

Willamette Farmer.

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SALEM, FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 1877.

The Tick Question

APRIL 2, 1877.

ED. FARMER: I am rather sorry the Tick question has closed as I had a few things to say about the animal, seeing it has assumed so much importance.

In regard to Professor Johnson's say about ticks—I am inclined to think his ideas are based upon his reading of the Eastern tick. I would suggest that we have a different tick here, or, what is more probable, several different species of them. I know that some of them have wings, and it is quite probable with me that they all do at the period of egg-laying (if this last is their way of propagating the species.) That we have different species is apparent from the fact that we have, among our mature growth, some as large as the end of your finger, and nearly exactly round, while some at maturity are quite small, flat and elongated. The Eastern tick also seemed inclined to fasten upon and feed upon the human body, while the Oregon tick seems to have no inclination of the sort.

It was about the tenth of October, some six years ago, in the neighborhood of Sweet Home, Linn Co., where Mr. J. W. Gilliland showed me some ticks having wings. He had just killed a deer when I saw some dozen or twenty singular flying insects flitting about in a disturbed condition. In answer to my inquiry as to what they were, Mr. Gilliland said they were ticks, and caught one and showed it to me; so there is no mistake about Oregon ticks having wings. I suppose then, that like all other insects which pass through different phases of life, eventually assuming the winged state, they make this their propagating period. This period, others have informed me, is in September and October. This, I believe, I have noticed some of my horses in September with the hair on their sides and backs terribly confused, as though the horse had been bitten himself, caused, I supposed, by some local irritation in the skin. I examined several but could find no cause. Some two or three months hence, however, I found them covered with ticks. My conclusion was that the irritation was caused by the flying tick, in crawling about the horse depositing his eggs upon the skin, and that these eggs hatched out all through the Winter, but principally in November and December.

Like Mr. Finlayson, I have looked a considerable upon the bush for them, but have never seen one there yet.

I will suggest this to all interested—that they procure sulphur and mix sulphur and salt in about equal quantities and feed your horses all through September and October, once or twice a week, and the ticks will not bother your horses that Winter. After losing two fine colts in one early Winter, the next Fall I tried the above remedy and succeeded to a fraction.

I see some say they will not bother a fat horse. This is all bosh, as some of mine, the fattest in the Fall, suffered the most the following Winter. Ticks seem to make a fat horse poor, and this fact accounts for that opinion. About Oak gnats producing them—the horse being their most acceptable home, they hence wherever dropped from the horse, if there is brush to protect them in their transformation. As the horse, in feeding, roams much more in oak than fir, this will account for that opinion.

As to ticks and Darwinism, it is wrong in Mr. Finlayson to raise that question. If some disciple of Darwin thinks his father or grandfather was a tick, just let him think so. If it is any consolation to him, it were doubtless very low origin, and if, perchance, they are satisfied with it, let them enjoy it. As to Mr. Finlayson, myself and the editor of the FARMER, we claim a higher origin. Mr. Pick is not authority for us.

ELMER MATHIAS.

Another.

McMINSVILLE, April 1, 1877.

ED. FARMER: I see, by reading your paper, that the Tick question is the great absorbing topic of the day, and to settle this important subject in the minds of the unopinionated I would simply say that I have studied ichthyology some little, and I discover that ticks, like all other vermin, are generated from filth and carelessness, and to get rid of them on horses, and especially on colts, mix one teaspoonful of cayenne pepper with a common feed of chop or bran, then feed to the animal, and then, if Mr. Tick doesn't let loose his strong hold and disappear, I will pay all damages.

T. B. C.

The story of Trowell's escape and wanderings is full of exciting and romantic interest. He disappeared December 8, a year ago, and was concealed by professional criminals, in actual sight of New York, and subsequently at the lonely burglars' rendezvous on Staten Island until toward the middle of February following. Thence he went to Florida where he remained till last summer, part of the time in the coast light house, whence he crossed to Cuba, and thence proceeded to Spain in the vessel from which he was captured on her arrival. Weighing nearly 300 pounds in his palmy days, he shrank to 155 but is now rapidly improving.

PORTLAND, April 21, 1877.

EDITOR OF THE FARMER: In your last paper a boy nine years old wrote about a dog. He copied it from the Pacific Coast Third Reader, on page 29. I think that is not fair. I am a little boy nine years old.

CHARLES W. GIBBS.

Don't Kill the Birds.

There is trouble on our track if we do not at once take measures to protect and increase the bird family. The insects are siter us; their numbers are legion; every plant, almost, has its enemy. Many of them have a host of enemies that are making war upon our success in cultivating them, and yet we invite the sportsman to come in and destroy our only ally in the ever-present conflict we are holding with the insect host. All these enemies are rapidly on the increase, and the destruction is fabulous in amount. Prof. Aughey is the authority for the statement that "the amount of damage done in a year throughout the United States, by insects, is not less than \$400,000,000. Illinois, alone has suffered to the amount of \$73,000,000 in a single year." Seventy-three millions of dollars in one State, destroyed by insects in one year; and yet bird-killing goes on under the protection of the law. Some rash individuals claim that birds do not destroy insects. If those persons will examine the stomach of a bird killed by these hunters, they will no longer assert that the bird has not a host of enemies. The birds are not faithful to his post performing duty. If these insects are not destroyed in some manner, what may we expect? Prof. Aughey is authority for the following, also: "Apple, pear and plum trees have about 100 species of insect enemies; 50 species of insects interfere with grape culture. There are at least 25 insect enemies to our gardens. Most species of insects have a marvelous fecundity; one pair of grain weevils will produce 6,000 young between April and August." According to Reamer, one aphid, or plant-louse, may become the progenitor, in a single season, of 6,000,000,000. The female wasp produces, in one season, 30,000. The white ant deposits eggs at the average rate of sixty to a minute. Our own silkworm, which feeds so largely on our wild plums, produces from 500 to 1,000 eggs per season. Learn these facts; and yet the gunner is permitted to destroy our greatest hope, the trustworthiness of the insectivorous class; and all that are sought by the hunter are of the family that is continually destroying the great enemy of our harvests. Dogs and traps should be prohibited by the most stringent legislation enacted. The few days of respect from labor and the other, that are found in the field or forest with the dog and gun, may be missed; but what is that in comparison with the fabulous amounts destroyed by humoring the desire and removing the protection to the crops, and our bread and butter? Let the experiment be tried for three years, or permitting no one at any time of year to kill any bird or fowl. Such a law would work hardships to no one, and it saving to the West might be in amount more than our national debt. The law-makers of our several States now in session should take prompt and united action in the matter, and enforce it at once.—Factory and Farm.

Managing Poultry.

[Paper of I. K. Fitch, read before the Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture.]

Raising chickens should pay a profit of nearly one hundred per cent., but if neglected they will run one in debt. To smaller the flock the greater the individual yield. Fifty hens are the largest number that should be allowed to run in one flock. The roosts should be low and level, and not one above another, like the rounds of a ladder. The chickens will all seek the highest roost, and many will be crowded out, and probably injured by falling. Hens that are accustomed to low roosts are less inclined to scold fences, and may be kept in pens with less trouble. The ground under the roosts should be of loose gravel, mixed with loam. Two yards are better than one, as one may be cultivated while the other is occupied. In this way roots and other forage may be grown for the fowls on land fertilized by their droppings. The open shed is very inferior, as affording protection from cold in winter and heat in summer.

I would feed swill or dough in the morning, green cabbage, roots or other forage at noon, and grain at night. Hens must be fed well to be profitable, and it will care for any like a machine with the power applied to it must work. If hens are well fed they must lay eggs or die. Clover rouse is excellent for winter feeding, in place of the green stuff which they get in summer.

Close breeding for three years will cause the eggs to be unferile. Breed every year, and change old stock for new. Young fowls pay much better than old ones. Brahmins should seldom be kept more than two years, if one is seeking the greatest profit. Never keep more than one hundred growing chickens in the same yard, and if of different ages not so many. For setting hens I prefer half barrels without heads, set in the ground half their depth. Make nests of hay on the earth. In cold weather such nests exclude cold air from beneath the eggs. In warm weather the earth should be moistened by pouring on a pail of water. Sitters should be kept by themselves to prevent any annoyance from other hens. A coop placed over the nest is large enough to allow of a dust bath works well. Have food convenient so the bird can eat and go back to the nest before the eggs get cold.

AMERICAN FLOWS FOR RUSSIA.—The American Agriculturalist for March, the 1st says: One of the most noticeable of recent occurrences is the purchase of ten thousand American plows by the Russian Government, for distribution among the farmers of Russia.

There is more in this than would seem to be at first sight. It is certainly a great compliment as well as a valuable acknowledgment of merit to American agricultural implement makers, but it implies that the competition of American farmers in the European grain trade has touched what has been considered an invulnerable spot. The wheat growers of Southern Russia supply what is known as the Black Sea trade, and being much nearer to the market than we are their wheat has had a great advantage over ours. But American wheat has displaced the Russian wheat, to a considerable extent, in the English market, and the Russian farmers have now to exert themselves to hold even in the Black Sea trade. Hence it is determined to try the plows that we are using, with a view to produce wheat more cheaply than hitherto. But there is something else needed. The man that holds the plow is of more account than the plow, and there are no farmers in the world who are more ignorant of more skillful than American farmers. But we cannot afford to rest upon what we have gained. The important fact noticed shows that our competitors are by no means idle, and intend to improve their methods of work as far as possible. We must meet their improvements by others of our own.

BOOKBINDING.—Mrs. Snyder is carrying on the business of a bookbinder in Salem. Her establishment is in Gray's block. If you have any books that need re-binding, or any sheets of music that you wish to preserve, or any other binding to be done, call on her, and you will have the work done in the best manner. She does all the work that pertains to a book-binder.

Another case of smallpox has been reported in Seattle, in which the patient, a woman by the name of Elizabeth Ransage, died.

BREEDS FOR THE DAIRY.

At the annual meeting of the Western Reserve Dairymen's Association of Ohio, just closed in relation to breed of cows best for milk, or for dairymen to feed for milk, and for the utility, the following testimony was given as reported in the Ohio Farmer: Mr. Olds has kept nothing but grade Shorthorns for years, and he regarded them as much more profitable than any others; they were good milkers, and were valuable when wanted for beef. Mr. Taylor had an Ayrshire heifer that came in at two years old, and for sixty days gave forty-two and three-quarter pounds of milk per day, on the average. This year, at three years old, she averaged thirty-four pounds per day. His neighbor, Mr. Fuller had several Ayrshires and they averaged ten pounds per day more than his other weight in milk in nine-teen days. He had another good cow, named B. Lee had an Ayrshire that came in at two years, and gave an average of thirty-five pounds per day for 100 days—all before she was three years old. 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