

clover ensilage in air-tight barrels for next winter's use. There's nothing like it for winter feed to produce eggs and keep the fowls in good order with red combs and high spirits. There is a great deal in the breed but *more* in the feed, and if to good feed is added, good poultry houses cleanly kept and good range, then success is assured no matter which of the tested practical breeds one may keep. We should say it would be very hard to pick out the best practical fowl with Wyandottes, Plymouth Rocks, Brahas and Leghorns all in the field. Of course every fancier has his preference, and the writer naturally leans towards his hobby, the black Wyandotte, as the best all round fowl in the field. Yet if asked why they are better than laced or white Wyandottes or P. Rocks, I can only say that I think they are hardier than other Wyandottes and better layers than Plymouth Rocks. I only say I *think* so because another fancier equally sincere will be sure to back up severely with the positive assertion that his P. Rocks or Brahas surpass any other fowls in existence for every virtue found in feathered stock.

One thing I have had impressed upon my mind by sad experience this season, that is have only rat-proof coops for young chicks. There is nothing so trying in ones religious experience as to wake up some morning and miss a brood of blooded chicks on which he was depending for some winning birds. A friend of mine is mourning the loss (in a single night) of all his flock of early hatched light Brahas—24—promising chicks all gone in a night. A little precaution might have saved him some high-priced birds. We are all given more or less to "leaving the stable unlocked until the horse is stolen," and I write the above advice after

the loss of some valuable black Wyandotte and Brahma chicks. After all there is no experience so valuable as that which comes by the thorny path of tribulation. All broods of little chicks should have a good tight coop which may be safely ventilated by using wire cloth. They should also have a covered wire attached to coop in which they can stay comfortably in wet weather and every morning until the grass is dry. No precaution will pay better than this.

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POULTRY BREEDING.

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No. 7.

INFLUENCE OF THE MALE.

WHEN one touches upon sexual influences he needs to be guarded in his expressions, for positive information is small and supposition is large in what we call our knowledge of this subject. There are writers who make statements with the greatest assurance, who have an air that says "We are the people and wisdom will die with us," but who prove the sayings of Josh Billings that it is better not to know so much than to know so many things that ain't so.

One thing, however, we do know definitely about the influence of the male, and that is that it extends to all the chickens produced from the pen he heads. This fact makes it very important that the male bird should be the best procurable. A man should never let a few dollars stand between him and the male bird he needs in his pen. Years ago, when the white Leghorn was one of my favorite breeds—

and I have never lost my liking for it—I purchased a cockerel at a very high price, at least it seemed so to me at that time, though since that day I have bought and sold many for much larger sums, and I almost repented of my bargain. But I was one that swallowed disappointment and tried to conceal disgust when I made what I deemed a bad bargain. The cockerel I kept and bred from, was a good bird and bred from good ones. That fall my stock of young birds was worth over and above what the same number would have been if bred from an inferior male, ten times the cost of the cockerel, I saw it there, and since then twenty five or fifty dollars for a cock that is needed to produce certain definite results, does not appear to be extravagance but rather the wisest economy.

There are those who say that the male gives the color to the progeny. If this were so poultry breeding would be greatly simplified. In order to obtain the desired color points, all that would be necessary would be the use of a male possessing them. But we know that this is not so. Certain experiments which were made, in England I think, some years ago, proved that in crossing certain breeds, the male gave the color to the resulting pullets, while the cockerels were colored like the dams. But a few experiments do not settle this question any more than one swallow makes the spring time. It is pretty safe to say that in matters of this kind breeds differ, different males of the same breed differ at different times and under different circumstances

Again it is said that the male gives the shape. I do not think this can be said to be proved, though oftentimes the progeny will be found wonderfully like the male in shape, especially in the character of the head and its appendages, yet I have seen cases where the progeny so closely resembled the