

animal food in the form of worms and insects when suffered to run at large, unless their number is so great as to consume beyond the supply in their roving distance. I found it advantageous, in the summer, to open the gates occasionally, and give the fowls a run in the garden and in the field adjoining their yard, for a few hours in the day, when grasshoppers and other insects are plenty. I had two objects in view; one to benefit the fowls, and the other to destroy the insects. It will be found that the fecundity of hens will be increased or diminished, according to the supply of animal food furnished.

Hens moult and cast their feathers once every year, generally commencing in August and continuing till late in November. It is the approach, the duration and the consequences of this period, which put a stop to their laying. It is a critical time for all birds. All the time that it lasts, even to the time that the last feathers are replaced by new ones, till these are full grown, the wasting of nutritive juices, prepared from the food for the very purpose of promoting this growth, is considerable; and hence it is no wonder there should not remain enough in the body of the hen to cause the egg to grow.

Old hens cannot always be depended on for eggs in winter, they scarcely being in full feather before the last of December; and then, probably may not begin to lay till March or April, producing not more than twenty or thirty eggs; and this is probably the cause of the disappointment of those who have supplied themselves at the market with a stock to commence with, and get few or no eggs. As pullets do not moult the first year, they commence laying before the older hens, and by attending to the period of hatching, eggs may be produced during the year. An early brood of chickens, therefore, by being carefully sheltered from the cold and wet, and fed once a day on boiled potatoes, warm, with plenty of grain, and occasionally a little animal food, will begin to lay in the fall, or early in the winter.

TREATMENT OF HENS.—Here is a timely item, containing a valuable hint to poultry keepers. An uncredited paragraph in an exchange says:—"Two flocks of hens were compared. One laid eggs almost all the time. The other laid scarcely any. On examining their treatment the following differences were found to exist; the former had a warm cellar to roost in during the winter; the latter roosted in a stable where the wind blew in. The former had a fine place in an open cellar for scratching among ashes, lime, and earth; the latter scratched in the manure heap, or in the stable when the cows were put out. The former had plenty of good water, with milk, etc.; the others had no drink except what they could find. It can be seen, we think, why one flock laid eggs generously, and the other did not."

ENGLISH PLOWING.

The Editor of the *Maine Farmer* informs us that:—

H. F. French in one of his letters in the *New England Farmer*, speaking of plowing in England, says, their work is done far better than ours, and it is either because they have better plows, or hold them better, and our farmers and plow makers may settle that question as they can.

I have seen a man in England, with a yoke of oxen harnessed in collars, like horses, with blinders on, and bits in their mouths, guiding them with reins, and holding the plow himself, striking out lands eighty rods long, with no stakes except at the ends absolutely straight, so that I could not see an inch variation in the distance.

It is a common operation here to plow land into ridges for mangold wurzels, drill four rows at a time with a horse drill, and when the crop is up, to horse hoe four rows at a time. Any person who will consider this statement will perceive that all the operations must be accurate to admit of this treatment.

HEIGHT OF COLTS.—A very reliable rule to judge the height a colt will attain to when full grown, is the following:—When the colt gets to be three weeks old, or as soon as it is perfectly straightened in its limbs, measure from the edge of the hair on the hoofs to the middle of the first joint; and for every inch, it will grow to the height of a hand of four inches when its growth is matured. Thus, if this distance be found 16 inches, it will make a horse 16 hands high. By this means a man may know something of what sort of a horse with proper care, he is to expect from his colt.