

being more difficult to rear, the late-hatched chickens seldom grow to a desired size, and as a rule lay smaller eggs, and are always more susceptible to disease than birds hatched during the early season. The aim should be to have the chicks hatching out as the days commence to lengthen, so that they will be well developed before the hot trying summer weather sets in.

Of course, where early autumn eggs are desired the pullets must be chiefly depended upon to produce these, as at that time of the year the majority of the adult stock are commencing to take a rest prior to moulting. In such a case there is no objection to, but rather an advantage in, hatching out chickens of any breed, even White Leghorns, for the production of the high-priced autumn egg. Such stock will probably moult before the winter season sets in. The fact, however, of their producing a good supply of eggs when dear (at which time on the average plant there is much going out and little coming in) goes to show that there is more money to be made out of the early July-hatched pullets than the average poultry-keeper is aware of. Indeed, no plant can show a maximum of profit unless a good proportion of autumn and winter eggs is produced.

—*F. C. Brown, Chief Poultry Instructor.*

THE APIARY.

WINTER PRECAUTIONS.

BEFORE the cold weather sets in every hive should be examined in order to make sure that the frames are completely covered with sufficient dry well-fitting mats to keep the bees protected. Wherever a damp or mouldy mat is discovered it should be replaced with a dry one, and the roof examined and repaired. No draughts should be allowed around the frames. Mats made of corn-sacks cut to the exact size of a zinc queen-excluder answer all requirements of warmth. Be sure they are placed in their exact position. If placed crookedly the edges are apt to be pushed out between the hive-body and the roof, and will in time absorb enough moisture to make them damp and unwholesome.

Once more the time approaches when the necessity for shelter should impress itself on the beekeeper. It is most essential that the bees be protected from cold winds during the winter. Should no permanent shelter be available, something temporary should be erected—if the bees are expected to prove in normal condition in the spring. Manuka scrub is excellent for making a temporary wind-break.

Weeds and grass should be kept down. A good clearing round the hives in autumn will suffice until spring, and will add materially to the comfort of the bees and the well-being of the hives. Not only should the entrances be cleared, but the ground all round the hives similarly treated, and the weeds raked up and destroyed.

CARE OF HIVES.

At no other season is the welfare of the hives of such importance as during the next few months. Every hive should be raised from