



THE SIMPLE LIFE



WITH THE POULTRYMAN

THE HEN AND THE COW

ROOFITS from hens look small to farmers until they compare them with the profits from their cows. Then they find that the hens yield better returns in proportion to the capital invested than do the cows. The farmer who gives his hens the same attention his cows receive, however, will never raise a question as to the comparative values of the cow and the hen. It will be with him not a question of the cow or the hen, but the cow and the hen. The two are a profitable combination. The food which is good for the cow is good for the hen. The ration which produces milk will produce eggs. If when grain is ground for the cows a portion is set aside for the hens, the farmer's wife can balance her own ration for the hens, and prepare a food good for eggs, meat or feathers. If the grains are ground together, corn, wheat and oats, sift out the fine flour which would be wasted when thrown on the ground or fed in the hoppers and save for fattening the young stock. This meal if mixed with buttermilk will put a fine finish on chicks in two weeks. The cracked grains can form two meals a day, and should be fed in litter. If the corn is ground separately give a feed of the coarse cracked corn at night, and a change of grains in the morning. In either case a feed of clover hay or vegetable refuse should be given at noon. If it is desired to give cracked wheat, scald the amount used at a feeding, and let stand until cool. We are feeding an early hatch of brooder chicks, cracked wheat scalded with skim milk each evening, and how they grow! Besides the wheat the chicks get all the milk they can drink, cracked corn, and one vegetable meal a day, usually raw potatoes. For grit they have coarse sand. They are getting nothing but what is grown on the farm, but all they want of that, and it is surprising the amount they eat. Too often growing chicks are underfed. The maintenance ration is all right for stock held over from which nothing is expected, but that they hold their own, but for growing stock it won't do. Arrange a feeding place for baby chicks away from the older birds and keep feed there all the time. There are always timid birds which will be saved from becoming runts by opportunity to eat in peace after the voracious ones have finished their meal. Don't be stingy with your chickens; a pound of chicken will bring more money than a pound of pork at less cost for feed.

On a farm where cattle are being finished for market hens will get too fat for profit unless yarded, but such a farm is an ideal place for young chickens, which fatten on food that would otherwise be wasted. Be fair with the hen; give her as good housing, feed and care as you give your cow, and she will hold her own.

POULTRY ON THE FARM

Farm poultry should be of some of the improved breeds, and bred pure for eggs, or for the table or both, according to the breed adopted.

The Scottish Farmer says: "It has now come to be regarded as a fundamental rule in poultry-keeping that laying hens cannot be kept with profit after the third year, and it is, in fact, generally agreed that it is unprofitable to keep them after the second year. This means that from one-third to one-half of the laying flock kept on the farm must be disposed of every autumn, and that in the course of each year enough pullets must be raised to take the places of the hens which are sold, as no longer fit for service. But pullets cannot be raised without cockerels, since there is no method known to poultry keepers of ascertaining whether an egg will produce a male or a female chick, and this brings us to the question, 'How shall we dispose of our surplus cockerels?' When the cockerels are taken away from the pullets at the age of from two and a half to three and a half months, in accordance with their breed, I have found it advisable to fatten them for two weeks, and thus increase their weight by half a pound to a pound. They do not sell as well taken from the runs, because they have had too much exercise, and are composed chiefly of skin and bone, but a brief period of fattening in confinement puts them into excellent condition for killing."

UNDERSIZED POULTRY

If a farmer were to look up the standard weight of the breed of fowls he is handling, weigh all his birds and take the average weight, he would be an exception to the rule if his fowls averaged within two or three pounds of the weight required by the standard. Most farmers complain of the lack of size in their poultry and are trying to remedy it by various means. They usually try to increase the size by purchasing large male birds. This, of course, helps the matter somewhat, but it cannot produce the desired result as the hen has more influence over the size of the chick than the sire, while the sire's greatest influence is in color. Standard weight fowls can be produced only by standard weight birds on both sides, male and female.

When a person breeds fowls as most farmers do, without knowing which hens lay the eggs

that are set, using eggs from pullets hatched all the way from April to August, he must expect undersized poultry. The only way that the size can be kept up to standard is to select a vigorous, well-built male of standard size and mate him with from eight to twelve strong, well-developed females of standard size. Late-hatched, undersized males or females should not be used. This method of breeding would be much more satisfactory and in the end less expensive.

Suppose one man has one hundred hens and buys purebred cockerels enough to breed them all, and sets eggs from any female that happens to lay a nice-looking good-sized egg, though she may be the smallest bird in the flock, and his neighbor buys one good pure-bred male bird, lumber enough to make a small colony house six by eight feet, and chicken wire enough to make a pen twenty-five feet square, and puts his one good male in the pen with his twelve best hens and keeps them there till they get used to roosting in the colony house, and then lets them out after laying time each day at from two to four o'clock in the evening, the man who buys the one good male, lumber and chicken wire spends little, if any, more than the man who buys several pure-bred males in the first year, and after that he has decidedly the best of it as he has only one male to buy each year, while his neighbor must buy several. The man with the pen will be much ahead in the weight of poultry to sell in the fall. Hens confined part of the day and allowed to run a few hours each day, and properly fed, will lay more fertile eggs than those put out on the range to hustle for themselves.—EX.

PRESERVING EGGS

A poultry keeper says eggs may be preserved so as to keep from August until warm weather of the next spring, and be so fresh that they cannot be told from newly laid ones by following this recipe.

Buy of your grocer or druggist a few pounds of paraffine which melt in a kettle over the stove slowly until it is perfectly melted, but do not have it hotter than necessary to keep it thin like water. Put the eggs into a wire spoon, a few, at a time, so that they do not touch each other. Dip them quickly but thoroughly into the melted paraffine, letting them get thoroughly wet in it, but not hot enough to cook them any. Raise the wire spoon or basket over the kettle and let all drain off that will run from them. Set them on a table or board for the paraffine to harden, which it will do in 15 minutes, sealing all the pores of the eggs perfectly air tight, so that they will keep for months in a cool, dry place. They keep best packed in salt or put in egg cases on a dry cellar shelf. If they do not keep it is because the paraffine did not cover them well, practice to leave no spot on the egg uncovered by it.

If they are to be kept very long, turn the box or barrel in which they are kept once a week to prevent yolks from settling to one side.

GEESSE ON THE FARM

There are many places on a farm worthless for cultivation that could be utilized for geese pasture with splendid results. No buildings are required and in most cases but few, if any, division fences. The additional fact that the same breeders may be used continuously for ten or twelve years, also means quite a saving in expense. They may be plucked two or three times during the summer, and each year will yield about a pound of feathers worth from 50 to 75 cents.

In mating, there should be one gander for every two or three geese; the writer has found as a general rule, the less geese to a gander the better the results. An ordinary store box 3 or 4 feet square makes an excellent home for such a colony. With a little attention at first the fowls soon learn which is their own home, and will always return to it at night. My preference from both practical experience and observation is for the Toulouse. Almost all varieties are good sitters, and only ordinary precautions are needed to insure good results. A goose will lay 12 to 20 eggs before she wants to sit. The period of incubation is about 29 days. If given a little care and attention, the goslings will appear at the end of that time.

For the first few days the goslings require much the same sort of food that little chickens do, except that they should be given some tender grass, cut fine, several times a day after the first day. When a few days old they become strong enough to roam a good bit, and should then be transferred to a coop with one side slatted to confine the old geese. If given attention the goslings should all be raised.

Fattening geese for market is almost a business in itself. While fattening them I keep the geese, about ten, confined pretty closely, in a small yard, keeping water constantly before them and giving them all the food they will eat, but not allowing them to secure much, if any green food. This is very apt to change the appearance of the flesh. They are fed a mixture of scraps and meal, with some sharp sand added, stirred up with boiling water.—N. E. Homestead.

A small flock of hens pays better per hen than a large flock because the birds have more range around the farm buildings and more floor space in the houses and coops. Give the birds plenty of room and air and a thousand can be made to return as large a profit per bird as a hundred.

AROUND THE FARM

THE COW MOTHER AND HER BABY

SINCE much of future usefulness depends upon a heifer's first year in milk, she ought to be well fed and nourished, both before and after the birth of her calf. As to the best time of year for this event, probably the month of October has more advantages than any other, and for reasons here noted. For a month or so after calving she will be on grass, and usually the pastures of autumn are good. Then going into winter quarters on full flow of milk it will not be difficult to preserve the flow, if the feeding is generous and of a character intended to help along in this direction. At the end of winter, when shrinkage naturally sets in, comes spring with flush of fresh grass which starts the milk again. This increase will last with gradual diminution until well along into summer, when the young cow will be due again to freshen.

Too much importance cannot be placed upon keeping up the flow of milk during a heifer's first year as a producer. Up to six weeks of second calving, if possible, some semblance of milk giving should be continued. After that the milking habit will be so well established that little trouble will ensue in this direction.

On the other hand, if the heifer drops her first calf in the spring, she is nearly dry by the time winter sets in. During the cold months the lack of green feed will finish her and she will have ceased to give milk long before spring.

The age of the heifer may best be as near to two years as possible. In case of an animal dropped in the spring or summer, I should prefer to have her calve the fall following her second birthday; although some excellent and well-developed cows have been known to calve at eighteen months. The danger lies in getting over-fat when calving is delayed much beyond the age of two years. It ought not to be necessary to dwell upon the point of feeding a heifer generously. She is as yet immature and must build up her own body as well as nourish the foetus.

During the months immediately previous to calving, when the demands of nature are particularly exacting, some supplemental food should certainly be provided. Nothing is better for the purpose than oats or wheat bran. Before the advent of the little stranger, the prospective mother should be made acquainted with the stall she is to occupy. She should be familiar with the one who is to be her caretaker, and it will be a good idea to win her confidence by choice bits of food occasionally; also by kindness in handling. A heifer sometimes appreciates fondling, and shows her liking for it. Anything which tends to win her goodwill should be encouraged.

The well-littered maternity stall should be occupied by her for several days before the calf is expected. When it arrives it should be allowed to suck once or twice in the natural way to ensure correction of the bowels. It may then be removed and taught to drink from a pail, it's mother's milk twice or thrice a day.

Opinions differ as to the best time for removing a calf from its mother's stall. Having tried both methods, I incline to the idea that best results follow when it is not allowed to remain with her more than a single day. The longer the two are together, the stronger the attachment and consequent grief at parting. Yet I believe it best for the little thing to get some mother's milk in the natural way.

Feeding a young calf is very delicate business. Two quarts is plenty at one time, and great care is necessary that it is fed at the proper temperature. Nothing is worse than to give cold milk one time and hot the next. Equally bad is the overdose of milk. The delicate stomach can not take care of it and disarrangements speedily follow. Measure carefully, or better still, weigh the milk, increasing the amount very gradually as growth advances. Bright clover hay should be offered at the end of two weeks. To promote rapid growth, yet not fat, give a little ground or whole oats after the milk. Blood meal in the milk is excellent as a bowel regulator, given in teaspoon doses.

As to the young cow, she will need kindest treatment and after a few days generous rations. All is strange in connection with her new-found function of milk-giving, and she should be carefully dealt with, not forgetting that she is a mother and entirely worthy of human consideration. The making or the marring of a future career depends largely on this first year. Gentleness first of all should be the rule if she is to be trained so as to make a kindly disposed cow for the years to come.—Mrs. F. G., in Hoard's Dairyman.

UDDER TROUBLES

"Probably all dairymen know that each year they lose considerable from this source, and for that reason I have made it quite a study so as to bring out some method by which we could save a large per cent. of these udders that are caked soon after calving. We find very often a very good cow that has a diseased quarter, the quarter becoming diseased after the first or second calf. The usual methods that are adopted are something like this: They will put on a hot vaseline, or a liniment, or some kind of vaseline, and then when the system becomes clogged they will use what is known as a probe, sometimes a darn-

ing needle, and with that kind of material they usually ruin the udder. They will have a large quantity of bloody milk and then in a little while there is no flow from that quarter at all, and the result is the cow is spoiled.

"Now, the udder is to be considered something like a sponge; it is very porous, full of holes, and for that reason it is a very delicate member, and it wants to be treated in that way. I am not a dairymen but I am told that some milkers have a less gentle touch than others, and there is an irritation caused, and this irritation will produce serious results by clogging up these little tubes, and the result is that the quarter will be gone, if not the entire udder. Now, then, the question is what to do. You have probably tried a great many things, but I have found this the best remedy, and it is something that farmers can do. The secretary told me recently that the greatest trouble with us veterinarians is that we try to give the farmers something to do that is hard for them to do. I have here an ordinary milk tube with a little bibb at the end of it. I use a rubber tube something like an ordinary hand bicycle pump. Now, I insert this tube carefully into the quarter that is affected and I fill it up with air. I do not probe in there with irritating needles and other kinds of instruments, but I fill up this spongy organ with air, and it is like filling a sponge with water. If the udder is caked, you put in as much air as you can. Then you massage or work with your hand, and work that air all through the quarter and you will hear the bursting of these little vesicles—these little tubes. You can burst all of them in two or three applications of that kind and you will generally restore the udder. I have treated several hundred, very bad cases and I know it works all right, and anyone of you can easily do it.

"Now, where the entire udder soon after calving has become caked, we use what is known as the compress. We take a piece of heavy cloth and put it on so that it lifts up the entire udder and tie it on top. We usually use straw with it, so that we do not chafe the back of the animal. That is to relieve the pressure. You will notice that the udder is very heavy and that the pressure must be relieved before anything else is done. If you want to assist, take several small, five or ten-pound bags, and fill them with bran, keep them hot, and apply them to the udder. This is the treatment that we use where there is a very great amount of congestion. Now, these are about the simplest methods of treating diseases of the udder that I can explain—the massage for the diseased quarter and the compress for the whole udder."—Dr. Peters.

SIMPLE REMEDIES FOR HORSE AILMENTS

Many farmers, although keeping a number of horses, do not know the simplest remedies for the slight ailments the horse is heir to. Flatulence or colic with swelling is quickly relieved by a drench of salt and water (which will only take in a certain amount of salt), followed by gentle exercise. This will force the gas out, and the patient will soon be relieved. A second dose in about twenty minutes is advisable if not sufficiently relieved. Colic without swelling, but with cramp of the bowels, needs a stronger remedy—two teaspoonfuls of baking soda, two teaspoonfuls of ground ginger, two tablespoonfuls of turpentine, two teaspoonfuls of laudanum, in a little warm milk. For a purgative dose, a ball composed of three ounces of Barbadoes aloes, a little ginger moistened with water, wrap mixture in two long-shaped parcels, and thrust with hand well to the back of throat. This does not sicken a horse like oil does. Feed on bran mash only before dosing. In the case of a horse purging badly, give three teaspoonfuls of laudanum in milk. In a slight case of purging, a handful of flour mixed with his oats will help.

To cool horses' blood, to take down swellings in legs, two pounds of salt, two pounds of Epsom salts, half a pound of sulphur, a quarter of a pound of saltpetre, a tablespoonful in feed three times a week. For sore shoulders use sulphur and lard, with a few drops of carbolic oil. White liniment made of equal parts, white of eggs, turps, and vinegar, shaken up and left to stand a day or so, is quite as good as any you can buy, and very good for sores, too. For proud flesh, sprinkle with powdered bluestone. For running sore, syringe with carbolic, one in forty drops. A good condition powder is made from powdered gentian, sulphate of iron, and ginger.

The easiest way to physic a horse when alone or otherwise, is to put on bridle with rein on upper side of bit rings, passed through over a pole in the stable roof. Draw head up high and pour into corner of mouth slowly; if he refuses to swallow, confine the nostrils for a moment with hand, and the medicine will go down.

RAISING OF MULES

Formerly the mule was restricted to use in the mines and in conducting Southern agricultural operations, but more recently the mule has won a place in the teaming industry of Northern cities and work on Northern farms. Every leading wholesale horse market is now featured with a mule department, as the demand constantly broadens in all parts of the country for commercial use.

The mule is a hybrid animal produced by cross of a jack and a mare, and the industry is gradually extending into the Middle Western states. The mule in conformation possesses more the external characteristics of the ass

than the horse, and in mental qualities the mule is more fearless and courageous than the horse.

The qualities of the mule in patience and endurance transcend those of the horse, while he is less subject to diseases. The mule is not a dainty feeder and appears to be endowed with an instinct to eschew gluttony. If a mule should gain access to the grain storage he would not eat until he was foundered, as will the horse. If a horse runs away it is liable to injury, while the mule never becomes so unbalanced but what he avoids dangerous objects. As an economic work animal the mule excels the horse, as he can perform more work on less feed than the horse.

The mule is becoming more popular with the city teaming industry and is now frequently seen hauling heavy loads of coal and general merchandise. Owing to their decreased liability to accidents their use is more economical than horses. On the macadam and paved streets of cities the feet of heavy draft horses soon become tender, often disabling them from service, while the finer and tougher texture of the mule's foot renders him immune to the strain of paved streets. It is the wearing attribute of the mule's foot that is introducing the animal into favor with the great teaming industry of cities and laying the foundation for broader future demand.

The vicious attributes of mules have been exaggerated. They are preferred for field-work on Southern plantations because they are more docile and tractable than horses. They are easily broken to harness and work cheerfully and patiently at tasks that would provoke rebellion in horses. They are maintained in good condition on less feed than a horse and excel their rival in longevity and years of possible service. There is no danger of overproduction, as the mule supply is below the demand, while the prices they command surpass those of commercial horses.—Drovers' Journal.

WHAT WEEDS DO

Weeds injure the farmer chiefly in two ways. First, by offending his idea of the beautiful. This injury is an important factor in the value of the land, and, furthermore, it is one that is felt by the whole community. A farm with weeds is not only less valuable itself, but it makes every other farm in the community less valuable. Second, by the crop loss. This is the loss that receives the more common estimate. The farm's profits are lessened in a number of ways, the most important of which are the following:

1. Weeds rob the soil of moisture. The amount of water that must be taken up by the roots of any plant and exhaled out into the air through the leaves is enormous. Experiments have shown that for most of the cultivated grasses from three to five hundred pounds of water must actually pass through the plants to produce a single pound of dry matter. In seasons of drought, when there is scarcely enough moisture to supply the cultivated crops, it is easy to understand the injury done by the presence of a large number of additional weedy plants. This is, doubtless, the most important of the weed injuries, for it must not be forgotten that the moisture in the soil is the all-important thing. Ask the average farmer why he cultivates his corn, and he will say, "To kill the weeds," when, as a matter of fact, it is, or should be, for the purpose of conserving the moisture in the soil. The weeds are killed purely as an incidental matter. A perfectly clean cornfield needs cultivation as badly as a weedy one.

2. Weeds crowd the cultivated plants, depriving them of light and space in both soil and air. If corn or wheat are planted too thickly they cannot develop properly, because the plants do not get enough sunlight and the roots do not have sufficient feeding space. Similar results will be apparent if the extra plants are weeds.

3. Weeds rob the soil of food elements required by other plants. While there is usually more than enough plant food for all plants in almost every soil, the amount in a readily available form is limited, and the greater the number of plants among which it is divided the slower and less vigorous will be the growth of all.

4. Weeds harbor injurious insects and diseases. The overgrown fence rows and ditches furnish most ideal places for many of these troublesome enemies to live through the winter.

5. Weeds sometimes injure by killing farm stock or by rendering their products unsaleable. Mountain laurel, wild parsnip and a few other plants found as weeds in certain localities sometimes kill stock outright. Wild onion, a very serious weed in some places, often renders milk and its products unsaleable.

6. Weeds render certain products of the farm unsaleable. Weeds in hay reduce its value, and the presence of weed seeds in commercial farm and garden seed not only reduces its value, but opens the way for introduction of a weed pest into a new locality, from which it can perhaps never be eradicated.

Other injuries will suggest themselves, but these are perhaps the most important.

BRISTLES

Air-slacked lime is a cheap, good disinfectant, and can often be used to a good advantage by sprinkling over the sleeping quarters.

It is a good plan to have some warm, thin slop ready to give a sow as soon as she is through farrowing and shows an inclination to get up.