

range. It would have paid you best if you had destroyed these chickens as soon as hatched, when you would have lost only the eggs that were hidden away and the time the hen wasted in hatching them. However, next year we shall find a way to avoid this loss.

The next thing for you to do is to get all your hens laying. I consider sand the best material for a floor. You should have five or six inches of it, and over this put five or six inches of wheat straw. In this mixture of sand and straw scatter the grain, and at the same time cover it well over, so that the hens will be forced to scratch for it. Keep them scratching from morning until night. A lazy hen is an unprofitable hen, and the only way to keep her from becoming lazy and unprofitable is to make her work.

IMITATE SUMMER FOOD.

In feeding we must do our utmost to imitate the food obtained on a free range in summer. We must, besides grain, feed substitutes for insects, grass, gravel (the hen's teeth), etc. You should have on hand, then, finely-cut second crop clover, mangolds, turnips, potatoes, cabbages, grit and meat in some form. There are different successful ways of feeding. We shall take a sample day. In the morning, as soon as light, feed cut clover hay mixed with ground oats and steamed. Put into troughs. Feed only what will be eaten up readily; don't fully satisfy them. You might take boiled potatoes, mashed, and mixed with crushed oats, while hot, instead of the clover. In, say, an hour after this, put up the troughs, and scatter a few handfuls of grain amongst the litter, covering every grain as deeply as you can. Repeat this four or five times a day. Have a turnip, a cabbage, or a mangold, and grit, where they can help themselves at all times. At night, before going to roost, feed a full feed of wheat, so that each one may get all that it wants. You may use the troughs for this feed, and when all have gone to roost, empty out all the grain left in them. Keep perfectly clean, fresh water constantly before them. Mix meat of some sort, a little salt, and a little sulphur in their morning feed occasionally. Nothing is better than meat. Fed in a way similar to what I have here outlined, the flock of hens you have chosen cannot help but lay throughout the winter. I have heard farmers lament about their hens not paying, because they were feeding them all the wheat they would eat, and yet they refused to lay. Is it any wonder that they did not pay him? Look at the cost of such a method of feeding compared with the one I have outlined. All wheat will never make eggs in paying quantities,

no matter how carefully fed, but fed as this farmer does, throwing it down in filth, why, it is a wonder it does not kill his hens. Does this same farmer feed his pigs all the peas they will eat, his horses all the oats they will eat, and his feeding cattle and milch cows all the chop they will eat? It is all nonsense, utter nonsense, for a farmer to expect his hens to pay when he does not bestow even a fraction of the intelligent care on them that he does on his other stock.

THE HATCHING SEASON.

As February comes round, it is time to begin to get ready for the hatching season, because, in order to reap the greatest returns, we must hatch our chickens as early as possible, March, April, and early May being the best months. About the beginning of February, then, pick out ten of your best females, place them and a *purebred* male in a pen made for the purpose, and from this pen gather all your eggs for hatching. Use nothing but a *purebred* male, and have only one male. Never allow him to run with any of your hens excepting these ten, and only as long as you are gathering eggs for hatching.

After this pen has been made at least ten days, you may use the eggs for hatching. Always set several hens at once, and in about a week after they have begun to sit, test out all the clear eggs, and put those left under fewer hens, resetting as many as you can. These clear eggs can be made use of, especially for baking, as there is nothing wrong with them beyond being a little dried up. I heard a gentleman tell that he took a clear, or infertile, egg that had been under a hen for nine weeks to a friend, who was an egg dealer, and asked him if it was a fresh egg. He took it, broke it, looked at it, then swallowed it, and pronounced it good.

AN EGG-TESTER.

For an egg-tester, take the lid of a biscuit-box, cut a hole in the centre just large enough to admit most of the egg when held perpendicularly against it. When you hold this with the egg towards you before a good strong light at night, you will be able to tell readily all fertile (dark) from infertile (clear) eggs.

The young chickens will require to have the very best of care and food. They should be fed often at first, but not before they are twenty-four hours old. I consider stale bread soaked in sweet milk and then pressed dry, granulated oatmeal, and cake made somewhat as follows, with the grain varied as you think best: Ground oats one-half, equal quantities of ground wheat and corn or barley, a little salt, flaxseed meal, and meat scraps (in the early spring) mixed together,