

ting on them, determine them to take their rest in a natural manner as under the hen, and I contrived to give them an inanimate mother to stand them instead of a live hen. Let the reader form to himself one of those portable desks which are used upon a writing table, all the sides of the cavity of which should be lined with a good warm fur, such as a lamb skin or rabbit skin, and he will easily conceive how it may be to the chickens an equivalent for a mother, and even something better, it is a lodging which affords them a wide door to come in at, but the roof of it being shelving and not very high, they never can go very far in it without touching their backs with the hair of the fur which the inside of the roof is lined with; as they go further and further in their back presses more and more against the fur lining and they press it more or less to please themselves.

(To be continued)

Winter Care of Laying Hens.

The season of the year is now upon us, when—as the old lady put it—“eggs is eggs,” and the question with the consumer who keeps a few hens is, how shall I make my hens lay? He knows it is an easy matter to have plenty of eggs in the hot summer months when they are worth 10 cents a dozen, but in December and January when eggs are 40 cents a dozen he cannot make his hens keep up the wanted supply for his own table. And I am prepared to admit that it requires some extra care to make them do it, yet with a little attention if you have any good breed of hens, you can have plenty of eggs at any and all seasons of the year. Of course, for winter layers you want pullets hatched in the previous April or early in May, and not old hens. But April hatched pullets of almost any of the good laying breeds will answer your purpose. So if you have the hens to start with you are all right.

The first thing to look after is the coop, and this must be right: must be close, dry and warm—close and free from drafts of cold air,—entirely dry in the bottom and free from a leaky roof, so as to keep your hens healthy and well protected from north-west winds, either by being placed on the south-east of some large building, or made air tight so as to keep the hens comfortably warm. Artificial heat is not necessary—it is even a disadvantage as it makes the hens take cold, &c. We now have the breed and the coop, and now let me say, Do not put more than 20 hens in one coop in the winter—do not crowd them. Now as to feed, care, &c.: you must feed plenty—not too much. It must be of a proper kind and in proper quantity. As to kind: it must not be kind, but kinds—every thing—hens eat everything, and to keep them

healthy in the winter season when they cannot get to the ground to get insects, bugs, worms, gravel, &c., you must come as near supplying this want as you can. Therefore feed a little of everything. In the morning feed soft warm feed, made of a mixture of middling bran, corn meal, buckwheat, bran, oat meal, barley meal, in fact a mixture of any one or two or three of these things. But I would particularly recommend the use of chopped buckwheat, or buckwheat bran in the feed. Mix your feed pretty stiff, and season it with a little salt, adding every second or third morning a little cayenne or black pepper, and once in a while a little alspice is very excellent. And just here let me tell you another good way to tone up your hens: take a teaspoonfull of cayenne pepper and pour a quart of boiling water on it, let it stand till almost cold and then let them have it for their morning drink. This serves as a stimulant and also keeps them from taking cold, as they get more or less in the nose and prevents disease to some extent. In the morning give the hens all they will eat up clean, and wait for them till they are through, so that none may have to quit without a good fill to warm them up and make them feel well after a cold night. But do not leave any feed to get frozen or stale. At noon, if you have only a few hens, give them the offal from the table, meat bits, gravy, squash, turnips, potatoes, &c., and this will be sufficient for the noon meal. But if you have a large flock you must also add wheat, buckwheat, corn and oats mixed. At night all they will eat of corn, whole grain and buckwheat. Besides this they must have meat cooked or raw once a week at least. A good way to give meat is to get a sheep's, calf's or beef's head and suspend it by a string just high enough for the hens to reach it nicely, and they will amuse themselves picking off the meat until the bones are entirely bare. This is a good way to feed meat as it furnishes exercise as well as food and keeps the hens at work. Also when the ground is covered with snow, as it is for several months of the year in this northern climate, and the hens cannot get anything green to eat, a good thing to do is to hang up a head of cabbage in the same way you do the beef's head and let them pick at it; in a few days they will have all picked off clean and you can put up another. Or a large sugar beet or turnip is good also—in fact almost anything grown will be relished by the hens at this season, and they *must* have it to keep them in good healthy condition.

Another thing I always use at this season, is to put a sheaf of oats or wheat into the coop and let the hens pick and scratch at it till they have it all picked off and scratched over and over again in their hunt for the grain. And if you have not the