

SOME OF THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF POULTRY KEEPING

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Elementary Presentation of Some Truths Sometimes Little Heeded, but Which are All Important Means to Success. The Classification of Breeds.

OUR symposium at this time is in relation to some of the guiding principles of poultry keeping proper. Our study may be of an elementary nature but it mayhap be useful. The great poultry family is—as generally known—divided into land and water fowls. On the present occasion, we deal with the domestic fowl (*Gallus domesticus*). Fowls are divided into various breeds, some of which are sitters and others non-sitters. The former hatch their young, the non-sitters (when young and strictly pure) do not exhibit the broody instinct. They may be distinguished as follows:

Breeds that hatch out their young:—Among the best known of the sitting varieties are Plymouth Rocks, Wyandottes, Orpingtons, Brahmans and Cochins.

Non-sitting breeds:—The following are well known breeds of non-sitters: Leghorns, Minorcas, Andalusians and Hamburgs.

Breeds are again divided into varieties. What is the difference between breed and variety? A breed is a group or family of fowls embracing several varieties. For instance, take the family of Plymouth Rocks, just mentioned, and we find that they are divided into three varieties, viz.:—Barred, White and Buff. The Wyandotte family is composed of Silver Laced, White, Buff, Golden, Black, Partridge and Columbian varieties. The Orpington group has no less than 10 different varieties. The Leghorn family includes several varieties, the best known of which are White, Brown, Buff, Black, Dominique and Silver Duckwing varieties.

The Brahma, Cochin and Spanish breeds also embrace many varieties as do numerous other groups, but the instances given are enough for our purpose. It should be stated in order to be strictly accurate that several of the varieties—more particularly of the Leghorn group—are again divided into Rose comb and Straight comb varieties.

BREEDS SUITED TO FARMER, FANCIER AND EXHIBITOR
Among the different varieties of fowl there is ample room for choice on the part of the farmer who is always our first consideration. We have no hesitation in recommending to the farmer one of the dual purpose varieties. What do you mean by the dual purpose fowl? By the dual purpose

fowl, we mean a fowl that is an excellent egg layer and a good market type combined, a fowl that is really good for both eggs and flesh; one which possesses the dual qualifications of egg layer and table fowl, so making money both ways. With such fowl in his possession, the farmer should make money from eggs during the winter and by hatching and rearing chickens in summer.



Breeding Stock of that King of Table Fowl—the Turkey

Turkeys in recent years have commanded prices that should make them a most attractive proposition. The photo reproduced shows Mr. Thos. Elliott, of Bayfield, Ont., and some of his stock.

We say to a farmer or indeed to any other poultry keeper, "There is a bird that is good for eggs but no good for table use." "Oh," he replies, "If I keep that kind of bird will I not be getting less value for my feed and care as compared with the dual purpose fowl?" And he would not be far wrong from his standpoint. The dairyman has difficulty in getting the milk cow and beef animal combined. Happily, in poultry keeping, by making choice of one of the Plymouth, Wyandotte, or Orpington varieties, it is quite possible to have egg layers and table fowl combined. If only eggs are desired, there should be

no trouble in being suited by choosing one of the Leghorn or Mediterranean varieties. The fancier or exhibitor who breeds for show purposes should find a field for his skill in any or all varieties.

A MUCH USED AND ABUSED TERM

I am not going to use a word that is frequently misused and that is the term "Utility." We frequently read of the "Utility breeds." What is utility? Is not a fowl that is a money maker, whether as egg layer and market type combined, or purely an egg layer, or it may be a show bird—for many of the latter make considerable money for their owners—a useful fowl? It need not follow that because certain breeds are money makers from an egg and flesh standpoint that other breeds should not also be useful as purely egg layers or even as a show bird. I fancy most of us would call any variety of fowls useful that made money for its owner. We must neither be narrow nor unfair. At this point, I do not wish to be misunderstood. I do not advise farmers to breed show birds, but I do certainly advise them to keep and develop fowls that are good egg layers and the best market types. But if the farmer desires to keep a variety that is good for egg laying only, or, for show purposes, by all means let him do so. My aim is to have him make whatever variety of fowl he has to pay well, as properly managed fowls will surely do.

SUITABLE BREEDS

I may be permitted to suggest the following order of choice:—

For farmers:—one of the dual purpose fowls, or, money makers for both eggs and flesh.

For farmer or fancier who desire eggs only,—one of the Leghorn or Spanish family.

For the show breeder:—What his inclination prompts in any variety, but he should be careful not to sacrifice the egg laying property in his struggle for the red ticket.

CROSSING DIFFERENT VARIETIES

Would you advise crossing different varieties of pure bred fowls? No,—although a great deal depends upon circumstances. No,—because the cross to be a true first cross, should be made every year. And this is tantamount to keeping two varieties. Then there is always the risk of the cross degenerating into nondescripts. And again for the very important reason that it should be the constant effort of every poultry keeper to develop or keep intact the good points of his fowls whether these points are egg laying and flesh combined, egg laying alone or for exhibition. This