

the shelves the eggs were hatching, and men were engaged where they were nearly all hatched in separating them; they tossed the little ones, as well as the eggs which showed signs of animation, very roughly and carelessly into baskets at considerable distance, greatly endangering the strangers' lives, from concussion, fracture of limbs, &c., in our estimation, but in John's opinion it merely broke the shells, and thus enabled them the better to extricate themselves. The ducklings, after remaining a few hours to dry and extricate themselves from the shells, were placed on the floor in little moveable basket-work inclosures of bamboo, and supplied with a kind of grass chopped up for food, which they ate with an appetite which showed that they fully appreciated it. This grass was placed in little baskets with broad bottoms, so that they could not be over-set, and the vertical splints continued upward and were tied together at the top, so as to afford slats in the manner of a horse's manger; they could stick in their heads in the scramble for their first breakfast, but could not trample the food under their feet. I presume the young are transferred almost immediately to the boats, as I did not see any which appeared more than a week old.

At the back of their room is a mud wall partition with a door in the centre, and two other walls running back at right angles to it, dividing the back end of the building into three small apartments—one for the furnaces of charcoal, &c., the middle one serves as entrance, and the third is the apartment appropriated to the most delicate part of the process. This has a board floor, raised about four feet from the ground, beneath which are placed the furnaces, if necessary. The apartment itself was very dark and smothering; not much gas or smoke, but high temperature. This apartment contained about ten barrels lined with the flannel paper, *stratum super stratum*, about three or four inches thick. In these barrels the process begins, and continues till within two or three days of its termination, when they go to the shelves in the front room. The barrels are almost filled with eggs, a sheet of paper being interposed between each layer of about six inches, and the whole covered with three or four sheets of the flannel paper, and a thick, light lid, composed in part of the same material.

The whole arrangement seems to be a most perfect protection from sudden changes of temperature, and I am under the impression that the eggs are handled a great deal, as they opened them without any hesitation, and even asked us if we would not like to invest capital in the business, for which they offered to pay two per cent. a month, or a share of the profits, which were certain to be equivalent.

#### A NEGRO DISCUSSION ABOUT EGGS.

—We are indebted to an exchange for the following: "In the fairest village of Western New York the 'culled passons,' in emulation of their white brethren, formed a debating society for the purpose of improving their minds by the discussion of instructive and entertaining topics. The deliberations of the society were presided over by a venerable darkey, who performed the duties with the utmost dignity peculiar to his colour. The subject for discussion on the occasion of which we write was: 'Which am de mudder of de chicken—de hen wot lay de egg, or de hen wot hatches de chick?' The question was warmly debated, and many reasons *pro* and *con* were urged and combated by the excited disputants. Those in favour of the latter proposition were evidently in the majority, and the president made no attempt to conceal that his sympathies were with the dominant party. At length an intelligent darkey arose from the minority side, and begged leave to state a proposition to this effect: 'Spouse,' said he, 'dat you set one dozen duck's eggs under a hen, and dey hatch, which am de mudder, de duck or de hen?' This was a poser, was well put, and non-plussed the other side, even staggering the president, who plainly saw the force of the argument, but had committed himself too far to yield without a struggle; so, after cogitating, and scratching his wool a few minutes, a bright idea struck him. Rising from his chair in all the pride of conscious superiority, he announced: 'Ducks am not before de house; chickens am de question; before I rule de ducks out!' and do it he did, to the complete overthrow of his opponents."