

POULTRY.

Poultry on the Farm.

BY MRS. IDA E. TILSON, WEST SALEM, WIS.

Scientists have said milk and eggs are the only articles of food containing each in itself all the elements of the human body. Farmers think they appreciate fresh eggs, but their visitors from the city often prove more enthusiastic. When far South, where ice and facilities for keeping fresh meat were lacking, I found poultry and eggs especially esteemed. In certain sections, among poor people, eggs sometimes took the place of pennies and nickels. It is reported a colored boy walked forty miles to the Normal School at Tuskegee, Alabama, and entering the principal's office, held up three little chickens, saying, "Please, sir, is dese enough to begin de college on?" "Two miles from a fresh egg" expressed the greatest drawback and was the recent title of a western camping party's experience. Now winter is here and eggs harder to secure, we shall want them all the more in the sense of wish for them, and I hope not want eggs in the sense of lack them. Whenever anybody asks me the secret of egg production, I tell them, give good general care, then the eggs have to come and will come before one knows it. The health of a hen and her productiveness stand or fall together. There is no divorce possible between her egg product and a due regard for biddy's welfare and comfort. In this variable, severe climate, wagon and cattle sheds or old barns are unsuitable and inhuman roosting places. A henhouse especially constructed for its purpose, and neither leaky nor draughty, but warm and ventilated from the bottom, will prevent colds and roup. If parasites sap the life of hens, there can be no vigor nor material left for eggs. The value of lime as a poulterer's assistant is not fully known. Every day or so, toss, with a long-handled spoon, dry, air-slaked lime upon roosts and into nests and cracks, till it resembles a light fall of snow. This gives insects a very destructive asthma. I do not particularly throw lime over the droppings, as, like ashes, it destroys some of their particular manurial value, and frees so much ammonia there is a strong odor, unless done when the house can be open. Dry earth is really the best thing to put on droppings. Speaking of lime, are the permanent coops, which I hope have been built for the early comfort and healthy start of chickens, stored away, cleaned and whitewashed, safe from storm and decay, ready for use the moment your first spring chick peeps, or were said coops rickety structures now adorning the woodpile? Sleet, slush, high winds and cold rain so chill hens that food which should make eggs goes to restore warmth, but my birds run out every suitable winter day. Idle hens learn egg and feather-eating. The New York Agricultural Experiment Station purposely let a known feather-eater remain in the pen with her companions, to which she soon taught her vicious trick, and then egg production fell off markedly, the explanation, I suppose, being indigestion from such a strange diet, and back of all, a lack of exercise. So far as convenient, I scatter my grain and hide it under clean stuff like leaves or straw, so the eaters thereof can work up an appetite and quicken their blood. I believe tame hens are the best layers. Fright temporarily paralyzes organs, checks flow of blood, and destroys appetite. The timid fowl never gets her share of food, and what she eats is consumed in jumping and flying, not in making eggs. Eggs broken within her are a sure cause of death, and prematurely dropping them is nearly as bad. I think I mentioned some of these things before, but have the example of a Bible prophet who said, "Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little."

Now our chain is ready for its last link, namely, proper food. A little girl said, "Papa most always wants for breakfast what we hasn't got." If variety has been neglected, you will generally find your biddies longing for what you haven't fed. The shell of an egg has some phosphate, but more carbonate of lime in a form similar to chalk, and a little powdered chalk is sometimes given instead of lime itself in puddings. Oyster shells, ordered by the quantity from the east, this year are probably \$1.10 per 100 lbs. Ground bone contains more phosphates, and I have usually had that from the Northwestern Fertilizing Co., Union Stock Yards, Chicago, at 2 cents a pound, plus freight, and which may be better to build chicken frames and feathers. Tiny fragments of old meat seem still clinging to the bone, but not enough to hurt the hens or flavor eggs, as I can discover. One lady to whom I recommended ground bone, sent on her own account, then anxiously whispered next time she met me, "Have I got the right stuff? Ought it to smell so?" She was reassured when I informed her it was not intended for a parlor ornament. I personally know nothing of Mann's bone-cutter, but often see it recommended by those who have large flocks and wish to prepare their own fresh bone. One year I tried breaking up a few clam shells brought from our neighboring La Crosse river. They were well relished. Roasted bones, though less valuable than green ones, pound up easily on a hardwood block with a hammer. Albumen, chief constituent of white of egg, and the latter's traces of salt and sodium, are found in

milk and grains. With the other grains, corn, which should always be fed at night, furnishes the yolk its oil and albumen. The yolk also contains sulphur and a great variety of elements to which vegetables and grasses contribute. Grasses and vegetables also contain considerable soluble lime, so some fanciers rely on variety of food with plenty of grit to grind it, and do not specially provide bone or shell. Musty grain, decayed vegetables and tainted meat, in any quantity, will as surely vitiate a hen's blood as they would our own. To sum up, the poulterer is feeding for results. So much food in winter goes to create animal heat, there comes great saving and more comfort if grain is heated before fed, and warm cooked vegetables, meat or meal are given every day or so, with plenty of warm water twice a day. Then, what matters it

"That snow and sleet will raven
Where the flowers bloomed in spring;
We need not fear the wintry storm,
Nor dread the north wind's wing."

Filth and Lice.

Whether filth can be said to stand in a causative relation to lice or not, it is certain that they usually "hunt in couples," and where you find the one, there is the other also. It is also a further fact that where lice are abundant, eggs are scarce. And a still further fact is that where eggs are scarce profits grow exceedingly small and beautifully less, like the apples at the bottom of a barrel of a dishonest seller. The claim, therefore, is thus made: If you would have large profits you must have abundance of eggs; if you would have an abundance you must have a dearth of lice; if you would have a dearth of lice you must get rid of the filth in the houses. The moral is too obvious to require stating, but when you find a poultryman who is making a handsome profit of his fowls, we advise you to make an inspection of his houses and see how neat everything is, how free from lice the premises are, and how happy and contented his fowls seem to be as they go singing about their yards and inhale the fresh odor that arises from white-washed walls, sanded floors and carbolic-anointed roosts. These are matters that every poultryman should know, and knowing, should put into daily practice.

It most commonly occurs that the young fancier commences to cultivate poultry in the spring of the year. At that time it is thought to be the most economical to purchase a setting or two of fancy eggs, from which, with good luck, half a dozen or a dozen chickens may be secured. If the chicks can be got out early, and carried through April safely, this plan is very well, and the amateur who has courage to buy eggs enough to give him a good-sized flock of chicks at first, which, with extra attention he is able to rear, is lucky. We incline to the opinion, however, that the better method is to commence with young stock in the fall of the year. The reasons for this preference are, that prime young fowls can be obtained at less average cost in November and December than at a later period. Breeders have surplus birds to sell then, and a better opportunity to choose the quality is offered at that time of the year.

Buy now, before severe cold weather sets in, when fowls are liable to be injured in transportation.

Fanciers will demand much higher figures next spring, and justly, for it will have cost them a considerable sum to keep their flocks through the intervening months.

Well-bred birds of any variety are the best and most profitable stock to keep, whether we have few or many, and these will turn to best account the food and labor bestowed upon them by more quickly fattening, by more thrifty growth, or by giving us eggs more abundantly in their season. The old mongrel race of farm-yard fowls have well nigh "played out" in this country, and wherever we see a flock of this kind, in these days, we are constrained to believe that their owner does not read the poultry or agricultural papers much, in which, at a very trifling cost annually, he might readily learn how he could improve his income in this respect.

Fowls fed on buckwheat are of fine flavor. Why not give your fowls more instead of all the rubbish that is fanned out of grain, and on which they can scarcely live?

Plymouth Rocks.

To settle an argument, please say, if you can, the points of a Plymouth Rock. A says a pure-bred Plymouth Rock has yellow legs with black spots on them; B says clean yellow legs; C says light or white legs; D says feathered yellow legs.

OLD SUBSCRIBER.

There are three varieties of the Plymouth Rocks:—The Barred, the Pea Comb Barred, and the White, but there is practically no difference in the scale of points except that which the names would signify.

In the standard of excellence the points given for the legs are identically the same.

They are for the male:—Thighs,—Large, strong, well-covered with soft feathers; Shanks,—Of medium length, stout in bone, well apart, yellow; Toes,—Straight, strong, well spread, of medium length, yellow.

Female:—Thighs,—Of medium size and well covered with soft feathers; Shanks,—Of medium length, fine in bone, well apart, yellow, which in hens may shade to light straw color; Toes,—Straight, well spread, of medium length, and in color the same as the shanks.

Disqualification,—Any feathers on shanks or toes.

Poultry Notes.

As to feeding:—For the morning meal take all table scraps of the day before, water from boiled potatoes, and clover leaves and blossoms cooked, and often cabbage, apples and potatoes, cooked and mashed, ham-rinds, and waste pieces of beef cocked and cut fine; then this is salted, and black pepper added, and occasionally cayenne. While this is scalding hot, make it thick with the following feed:—A mixture of 2 parts wheat bran, 2 parts wheat middlings and 1 part cornmeal. Give of this all that will be eaten clean. For drink supply fresh hot water in clean vessels both morning and night. Give plenty of grit, chaff and clover to pick at through the day, and at night a good meal of some one of the following grains: Wheat, oats, barley, buckwheat, and when the weather is very cold, corn heated in the oven. Keep their quarters clean and the birds free from lice, and in first-class condition. They should always have at hand plenty of material for the necessary dustbath. Sunflower seeds are a good thing for poultry. The writer has raised quite a quantity for two years, and intends to have more the coming season.

The whole story of getting eggs in the winter can be resolved into three simple rules.

- 1st. Hatch the chickens early.
- 2nd. Keep them growing so the pullets will come to laying maturity in October (by November 1).
- 3rd. Keep them laying by good food and good care.

An Electric Horsewhip.

Some months ago an enquiry came to us asking if there was not an electric whip or stick of some kind that could be used for taming a vicious horse. Our veterinarian replied that he knew of no such invention. We noticed the following in an exchange recently, and give it for what it is worth:—

"It seems doubtful whether objection can be brought against the latest form of horsewhip, which is constructed so as to give a slight electric shock to the animal. The handle, which is made of celluloid, contains a small induction coil and battery, the circuit being closed by means of a spring push. The extremity of the whip consists of two small copper plates insulated from each other, each of which is provided with a tiny point. The plates are connected with the induction coil by means of a couple of fine insulated wires. As a means of surprising a sluggish animal into doing his best work without the infliction of physical pain, the electrical horsewhip will by many be hailed with gladness."

A WORD TO AGENTS.

Farmers' Sons and Daughters, Students and Teachers.

Any honest, thrifty person, male or female, can earn good wages and obtain regular employment canvassing for new subscribers to the FARMER'S ADVOCATE. This is honorable work, benefiting the subscriber, the agent and the publisher.

The past year has been a very successful one with us. Our subscription list has grown. Our paper is daily becoming more popular all over the Dominion. The regular agents now in our employ are doing exceedingly well, earning for themselves, above expenses, from \$30 to \$85 per month, depending on the energy and industry of the individual. With a little practice any man equally industrious and earnest could do as well. At what business, without capital invested, can you do as well? We will give to all new paid-up subscribers the balance of this year and 1894 for \$1.00; for \$1.10 we will give the ADVOCATE for the same period and one copy of our splendid picture, "Canada's Pride," a few copies of which we have on hand. With such inducements as these we trust our friends will send us many new names between now and Christmas. If possible start to work immediately, before the other papers are in the field.

The following cash commissions are given to all our agents: From 10 to 20 names, 25c. each; 20 to 50 names, 35c. each; 50 to 100 names and upwards, 40c. each. Special terms will be made with those who wish to canvass continually. A short time ago, a farmer and his daughter earned \$180 in ten days taking new subscribers for us. Those who would sooner receive live stock or implements than cash commissions can be supplied advantageously. See our prize list advertised in next issue. We will guarantee the safe arrival of every animal and article, and will further guarantee that all prizes will be of good quality and satisfactory in every respect.