

BEES AND POULTRY.**BEE-KEEPING IN CANADA.**

In the *American Bee Journal* Mr. Charles Mitchell, of Molesworth, Ontario, gives some of his experience in bee-keeping.—"I often wonder what is called good work for a colony of bees to do in a certain time. One of my colonies of brown bees gathered last season thirty-four pounds in three days, and threw a large swarm the day before I commenced the test. The hive had 3,000 cubic inches. It will not pay to double up the bees in the spring of a good season, though this is not the common advice and rule. Last year I got seventy-five pounds of honey from one colony, with only one hundred bees on May 1st. The same queen has done well two seasons since. I believe many good queens lose their heads when they are not always to blame; if she is not producing drones, give her a chance. Pack the hive, inside, not outside, leaving only three frames at most, and put a few sheets of paper on top of the frames to keep the heat in and drive it down. The golden willow is the only thing in Canada that gives honey before the dandelions. Bees work on it here until quite dark in good weather; it fairly rains honey and can be seen easily with the naked eye. If you wish to plant it, and have a creek or permanent lane on your farm, with an axe cut off branches four to six feet long, any size, in the spring, and drive them where wanted; if put along a creek they make a good shade for cattle, and in three years they will support a wire fence. When my bees are getting honey I like to know how much, what from, and what kind of day. As to Bokhara clover not growing, it will grow anywhere, if there is moisture to sprout it and keep it alive until it gets hold of the ground, the same as other clover and timothy. I hoed the seed in, in rows, between mangolds, and it did well. I harrowed it in with oats, on June 1st, with last stroke of harrow, it was two feet high before I cut my oats. It has given the barn a fine smell, and the bees have haunted it all the fall, in vain, for honey. I find onions are good to use in doubling bees; I have tried them and without loss. Honey is an excellent medicine for the eyes, it is unequalled for inflammation. As to whether bee-keeping pays, I will let the bees speak for themselves. Last season there were only four colonies to make profit in the good year. They gathered 126 pounds on an average, having come through two years without loss. The willow and apple trees were killed while in bloom, and we had to kill the young bees. The expenditure in two years for bees was \$80, and the receipts \$480."

NATURAL COLOUR IN EGGS.

Those interested in fowls will appreciate the following from the *Country Gentleman*:—"By the eggs, in many instances, the breed of fowl may be known, but not always. Both Brown and White Leghorns lay white eggs, the eggs of the white variety rather exceeding in size, while the brown lays the most in number. The Black Spanish, the Crevecoeur, the Houdan, the Dorking, and some others, lay white eggs, while the eggs of Cochins and Brahmas are brown, and many of their crosses

lay eggs of a lilac colour. Where there is any colour to the shell, there is more or less Asiatic blood in the veins of the fowl dropping the egg, the colour being graded according to the quality of blood. While the eggs of many breeds may be termed all white, still a close observer will note a difference. The Leghorn's egg is what is called white, yet there is a roseate glow over the fresh-laid which is easily detected by those accustomed to handling—a glow like the freshly-opened oyster shell, which is seen on the insides also. The Spanish egg possesses thicker shells, and is of a dead white—a chalky whiteness, as are also the Houdans, and these are longer and more pointed. The Dominique egg is quite similar to that of the Game, being, when in purity, a little under size and round. The Spanish, the Crevecoeur and the Houdan eggs are as large as that of the largest Brahma, while the weight of the body is less. The Leghorn, the Game, Dorking, Dominique and Hamburg eggs are medium in size, but as a rule are frequent, which latter virtue also belongs to the Spanish. The first crosses of any of these breeds are good for either flesh or eggs, rivalling in most cases the pure breed. Beyond the first cross it is not desirable to go."

DOES THE QUEEN LEAD THE SWARM?

The *British Bee Journal* remarks as follows on this subject, correctly concluding that she does not:—"There is an impression prevailing among the uninitiated that the queen of a hive leads off the swarm, but this is by no means the case with first issues, for, as a rule, the queen does not come forth from the hive until the greater part of the bees are on the wing. Another erroneous idea in existence is that the queen bee is the first to alight upon a branch or a bush, and that the bees congregate about her, but the reverse of this is the fact. When a swarm begins to issue, if the bee-keeper will place himself on the shady side of the hive and watch the stream of bees which pour forth like an army through a gateway, he may see the queen come out, and, if inclined to prove our assertions, he may capture and cage her, and put her in his pocket while he watches the proceedings of the bees. When the throng is circling in the air he may imagine that the bees are searching for her, and will perhaps conclude that as they cannot find her, they will return at once to the hive; but no, they will first congregate near a convenient tree or bush, and make a great noise sufficient to attract the attention of her majesty, if she were abroad, and they will alight and form a cluster, and wait for some minutes to give her an opportunity of joining them. If now she be taken to them, she will join the mass and all will be well; if not, the bees after a short time will disperse and return to the hive. Now this kind of experiment has been so often proved that it may be taken for granted when a swarm of bees has alighted, and afterwards returned to the hive, that the queen was not able to join them, or she would assuredly have done so."

DARK BRAHMAS.

While Light Brahmas are very popular, by many fanciers being considered the very best

breed extant, the Darks are not without their ardent admirers. Foremost among the latter class is our friend, Mr. Sanford, who has bred them continuously for the past nine years, having at three different times added to his stock imported birds, and in whose possession such birds and their progeny have always taken the highest honours wherever exhibited; he can justly be termed an experienced breeder of this variety.

The Dark Brahmas are one of the largest of domestic fowls, and are beautiful, upright looking birds. Among the characteristics most difficult to secure in this breed, are black breast and fluff in cocks, and evenness in penciling in pullets, qualities which are possessed by Mr. Sanford's birds in a marked degree, which have made his strain among the most celebrated, and won for him an enviable reputation.

As Mr. Sanford has never patronized our columns to any great extent, we are pleased to introduce him to such of our readers as are not already acquainted with him personally, or with his reputation as a fancier, assuring them that he ranks among practical fanciers as one of the first-class.—*The Poultry Monthly*.

BEES PUTTING BESIEGERS TO FLIGHT.

The *Times* "Beemaster" has been giving amusing instances of the application of bees to defensive purposes. A privateer manned by fifty men, but having on board some hives of bees, was pursued by a Turkish galley, manned by 500 seamen and soldiers. When the latter came alongside, the crew of the privateer mounted the rigging with their hives, and threw them upon their foes, who, astonished at this novel mode of warfare, hastened to escape from the fury of the enraged bees. Another instance occurred, when a rabble at Hohnstein, in Thungaria, attempted to pillage the house of the parish minister; he caused some beehives to be thrown among the mob, who in consequence soon dispersed. Again, Vauban relates how bees played an important part at the siege of Chatte, in Lorraine. After a siege, the town was being stormed, and, during the assault, the besieged threw a few hives of bees upon the heads of the storming party. The little creatures stung the besiegers so dreadfully that they had to retire; and the historian tells that "the bees were not the least cause of the siege being abandoned."—*Chambers' Journal*.

The *American Poultry Journal* believes that to succeed in breeding fine fowls, we must first cultivate in us a love for the fowls, also an ideal fowl, and then, by thought and patient labour, produce that ideal in the living form.

The Pekin duck is nearly as large as a goose, is entirely white, and can be kept in small enclosures with only a trough to bathe in. They grow rapidly, furnish fine feathers, and are excellent for the table. They are also good layers, good sitters, and careful mothers.

ANIMALS, when first confined, and supplied with fattening food, always increase largely in weight during the first few weeks, after which the rate of increase diminishes to a considerable extent.