

Agricultural.

HOW TO RAISE GEESE.

C. N. Bennet, in the *Country Gentleman*, says that of all our domestic birds none are so profitable as geese, where there are facilities for keeping them; for there are none which can do so much for themselves when alive, and none that come to so little waste when dead. Unlike the fowl, all parts of the goose are equally good, besides which every feather is of value, greater than that of any other of our domestic birds.

The profits to be derived from geese feathers is not anywhere to be neglected; it is now and always has been an important article and commands a high price. An acquaintance of the writer, who is particular in keeping his feathers clean, finds a ready market at the highest price. A common goose will yield from 15 to 17 ounces, while the Bremen variety, being of larger size and always white, yield on an average from one to three ounces more feathers, and of a better quality, having more down attached to them than the common brown goose.

Geese have been accused of poisoning and rendering the spots where they feed, offensive to other stock; but the secret of this is very simple. A horse bites closer than an ox; a sheep goes nearer the ground than a horse; but after the sharpest shaving by sheep, the goose will polish up the turf and grow fat upon the remnants of others. Consequently, where geese are kept in numbers on a small area, little will be left to maintain any other grass-eating creature. But if the commons are not short, it will not be found that other grazing animals object to feed after a flock of geese.

The best locality for keeping geese is a wild range, for where water and grass are plenty we need go no further. Water of such size and depth as will permit at least a daily "paddle," is essential for stock birds, for here they resort as soon as they are set at liberty from the place of their night's rest. The presence of water appears essential to the fertility of the eggs.

We will suppose that the goose keeper (for there are those who are not farmers) commences operations by purchasing ten geese in the spring, before they begin to lay, at \$1 each. Eight of the ten geese, (for two should be ganders,) will have, on an average, ten goslings each; but allowing one-half for paper calculation, and probably less through the season, it will leave us with a flock of fifty, old and young, worth, when dressed for the market, not a dollar, the original cost, but half that sum, and you have \$25. In addition to this, every old goose will yield one pound of feathers, and every young one three-fourths of a pound, making in all 40 pounds, which, added to the \$25, gives us \$50 20. We say net profit, for there is not one goose-keeper in ten that feeds his geese, old or young, after the grass has started in the spring, until fattening time in the fall; and then their quills will often pay for their food. The above calculation is made, having reference to the usual mode of managing this fowl, which is no management at all. Because, in the first place, they have generally no place to obtain their food but on the open common, except such as they too often steal from meadows, to the great injury of the standing grass and to the feelings of the owner, and very frequently putting their own necks in jeopardy.

But, on the other hand, if the owner will provide a good, warm and dry house for the accommodation of his geese while laying and hatching, and attached to this a pasture, where they may at all times have access to green grass and a small stream or pond of water, with the due attention and right bird, which, in our opinion, is the Bremen, and our word for it, with only ordinary good luck, he will receive more than ordinary profit on the care bestowed and capital invested.

PLAN FOR A HEN-HOUSE.—A correspondent of the *Boston Cultivator*, gives the following description of a plan for a hen-house for about thirty hens.

Let the enclosed part be about twelve feet square, with roof very sharp; walls four feet high; the side sills and plates sixteen feet long, so as to form a portico at one end of the building; let this be floored, the flooring to extend two feet into the enclosed building, the remaining part well underpinned without any floor. Construct a feeding trough across the porticoed end, four inches wide and three deep, leaving space for a watering trough at one end of it. The hens

should be kept out of these with vertical slabs two inches wide, two and a half inches apart, and eighteen in height. On the top of this construct the nests, two tiers or more, one above the other; have some nests, so as to shut your laying hens from the setters. Leave no chance for roosting above or over the nests. Have shutters to the feeding and watering troughs, and nests all open downwards. Construct windows so that the sun may shine in the henery during the day. Let the entrance door be in the end opposite the portico. The roosts should be built like a ladder, set at an angle of 45 degrees. Under these throw fresh loam every few weeks. The object of the portico is, that the hens may be fed and the eggs withdrawn without going into the henery, meanwhile the poultryman is protected from the inclemency of the weather."

THE NEW YEAR'S GIFT.

"To-morrow will be the last day of the old year," remarked the young and handsome Mrs. Harmon to her husband, as they sat at breakfast. "I hope, my dear, you have decided on a nice New Year's present for me."

Mr. Harmon pushed back his chair and looked abstractedly at the fire, as if matters of more weight than New Year's gifts were passing in his mind. His wife, however, did not observe his inattention, but continued her remarks.

"I saw a magnificent mantle at Swan and Edgar's to-day, and so cheap too!—positively, they only asked three pounds for it! Would you have believed it? They have elegant shawls too; one—but I will leave it all to your own choice. I know you will be sure to give me an elegant present."

"Hum—yes—thirtieth to-day?" observed her husband, as if awakening from a reverie. "Smith's note falls due to-day, and that two hundred to-morrow. Dear—dear—how the time flies."

"Going to business so early?" said his wife. "I have several things to arrange with you about our party next week, therefore I shall require some money from you. Well, if you must go now we will talk it over in the evening. Good-bye! Mind, the day after to-morrow is New Year's day."

Mr. Harmon took his way to his place of business in a very thoughtful mood. He had been married about ten months, and during that time his domestic peace had been undisturbed by a single breeze, and yet for the latter part of the time he had been anything but a happy man. A cloud hovered over his spirits, and the cloud became darker every day.

When he married he was a young beginner in the mercantile world, but in a fair way of business. His wife was taken from the upper circles, and was consequently accustomed to gaieties and luxuries to which he had been a stranger. He could not, however, find it in his heart to deprive her of anything to which she had been accustomed, and so he kept up an expensive style of living, utterly unsuited to his means. He had given his wife a very handsome sum on their wedding-day, for her own especial use as pocket-money, and the extravagant expenditure of his household being added to this, soon crippled his resources. Latterly he had become painfully conscious of his downward course, and he was more aware of it on that December morning, when he found a note due, and hardly a possibility of meeting it. He had determined frequently for the last two months to look into his affairs, but never could summon sufficient resolution to face the dreadful array of figures and facts. On this day he determined to set about it in earnest.

He directed his clerk to draw up a statement of the position of the business, and then he proceeded to look around for means to pay Smith's note. Eventually this was accomplished, and the evil day put off.

That night there was a torrent of playful questions poured on him as to the nature of the intended present, and his pretty wife guessed and wondered what it could be that he kept so secret and appeared so grave about it.

The next day the clerk handed Mr. Harmon the balance-sheet. The first glance at it struck a chill to his heart. He passed into his private room, and placing the paper on the table, sat down and looked at it as if it were a deadly serpent. At last he summoned his courage, and with a countenance rigid as marble, went through all the withering details. There was no error—no miscalculation. The clerk had performed his task but too correctly, and had stated in incontrovertible figures that the young merchant was ruined!—hopelessly, irretrievably ruined. He clenched his fingers in his hair, and

resting his elbows on the table, glared on the document as if he would have burnt out the figures with his fiery looks. Then the thought of his wife came, and he bowed his head and wept like a child. He felt so thoroughly miserable as he turned towards home that evening that he dreaded to meet his wife, but fortunately she was out visiting and had not returned. Hastily despatching his meal he again went to his counting-house to brood over the evidence of his ruin, and to consider if there were no means of averting it.

When Mrs. Harmon returned and discovered her husband's departure she smiled, and concluding that he was gone to purchase the present for the following morning, thought no more of it.

Night wore on, but the spirit-broken man still sat in his counting-house, his head resting on his hands, with the fatal document extended on the table between his elbows. His eyes were riveted to the one item that showed him to be a beggar. A current of bitter reflections was passing rapidly through his mind.

"To-morrow, and the whole city will know it," said he. "My clerk knows it already, and is doubtless talking of it among his friends; and in a day or two the creditors will be swarming around my doors. Lydia will also know it—will know that the husband she supposed so rich is penniless and in debt. Will she not turn from me in scorn? Will she not say I have deceived her, and then leave me for the home of her parents? Oh, merciful Heaven! if I am to be deserted by all it will certainly kill me."

Then followed another reverie, at the end of which he started up with somewhat more of determination than he had evinced since his knowledge of his failure. "I must tell her," he said. "There is no other course. The blow must come, and it will come better from me than from my enemies."

It was after midnight when he reached home, and his wife was in bed and asleep. He silently lay down and endeavored to get a little sleep, but failed. Then he got up and paced round the garden until morning. He did not enter the house until the breakfast-bell rang, and then it was with a firm step, as that of a man who has a disagreeable duty to perform, and who has mustered all his energies to the task.

"Fredrick, where were you last night?" said his wife, reproachfully. "I was in terror for your safety; where have you been?"

"Looking for a fitting New Year's gift," he replied, with a forced smile. "It is here," and he laid the folded balance-sheet on the table.

"Gracious Heavens! what is that? What has happened?" exclaimed his wife, in terror at his strange looks and actions.

"Look at it," he said. "See, it means that I am ruined—absolutely ruined! It means that I am no longer a wealthy man, but a beggar."

Mrs. Harmon turned deathly pale at his violence, but did not shriek or faint as her husband expected she would do. The suddenness of the catastrophe seemed to give her strength. "This paper—?" she said, partly opening it and looking at him for an explanation.

"Is the proof of my ruin," he replied, "the balance-sheet of my business."

She sat down with a calmness that utterly confounded him, and proceeded to examine the particulars of the account, at times calling on him for an explanation of the items. When she finished, she inquired of him how much was required to meet his most important creditors. He immediately informed her, and she left the room without another word, but shortly returned with a roll of bank-notes, which she handed to him, saying, "There is my New Year's gift, a truly acceptable one, I flatter myself."

"Lydia—this money—what is it?" said the astonished man.

"The same that you gave me on our wedding day," she replied. "I did not require it then, so I laid it aside for any future emergency. We must sell this house and its costly furniture, dismiss our array of servants, take a neat cottage, and be content with one servant. After paying your debts there will then be a balance with which you can begin business again. We will live economically but comfortably. I so much delight in a small cottage! and I shall have the household affairs to attend to, which is so much more pleasant than receiving or paying idle visits, and we shall live much more happily than in this great unwieldy and uncomfortable mansion."

"My dear Lydia, how can I ever repay—?"

"Let us say no more about it," interrupted his wife. "You must be up and doing; and remember for the future that I am a partner in your business as well as your domestic life. See that I am not kept in ignorance of anything that passes, and I'll undertake that you shall never again have occasion to present me, as on this day, with such a New Year's Gift."—[*Family Herald*.]

Bits and Scraps.

..... Sydney Smith, in his last illness, wrote to the Countess of Carlisle:—"I am in a regular train of promotion; from gruel, vermicelli, and sago, I was promoted to panada; from thence to minced meat, (such is the effect of good conduct,) I was elevated to a mutton chop. My breathlessness and giddiness are gone, chased away by the gout. If you hear of sixteen or eighteen pounds of stray human flesh, they belong to me. I look as if a curate had been taken out of me."

..... When the Earl of Chesterfield was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland during the rebellion of 1745, he was one morning awakened by a gentleman entering his chamber very abruptly, and exclaiming, "My lord! my lord! we are undone! The country is agitated, and by every account I here, all Ireland is expected to be up immediately."—"Pray, what o'clock is it?" said the peer. "Ten, my lord," answered the gentleman. "Why, then," replied he, very calmly, "I'll get up myself, for I think every man should be up by ten o'clock."

..... The late Prince Bishop of Wurzburg in one of his hunting parties met a poor boy attending some swine. The prince among other questions asked him what his wages were as a swineherd. "A new suit and two pair of shoes every year," was the reply. "No more?" said the prince. "Look at me! I am a shepherd too, but I wear better clothes and look better."—"That may be, sir," said the boy, in his simplicity, "but I dare say you have more swine to keep than I have."

..... An old miser owning a farm found it impossible to do his work without assistance, and offered any man food for performing the requisite labor. A half-starved pauper, hearing of the terms, accepted them. Before going into the fields in the morning, the farmer invited his man to breakfast; after finishing the morning meal, the old skinflint thought it would be saving time if they should place the dinner upon the breakfast. This was readily agreed to by the unsatisfied stranger, and the dinner was soon dispatched. "Suppose, now," said the frugal farmer, "we take supper; it will save time and trouble, you know."—"Just as you like," said the eager eater, and at it they went.—"Now we will go to work," said the satisfied and delighted employer.—"Thank you," said the gratified laborer, "I never work after supper!"

..... Old bachelors (says Miss Tulip) are useless weeds in life's garden and ought to be—choked!

..... An old lady in Pennsylvania had a great aversion to rye, and never could eat it in any form. "Till of late," said she, "they have got to making it into whisky, and I find that I can, now and then, worry down a little."

..... "How do you like the character of St. Paul?" asked a parson of his landlady one day, during a conversation about the old saints and the apostles. "Ah, he was a good, clever old soul, I know," replied the landlady; "for he once said, you know, that we must eat what is set before us, and ask no questions for conscience' sake. I always thought I should like him for a boarder."

..... The *Moniteur du Loiret* recounts the following anecdote:—"At a recent fete at St. Cloud a high dignitary of the Church wishing to pass from one drawing-room to another, found himself in a narrow defile blocked up by two ball dresses of frightful proportions. Seeing the embarrassment of the prelate, one of the fair wearers essayed to compress the swelling folds of her raiment, and said to the prelate with a confused smile, 'Try to get through, monseigneur. Really the dressmakers put so much stuff in our petticoats now-a-days—' 'That there is none left to cover your bosoms,' said the bishop, concluding the sentence."

..... Mr. K. (says Miss Martineau in her *Retrospect of Western Travel*), a missionary among a tribe of Northern Indians, was wont to set some simple refreshment—fruit and cider—before his converts, when they came from a distance to see him. An old man, who had no pretensions to be a Christian, desired much to be admitted to the refreshments, and proposed to some of his converted friends to accompany them on their next visit to the missionary. They told him he must be a Christian first. What was that? He must know all about the Bible. When the time came he declared himself prepared, and undertook the journey with them. When he arrived he seated himself opposite the missionary wrapped in his blanket, and looked exceedingly serious. In answer to an inquiry from the missionary he rolled up his eyes, and solemnly uttered the following words, with a pause between each—"Adam—Eve—Cain—Noah—Jeremiah—Belzebub—Solomon—" "What do you mean?" asked the missionary. "Solomon—Belzebub—Noah—" "Stop, stop!" said the missionary. "What do you mean?"—"I mean—cider," replied the old man.

..... Dean Swift proposed to tax female beauty and to leave every lady to tax her own charms. He said the tax would be cheerfully paid, and very productive.

..... A lady who had on her upper lip something approaching a moustache lately called on an officer and his wife, whose laughing merry little boy happened to be present at the time. In the course of conversation this little fellow inquired what he must do to get hair on his lip. "Why, rub it against papa's," was the reply. "Oh, mamma," said he, "is that the way Miss has got hers?"

..... A man while harvesting kept his gun near him to shoot squirrels. Seeing a squirrel, he reached out and took the gun by the muzzle, and drew it towards him, when, by some means unknown, the gun was discharged, and the contents passed near his head without injuring him. As soon as he had sufficiently recovered from the fright, he hastened to the house and informed his wife of his narrow escape, at which the good woman—who is noted for her economy—raised both hands, and exclaimed:—"What! did you lose the charge?"

..... A man fell overboard from a Yankee steamboat. The captain only asked, "Has that man paid his passage? If he has, go a-head! I did not put him overboard."