

few survive, they are of small value, always dwarfed and imperfect. This is the result of direct negligence. If the fowls had been kept in confinement, or every hen made to give an account of herself at the morning feed, this trouble might have been avoided. These are the persons who say that fowls do not pay their keep, and they are only kept around to please the women folk.

Fowls should not be allowed to steal their nests. They are never so profitable as when kept in confinement—in summer in ample yards, and in winter in roomy, comfortable buildings. The eggs can always be found where they are laid, and there are no late broods coming off at the beginning of winter. I have frequently heard the indifferent poultry keeper remark that it is better for a hen to steal her nest and come off in late summer. Her brood is then no trouble, and the chicks are all pretty sure to live and grow up. I know better. Experience has taught me that one early-hatched chick well fed and raised, is worth two of these late, neglected ones. I do not leave it to the fowls what kind or sort of chicks I shall raise. I like to control this matter myself. I have a choice, and I know which my best fowls are. From them only do I make my increase of stock. Of course fowls kept in confinement are more trouble, but there is no branch of farming that pays better for the outlay than the keeping of fowls. The stock must be right, and then there will be found little difficulty, with a steady application to the business. All the fowls' wants must be supplied. A hen should never be set after the 10th of June, and not then unless it be on eggs of some small and early maturing breed. This gives an opportunity for every feather to get full growth in warm weather, after which the fowl takes on fat rapidly. Lean, poorly-kept hens will not lay, and lean, poor poultry is not fit for market. The rule should be to give good keeping at all times and seasons.

*Duchess County, N. Y.*

C. B.

#### A Yorkshire Egg Farm.

"Henwife" supplies to the London Live Stock Journal an account of a visit she has recently paid to a farm where the staple return is from hens:

In the middle of Yorkshire, at the picturesque village of —, surrounded by a beautiful scenery of heather, moor, hill and rushing brown stream, lies the farm to which I refer. Mr and Mrs. W. are the only occupants of the cosy little stone farmhouse, and preferring to perform all the work of the dairy and poultry yard themselves, are therefore satisfied that it is well done. I should mention that the exceptional size and beauty of the eggs which I saw in a grocer's windows in the market town led me to inquire whether they were a specimen basketful or no, and being much struck with the reply that these were "only part of a consignment received that day," I begged permission to visit the farm which supplied them.

A short journey of half an hour brought me to the village, where I was most kindly received; and Mrs. W. at once gave me full particulars as to her method of feeding and managing the hens. In the morning, about six, they receive a good meal of small round maize. Directly afterwards they go rousing all over the grass fields always returning punctually at noon for their dinner. This second feed consists of the best Indian meal, mixed with a fourth part of very superior Scotch oatmeal, sweet and fresh; a sprinkling of spice is added, and the mixture made with boiling water. This they eat ravenously, and then rush off again to the fields. About five o'clock a duplicate meal is given them, after which they go to roost.

Mr. W. has not more than 200 hens. The breeds are mixed. In some I could see Andalusian blood, in other the nodding tuft and speckled plumage of the Houdan, were apparent,

Cochin and Brahma, as well as Dorking characteristics might be observed in others. From these 200 hens Mr. W. has obtained, from May 1st to September 1st, £60 worth of eggs, the highest price obtained being 1s. for seven and the lowest 1s. for seventeen. In April and May he several times collected 1,000 eggs per week. The average yield during May and June was 100 to 130 eggs per day. At this moment he is bringing to market from 350 to 420 eggs weekly, the hens laying daily from 50 to 60 eggs.

Fifty eggs daily in September from 200 hens in deep moult, is a most extraordinary return, of course, a very large proportion are not laying at all at this moment. The eggs are quite over the usual size: six of them when selected turning the scale at a pound; but they average seven to the pound, picked up haphazard from the nest.

Mrs. W. insists upon the food given to the birds being of the best quality, and distributed most punctually. She occasionally, in the winter, makes a pail-ful of sour barley quite hot, by baking slowly for an hour, and considers it to be a great stimulus to laying. The hens are many of them in their fourth year, at the commencement of which they are killed. Mr. W.'s experience satisfies him that birds bred from laying strains do not reach the height of their powers till the completion of their second year. Green corn he considers the worst of food for laying hens, and has observed that, if allowed access to the ricks at this season, they cease laying. He thinks it (being sweet and new) fattens, but lacks the stimulus contained in sound and thoroughly dried corn.

Referring to the ravages hens are supposed to commit in their ranging, Mr. W. spoke highly of the benefit conferred by poultry on grass lands, by devouring insects and manuring the soil. He informed me that when he began to farm his present tenement, thirteen years ago — consisting of sixteen acres — he could not make enough hay to winter three cows, but that now he keeps ten with ease. It is evident that in this case the "eye of the master fattens the steed," as the old proverb has it; but Mr. W. gives much of the credit to his poultry. Buttermilk forms another article of diet in the chicken yard; this or sweet milk is given in troughs, and especially during the autumn and winter months forms a valuable heat-producer. On inquiring as to what method Mr. W. pursued in breeding his laying birds, he replied "Whenever I see a good layer I buy her, and set a few clutches of her eggs, and always, when setting from my own birds, select the eggs of those which lay the largest ones, and that most frequently." The cocks are of the same mixed breeds as the hens. I think I saw about twenty in all. The soil is dry—a mixture of loam and sand, with here and there a good deal of limestone. The fowls' houses are of the most simple description, and they have a free run over the grass fields. I left Mr. W.'s farm with a feeling of real pleasure. It is delightful to have found even one English farmer who allows that poultry will pay, and who demonstrates so practically. All around his neighbors echo the old cry, "Fowls don't pay," and in many cases have given them up in despair. Great cleanliness, great care and punctuality in feeding, personal attention, and a simple and practical rule in breeding have brought about these excellent results. Why are there not many more such cases? I have often urged upon farmers and cottagers to establish a profitable breed of poultry. Perhaps this instance of a well earned and paying return may encourage them to go and do likewise.

#### Grazing According to Climate.

EDS. COUNTRY GENTLEMAN—Some years ago your eminently practical contributor G. G. repeatedly insisted on the close grazing of pastures in America, as a practical necessity