

The Poultry-Yard.

DRINKING FOUNTAINS.

One of the difficult problems for the poultryman to solve is how to provide easily pure, fresh water for his fowls. Many patent fountains which are on the market are automatic and keep before the fowls a certain quantity of water. Under certain conditions these fountains serve an admirable purpose. Under more adverse conditions many of these patent contrivances fail to give satisfaction for the simple reason that it is impossible to keep them clean. If fowls were fed only whole grain and the weather was always cool, it would be a comparatively easy matter to provide satisfactory automatic drinking fountains, but as soft food forms a considerable portion of the diet for laying hens and fattening fowls, these fountains are necessarily more or less fouled and in warm weather soon become unfit for use as drinking fountains on account of the tainted water and disagreeable odor.

A simple, wholesome arrangement may

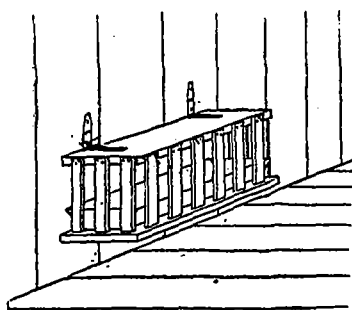


Fig. 3.—Drinking fountains.

be made as follows: Place an ordinary milk pan on a block or shallow box, the top of which shall be 4 or 5 inches from the floor. The water or milk to be drunk by the fowl is to be placed in this pan. Over the pan is placed a board cover supported on pieces of lath about 8 inches long, nailed to the cover so that they are about 2 inches apart, the lower ends resting upon the box which forms the support of the pan. In order to drink from the

pans it will be necessary for the fowls to insert their heads between these strips of lath. The cover over the pan and the strips of lath at the sides prevent the fowl from fouling the water in any manner, except in the act of drinking. Where drinking pans of this kind are used, it is very easy to cleanse and scald them with hot water as occasion demands. This arrangement can be carried a little further by placing a pan, or, what would be still better, a long narrow dish, something like a tin bread tray, on a low shelf a few inches from the floor, and hinging the cover to one side of the poultry house so that it can be tipped up in front for the removal of the dish or for filling it with water (See Fig.) whatever device is used, it must be easily cleaned and of free access to the fowls at all times.

STARTING THE INCUBATOR.

As this is the season when incubators are run, a few points on how to operate them might interest the novice.

After getting an incubator, run it empty for a few days before putting in eggs; try and see if you can run it empty first, then, after you fully understand how to maintain an even temperature, it will be safe to put in half the capacity of eggs when the temperature is 102 with the thermometer lying on its side on the tray; remember the lamp has considerable to do with an even temperature; should the lamp turn too high a flame it will cause the machine to run irregularly. It is not necessary to keep the regulator too active; have the lamp to burn slightly in excess of what is necessary to maintain the proper heat of the egg chamber—then, in the case of a fall of the temperature of the room in which the incubator is run, the excess will then be used. Should the room become warmer, the regulator will open the valve and let the heat escape, thus maintaining an even temperature unless the flame is turned extremely high, in which case there is no regulator made that will keep the heat down.