

tubs should be covered with water to such a depth that about an inch of brick projects above it. The top of the tub should be covered with stout brown paper, upon which a dainty meal of bacon rind and other scraps dear to the rat's palate figures—a sloping board giving the rodents facilities for partaking of it. The feast should be renewed for several nights, so that all the rats in the neighbourhood may get to know of the food which is placed within such easy reach. When it is judged that this policy has been pursued long enough, the centre of the brown paper should be cut in such a manner that any rat venturing on it will be precipitated into the cold water below. It might be thought that the result of this would be the capture of a rat, or at the most two, in each tub prepared, but no such meagre result for the trouble that has been taken need be feared. The rat, finding its trust abused, and itself struggling in the water at the bottom of the tub, soon recovers sufficiently from the shock to discover that here is an island of refuge, on to which he clambers, and squeals his loudest for help. Now, the squeal of a rat in trouble attracts everyone of his kind within hearing, and very few minutes will elapse before the victim of misplaced confidence is joined by one of his friends. The newcomer is as quick to discover the chance of escape from a watery grave as the original victim, but when he attempts to avail himself of its presence it becomes apparent that there is not room for more than one upon it. The first comer resists with tooth and nail the effort of his companion in trouble to dispossess him of his coign of vantage, and the squeals which form an accompaniment to the fight for a footing upon the brick attract more rats to the scene of the tragedy. The conflict waxing more and more furious as rat after rat topples into the water, and by morning bedraggled corpses in plenty will gladden the eyes of the man whose losses at the teeth of rats have induced him to adopt this means of thinning their numbers. Some years ago the plan described above was tried in a city warehouse, with the result that 3,000 rats were destroyed in a single night."

Egg Laying.

In Poultry Culture for Profit the Rev. T. W. Sturges, M.A., Vice-President of the Poultry Club, writes:—

"The poultry keeper who can make his hens lay well from Michaelmas to Christmas will reap twice the profit of the one whose hens begin to lay only in the spring time. That is when he is looking chiefly to the sale of new laid eggs for profit.

"If he can supply eggs in winter he is more likely to find ready custom for eggs when they are more plentiful.

"There are certain well-known, but too little practised, methods of attaining this end:—

"(1) Pullets must be hatched at the proper season. The general purpose fowl, such as Orpingtons, etc., should be hatched from the beginning of March to the end of April; and the lighter, non-sitting breeds from the end of March to the end of April.

"(2) They must be brought on to lay by Michaelmas. If backward, a little additional flesh food will produce this effect.

"The farmer's great mistake is in beginning to hatch too late in the year, and to have only half-grown chicks when the cold season arrives. If they are hatched too early they lay a few eggs, and then go into moult like old hens, and if they are hatched too late their growth and development is retarded by the cold weather.

"(3) Good feeding, housing, and cleanliness have much to do with it also. It should not be forgotten that in the springtime when all the feathered tribes, wild or domesticated, lay most freely is the time when insect life is abundant. And as this diminishes in the winter, a substitute should be provided by an increase of the albumenoids in the food.

"It is easier to manage pullets than the year-old hens. When it is decided to keep the hens through a second year, every effort should be made to get them through their moult early.

"In the case of the sitting breeds it is advisable to let them bring up one or two broods of chicks. The result thus obtained during spring and summer, and the warmth during sitting and brooding, induce an early moult. And if a hen sits late in the summer she often changes her dress entirely during this period.

"But in case the hens do not moult early, whether of the sitting or non-sitting varieties, it can be induced by feeding them on half rations, and by keeping them warm. If they are shut in the houses and scratching sheds, and only fed very sparingly during the warm days of July and August, a fortnight will often start the whole pen to moult. An aperient added to the drinking water will be an aid.

"After the birds have started fairly to moult they should be let out on every fine day, and fed more liberally with nourishing food. If the moult still hangs, a handful of linseed for every ten fowls, boiled and added to the soft food, is an assistance; or, on warm days, a teaspoonful of flowers of sulphur.

"Overfed fowl cannot moult easily. Care must be taken not to overfeed the fowl after they are fairly well on with the new attire. If they are to lay during the winter they must be kept in fairly lean condition. Nature prompts the birds to overfeed in order to lay on a lining of fat for winter protection; but, then, Nature does not ask them to lay in the winter, and we do.

"There is more than a glimmer of truth in the saying I have known from childhood, 'Run the hens to make them lay.' When a hen is listless and lazy she does not lay, and this condition is brought on by overfeeding. When a hen is not producing eggs she does not require more than half as much food as when she is laying. The strain upon the system is not so great, and yet the careless poultryman goes on giving the accustomed ration. Feed them on hard corn only, and make them scratch for it until they begin to lay, and then, if you will divide the layers from the non-layers, you can feed them more liberally; and don't forget the green bones or flesh food of some kind.

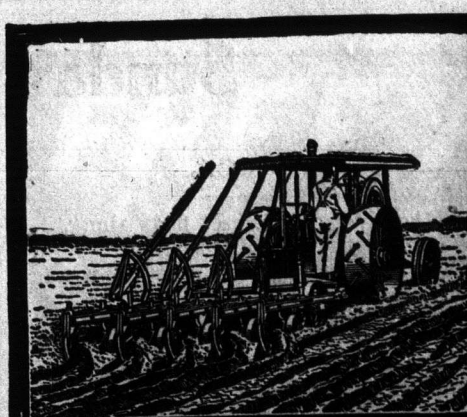
"These methods are simple, but effective."

It is much better to obtain eggs in the natural way than to be continually dosing the birds with various condiments and spices.

A lawyer had a horse that always balked when he attempted to cross a certain bridge leading out of the village. No amount of whipping or urging would induce him to cross it, so he advertised him for sale. "To be sold for no other reason than the owner would like to leave town."

Spontaneous Applause.—A political orator was addressing in English a club of Italian voters. To his surprise and satisfaction, his listeners paid strict attention and applauded at the proper places, shouting "Viva!" and "Bravo!" repeatedly. At the conclusion of his speech the orator resumed his seat beside the chairman, whispering that he was delighted with his reception and had never spoken to a more intelligent audience. "Ha-ah!" replied the chairman. "Me fix all-a dat! Me hol' up one-a finga, evera man say-a 'Hurrah!' Me hol' up two-a finga, evera man say-a 'Viva!' Me hol' up tree-a finga, evera man say-a 'Bravo!' He hol' up whole-a hand, evera man say-a 'Hi-yi!' like one great yell. Me fix all-a dat!"

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