

BEES AND POULTRY.

THE PLYMOUTH ROCKS.

The Plymouth Rocks are a new breed, their origin being rather a matter of dispute, but Mr. D. D. Wilson, of Seaforth, expresses the belief that they originated in a cross between a single-combed Dominique cock, and Black Java hens. Mr. Wilson says:—

"The Plymouth Rock is a good layer; it lays a large egg, with a strong, durable shell. It is a very good table fowl when it is no longer useful as a layer, and, when well cared for, comes very early to maturity."

Mr. Doel remarks of these birds:—

"The Plymouth Rock promises to be a very good fowl, but it will not suit the farmer for a number of years, as it can hardly be called a fixed breed yet. The farmer looks to have both a good fowl and a good-looking fowl. The Plymouth Rock has been a cross until late years, and it has not been bred sufficiently long or with sufficient care to make it yet an established breed, so that it may be depended upon. It will do very well to use for crossing purposes, like any other common fowl, because when fowls are once crossed, they are nothing but common fowls, although some of them make better layers than many full-bred fowls."

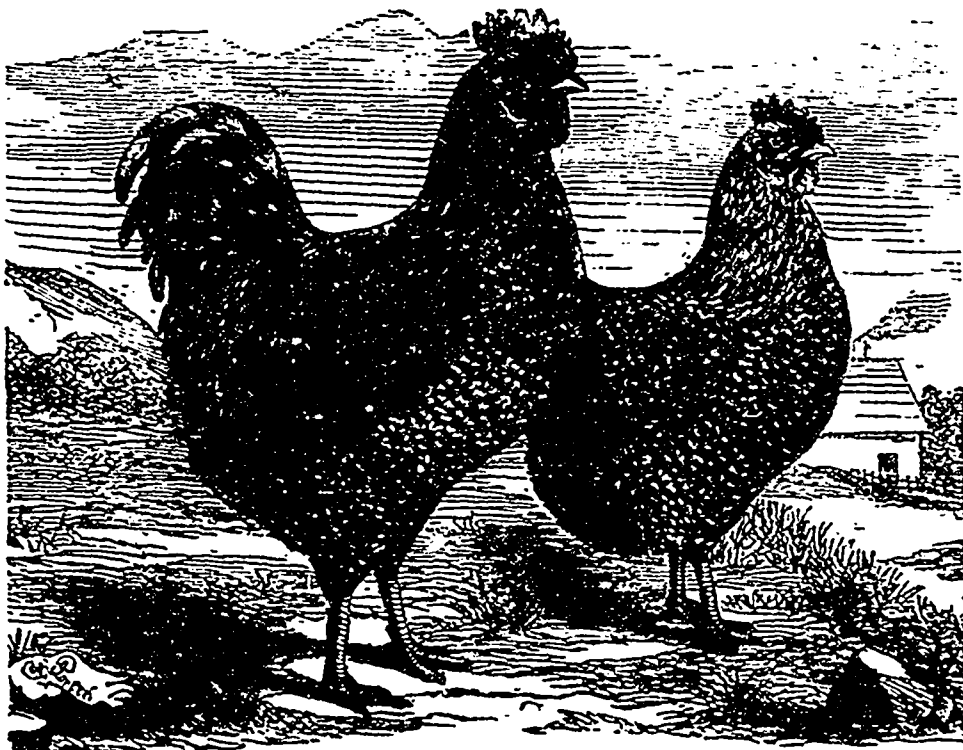
KEEPING BEES.

We often hear of people keeping bees for pleasure, and it always signifies that those who do it are not only people of a greater or less degree of cultured taste, but that the apiary is really one of the fine arts. Whether it is appreciated as such or not, it is just of that character. When we take into consideration the habits and artistic design of the busy little bee, it is no longer a wonder that its characteristics have been woven into verse, and that the scientist and artist and poet have loved to study those habits and have been free to admire its ingenuity. Believing, therefore, that we cannot cultivate refined taste too much, the business of bee-keeping becomes more valuable as we view it in this light. We frequently refer, the reader is aware, to those branches of farm industry which soften and elevate, and for the reason that they do soften and elevate recommend them most heartily. While the apary can be made pecuniarily profitable, it must always be remembered that money is not the only profit in this world, but that whatever makes us better, more industrious, frugal and nobler, is profitable, if it never returns us a penny. Bee-keeping we believe to be of this character, if it is properly studied.—*Western Rural*.

WHAT KIND OF FOWLS?

Farmers should restock their poultry yards every two or three years, for the old breeds, being bred in-and-in, soon run out and become unprofitable. It is not every farmer, however, that can afford to buy full-blood fowls of any kind to restock the place. In order to work into pure-bred chickens, there are several modes of procedure, all very good, because very cheap. The first is to buy a couple of thoroughbred roosters, and turn them with the native hens. If the Leghorn variety is selected, the progeny will be far better layers than the old ones, partaking in a very great

degree of the excellence of the new breed. Then when the half-breeds commence to lay, sell off the old hens entirely, keeping only the half-breed pullets, also getting rid of the half-breed roosters, for the breed will not improve if they are kept. Keep the same thoroughbred roosters the second season, though it would be better to change every year. But under no circumstances should they be kept to cross on their own progeny longer than the second season. The first cross will be half-breeds; and if none but thoroughbred males are used, the second cross will be three-quarters pure blood, which for all practical purposes are equal to the thoroughbreds. If, however, after the first cross the half-breed roosters are kept, the grade will not improve, and the chicks will still only be half-breeds, and poor ones at that. Hence, it is important that none but thoroughbred males should be used. Another plan is to buy a trio of pure-bred fowls and keep them in a separate enclosure, setting the eggs under other hens as fast as laid. This will give pure-blood fowls from the start. Still another plan is to buy several settings of eggs, but this requires considerable time.



PLYMOUTH ROCKS.

As to the best breed, that depends on the circumstances. It is conceded on all hands that there is more money in eggs than in raising chickens, and if this branch of the business is followed there is no fowl that can equal the Leghorn, and there is not much difference between the Brown and the White Leghorn. They are good foragers, hunt their own living to a great extent, and are tough and hardy. It will be necessary to keep other breeds to hatch the eggs, as Leghorns will not sit.—*San Francisco Chronicle*.

SEX OF EGGS.

A correspondent of the *London Journal of Horticulture* says in reference to this question:—"Last winter an old poultry-keeper told me he could distinguish the sex in eggs. I laughed at him, and was none the less sceptical when he told me the following secret:—Eggs with the air bladder on the centre of the crown of the egg will produce cockerels; those with the bladder on one side will produce pullets. The old man was so certain of the truth of this dogma, and his poultry-yard so far confirmed it, that I determined to make experiments upon it this year. I have done so, carefully registering the egg bladder vertical or bladder on one side, rejecting every one in which it was not decidedly one or the other, as in

some it is only very slightly out of the centre. The following is the result:—Fifty-eight chickens were hatched, three are dead, eleven are yet too young to decide upon their sex. Of the remaining forty-four, every one has turned out true to the old man's theory. This, of course, may be an accidental coincidence, but I shall certainly try the experiment again."

SUGGESTIONS ON BEE-CULTURE.

Under this heading the *Chicago Herald* gives the following: There are many people who own a few colonies of bees, and seldom, if ever, realize anything from them, while with a little exertion and study they might be made a source of great pleasure and profit. In the first place, no person should ever expect to be successful with bees who is not willing to give the subject a reasonable amount of time and careful study. The most successful bee-keepers are lovers of nature and have a fondness for these little marvels of industry. Those who would be successful with bees must always be ready in the proper season to administer to their wants. Hence the neglectful, heedless and indolent are as sure to fail in apiculture as in any other calling. The inducements to bee-keeping are numerous; it affords a most pleasurable and healthful recreation for a person whose business or profession is confining.

MARKETING HONEY.

In regard to comb-honey, it is of importance to the bee-keeper, first and above all, to produce a choice article in good shape. Choice comb-honey is white and well-capped. Small frames of light, clear lumber, five to six inches square and one and one-half to two inches wide, filled with nice white comb-honey, well finished and weighing one and one-half pounds each, is perhaps the most suitable shape with which to meet the retail demand. Neat shipping cases, holding fifty or sixty pounds of the above frames of honey, will accommodate the jobbing business. Shipping cases should be cheap, neat, but strong enough to stand transportation; and the contents should be shown through glass on two sides to as much advantage as possible. Neat glass boxes, filled with nice white comb-honey, look well; but the most popular shape is, undoubtedly, a frame, as described above, without any glass. Purchasers of honey look so much at their own interest in close times like the present, that they are loth to pay for any more tare than necessary.—*Bee-Keeper's Magazine*.

It is not generally known that a few sprigs of cedar bush, mixed with hay or any kind of litter for hens' nests, will keep them entirely free from hen lice.

Every poultry raiser should decide what breed he prefers, and purchase a few thoroughbreds with which to cross his common stock. If the object is to sell frying chicks, get the Partridge Cochins, Plymouth Rocks, Light Brahmas, or Buff Cochins. If eggs are the object, get the Crown Leghorns or Houdans. No one who has tried one of these crosses will do without them afterwards.—*Exchange*.