

## The Apiary.

### Questions about Bee-Keeping.

In its report of the recent meeting of the North-eastern Bee-keepers' Association at Utica, N.Y., the *Herald* of that city says:

One of the most interesting exercises of the convention was the "question drawer," which was expounded by Mr. Van Duzee, with the aid of Capt. Hetherington and Mr. L. C. Root. These questions and replies are of such particular value to the bee-keeper that we print this part of the proceedings verbatim.

Question. Is there any profit in buckwheat flour? Answer. Yes.

Q. Can broods be raised successfully in March and April? A. It is best to have no brood started until the weather is sufficiently warm and settled to enable them to start a full brood. The presence of a sufficient amount of pollen must be assured.

Q. What effect has the shape and size of the hive on freezing or on the amount of honey stored? A. Very little, provided they have plenty of accessible room and the proper temperature is maintained in the hive.

Q. The best mode of caring for bees after they are sent out in spring and before the honey harvest? A. Feed and keep warm.

Q. Will bees store enough more honey in boxes with communications from box to box to pay the extra trouble than to have the boxes separate? A. Yes, in small boxes, but not in large.

Q. How many swarms should be kept in one yard? A. This depends upon the quantity of honey-producing plants, from fifty to 100 swarms.

Q. What is the best size of the brood department? A. Let it vary according to the quantity of bees.

Q. About what amount of honey is sold in New York city, yearly? A. About 400,000 pounds.

Q. What is the most suitable package to put extracted honey in for market? A. This depends upon the market in which it is to be sold. In some cases it sells best in bulk or by the pound net weight; in other cases in glass jars.

Q. What is proper the measure for a single box? A. Two to two and a fourth inches.

Q. How near to the ground ought hives to be placed during the summer? A. Four or five inches.

Q. Will using the extractor on comb containing eggs or larvae produce any injury; if so, at what time most? A. There is no injury, unless larvae are thrown from the cells by too rapid motion.

Q. Is it advisable to undertake to Italianize your apiary when you are surrounded by black bees? A. It certainly is, if in a locality that produces much white honey.

Q. How long from the time the egg is deposited in a worker cell before it cannot be changed to a queen cell? A. Would not use it older than the third day after hatching.

Q. If a queen's wing is clipped about half off by a trusty, experienced hand, is there any injury; if any, what, and in what way? A. There is no injury.

Q. Making an examination of my stocks in January, I found some stocks from which the honey was leaking. What is the reason? A. The condition is found only in hives that have been so exposed to the cold as to crack the combs with frost—or in hives that are so poorly ventilated as to retain the moisture and sour the honey.

### Will Bee-Keeping Pay.

We cannot reasonably expect people to go into any kind of business in this material age, unless it can be shown that it is fairly remunerative. Bee-keeping is so without doubt. Indeed, some experienced apiculturists claim for it a superiority to most rural pursuits in this respect. Thus, Mr. Qamby, one of the highest authorities on this subject, made the following remarks at a farmers' meeting recently held in Utica, N. Y.:

The leading principle will predominate here. Is money to be made by it? Suppose a man has no bees to start with, but has a knowledge of the business. He can earn at ordinary farming \$1,000 in the summer season. He wants bees; 100 hives are all he can care for. Suppose they cost him \$300. He wants hives and fixings costing \$100 more. Here is \$400 invested. The interest of this amounts to \$40. He must raise that, and the \$200 he could have earned on the farm, together. Take a season such as the present has been, ten miles south of the Mohawk, where one man had the control of \$170 hives, and obtained near 17,000 pounds of surplus. Call it 16,000, six thousand box honey and ten thousand extracted. The first, at 25 cents, amounts to \$4,000. Ten thousand extracted, at 15 cents, amounts to \$1,500. The man starting with \$400 capital, would realize at this rate, over \$1,700. More than \$1,300 above what his wages, for a few months, would have been, and the interest on the capital invested. "But," says one, "he has not paid for his stock, and may not do it another year." But he has it

on hand, and it is not depreciated in value. Possibly it has increased. He can sell or try another year. If a profit of \$1,400 is thought too much in one season for an investment of \$1,000, let him put one-half aside, for a poor season, and say he has only \$700. It is not so very bad even that. I would say here that L. C. Root, of Mohawk, Herkimer county, has realized over 10,000 pounds of surplus from one hundred stocks, the past season, besides some increase in number. I could give details in regard to smaller apiaries, that would go still further to show that bee-keeping is more remunerative than many other pursuits.

How I WINTER.—"I have kept bees twelve years and never lost a colony by dysentery. I winter in a cellar, warm and dry, from forty to fifty-five degrees. Put in the bees before they get chilled with the cold. Cellar has a furnace, and is well finished. I brought thirty-five colonies through last winter, all right. Bees all around me died of dysentery. They put them in too late, and do not keep the temperature even.—*Cor. Ex.*

IN SWARMING, the queen is not always foremost; it is frequently, or rather generally, not till after the departure of a considerable number of workers that she makes her appearance; and when she does come, it is with a timid irresolute air, as if she were borne along, almost against her will, by the torrent that streams out of the hive—for she often turns on the threshold, as if about to re-enter, and in fact frequently does so, but cannot long resist the opposing crowd.—*February.*

How to SHIP HONEY.—Place two rows of boxes together with three or four boxes in each row, or enough to make a fifty-pound package; then you can measure and cut two end pieces of lumber an inch thick, and bottom and top boards half an inch thick, and long enough to nail on the edge of the end pieces. Nail a cleat, two by six inches long, in the centre of each end piece, by which to lift the case, and then nail it together, placing the boxes in and tacking a strip one inch wide on the edge of the top and bottom, and on the ends of the end pieces, letting it project only about half an inch over the honey boxes, to hold them in place, and yet not hide the honey and glass from view, as railroad men will handle honey more carefully when the honey and glass are in plain sight. Box honey is often broken, and its sale is injured by being moved by inexperienced draymen after it has arrived here in safety; hence the commission merchant to whom it is consigned should be notified of about the time it will arrive, and let him have it removed to his own store by his own cartman. Some may suppose we are unnecessarily explicit, but those who have suffered serious loss will appreciate our words of caution.—*Bee Keepers' Magazine.*

## The Poultry Yard.

### The Domestic Goose.

The origin of the domestic goose is conceded by all naturalists to be from the grey-lag, or common wild goose, a bird unknown on this continent, but common in some parts of the centre and south of Europe, Northern Africa, Asia Minor, and Asia itself, also Northern India, but at the present day, comparatively rare in Great Britain. Its length the grey-lag is almost three feet from the tip of the bill to the extremity of the short tail. Its extent of wing is about three feet, which, however, do not reach to the extremity of the tail. The weight of the largest birds is about ten pounds. The color of the plumage is grey, varying in some parts to greyish brown, the rump and belly white, the tail greyish brown and white, the bill orange, the nail at the tip of the upper mandible white. The color of the young birds is darker than that of the adults. Next in size to the grey-lag is the bean goose, by far the most abundant British wild goose, and one so closely resembling the grey-lag that it is only distinguishable on careful examination. It is common in all the northern parts of Europe and Asia, in Nova Zembla, Greenland and other northern regions, but not in America. The bean goose is not unfrequently taken by many for the grey-lag: the following description may therefore be useful in distinguishing between the two varieties. The bill is longer, of orange color, with the base and nail black; the plumage mostly grey, but browner than in the grey-lag, the rump brown. The wings extend beyond the tail. Two other wild species of geese known in Great Britain, but exceedingly rare, are the pink-footed and white-fronted geese, but as neither of these are claimed by naturalists as the origin of the domestic goose, we will not trouble our readers with any description of them, farther than to say the pink-footed goose has a very short bill, is very prolific, breeding in great numbers in the Hebrides; and the white-fronted

goose has a very conspicuous white space on its forehead, from which it derives its name. Its plumage is mostly grey, and it is only about twenty-seven inches in its utmost length. It is not improbable therefore that the grey-lag and bean goose had one but still more ancient progenitor, and possibly the two latter also.

Geese require little trouble or expense, as they will support themselves roaming about the fields; they must have free access to water, and when this is the case they are easily reared and rendered profitable, the great object in their being kept. Two or three geese are quite enough with a gander, and they should always be mated in the fall of the year, otherwise the gander may not take up with them before the laying season begins. In this respect they are very exceptionable. It is seldom a goose lays till after a year old, hence the desirability of keeping old geese for breeding stock. The hen will lay from thirteen to fifteen eggs, after which she begins to feather the nest for sitting. Thirty days is the usual time for a goose to sit; after being hatched the goslings should be kept warm, and well fed at first with bread crumbs, hard-boiled egg and a little green food. When strong enough let them out on a grass run and they will grow fast. The goose lives and retains her breeding powers until an advanced age, some say to at least forty years, while others maintain double that length of time. Whether the ganders would remain equally vigorous is somewhat uncertain. Geese are excellent guards to a poultry yard, for should any intruder come to the pens at night, or should a fox or other wild animal be prowling about, their clamour is sure to be such as will give timely warning that something is amiss. We cannot but remember that it was to this quality Rome owed its preservation from the onslaught of the Gauls, the cackling of some geese confined in the Capitol putting the Romans on their guard in time to repulse the attack of the invaders; for which good service the geese of the Capitol were declared to be sacred and ever afterwards treated with profound respect. Geese should always be shut up and fed liberally for a while before killing. If kept quiet in a partially darkened place they will very soon become reconciled to the plan and lay on flesh rapidly. Some difficulty is experienced in separating the young geese from the ganders, nor is their any rule to be laid down as a guide in this matter. The experienced ear will, however, soon become accustomed to the sound of the voice, and the peculiar long call of the goose compared with the short quack call of the gander. Having thus treated generally of the domestic goose and its origin, we shall in our next paper speak of the more important breeds of this species.

THERE WERE EXPORTED from the Dominion into the United States, in 1874, 3,321,545 dozen of eggs.

HARDY FOWLS.—The most hardy and robust fowls, says Dr. Dickle, before the Pennsylvania Poultry Association, are Dominiques and Plymouth Rocks; after those come the Brahmas, light and dark, and the Cochins. All are easy to raise.

THE PROVERB, "What is worth doing at all, is worth doing well," will nowhere apply better than to the care of poultry. Without constant attention and thoroughness, success need not be expected. Some kinds of business may be occasionally slighted without doing serious harm, but in this employment one mishap may blast the hopes of a whole season.

A CHOLERA REMEDY is named by a correspondent of the *American Rural Home* as follows:—"This disease is very easily treated as follows,—for 50 fowls take two quarts of wheat bran and stir into a pot of boiling water; add one teaspoonful of saleratus, one ditto of black pepper; stir it all together, and place it where all the fowls can get some—the hotter the better.

THE NUMBER OF EGGS IN A HEN.—A curious point of inquiry among zoologists has been for a long time, How many eggs are there in the ovary of a hen? To determine this, a German naturalist, a short time since, instituted some careful investigations, the result of which showed the ovary of a hen to contain about 600 embryo eggs. He also found that some twenty of these are matured the first year, about 120 during the second year, 135 during the third, 144 during the fourth, and during the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth years, the number decreases by twenty annually, consequently following that after the fourth, or at most the fifth year, hens are no longer profitable as layers, unless it may be in exceptional instances.