

Entomological Department.

To Exterminate Ants.

The N. Y. *World* tells how housekeepers can rid themselves of red, and black ants. It says that one succeeded by filling cups with water, and placing them under the sink and cupboard, removing all crumbs, and everything they could eat, from the shelves. They all left. Another way is to wash the places they haunt with strong alum-water, and leave it standing in a vessel thereabouts. Another mode is to place a fresh meat bone where the ants can get at it, and they flock to it in large numbers. When they are on it, dip in hot water, repeat a few times, and the ants will have disappeared. Another remedy is to boil four ounces of quassia in a gallon of water, for ten minutes, and add four ounces of soap. This poured on their nests will destroy them. This is intended to destroy a nest of black ants, when it is found. For red ants, another remedy that has proved successful is: Take six or seven drops of oxalic acid, and mix it with a small teacupful of melted lard, and set this preparation wherever the ants are troublesome, and they will disappear in a short space of time. Carbolic acid, applied with a swab of raw cotton, on a thin stick, to the edge of the shelves, and where they seem to come from, will cause them to disappear, but before it is applied, all butter, and milk, should be removed from the vicinity, for both will absorb the odor emitted therefrom, which will give flavor thereto. But ants will not haunt the vicinity of carbolic acid, whether they are black, or red ants. Pulverized borax, sprinkled about the places infested by ants, is said to exterminate them. Another way adopted by some housekeepers, is to saturate a sponge with water, and sprinkle it with fine, powdered sugar. The ants will enter it, and may be immersed in boiling water, and thus destroyed. Wash the place infested with creosote soap, or spirits of turpentine, and it is said they will avoid it.

A strong colony of bees have been known to build one hundred square inches of comb in twenty-four hours; at that rate over sixty sheets of comb a foot square could be constructed in three months. The editor of the *Annals of Bee Culture* has had a report of a swarm that built nine sheets of comb, ten by thirteen inches, in ten days.

CATCHING BEES.—Although bugs are generally found asleep at this time of year, it may be well to keep in mind the following method of destroying them, when the growing season comes again. If potato bugs could be trapped by a tar barrel, what a discovery that would be. A writer in a French horticultural journal relates this suggestive experience: "After sunset I place in the centre of my orchard an old barrel, the inside of which I have previously tarred. At the bottom of the barrel I place a lighted lamp. Insects of many kinds, attracted by the light, make for the lamp, and, while circling around it, strike against the sides of the barrel, where meeting with the tar, their wings and legs become so clogged that they fall helpless to the bottom. In the morning I examine the barrel and frequently take out of it ten or twelve gallons of cockchafer, which I at once destroy. A few pence worth of tar employed in this way will, without any further trouble, be the means of destroying innumerable numbers of these insects, whose larvae are among the most destructive pests the gardener or farmer has to contend against."

HOW DO PARASITIC INSECTS DETECT THEIR PREY?—A variety of opinions have been expressed as to the means by which ichneumon flies, and other parasitic insects discover the living objects upon which they seek to deposit their eggs. Some have inferred that this is done by sight, others by smell, or by the operation of some peculiar sense unknown to us. The rapid movements of some of the Hymenopterous parasites, which attack caterpillars, would rather lead one to suppose that the sense of touch is an agent, if not the sole agent. These flies may be noticed running rapidly up and down leaves and twigs, with vibrating antennae and palpi, sometimes going over very nearly the same ground again and again, which they would hardly do if they chiefly depended upon their eyes, and were any odor given forth which led them to their victims, these flies would hardly wander about in the manner we see. It is quite possible that they may detect even the larvae of Tortricids, by the feel of the leaf enclosing these, though the larvae themselves are screened. —J. R. S. C., in *Hardwicke's Science Gossip*.

Poultry Yard.

Brown Leghorns.

This now and beautiful variety of fowls has lately become very popular in the United States, and bids fair to out-rival some of the more widely known breeds. In size it is somewhat larger than the White Leghorn and hardier, and like the whites of the non-



sitting class. It is an abundant layer, of hardy constitution, capable of sustaining excellent health during the long and vigorous winters of our climate and is soon destined to become a general favorite to the farmer as well as the fancier.

Mr. F. J. Kinney, writing in *The Pet Stock, Pigeon and Poultry Bulletin* of May, 1873, says:—"I have bred Brown Leghorn fowls carefully for twenty years. My first I bought on board a ship in Boston Harbor, in the spring of 1853, which was the first trio I ever saw, and which I believe to have been the first ever brought to America. I have since had two other small lots direct from the city of Leghorn in Italy, and expect more soon from the same place. The first trio weighed 13½ lbs., and were yearlings. Their combs and wattles were very large and coarse; ear lobes entirely red, same as face, comb and wattles. They were not Black Red Games, nor Black Red Leghorns, but Brown Red, i. e., the cock's breast was dark brown, spotted with lighter brown, the dark brown running up under side of the neck; his hackle was light brown, striped with black, the hens were feathered and colored same as the good ones are now, the colors being very distinct and the pencilling the most beautiful of any fowl I ever saw, and the most distinct." A second importation by the same writer seems to have confirmed still more his opinion of the Brown Leghorns as a separate breed of fowl, they also having red ear-lobes; other importations by different breeders followed, all of which came from Leghorn or its vicinity and hence the name of the fowl. Considerable difference of opinion prevails as to the true color of the ear-lobe—some writers, Mr. Kenny among the number, state that the first importations all had red ear-lobes. Other writers are equally confident that there are several with white—be that as it may, it is now pretty well understood among fanciers that the deaf-ear-lobes should be white, and no doubt this will be the standard for exhibition. Much improvement in Brown Leghorns has been made since the first importations took place—and several writers in poultry journals have given their respective views of the breed—all speaking highly of them. We quote those of a well known fancier, Mr. W. E. Bonney:—"In Brown Leghorn fowls, their gay plumage, lively appearance, and, in fact, every feature connected with them is attractive and pleasing, and in this class we must soon recognize the leading variety, whether for fancy or profit.

They mature early; I have known pullets to commence laying at three months of age, and continue laying during the entire season. They are non-sitters; and I never saw a case of roup or any hereditary disease among my fowls during the whole period of my successful breeding. I have bred all classes of fowls, and by far give the Brown Leghorn the preference, I shall continue making a specialty of them, adding fresh imported blood when needed. I have bred them since 1860 (the first importation into this country being in 1852), and when I commenced to breed they would hatch all colors—black, brown, dominique, and in 1863 I had one white chicken (a pullet). Since then I have added fresh blood, sparing no pains to get select stock, and by careful breeding have accomplished their hatching true to color.

In the *Illustrated Book of Poultry* the author states that "the first Brown Leghorns ever received in England were sent to ourselves by the kindness of Mr. A. M. Halsted." "We might," the author adds, "describe the birds very briefly as combining the Spanish comb and type of head and body, with the color or plumage of black red game of a rather darkish type, the cock being a black breasted bird, with hackles orange red, striped with black, and the hen salmon-breasted, with the rest of the plumage partridge-marked, or brown finely pencilled over with dark markings. They are somewhat larger than white Leghorns, and rather shorter on the leg, averaging about half a pound heavier in the opinion of American breeders. Being anxious to test the stock, and having some suspicion the birds might have been created by crossing White Leghorns with Game, we hatched a brood of chicks on the 1st August. Except one or two broken, every egg hatched, and not a chick died. We know no fowls which feather so quickly, except Houdans and Andalusians. Being very short of room and accommodation, owing to a recent removal, the chicks had an open shed to roost in, but grew up perfectly hardy, and with no care whatever, in spite of the very late date of hatching. They were very uniform in color in their first feathers, but in their second or adult plumage two of the cockerels moulted black, all but some reddish feathers on the hackle and wings. The pullets varied little, two being just like the mother, and the rest of the same type, but darker, somewhat like darkish grey Dorkings. One cockerel was just like the father, and a fourth brown breasted. On the whole, and considering the want of what English fanciers consider careful breeding in nearly all American stock, we were surprised and gratified by the degree of uniformity thus apparent, and fully convinced that the breed was genuine, or a really distinct race." "Our decided opinion is that in intrinsic value the Brown Leghorn is the best of all the American breeds, especially if size as well as number of eggs be taken into consideration. The constitution is hardy, the shape and carriage sprightly; the color neat, handsome, and at the same time adapted for wear; the flesh very good; the growth quick; and the eggs both large and numerous. The following is the American standard for Brown Leghorns as given in the work already quoted from.

Color of Cock.

Beak—yellow. Comb, face and wattle—Bright red. Ear-lobe—Pure opaque white. Head—rich reddish bay, shading into lighter tinge on the neck. Hackle—Rich golden red, each feather striped with black. Back, shoulder coverts and wing-bow—Very dark red, approaching black; on the lower part of the back each feather tipped or mooned with golden bay. Breast under part of body and thighs—Black. Wing coverts—Rich metallic black. Wing primaries—Black, each feather edged with brown. Wing secondaries—Black, with the outside web broadly edged with brown. Saddle—Rich reddish bay, each feather striped with black, the stripe being quite broad near the butt of the feather, and narrowing to the point.