

Let us be wise and look ahead to the particular work of the spring now rapidly coming upon us. Do not let our work rush us; if we do, something of importance must be left undone, and we are confronted with failure when we expect to meet with success.

If you have a fair market, and give honest, persevering, *enthusiastic*, intelligent care to poultry, you may expect to be well repaid for your labor. In all labor there is profit.

It seems to me that the chief concern with every breeder of poultry who aims at success is to have eggs or chickens (or both), ready for market when there is scarcity of supply, because then he can obtain a much higher price than when the market is stocked. According to our advice fresh eggs command the highest price from November to March, i. e., in winter and spring, and good plump chickens will bring, I am informed on good authority, as high as 35 cents a pound till May, especially in Boston, New York, etc. Hence the question now presents itself, "How can we furnish eggs and chickens during this, the coldest part of the year?"

We must lay our plans to reach this greatly to be desired result. To obtain early eggs and chickens from November to March we must keep only *young birds*, that is, pullets of the first or second year. Kill off all the old hens when they are in good condition for table use or for market.

Again, it is to be remembered, keep only *those birds* that are with good reason esteemed the *best layers*. We place in the first rank the Leghorns as the best layers during the whole year (Brahmas are esteemed the best winter layers), next the Hamburgs, Houdans, Plymouth Rocks, with many a great favorite, and the Langshans, which also in some parts are coming more into prominence both as layers and good table fowl.

Note in passing: Those who desire the *best table fowl* will find it in a cross between the game and the Colored Dorking. An experienced breeder says "Birds of the above breeds, if hatched in March or April, and not more than two years old, will begin to lay at the latest in September, October and November, and will (if properly housed and well fed), continue to fill the egg basket the remainder of the winter."

From this it will be seen that for regular supply of eggs we must depend upon birds hatched in March or April, and not more than two years old. In a well arranged yard half the stock of layers will be bred each year, and half will be killed off annually. This plan we, from a wide experience, strongly recommend.

To *secure hardy chickens* keep the breeding stock in the very best of health and condition, and you cannot fail to secure hardy chickens. All depends in a measure in a good start. Select good birds as breeders. Get pure bred stock, though it will cost more at first. See that the birds have ample accommodation, feed them well and with regularity, furnish plenty of water and let them have exercise, as indicated in previous articles. Attend to these details honestly, be thorough in everything, and you will in season have beautiful broods of nice hardy chicks. Always use a pure bred cock. Pure bred fowls pay much better than cross-bred. In observing the birds, one learns something new from time to time.

I have been led this winter to make a change in my method of feeding. I used to feed grain at noon, but I have stopped doing so. I noticed that hens in the nest came off to feed and did not return. Feeding at noon I found disturbed the fowls. I therefore now immediately after they have had their breakfast (as early as possible), of soft warm food, scatter some grain on

the floor of the day room, on straw or chaff, to compel a moderate activity, which increases the bodily warmth, and induces them to seek the nest, and leave them, after seeing to the water supply, *undisturbed till half an hour before roosting time*, when I feed the evening meal of grain, mixed grain. So far I find this plan works like a charm. It is worth a trial.

Permit me to submit to your consideration a few cases to show further that *poultry keeping is profitable*: Mrs. Ada B. Hart, in the *Housekeeper* gives her experience in the profits of poultry raising extending over a period of forty years:

"We have been proving from facts drawn from about 40 years' experience that it is profitable to keep hens for the eggs they will produce. To do this a person must understand the business and attend to it. By saving your early hatched pullets they will begin to lay about October first, and by being well housed and having the right kind of feed will lay all winter. There is no good reason why any farmer should not clear at least \$1 per head from 25 to 100 hens over and above the cost of feed during the six months from October till April."

Take another example, which you will find in the *Poultry Raiser*, November, page 12. D. W. Andrews, Essex Co., Mass., gives his experience in *profitable poultry keeping* briefly:

"I started poultry keeping in 1868, and it took me a few years to get the hang of the business, but now I am master of it, and can make it *always profitable*. In 1872 I had 500 hens; total receipts from them were \$2,299.40, cost of feed, \$1,098.76, leaving a profit of \$1,202.62. In 1881 I had 1,500 hens, receipts, \$4,425; feed, \$1,656; clear profit, \$2,769, for my labor. The profit depends on the grain market, the egg market, and especially the *skill of the poultry raiser*."

My friends, these facts are worthy of earnest examination.

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Diseases of Poultry and their Cure.

Diseases of poultry as well as of mankind are caused by neglect, or violation of some of the laws of nature. If the poultry house is properly constructed, so as to ensure a moderate degree of warmth, perfect freedom from dampness, ventilation arranged in such a manner that a constant supply of pure air is ensured without drafts, scrupulous cleanliness about house and runs, and constant and vigilant watchfulness exercised, there should be no sickness amongst the fowls. Inbreeding and breeding from weak, sickly birds is often the cause of much vexation and trouble, the parent bird transmitting to its progeny the ills with which it is cursed. Very much depends upon the vitality of the strain of fowls that is bred from. If they have been inbred to any great extent, the chances are that their vigor is so much reduced that they cannot successfully resist the inroads of disease. One of the most fruitful causes of disease is overfeeding, which creates trouble in various ways. The system becomes clogged with fat, particularly the ovaries, which are unable to perform their necessary functions, which diminishes, and in some cases stops, the supply of eggs. With overfeeding may also be classed the evil of feeding unhealthful food, such as musty, damaged grain, stale or tainted meat. The diet should consist of clean, pure grain, fresh shorts or grain-meal, a small quantity of meat, a moderate supply of green food, and care should be taken not to omit the constant supply of gravel, lime, and charcoal. Last but not least, be very particular to see that the water supply is pure. Many attacks of cholera are traceable to impure water. Do not allow the fowls to drink stagnant water, or water that has filtered through stable manure.

In poultry keeping "eternal vigilance is the price

of success." If, however, after using all precautions, you should be so unfortunate as to find sickness among your flock, the first care should be to find out just what is the matter. To do this successfully you must make yourself thoroughly conversant with the appearance and habits of fowls in health; you should thoroughly understand the appearance of the eye; the feel of healthy muscle; the look of the skin about the vent; and you should be well posted on the symptoms of a few (at least) of the most prevalent diseases of poultry, such as roup, cholera, egg-bound, diarrhoea, crop-bound, gapes, pips, soft eggs, etc. As soon as you are able to locate the disease, then you can go to work to cure it. In case of roup, cholera, and all infectious diseases, your first care should be to separate the sick birds from the well ones, fumigate the houses, disinfect the drinking and feeding dishes with carbolic acid, and spade up the yards spade deep.

The first disease of which I shall treat is roup, which is the cause of more trouble and loss to the fancier and breeder than all other diseases combined. This may seem like an exaggeration, but I think I am correct in this estimate. Still it is not so much dreaded now as it was a few years ago. The great improvement in poultry buildings, and in management of the poultry have reduced to a great extent the causes which contributed to its propagation.

Roup amongst fowls is like diphtheria in the human family, and in most cases if taken in time can be cured. The symptoms are in the first stage much like those of an ordinary cold; in fact, is often the result of a neglected cold, which passes into confirmed roup, in which state there is general debility, feverishness, watery eye, drooping, a thick foetid discharge from the nostrils, swollen head and noisy breathing. I find it a good plan to visit the poultry house at night, when the birds are on the roost, and if you hear noisy breathing or sneezing, then examine the bird's nostrils, and if there is any discharge, then look out for roup. If you are in doubt as to whether it is only a severe cold or roup, it is better to give the bird the benefit of the doubt and isolate it for a few days, or until there are some more decided symptoms. A very conclusive test is the odor from the nostrils; if very offensive, you can make up your mind that you have a clear case. My system of treatment has been as follows (and I have lost very few birds). Place the affected bird in a warm dry coop, giving as much sunlight as possible; wash the throat, nostrils and eyes with a weak solution of carbolic acid, give a dessert spoonful of castor oil, feed only scalded shorts or barley meal, seasoned with cayenne and chopped onion. To each quart of the drinking water add ten drops each nitric and sulphuric acid, and same quantity of tincture of iron; the acid to be continued for three days, then for three days the iron only. If at this stage the bird does not show signs of improvement, then give another dose of oil, and continue the acids.

In very severe cases, or those which do not readily yield to treatment, the best cure is a sharp hatchet swiftly applied to the base of the head. In mild cases I have found German roup pills an effective and convenient remedy. I will give Wright's notes on roup, in next issue, and will add that in any case you will have to use your own judgment to a great extent, and gauge the severity of the treatment by the severity of the disease; and above all, do not forget to remove the cause of the disease; remove all filth from house and yards, see that you have good ventilation without drafts, and if your location is damp, either remove the dampness or give up poultry keeping. Give the flocks chopped onions twice a week as a preventative.