

fed on this every two hours for about three days. I then begin to give them coarse dry oatmeal, the best I can get. After the first three or four days you will find they will peck wheat—a very good corn for them. My chickens have no moist food for the first month, neither do they have any water, but occasionally a little milk.

Opinions differ greatly as to whether it is best to give young chickens water or not. My wife holds to the opinion that they are best without it, for the first two or three weeks at least, and I am inclined to think so, too. She has had some experience the last few years with chickens, and I venture to say she will grow a Cochin chicken as well as most. If you can get your wife to take an interest in the feeding of the birds, I am sure you will find they will make more rapid progress than if they are left to us. I owe a great deal of my success with the birds to my wife. It is marvellous to see the rapid progress a young Cochin will make. I have gone away from home for a day or two, and have been astonished at the alteration in them on my return. After the chicks are about a month old, they are fed on oatmeal porridge and sharps mixed about three or four times a day. I consider oatmeal one of the best and cheapest foods you can get them—it makes both bone and feather. My birds scarcely taste barley-meal until they are three months old. When they have arrived at this age I give them some good Indian corn for a change, but it is very fattening, and they should not have too much, as you don't want to get your chicks fat. You want them to grow. I believe Indian corn to be the best food you can give a buff Cochin to help the colour. If you kill a bird that has been fed on Indian corn you will find the flesh is very yellow, and it seems to me only reasonable that it should affect the sap in the fea-

ther. Upon no account would I give it to a white bird. I believe the feeding has a great deal to do with the colour of these birds, and I also think the soil has something to do with it. You cannot grow a good buff Cochin on heavy clay soil; it is too cold. What you want is a light sandy soil and a nice south aspect, with plenty of shade and shelter.

Clean water is another very essential thing. It is not sufficient to give the birds clean water occasionally. They should have it at least twice a day, and the water vessel should be well cleaned every morning, and I am inclined to think even the colour of the water vessel will affect the colour of a buff chicken. I may be "laughed at" for this idea, but I go so far as to say that I think a buff Cochin should have a buff vessel for the water, even the glare of the vessel the water is in will affect its colour to a certain extent. One more word about the feeding. I believe nothing beats a good, plain, wholesome food. I use very little patent food. No doubt some of them are good, and others very injurious to young birds. Many of the patent foods are too much like sand. If the chicks are properly fed and attended to, you will not have many cases of sickness. Give birds as little medicine as possible. No doubt medicines are good, but it is better to do without them if you can.

When your birds are about three or four months old, you will begin to think as to which are likely to make show birds, and feel disposed to kill some of the wasters. Be careful, and not do this in too great a hurry, you will probably kill a bird that would make a winner. It is impossible to tell what a Cochin will be until it has got the last feather on, unless it really has some very glaring faults, then they are better out of the way. You some-

times feel very much disappointed with them, and think they are not worth 5s. each, but you go to them in a few hours afterwards, and you think they are worth £5. The best time to look at them is just about twilight, after they have been fed. You need not be afraid of a Cochin annoying your neighbours by flying over the garden wall. They won't go over a "brick," they would rather walk round it. The only way they can be a nuisance is by commencing that "dismal howl," as many people call it, sometimes at midnight. The cockerels are not fit to show until they are about eight or nine months old. They take a long time to make up. Pullets can be shown when they are six or seven months old. Of course the birds must be washed before they are sent to a show, unless they are kept particularly clean, especially cockerels. It so changes them, if properly done, that you can scarcely recognize them again. They stand a poor chance in the show pen if sent in a dirty condition. You may get in the prize list with a dirty bird, and you may get highly commended, which doesn't always mean hard cash, but sometimes I think it is hard cheese.

In conclusion, I will just say that if you are thinking of commencing to breed buff Cochins, go in for the best birds you can procure, it will save you years of study, trouble and disappointment. There is a better market for first-class birds than third-rate ones—I find there is a greater demand for £10 birds than 10s. ones. I consider I frittered away the first two or three years I bred these birds by not having first-class stock. I determined at last to go in for some good ones, and I have not been disappointed. I have been repaid ten-fold for doing so. The chief pleasure to me is in seeing them in the show pen, with first, second or third prize in front of them. The style of buff Cochins that are being shown in the present day will hold their own and be in the front rank for many years to come.