ashes for the fowls to wallow in. This part of the equipment of a well-regulated hen-house is most generally neglected, but is one of the most important. As a preventive against vermin and for the comfort of the poultry, a little lime should be thrown in one corner and a stock of oyster shells kept on hand. All these things are essential for the comfort and health of the poultry. If eggs are expected, there must be additional care; green feed of some sort, as cabbage leaves, apples, or vegetables, chopped fine, must be supplied, and also meat. They must be fed grain freely, but not confined to one variety. Fowls suffer in winter for water; there is almost general neglect in this respect. It is the cause of hens eating their eggs, and must occasion much suffering when deprived of it. Warm drink is best, and has a stimulating effect in the production of eggs. It is useless to expect that fowls will lay any number of eggs when they are neglected, and compelled to pick around all day in the cold to keep from starving.—*F. D. Curtis, in N. Y. Tribune.*

EFFECT OF FOOD ON EGGS.

It does not require much of an extra understanding on the part of any one to really see how the flesh of a fowl fed on wholesome food and water should be better to the taste than those fed at random and upon all manner of unwholesome food. This applies equally to the eggs also. Any one can test this if he so wishes quite easily by feeding on slop food, or food of an unclean kind, such as swill and decaying garbage. The flesh of such fowls will quickly taint, and eggs will taste unsavory, at least to any one with an ordinary palate. Fresh air has also much to do with this matter. No flesh is fit for the table which is not allowed an unlimited quantity of pure air. If any person of ordinary discernment would consider the actual condition of highly stall-fed animals of Christmas and other similar times of rejoicing, he would be quite easily satisfied that, although to look at, the stall-fed animal, which always lacks pure air, is the fattest, yet its flesh does not agree with the stomach as does that of the healthy, ordinarily fed animal. Some may say that the extra fat does this. I say not, for I have quite often kept account; and, though I do not touch a morsel of fat, I was troubled afterward with a disordered stomach, which never happened when I partook heartily of fine beef, both fat and lean.

A LARGE quantity of cheese is being stored in the cellars in Ingersoll by buyers who do not care to ship this weather.

MR. J. MARSHALL, of London Township, has purchased the farm of Mr. Joseph Peaslee, being lot 13, con. 15, of the same township, for the sum of \$4,175.