

Another expensive present-day leak is the amount of food consumed by sparrows. The loss from this cause is considerable in normal times, but with the present high cost of food it must to a great extent affect the profit of many poultrymen. The only safe course to prevent this waste is to feed the birds in an approved open-front house, the front being covered with 1-in.-mesh wire netting. When this is not possible, and the birds have to be fed in the outside runs, it is always as well to remove any unconsumed food about fifteen minutes after the food is put down.

In successful poultry-keeping the sole aim must be to show the greatest profit over cost of production. While good stock properly housed in clean quarters, together with a plentiful supply of nourishing food, are the chief essentials to this end, it should never be forgotten that the maximum return can only be attained by eliminating losses and making the greatest possible profit from everything in the place.

THE APIARY.

E. A. EARP, Apiary Instructor.

FORMING NUCLEI.

WITH the approach of the main honey-flow and the prospect of more settled weather the beekeeper can turn his attention to the question of forming nuclei, either with an eye to artificial increase or for queen-raising purposes. Whatever the object for which they are produced the simplest method of forming nuclei is as follows: From the strongest colonies in the apiary take combs of sealed brood with adhering bees. Place two of these combs in each nucleus-hive, together with one comb of honey and an empty comb. It is as well, if the size of the hive will permit, to add a feeder. Close the entrance of the nucleus-hive by tacking over it a piece of perforated zinc or wire cloth, and place the newly formed colony in a cool place for twenty-four hours. At the end of this time the hive may be placed on its permanent stand and the entrance opened. Some of the field-bees will return to the parent hives, but in the meantime much of the sealed brood will have hatched, and thus the absconders will hardly be missed. The small colony can at any time be given a ripe queen-cell, and under favourable weather conditions will soon possess a laying-queen.

Nuclei can be built from one or two strong colonies, each of which should produce four or five small colonies; or several hives in the apiary may each be robbed of a frame of brood, thus providing increase while leaving the full colonies practically undiminished. When the young queen commences laying in a nucleus hive she should be left in possession until she has filled two frames with eggs, when she may be removed and given to a colony which requires requeening. The nucleus should at the same time be supplied with a ripe queen-cell, and the process repeated as long as young queens are required.