

Poultry Chat

Timely Topics for August, by H. S. Vialoux

THE hatching problem is over for another season, and the results are not particularly good, I must say. Leading poultry keepers claim only 30 per cent of the eggs set this spring have hatched, chiefly owing to weather conditions. Therefore, there is all the more need to take extra good care of the growing stock, and push them forward. Vermin is often the cause of spindling growth and lack of vitality in growing chicks; in fact, many losses come from vermin during the sweltering weeks of mid-summer.

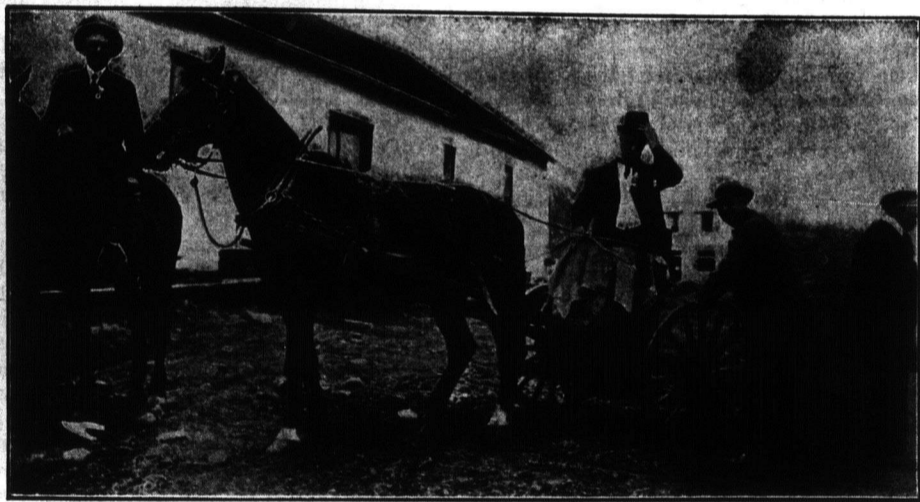
The young chickens and poults must be kept rid of these pests—care and cleanliness, plenty of lime and a good insect powder will banish them all, of any breed.

Lice, fleas and red mites are all born of filthy surroundings in the first place, and even 40 below zero will not kill the germs. When the hot days come, they multiply faster than anything else on earth, beating the house-fly and mosquito "all hollow." Hens lose flesh, and almost stop laying when so infested; small wonder that chicks cannot stand their ravages. The old hen house must be made as clean as a whistle first and foremost, and all roosts, nests and fixtures removed, every nook and cranny made free of dirt. Make a good strong whitewash of air-slaked lime, adding

Now is the time eggs on the farm should be put by for use in winter. The first step necessary to take is to make "a pot-pie" of the old rooster.

Unless there is an expensive male bird, whose qualities bespeak him another season's work on the poultry ranch, kill off every cock at this time of year.

Then fresh infertile eggs of keeping quality will be produced. For years I used the lime-water solution, then the water glass, but now I find gathering the eggs daily, putting them in a square of cheese cloth, and dipping them into boiling water for ten seconds quite the superior method of preserving for an indefinite time. Pack them away in a cool place in an egg crate, ready for use any time, and no queer taste of lime or water glass will worry the user. Breaking up the setting hens is a bother these hot days, when the broody hens seem glued to their nests, "now that their services are no longer required," but this is one phase of Biddy's cussedness. Shutting the hens in a roomy coop of wood or mesh wire out in a grass plot for three or four days, breaks them up, feeding them on wheat and water twice a day. A swinging coop of wire that can be hung up on a hook is useful also, as the air circulates through it, breaking up the fever. No doubt the egg and poultry firm which has shown the advantage of



AT ATHABASCA, ALTA.

C. F. Roland, Winnipeg's Industrial Commissioner, on the water wagon, making his bow to the crowd. H. A. Mullins acting as grand Marshal.

some crude carbolic acid. Either put this mixture on with a large whitewash brush (using plenty of elbow grease), or, better still, a force pump arrangement, used for spraying fruit trees, which forces the limewash into every crack in the walls of the house. If there are some fixtures impossible to remove, try pouring coal oil over them, and setting it alight, watching the flame, of course, only allowing it to singe any live stock in the wood. By using this method of house cleaning on the poultry plant, I have never had any red mites on the place at all, and few lice. Coal oil is always a handy thing to pour over the roosts frequently, and on the dropping boards. I advise a weekly visit to the poultry house with the coal oil can, and air-slaked lime should be freely used on the floors, and around the premises in summer.

That powerful disinfectant Vica is a wonder in killing vermin of any kind. It is sure death to bed bugs and fleas, etc. 'Tis put up by the Parkin Chemical Co., Winnipeg, and a good spray goes out with each gallon of oil. The hens can be easily sprayed when on the roost.

A good insect powder which I find invaluable is simply made from plaster of paris, mixed in one quart of gasoline, in which some crude carbolic acid has been stirred. Form a stiff paste, and when evaporated you have a pinkish powder at little cost and great strength, excellent for dusting on chicks and turks. When head lice are present the chicks should have their heads rubbed with pure lard, as well as a dusting. The lice fasten themselves on to little chickens' heads, and soon suck their vitality, causing death.

raising poultry at the Winnipeg fair this season has given many an object lesson to farmers and their wives. I wonder when Manitoba can arrange to have egg circles. Alberta made a start along this line recently. Undoubtedly when Farmer John can be quite certain of marketing his new-laid eggs at a good price all the year around, he will get busy in chicken raising.

Properly managed, egg circles will bring about this ideal condition of things for the producer, and the consumer can then rely upon new-laid eggs for his breakfast when he pays the price.

Again, I see complaints of the marketing of dirty eggs in Winnipeg in June. Egg circles will do away with this shiftless method of marketing eggs.

How farmers can indulge in this practice I cannot understand, but it goes on year after year.

Feed up the six to eight week old turkeys this month. They will be "shooting the red," which is a critical time with them. Curds of milk, or beef scrap, a good mash of shorts, ground oats and bran should be added to their ration of grain; give the mash early in the day, and whole wheat at night. They will eat plenty of green stuff in the day time, as they forage splendidly, and need plenty of ground to roam over.

Two Irishmen were among a class that was being drilled in marching tactics. One was new at the business, and, turning to his companion, asked him the meaning of the command "Halt!" "Why," said Mike, "when he says 'Halt' you bring the foot that's on the ground to the side of the foot that's in the air and remain motionless."

Classified Column

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