

THE POULTRY-YARD.

CARE OF HALF-GROWN TURKEYS.

It is a pleasure to care for young turkeys in summer. Their period of infantile helplessness, when they seem to court disasters of all kinds, is past, and those that have managed to survive the inclement spring or have been put out since, are now thrifty and strong, full of life and vigor, and especially energetic in their search for something to eat. The larger part of their daily food at this time should be insects of all kinds, and fresh, tender verdure, and the flock should be induced to travel far and wide in search of it. Like children, there is no tonic half as good for them as plenty of fresh air and exercise.

Until a month or six weeks of age poults should be housed at night in a coop close enough to keep them from running out in the dew and rain; after this time a larger and more open apartment is required, where the mother hen only can be restricted, and in which low perches may be placed, for growing turkeys, are always healthier, and safer too, after they begin to roost at night at some distance from the ground. When from two to three months old, according to the quality of their growth, the brood should be allowed to roost out of doors, on low limbs of trees or on poles eight or ten feet from the ground. This the flock considers a great promotion, and will come home an hour or two earlier in the afternoon in order to arrange themselves to their satisfaction. I have searched for my turkeys far and wide, and found them at last comfortably settled on their perches, looking down at me from their superior height with much condescension.

The food given them at this time should be the nicest of the table scraps, or simply bread moistened with sweet milk, but when the wheat is harvested and threshed, then whole sound wheat may be given. After the turkeys begin to roost in the trees at night, they are down in the morning and off to the fields without waiting to be fed, but unless water and shade are convenient here, they all come back again about ten o'clock. They prefer cool clabber or thick buttermilk to drink, and after refreshing themselves with something to eat and drink, they drop down on the grass under the trees and rest until the afternoon begins to grow cool, when they all return to the fields again. They could get on very well without any supper, but it is a good plan to offer them something as a reward for coming home.

The younger poults, after being turned out of the yard in the morning, seldom return until night, and not always then unless somebody goes after them. They are very fond of the orchard, and as it is cool and shady out there, it is better to carry them a lunch of bread and milk at noon than to bring them to the house. When you first come in sight of them, they are probably enjoying a midday nap, but the sight of you reminds them how very hungry and thirsty they are, and they beg most clamorously until the pan of food is set before them, when they all jump in it at once, and scream at the top of their voices all the time they are eating. In a few minutes, though, their appetites are fully satisfied, and they walk off and leave you, eating grass and clover, as if anxious to get a taste out of their mouths. (1)

During the very warm weather turkeys of all ages should be fed little or no heat-producing or fattening food; after they are old enough to eat grain, wheat, oats, barley and buckwheat are to be preferred to Indian corn. Everything that is given them should be of good, sound quality, and a somewhat smaller quantity should be allowed at each meal than the flock would like to receive. There is nothing more wholesome for them than good milk, but it is better to allow them

this twice a day, at morning and evening, and keep fresh water before them at other times.

Some of my neighbors boast of not feeding their turkeys at all after they are a month or six weeks of age, but this I think is a mistake, for I notice in the fall that when comparing the weights of our respective flocks, the greater weights of mine more than repay me for the extra food and attention. By thus being fed regularly, their development is both rapid and substantial; they have large frames, and as they already have some flesh, can much more easily be made to take on more, so can be gotten ready for market earlier, or developed into finer stock turkeys.

During the growth of turkeys they should be examined every little while to see if they have become infested with vermin, and when this is found to be the case, a drop or two of pure lard should be rubbed on their heads and under their wings and thighs, the mother hen being also treated in the same way. This must only be done in warm, dry weather, and the brood protected from rain for a day or two afterward. Fierce, beating rains, however, are always dangerous to poults until they are several months old. I have found a whole flock, after being exposed to a hard, beating shower, lying apparently lifeless, or just gasping for breath, and the most strenuous efforts were required—warming, drying and rubbing their limp little bodies—in order to restore them to life.

The owner should be careful to keep himself informed of the range of his flock, so that no time may be lost in looking for them wherever this becomes necessary. Turkeys are usually very systematic in their habits, have a regular route when they start out in morning, a certain place to rest at midday, and return home at evening through different fields from the ones they traversed in the morning.

Another and most important reason why we should keep informed as to their range is that we may know where to look for them when they fail to come home at night. Many poultry keepers by neglecting to do this lose by the depredations of thieves, both human and otherwise, the reward of their whole season's work. It pays to take care of every crop that is nearly made, and yet, just at this time, many of us relax our watchfulness, and then rail at our "bad luck."

A FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

GROWING SAINFOIN HERE AND ABROAD.

EDS. COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.—I read Mr. Howatt's article about "sainfoin," p. 584, with great interest. I said this revolutionized culture in certain localities, I proceeded to look it up, and found that in England, on heavy chalk soils, it is highly valued. Then, said I, it will work on heavy soils with hardpan under them. I propose to sow it next spring on such, preparing it as advised unless you now advise otherwise. Please tell me where I can get the seed, and the price, and add such other information as you think will be useful.

R. H. M. Troy, N. Y.

There are no certain localities for the growing of sainfoin; any locality, from Maine to California, will suit it. In England, to make the most of all crops, we adapt them to soils.

As a general rule there it is grown on chalky soil, chalk being a geological formation abounding in Europe, and nearly altogether absent here. It consists of a very large proportion of carbonate of lime. England is probably the best country in the world in which to learn farming, every detail being properly impressed on the mind, but if we were to follow it as practiced there, we should be a nonentity in the science. Even here different sections require different practice, if not an altogether different crop, and none but the thoroughly-vers-

(1) Plenty of young onions, please.

A. R. J. F.