Grange Column.

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Poultry.

The Wonders of an Egg.

Mr. Matthieu Williams, in one of his lectures, says: "Everyone who eats his matutinal egg eats a sermon and a miracle. Inside of that smooth, symmetrical, beautiful shell lurks a question which has been the Troy town for all the philosophers and scientists since Adam. Armed with the engines of war—the microscope, the scales, the offensive weapons of chemistry and reason—they have probed and weighed and experimented, and still the question is unsolved, the citadel unsacked. Prof. Bokorny can tell you that albumen is composed of so many molecules or carbon and nitrogen and hydrogen, and can persuade you of the difference between active and passive albumen, and can show by wonderfully delicate experiments what the aldehydes have to do in the separation of gold from his complicated solutions; but he can't tell why from one egg comes a 'little rid hin,' and from another a bantam. You leave your little silver spoon an hour in your egg-cup, and it is coated with a compound of sulphur. Why is that sulphur there? Wonderful, that evolution should provide for the bones of the future hen! There is phosphorous also in that little microcism; and the oxygen of the air passing through the shell, unites with it, and the acid dissolves the shell, thus making good strong bones for the chick and at the same time thinning the prison walls. Chemists know a good deal now about albumen; and, if they cannot tell us why life differentiates itself therein and thereby, they can tell you how not to spoil your breakfast."

Just Too Funny for Anything.

A paper was sent to us, says an exchange, in which appears an article by one who had tried an incubator and had failed. The writer thus gives his conclusions: "When I heard the first chicken chirp in my incubator and realized clear down in my boots that I was a mother, and had the documents right there to prove it, in spite of the cold, unfeeling fact that I was regarded by the world as a baldheaded man of much sadness, I felt as though I was worth a million dollars; but when six months later, I had to pawn my overcoat in mid winter to buy corn meal, I felt that I had been blessed with too much profuseness to suit the size of my flour barrel. When you see a man with hollow eyes, haggard cheeks, unshaven face and lifeless hair, shambling around in an aimless, homeless sort of a way, looking as though he hadn't slept, washed or combed himself for a month, bet every cent that you can raise that he owns an incubator, which has just begun to fire its possibilities at him with a desperation of energy that will kill him if he don't blow the light out. That's what it means to monkey with a hen roost on scientific principles, and as I love all mankind I want everybody to know it. When somebody tells you that the easiest way on earth to get rich with quickness and dispatch is to buy an incubator and plunge into the chicken business, pull down the corner of your eye and immediately give him a front view of your back."

Lime Cure for Chicken Gapes.

Gapes have interfered seriously with the pleasure and profit of chicken breeding at Kirby Homestead for years. Twirling in the windpipe a feather dipped with kerosene oil has saved some; blowing lime into the windpipe has saved others, but each experiment has made inroads on a busy man's time about equal to the value of the subject. And so between the time spent and the chickens lost there was a poor margin for any satisfaction. This year an attempt was made to outflank the gape worms by putting the chickens on new grounds upon the supposition that the things did not grow spontaneously, and fresh ground would be free. No use; when the time came the chickens began gaping, and at length reached a period when they did not do much else. The whole brood, eight, were the same way. A new idea dawned—to kill or cure, and the chicks, collected in a peck measure with a bag over it, were taken to the big house chamber, where was a barrel with a lot of dry air slacked lime in it. The barrel was turned down on the side and the lime stirred until the dust was as thick in the air as it could be, and then the measure with the chicks in it was put in and the bag was hung over the end of the barrel to keep the dust in. After two or three minutes the chicks were taken out and the experiment was repeated four times. There was a great deal of sneezing in the barrel but it finished the gapes. The cure was perfect. I presume three trials would be enough. Although I was careful as I could be, enough of the dust got in my lungs to feel it for several hours. I am satisfied that this heroic way is the proper thing to do with this trouble—N. Y. Tribune.

Condition Powders.

Many give condition powders with the ordinary food every day. The dealers in these powders know that much feeding is done "without rhyme or reason," and supply some important requisites of a perfect food in their mixture. Condition powders ought only to be given occasionally, although they may be fed regularly to sick hens. A cheap and efficient powder may be made by mixing common salt, one pound; chloride of iron, one ounce; fenugreek, one pound; ground ginger, two ounces; and charcoal, one pound. Fenugreek and ginger are tonics, while the charcoal corrects stomach disorders. Give but little of this food at a time. A tablespoonful mixed with the soft food given in the morning will be sufficient for a dozen fowls.—Ex.

The Apiary.

Something About Bees.

The statement is made says the Poultry and Farm Journal, that careless, lazy or slovenly persons should not attempt to keep bees. The care of an apiary is work for the brain as well as for the hands and feet.

Every bee master should take special pains in spring to ascertain constantly the amount of stores each hive contains. If he has uncapped most of the honey, and this has resulted in a larger supply being required to maintain the increasing number of bees, it is evident the hive will starve unless syrup is applied to it, or honey in considerable quantities is being gathered. A stimulated hive requires additional care in this respect, and its wants must be supplied artificially, if they are not satisfied naturally. All necessary handling of bees should be done with the utmost rapidity, and with just as little disturbance of the arrangements of the bees as possible. To this end all arrangements of racks and boxes should be easily adjusted, so that in removing surplus the bees need to be exposed as little and for as short a time as possible. If a hive is kept open for a long time, while complicated gimcracks are torn apart and fitted together again, robbing is apt to be induced in seasons of the best honey flow, and the workers soon find out that their attention is wanted at home to protect the stores, and to re-establish the the destroyed order of the hive, even if the demoralization is not communicated to all colonies, and a consequent serious loss of honey is the result.

Comb Foundation.

Persons of bee keeping experience know how to value extra comb as a help in building up new colonies. Before the days of artificial comb foundation, a single brood frame filled with worker comb, had a value to the bee-keepers of at least one dollar, when needed in the spring. Comb foundation, which answers the purpose quite as well as fully constructed comb, sells for about fifty cents a pound, and two pounds is sufficient to furnish an ordinary hive.

Comb building is a slow and expensive work for the bees. Observations have made out that it takes as much labor and time to construct one pound of comb, as it does to store 20 pounds of honey with the comb furnished. Thus we can see why comb honey sells for a higher price than extracted. If a person will take a piece of comb, shave off the cells on either side of the cell bases, he will have a sheet of wax with indentations; this is comb foundation. Man has invented a machine to make these impressions on thin sheets of beeswax, which, when completed into comb by the bees, can hardly be told from that constructed entirely within the hive. The true value of comb foundation cannot be realized until after a trial of its use. When made by machinery, foundation is thick, and heavier than the natural. But in this way it is an advantage, as the bees in making the bases of the cells thin, the surplus wax in building the side walls.

This invention belongs to the Germans. They first, about twenty years ago, used thin wax suspended in frames, then afterwards succeeded in making impressions on the wax to resemble cell bases. A few years later, comb foundation was greatly improved in America. By means of delicate machinery, manufacturers were enabled to make it almost as perfect as the natural comb, besides furnishing high sides to the bases as an aid to the construction of the cells. These high sides make the cell nearly one-eighth of an inch deep, and this is as near as man ever came, to imitating comb honey. It requires an expert to detect artificial foundation in comb honey. Its use is not adulteration, for bees accept nothing but pure beeswax, and this they work over into quite a natural state.

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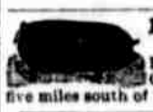

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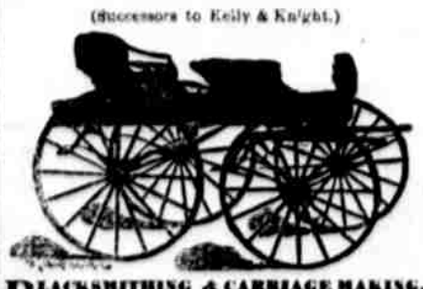

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