

hints, it will insure them not only fresh eggs most of the year, but they may expect to have some fine birds to astonish their less fortunate neighbours with.

If you think the above will be of any value to any of your readers, you are welcome to it, as I am anxious to see the fancy increase and the CHRONICLE circulate, which, I believe, is the means of doing a great deal of good, and is just what is wanted as a medium of communication between poultry fanciers.

AN OLD AMATEUR AND BREEDER.

November 15th, 1870.

INSECTIVOROUS BIRDS—INSECT FOOD FOR POULTRY.

SIR,—In connection with your journal, I wish to raise a discussion upon the best means to be adopted for destruction of certain descriptions of insect life, injurious to vegetation, and for utilizing other varieties of insects, so as to convert a present waste into a source of wealth.

Our fruit trees are subject to a variety of enemies, of which many of them form the food of birds. To meet this difficulty I have commenced a series of experiments, by the importation of European birds. For instance, the common house sparrow is now acclimatized at Quebec, and I hope to derive much assistance from him in my orchard, which he will frequent at a season of the year when our insect enemies are at great disadvantage, and when his services will be superior to most of our orchard hands.

I also find there are certain varieties of domestic poultry invaluable as destroyers of grasshoppers, crickets, etc., such as the Guinea Fowl, the Aylesbury Duck, the Dorking; the two former may be allowed the run of the garden, and appear to me to be almost a necessity in a crop of vegetables.

I noticed this summer, when my cattle took refuge from the flies in the pond, the ducks immediately got a good

feed of flies by hunting about amongst their legs, actually defending the udder from all attacks. This mutual arrangement was constantly renewed, and evidently of a nature beneficial to me.

The common House-fly, of which we have many varieties, is a wonderful breeder. He can be made to produce an enormous quantity of chick-food of the best description, and as he is being turned to good account in Germany, why should we not discuss him here?

The following receipt has been given me, viz.:—Make nine holes or pits, eight by four, and three deep. The holes to be tight, built either of brick or wood. On bottom place in layers, one inch of barley straw, ditto then chicken, pig, pigeon or other dung, one inch and a half of brewers' grains, one inch of bog earth, and so continue until the receiver is full. In this compost the flies will lay their eggs, and in nine days the maggots are fit for use. The *verminere* has to be kept sheltered. Feed three times a day. This kind of food may be prepared for winter use, as the maggots will turn into crystals, when they will keep as good as wheat. The above receipt is calculated to feed about three thousand chickens.

Pheasants, in fact any kind of bird flesh can be reared, and is reared in the Pheasantries of Europe, and I see no reason why we should not be able to succeed at least as well in this climate.

From the above, you will perceive my ideas run upon the practical and the useful. The fashion in the dress of our domestic birds keeps changing, and exposes us to so much trouble and expense in buying new breeds of poultry, that a farmer has little desire to become an amateur. But show the farmer that he can produce meat out of insects, which will sell at the price of the best beef, and he must listen to you, especially when you add that their manure is equal to guano.