

him over carefully and you will no longer wonder what could produce a flock of hens that would make you feel, when looking at them, as though you were looking into a kaleidoscope that is out of order.

Another thing particularly noticeable about a farmer's flock of hens is the great number of old fowls among them.

Taking the farmer's hens right through they are, as a rule, a very venerable looking set. You will see a few of them in which there yet remains traces of a departed youth, who yet have agility enough left to spring over the side of the pig pen, when the pigs are fed, or to dodge the swiftly rotating mangle from the hands of the farmer, when exploring the garden in search of freshly planted seeds. The last named are sadly in the minority. The greater number are staid and sedate old biddies, whose age, to judge from appearances, is as great a mystery as that of any woman's, who are content to lie on the sunny side of the barnyard and watch, with contempt bred from long familiarity, the antics of their younger sisters. It is indeed a mercy that nature kills off hens at a respectable age, else had they been granted the length of life allotted the Pelican and some other birds, there might be hens on some farms to-day who could boast, after the fashion of the oft recurring Washington's nurse, that they had laid eggs for the father of our country.

I do not propose to go into details concerning the way in which farmers take care of their hens; that it is faulty we are all aware. It is enough to say that the best of care and treatment would be thrown away on these aged mongrel hens. Most farmers, while they have learned the superiority of thoroughbred cattle and sheep over those of the scrub variety, yet retain the mistaken notion that a hen is a hen, regardless of its breed. It matters not whether she be two years old or ten, whether green or yellow, large or small, lays or does not lay, she is a hen, that is all that is all that is necessary in his mind. The farmer will in time, perhaps, learn how superior the thoroughbred fowl is to the mongrel in every way. But until he does find it out, we must expect to hear a continuance of that wide spread complaint among farmers, that there is not any money to be made out of poultry raising.—Frank S. Ballard in Poultry Monthly.

QUERY * DEPARTMENT *

Mrs. B. McMURPHY.—I have some chicks three weeks old, and they are pretty bad with a kind of bowel complaint, it makes them weak, and some have died, please tell me soon as you can what to do for them.

Alliston.

Give your chicks a feed every day of rice, boiled till it is nicely swelled, in milk and water, all milk would be too rich, if you have any bone meal sprinkle a little in it; make a little lime water by pouring boiling water over the un-slacked lime, stir, let settle and pour off, use about half a gill to a pint of water,

and let them have no other water to drink. Two teaspoons of Radway's Ready Relief in one pint of water will do as well. Do not give your chicks raw meal dough always scald it, and let it cool before feeding.

INCUBATORS.

C. J. B.—What do you think of incubators? Are any of them worth bothering with?
Rodney, Iowa.

I think the incubator is a blessing to the poultryman, and there are many worth bothering with. I have a good one just now, manufactured by the Gerred Incubator Co., Toronto. I am perfectly satisfied with it. I had such poor success in former years with an incubator that I got this one before having my brooder house built (I am on a new plan this year) because I thought I would not go to that expense until I had a good, reliable incubator. I have tried this one and subjected it to various kinds of treatment, and shall build my brooder house this fall, ready for the next spring's operations, if nothing unforeseen happens, so you will see I think the incubator a good thing.

P. B. CHICKS WITH DARK TINGED LEGS.

I purchased a sitting of Banded Plymouth Rocks from a well known breeder. I have eleven fine chicks but the front of their legs is tinged with black. Are they pure? Will the dark tinge fade as they mature? I never before noticed such on any chicks I have raised.

The front of legs being tinged with black does not signify, most likely they are pullets. The dark tinge will gradually disappear in any case. They are no doubt pure bred, if purchased of a "well-known breeder."

Winter layers you say moult early. Is it possible to promote early moulting?

It is possible to promote early moulting. To do this separate the sexes and put the birds to be hastened into warm quarters, especially keep warm at night time if the bird is old. Give warm food, but not too much of it when first the birds are put in. After they have been penned a few days give them plenty of nourishing food, and when the feathers begin to fall feed meat, cut cabbage and hemp seed. These are all rich in feather forming food, and will make the new plumage come out quickly.