



POULTRY YARD

BREED OF FOWLS.

It is often asked, which is the best kind of fowls to keep? This is the same as asking which is the best horse; if you want a horse to run for the Derby, you would not choose a cart horse, and if you want a dray horse you would not take a fine bred blood. The same with fowls; if you want egg producers you want one kind, and if you want flesh and good hatching you want another.

About common fowls or mongrels, this is just the difference between them and pure bred the one has a distinguishing property, while the other has not. It is impossible to combine the prolificacy of the egg producers, and retain it, with the feeding and hatching properties of the other. For the food that is converted into producing eggs will not certainly produce fat and flesh, and conversely, the elements of nutrition which go to building up the body cannot be converted into supplying eggs. The properties and qualities of thorough-bred fowls have been attained by the same attention to breeding that has brought other stock to perfection by observing the qualities most developed in the animal.

The following may be beneficial to those not acquainted with the prominent points of some of our pure breeds:—

In the egg producing class, the Leghorns stand pre-eminently above all others. This variety consists of the white and brown. The whites appear to be the favorites, being hardy, easily raised and mature quickly, the pullets often laying at four months. Pullets of this breed have been known to lay 240 eggs during the year. Their large comb and pendants require a warm house during our rigorous Canadian winters.

The next in high favor is the Black Spanish; these, like the former, are non-setters and prolific, but not so easily raised. They do not, until nearly grown, get their full feathers, being generally half naked for a considerable time after hatching. These, like the Leghorns, require comfortable winter quarters, owing to their large comb and wattles freezing and then mortifying. The Houdans, a French breed, come next as non-setters. This is what they call a *made* breed between the Poland and Dorking—showing the characteristic crest of the former and the fifth toe of the latter. Although not so continual layers as the two varieties mentioned, yet they possess points superior to the others in size, delicacy of flesh and hardiness, but very liable to disease. The small breeds—the different varieties of Hamburgs and Polands—have their admirers as fancy fowls. They are excellent layers, partially non-setters, but are not recommendable owing to their size, as likely to improve our present stock of common fowls.

The Dorkings.—This class may be considered the standard English fowls, and combine more general qualities than any other; regular setters. Large size, plump, square built, delicate flesh and highly flavored. They lay a good supply of eggs, and probably the best table fowl raised. They likewise have large combs and pendants, like the Leghorns and Spanish. They do not thrive well on damp soil.

The Asiatics are the most extensively bred and most fashionable class at present raised in America, and on the whole are probably better adapted to the rigorous winter of Canada and the Northern States than any other, being well supplied with an abundance of feathers down to the toes, having small combs and wattles, no danger thus arising from these parts being frozen.

This large class is divided into two families, the Cochins and Brahmans.

ON BREEDING DARK BRAHMANS.

An English fancier who writes in the *London Bazaar*, says:—

I keep dark Brahmans for pleasure more than profit, and would again repeat that to breed them for exhibition you require to know how to mate them properly, which can only be learnt by practical experience and close observation. There is no rule whatever that an exhibitor shall breed the birds he shows, for anyone that chooses to spend his money can buy the first prize birds at a show and win prizes with them, though in many instances they are worthless as breeding stock. It is well known that some of our best Brahma breeders very seldom show birds at all. 'Fanciers of Brahmans' need not buy prize birds to breed from; in fact, I never use a heavy cock bird for the purpose; it is not required. A moderately small bird is to be preferred. The cock should have a small head, with pea or triple comb, which should be close and firm set on the head, slightly rising at the back; hackle very full, flowing well over the shoulders; the black stripes at base of hackle should be very black

and broad, not mottled; there should be plenty of black on the front of back, under the hackle. The saddle broad and rising, and well striped with black; the tail coverts very broad and glossy; the wing should have only a little brown in it, and this should be near the top; the wing bar and tail coverts should be green, with bluish or purplish shade; the tail black, no white on it; the breast black and glossy, slightly spotted with white, and deep, full and broad; the fluff feathers slightly edged with white, the centre of the feathers solid black; shanks stout, wide apart, and well feathered; the middle toe also feathered. Black and white shank feathering I prefer. The black should be intense, and the white distinct, not mottled.

The hen should be deep, broad, rather long in the back, and large, with broad and rising saddle, well pencilled on the breast and up the throat, and of the same color as the cushion; in fact, of an even color all over the bird. The head cannot be too small, with small neat comb. The head of the cock should be white; that of the hen should be striped with neat, small stripes, increasing to the base of the hackle, where the stripes should be very broad and black; the wing well clipped up and buried in the cushion above and the fluff below; the legs short, wide apart, and well feathered to the toes, the feathers pencilled distinctly; in case the hen has little leg feathering, then the cock must be heavily feathered, almost vulture-hocked.

ABOUT RAISING DUCKS.

It is generally supposed that, to raise ducks successfully, it is necessary to have a pond or running water in which the ducklings may swim. Nothing could be more fallacious. It is true that old ducks find, at certain seasons, a large amount of food in shallow ponds, but the young are altogether better without water in which to swim. Indeed, it is better that they do not have water for this purpose until they are fledged with the true feathers, but it is necessary that they have abundance of water to drink, for they are, at best, thirsty birds; this may be supplied in any shallow vessel, kept constantly supplied; and they require absolutely dry and warm quarters at night.

There are no birds kept about the farm more agile in destroying insects and larvae, nor more indefatigable in hunting them, than young ducks, and from their apparently unlimited powers of digestion, they are far better placed among vines and other plants infested by insects than young chickens. Thus they will readily supply themselves with all the animal food they require, at no cost to the owner, and saving a large amount of trouble in this direction.

When first hatched they require some care for the first few days. The best food, undoubtedly, is oatmeal, boiled and mixed with the yolks of hard-boiled eggs, but corn meal and eggs is an excellent substitute. Give also, at the expiration of a week, if kept close, plenty of green food, as cabbage, lettuce, etc., chopped with the other food. After they begin to be well-fledged they should be kept out of the garden, since they are apt to destroy more than their keeping, in waddling over and through the plants.

Once tried, in the garden as insect exterminators, they will ever after be appreciated, and in the autumn and early winter they will be fully as much liked occasionally as a principal dish at dinner.

GOUT OR RHEUMATISM IN FOWLS.

These two names are applied indifferently to an inflammation of the feet or the joints of the legs. The affected parts will be reddened and swollen, and the bird will probably show signs of pain. The disease is probably caused by some fault in the digestive apparatus, but the trouble may be increased by exposing the fowl to cold and wet. There are several forms of these diseases besides the one described. In one the only symptom may be a slight lameness, or with this the joints may be stiff, and the toes bent up or twisted to one side. The trouble called 'cramp' is, perhaps, of a partly different nature, but this is not certain.

When the inflammation is very great, the bowels should be well opened with jalap or calomel. Twice a day may be given a pill containing half a grain of extract of colchicum. The bicarbonate of potash might prove a valuable remedy. Opium may also be administered in the same doses, or, if necessary, to soothe the pain. The local treatment consists in washing the affected parts in warm water in which is dissolved potash; or, in case there is only a stiffness and no great amount of inflammation, some mustard may be added to the water. Oil of mustard is said to be of use internally, in this last case. Sweet oil also has a favorable influence in cases where there is much inflammation. The fowls should be removed to a warm, dry place, and be well fed. *Poultry Record.*

GAPE WORM AND ITS REMEDY.

Prof. Riley, State Entomologist of Missouri, furnishes the following to the *New York Tribune* on this parasite:—

The nature of the animal that produces 'gapes' is well understood by zoologists. This parasite is a worm (*Syngamus trachealis*, Sieb.), and not the larva of the true insect. Closely allied species are found in many other animals, as in the intestines of horses, asses and mules, the fat of hogs, etc. That one under consideration lives in the windpipe and bronchial tubes, not alone of chickens, but of turkeys, pheasants, partridges, ducks, woodpeckers, crows and many other birds. The males and females—the latter being much the largest—are almost invariably found united firmly together, the integument of the male soon becoming organically united to that of the female, so that the copulation is permanent or for life.

The eggs are very minute and oval. The embryo develops while the eggs are still in the oviducts and uterine tubes, and they probably escape by a rupture of the integument of the body of the female. Chicks and poults, when attacked by it, open wide their mouths, gasping for breath, at the same time sneezing and attempting to swallow. This affection, slight at first, gradually becomes more and more oppressive, until it ultimately destroys the patient.

My friend, Dr. N. H. Paaren, of Chicago, recommends as the only remedy which he found serviceable, carbolic acid, both as a preventive and as a pretty sure remedy. He dissolves one grain of pure crystalline carbolic acid in ten drops of alcohol, and adds half a drachm of vinegar. With a feather, stripped as described, and moistened with this solution, the windpipe is cleared. A few twists will dislodge the worms, most of which adhere with slime to the feathers; those not removed in this manner will die from the contact with the mixture. Great skill and dexterity is required, and also some little knowledge of the anatomy of the parts, or the already half-suffocated bird will be killed instead of cured.

The bird is next put in a clean coop, with some shavings moistened with a solution of carbolic acid (half an ounce of the crystalline acid mixed with one quart of water). Powder of sulphur, with a little ginger, is mixed with the meal, composed of barley meal and coarse corn meal, which is given in tin boxes placed conveniently for the patient. A few drops of the last-named solution may be added to the drinking water. The mouth and beak of the bird should be washed with some of the solution, and the old shavings replaced by well sprinkled fresh ones each morning and evening. If the disease is at all curable, and the bird is kept dry in a warm place, it will be cured within three days.

Mr. J. H. Harkness, of St. Louis, who has had large experience, has had good success by using sulphurous acid instead of carbolic acid, diluting it with about five parts of milk, and applying it with the feather as already described. Prevention being better than cure, great care should be taken to destroy the parasite, after removal, by burning them, else the mature eggs will escape destruction, and the young parasites will ultimately find their way into the air passage of other birds.

TO INSURE THE HATCHING OF EGGS.

A correspondent of the *Poultry Record* gives the following plan as better than sprinkling eggs with water to insure their hatching. It is sound, for it is well known that hens which make their nests on the ground are apt to bring off large broods. The earth keeps an equable warmth, and supplies the necessary moisture to the eggs:—

I put about two or three inches of fine moist earth into the box I want to put the hen in, press it down firmly and have it a little deeper in the centre, a handful of straw or hay on top of it, and the nest is ready to receive the eggs. The earth contains all the moisture necessary for the good of the eggs. If your box is deep more earth can be put in. A foot deep will do no hurt. You say wheat screenings are poor food for chickens. My experience is different. I consider them the best and healthiest feed, and use them almost exclusively, and only give a little corn at night. Wheat screenings will make the hens lay, keep them from getting broody, and, I think, will in a great measure prevent cholera.

POULTRY.

Feed your poultry on raw onions chopped fine, mixed with other food, about twice a week. It is better than a dozen cures for chicken cholera. Fowls exposed to dampness are apt to be troubled with catarrh, which will run to or up if not attended to. Red pepper mixed with soft feed, fed several times a week, will remove the cold. Pulverized charcoal, given occasionally, is a preventative of putrid affections to which fowls are very subject. Sitting hens can be cured by putting water in a vessel to the depth of one inch, putting the hen into it, and covering the top of the vessel for twenty-four hours. The vessel should be deep enough to allow the hen to stand. Pulverized chalk administered with softer feed will cure diarrhoea. This disorder is caused

by want of variety in food, or by too green food. Garlic fed once or twice a week is excellent for colds.—*Gardener's Magazine.*

SAVE THE BEST FOWLS FOR BREEDING.

It is the worst possible policy to kill all the best and handsomest fowls, and save only the mean and scraggy ones to breed from. This is precisely the way to run out our stock; for like tends to breed like, and the result is that by continually taking away the best birds and using the eggs of the poorest, your flock will grow poorer and poorer every succeeding year.

It would seem as though this was too plain to be insisted upon, but, in fact, "line upon line" is needed. It is this crying want of poultry upon the farms the country through—this careful and intelligent selection of the best for breeding.

Nothing is lost by a little self-denial to start with. The extra pound or two of poultry fees that you leave on its legs, instead of sending it to market, is as good seed, and will bring forth tenfold in your future broods. Save your best stock for breeding.—*The Poultry World.*

THE DRY EARTH PROCESS IN THE POULTRY HOUSE.

The dry earth process can be applied in a way peculiarly valuable to the farmer and gardener. In this country, poultry are kept by everybody who owns land, from a rood to a run. And how few of us have an idea of the value or the quantity of manure that can be made from poultry. I have a pile now, I should say it weighs over two tons; and all this has been gathered out of the poultry house from some 50 fowls, 17 ducks, and 29 geese, young and old, since August last. It was made in this way:—Five loads of dry, good black soil, were dumped into an empty stall in the stable during last summer—in June, I believe. This earth is used for various purposes about the house. It very naturally came into use in the fowl-house, to keep down the ammonia that can be smelled at some distance during wet weather.

Next it was found that it was easier to spread a few shovels of earth over the floor of a morning than scrape up a place as we had been doing all these years. The idea that we were making a very rich compost—something very like guano—followed some time after the earth spreading commenced. Then we laid on the earth as quick as it was necessary to keep the place perfectly dry. The change is something to be surprised at, and it pleases everybody concerned with the poultry. Fully one-half of the dry-earth has been absorbed there, and in turn it has absorbed everything it came in contact with. The mixture has no smell whatever, and after being broken and chopped with the spade is a greyish powder. As I have said, the heap is over two tons, and is sufficient, if I am any judge, to manure an acre of wheat, barley, or oats.—*Morgan, in Queenslander, (Australia.)*

Recipes.

A VALUABLE RECIPE.

The *Journal of Chemistry* publishes a recipe for the destruction of insects, which, if it be one-half as efficacious as it is claimed to be, will prove invaluable:—

"Hot alum water is a recent suggestion as an insecticide. It will destroy red and black ants, cockroaches, spiders, chintz bugs, and all the crawling pests which infest our houses.—Take two pounds of alum and dissolve it in three or four quarts of boiling water; let it stand on the fire till the alum disappears; then apply it with a brush, while nearly boiling hot, to every joint and crevice in your closets, beds, pantries, shelves, and the like. Brush the crevices in the floor of the skirting or mop boards, if you suspect that they harbor vermin. If, in whitewashing a ceiling, plenty of alum is added to the lime, it will also serve to keep insects at a distance. Cockroaches will flee the paint which has been washed in cool alum water. Sugar barrels and boxes can be freed from ants by drawing a chalk mark just around the edge of the top of them. The mark must be unbroken or they will creep over it, but a continuous chalk mark, half an inch in width, will set their depre-cations at naught. Powdered alum or borax will keep the chintz bugs at a respectable distance, and travellers should always carry a package in their handbags to scatter over and under their pillows in places where they have reason to suspect the presence of such bed-fellows."