

## POULTRY DEPT.

Conducted by S. Short, Ottawa

The season is now sufficiently advanced to be able definitely to decide to what extent hatching operations shall take place. Nothing will be gained by postponing the decision. Good hatches should be obtained without difficulty; in fact, the best results should be obtained now with the least trouble. Conditions are perfect for everything that makes for a high percentage of fertility. The breeding stock are on the grass runs, getting the necessary exercise for laying eggs containing healthy, strong germs which develop into vigorous chickens. The most enthusiastic, but strictly amateur beginner is the suburbanite who has just moved into his summer home. He usually has the chicken fever and has it bad.

It may be worth while to offer a few suggestions as to the easiest way to begin the foundation for a flock of poultry that will not only be useful but ornamental. Of course, the initial cost has to be considered. At the beginning, we will discard any idea of keeping mongrels. No sensible person will go to the expense of building a beautiful summer home properly designed, painted and with neat grounds and then, for the difference of a few dollars, introduce or install mongrel fowls in his poultry quarters. So, we will discuss pure bred fowls and how to obtain them.

In the first place, there is the question of breed and then which variety or color of that breed. Every one has a preference or leaning towards a certain breed, and if so, by all means get it. Don't let any one

dissuade you from getting whichever you want unless the arguments advanced show that you had through inexperience decided to do something foolish, such as, to intend to buy Black Spanish instead of Black Minorca or something equally unwise.

A beginning may be made, a simple one it is true, by buying one setting of eggs and a clucking hen. This may be done at a nominal cost and a very good start made for say \$3; that is, \$2 for the eggs and \$1 for the broody hen. The hen should be procured, if possible, in the evening about dusk. Make the nest in a box about nine inches deep and about two feet square. Fill the box with hay or straw nearly full and round out the centre in nest shape and give the hen one or two dummy eggs until sure that she will sit in her new quarters. It is better and necessary to shut the hen in a closed pen or else next morning she will likely have disappeared. If she is sitting all right next day lift her off the nest and give her food and water as close to the nest box as convenient so that when she is through feeding she can see the eggs. If she goes back of her own accord she may safely be given the eggs she is required to hatch.


If more than one hen is set in the same room, treat each hen the same way. Give the same number of eggs to each, judging by the number the smallest hen will cover, usually either eleven or thirteen; then, it doesn't matter if the hens exchange nests at any time for good hatches have been obtained from eggs that three different hens had assisted to incubate.

After the chicks are hatched the first requisite is that they shall have, before food, access to fine grit or coarse sand, usually given by scattering on the floor of the coop, or near to where the chicks are having their first run. After the first day

feed a variety of food, such as oatmeal, hard-boiled eggs, bread and milk and the prepared chick foods. Always feed as great a variety as possible, but best of all let the hen have full range in fine weather and no difficulty will be experienced in raising healthy fowl.

It must not be forgotten that the hen re-

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