

In the Poultry Yard

How Poultry Farming is Taught in England

By our own Correspondent.

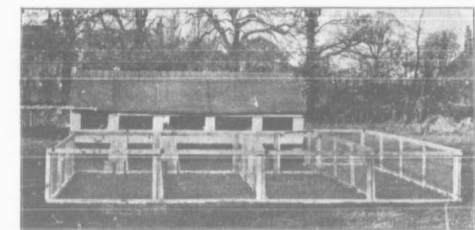
In these days of keen competition education in all branches of trade and commerce is a necessity. Poultry farming is no exception to this rule, and I lately had the opportunity of going over the poultry farm at Theale, Berks, maintained by the University College of Reading. The farm is under the management of Rev. Edward Brown, and is primarily intended for educational purposes, and is not run as a commercial affair, consequently upon the work having to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of students. There are a large number of permanent buildings in connection with the farm, which are utilized as far as possible, one object being not to set up what may be called a model poultry establishment with expensive houses and appliances, but rather to show how

use better results are obtained and the birds are stronger and have more vitality.

The practical work done at the college farm includes the breeding and management of stock birds, care of brooding hens and incubators, rearing of chickens and ducklings both by natural and artificial means, preparation of food and feeding, fattening, killing and plucking, erection of houses and runs and the treatment of disease.

The breeds maintained upon the farm are varied from time to time, but on the occasion of my visit they consisted of Buff Orpingtons, Red Sussex, White Wyandottes, White Leghorns, Plymouth Rocks and Black Minorcas. In addition there are several lots of Aylesbury ducks, also of Huttergan ducks, the latter a very popular breed in Belgium.

The portable continuous brooder illustrated was built upon the farm



Portable continuous brooder, with runs. The College Poultry Farm, Theale, N. Reading, Eng.

much material as is available on the ordinary farm can be adopted for the purpose in view.

The poultry farm runs to 40 acres, and the large meadows are used for portable houses, which are frequently employed, as in this way the birds have the advantage of fresh ground, and at the same time give considerable return by manuring and cleaning the ground.

SELLING DAY-OLD CHICKENS

seems a suggestion that at first blush is absurd, but in reality there is a big trade done in this way. Mr. Brown, the instructor at Theale, told me that they have already this year sold several thousands at prices varying from 7s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. and 12s. 6d., say two to three dollars per dozen. The day old chickens, it is found, can be sent long railway journeys—hundreds of miles—without any injury to themselves. They are simply placed in a wooden box with holes in the lid for ventilation purposes and covered with a thin piece of canvas; this protection is ample for the longest journey, the average loss not amounting to 2 per cent.

This raises another interesting question, as to the best age at which chickens should be fed for the first time. It is the general impression that chickens should be fed at thirty-six hours old, or say a day and a half, but experiments at Theale carried out by Mr. Brown show that no food is wanted until the chickens are sixty hours old, and it is a moot point as to whether they do not do better if not fed until this age. Other advantages in buying day old chicks lie in the fact that where a large number of incubators are working in one apartment specially adapted for such

and holds 200 chickens. It is heated by lamps and pipes.

Runs are fitted outside, and as the house is upon wheels it can be easily moved to fresh ground.

A. W. S.

The Dust Bath

When the weather becomes dry and dusty it is important that the young chicks have some cool, damp spot where they can "dust" themselves. I have frequently heard people complain that the chickens would always dust themselves near to the drinking dishes, so that the earth and rubbish were thrown into the water. They do this because they can stand the clouds of dust no better than the lice can and will always choose a spot where water has been spilled. Little chicks suffer very much if they are in very dusty quarters and will become a prey to a kind of mechanical pneumonia just as some young pigs do occasionally. All the soapy water from the house should be saved to pour over the very dusty spots. A few drops of Yergil's fluid should be added, as this will kill every obnoxious insect or germ as well as prevent disease in the chicks. The water, of course, must not lie in pools, but the dusty corners may be moistened very freely. I knew a hospital nurse who kept a large flock of chickens as soon as she retired from her work in the hospital. She used to spray the young chicks with the garden hose and used sometimes to mix a little weak Jeyes' fluid and water in the watering pot and water them. They used to freshen up on the sultry, dusty afternoons just like young plants after a shower. I have found that damping the dusty

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quarters that the chickens frequent is quite sufficient, and though it is a little extra trouble, it is surprising how much it helps the young and old through the very warm weather. The trouble after all is well repaid.

Ganges, B.C.

OCTAVIA ALLEN.

Poultry Truths.

The laying hen is naturally of a nervous disposition.

Poor brooding fills more chicks than poor incubation.

A well-kept flock of fowls is a necessary adjunct to a country home.

It is better to keep the hens tame, as a frightened fowl will never do well.

Keep the hens in a contented condition, as they are more profitable that way.

The habit of egg eating is sometimes caused by the lack of oyster shells or lime.

A chicken that is allowed to run free and get lots of exercise is bound to be tough.

Scald out all drinking vessels and feed troughs every few days, to keep them from developing disease germs.

For the good of the flock remove any fowl that shows any sign of being sick, even if the ailment is slight.

Skim milk makes one of the best of feeds for poultry, either winter or summer. They are very fond of it.

It is said that charcoal fed to chickens while being fattened will tend to whiten the flesh. Buckwheat will do the same.

Do not use eggs for hatching purposes which are laid by hens kept in close confinement, as such eggs are likely to produce weak chicks.

Have all the eggs in the incubator as near the same size and age and from the same breed as possible if good, uniform results are expected.

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