

Poultry Yard.

Hardy Table Poultry.

MANY persons object to Dorkings on the ground of the difficulty of rearing them on wet soils or in damp seasons, though at the same time they require for table-use large-framed meaty fowls. The three desiderata of hardihood, large size and first-class birds for the table can be most readily combined, if exhibition fowls are not required, by rearing cross breed varieties. For example, if the Dorking stock is found too delicate, we should recommend the introduction of two or three dark Brahma hens into the run; the chickens hatched from them will be very large, hardy, rapid growers, and furnish good table fowl. Two or three of the best pullets should be saved, and next year, if running with the Dorkings, will hatch some very first-class table birds that the best judge in the world could hardly distinguish from Dorkings when on the table. If preferred, Cochins may be chosen, but the result will not be quite so satisfactory. Other crosses that we have tried with great advantage are those between the Crozeccour and the Dorking. The chickens thus produced were of almost monstrous size, and of first-class quality as to whiteness of skin and rapidity of flesh; but they were undoubtedly very ugly as to plumage and combs. The La Flèche is also a very heavy bird, which is sufficiently hardy to be crossed with any large breed that may require fresh blood. Other crosses that may be named are Dorkings and Malays, Cochins and Crozeccours, &c.

The objection often taken to rearing a lot of mongrels is more apparent than real. There is no necessity for keeping the birds so reared; they are bred for the spit and the pot, and these should be their destinations. If larger, hardier, and more rapidly growing fowls can be obtained by cross-breeding, there can be no valid reason for not employing this method. The most gigantic oxen at our prize shows, the largest and most easily ripened sheep, are constantly to be seen in the cross-bred classes; but no one would think of perpetuating the races. So with fowls, keep one stock pure, purchase a few hens of the kind required to cross with your pure stock, and kill all the cockerels of the half-breed, and the result will be that, without deteriorating your pure stock, you will have larger, hardier, and earlier table fowls than those persons who obstinately cling to one pure variety only.—*The Field*.

A NEW IDEA FOR HOUSING POULTRY.—A correspondent of the *American Agriculturist* gives a novel plan for a poultry house. It consists of a light building 4 by 9 feet, and 4½ feet high, without floor, and set upon wheels or rollers. Three feet at one end open lath work, and the remaining six feet partitioned off, the partition coming down within a foot of the ground, enclosing 3 x 4 feet. The enclosed portion is for the roosts and nest boxes. The house is designed for fifteen hens, and is to be set on the grass, and moved its length every day. The writer states that such a house is in practical operation, and works well, the advantages being that the fowls get fresh grass each day, that they thrive better in small than in large flocks, that they can thus be kept more cleanly and in better health, and that by moving the house in any locality on the premises, so that it may be sheltered or exposed in warm or cold weather, a more even temperature can be maintained. The house is to be provided with windows and doors, and be made ornamental or otherwise, to suit taste.

The Apiary.

Management of the Apiary for May.

BY J. H. THOMAS.

In favourable seasons swarms may be cast the last of this month. It is well therefore to be ready. Old hives that are to be used should be well cleaned, by scalding with boiling water; then thoroughly dry and keep in a cool place, as bees will accept a cool hive far more readily than a warm one. Sometimes, however, bees will leave a hive and no reason can be assigned for their doing so. How to prevent this, see "Canadian Bee-Keepers' Guide."

Stocks that are in moveable-comb hives may now be examined, and drone comb cut out, which will prevent the rearing of an unnecessary number of drones, thereby saving a large amount of honey;

though in some cases it may somewhat retard swarming. Weak stocks should still be fed, especially if the weather is wet and cold; though, as fruit and other trees are now in blossom, bees will generally gather sufficient to supply their wants, and in some localities may lay in stores. If box hives are used they should be turned up every morning and the bottom boards cleaned, destroying all the miller-grubs that have been ejected by the bees, from the combs. The bottom board may be dropped at the back of my hive for the same purpose, or each frame may be taken 'out and examined, if any grubs are in the combs they can be removed easily with the point of a knife, saving the bees much trouble. As soon as fruit blossoms appear, the full entrance to a hive may be given the bees, as they will not be likely to rob anymore. If every thing has been favourable and the honey harvest is good, honey boxes may be given to strong stocks the last of the month. The question is often asked, if giving stocks honey boxes will not prevent their swarming? In some cases it may; in others it appears to make no difference. The advantages however are in favour of putting on boxes; for if a swarm is prevented, a box of honey will compensate for the loss of the swarm; on the other hand, should a stock fill the box with honey, and swarm also, which they are likely to do, then a box of honey is gained.

Entomology.

Precautions against Destructive Insects.

THE ORCHARD AND GARDEN.

We made some remarks in our last issue respecting a few precautions that may be taken against the insects that commonly injure the field crops of the farmer. In pursuance of the same subject, we now come to the insect depredators that attack our orchards and gardens. These are so various in number and kind, and differ so much in their mode of work, and the amount of mischief they commit, that it would be an almost endless task to give even a few short particulars concerning each; we shall, therefore, confine our remarks to those that are most injurious, and at the same time most widely distributed.

Let us begin with the insects that attack our Apple trees, both in the orchard and garden. The most formidable of these, inasmuch as it attacks the very heart of the tree, and conceals its operations from view is the Two-striped Borer (*Saperda bivittata*, Say.) This insect has inflicted an immense amount of injury in many parts of the United States, and has also commenced its work of destruction in Lower Canada, but we have not yet heard of its appearance in any part of this Western province. As, however, it is well known in the orchards of Michigan and Illinois, in the State of New York, and to the east of us, we can hardly hope to enjoy our present immunity very long. The presence of this insect in the tree can generally be detected by the little piles of saw-dust-like matter that are collected at the base of the trunk the refuse of the wood gnawed by the borer. The particular spot where the insect is at work is marked by the surface of the bark being there blackened and slightly depressed; this is often the only indication of the mischief that is going on within. Should any of our readers have reason to fear that their trees are thus attacked, their best course is to examine the trunks carefully, and wherever they notice the change of colour in the bark, apply the knife and exterminate the intruder. And then, to prevent renewed attacks, and assaults upon trees that have hitherto escaped, about the end of this month, or the beginning of June at the latest, rub the trunks of the trees well with common soap until they assume a whitish appearance, and place a lump of it in the principal crotch. This is considered an effectual remedy against the ravages both of this insect, and another, very similar in its mode of attack, though quite different in its form. The latter is called the Buprestis Borer (*Chrysobothris femoralis*, Fabr.); it is unhappily by no means uncommon in this country, though its depredations do not appear to have been much noticed.

The Tent caterpillar, another well known enemy of apple and other fruit trees, has been noticed before in this Journal. In the number for April 16, page 119, we referred to the necessity of examining the trees and cutting off the rings of eggs before the leaves come out and render their detection impossible. As, however, with all our care, some are sure to escape observation and build their nests as usual, it will be necessary to examine the trees ere long again, and destroy all that can be found by tearing down the "tents" and crushing under foot all their inhabitants. This can be most easily and effectually accomplished when the nests are small, and on a rainy day when the caterpillars are all at home for the sake of shelter.

Where Bark-Lice are troublesome, as they are in many parts of Canada, the trees should be well washed over early in June with one of the following washes, (both are highly recommended):—Take two parts of soft soap and eight of water, and mix with them lime enough to bring the whole to the consistency of thick whitewash; or, boil tobacco in strong lye till it is reduced to an impalpable pulp, then mix it with soft soap till the whole is about the consistency of paint; apply with a brush.

And now let us turn to our Cherry trees. The first insect enemy to be noticed is the Tent caterpillar, referred to above. After the leaves come out, however, they are liable to be visited by slugs, which frequently commit an immense amount of mischief. A detailed account of them and their remedies will be found in last year's volume of THE CANADA FARMER, page 262.—It is therefore unnecessary to recount them here. Another destroyer of the leaves is a reddish beetle (*Galeruca rufocincta*, Say) also noticed in volume II, page 248. The Black-knot, though apparently a fungus, and not the work of an insect, may be mentioned here, since it is so exceedingly injurious both to Cherry and Plum-trees. Mr. Walsh, after long and patient investigation and plenty of experiments, says that the following is the practical conclusion to which he has come:—"If the diseased twigs are all cut off and destroyed early in July, in the latitude of New York, or a little earlier or later, according to the latitude, taking care to cut a few inches before the affected part, the Black-knot can be checked, and probably entirely eradicated; but if this operation is delayed till August, it will be of no benefit whatever."

The Grape-vine is attacked by numerous caterpillars, some of them of large size, which can be most easily destroyed by hand-picking, whenever they make their appearance. The same mode of treatment can also be adopted for repressing the exertions of the large spotted beetle (*Pelidnota punctata*, Linn.), which is sometimes sufficiently numerous to be destructive, in the southern portions of western Canada. A more common enemy is the Flea-beetle (*Graptodera chalybea*, Illig.), which early in the season begins its work of eating holes in the buds and leaves. Dusting with lime, when the leaves are wet with dew, will probably be found a good preventive against this little insect; the use of very strong soapsuds is also recommended.

Current and Gooseberry bushes are only too liable to the attacks of caterpillars, as most gardeners know by bitter experience. In many parts of the country we shall no doubt have a repetition this summer of the hordes of destroyers that did so much mischief to our bushes last year; it will be well, therefore, to be prepared for vigorous measures of defence. Hand-picking is the only means that we can recommend for the extermination of the larvae of both the Saw-fly and the Currant-moth (vide CANADA FARMER, vol. II. page 231.)

Current bushes are also very subject to the attacks of two borers, one the larvæ of a beetle (*Pachnoderus supernotatus*, Say), the other of a wasp-like moth (*Trochilium tipuliforme*, Linn.). Both of these feed upon the pith of the stalks which they often completely hollow out, and of course, very soon kill. Dr. Fitch gives some very good advice respecting them, which gardeners would do well to follow; he says:—"The utter carelessness with which the currant is treated in most of our gardens, with a thicket of young shoots annually left unpruned and crowding upon and smothering each other, gives these borers and other pernicious insects the utmost facilities for lurking unmolested and pursuing their devastating work without interruption. Were this shrub suitably trimmed, and kept thinned out to only three or four stalks from each root, these stalks, growing freely exposed to the light and air, would be little if any, infested by these depredating insects. As these worms remain in the dead stalks through the winter, their destruction is easily effected. By breaking off all the dead brittle stalks at the surface of the ground and burning them, these borers may at once be exterminated from the garden. But they will soon find their way back again unless the bushes are well pruned every year."