

POULTRY DEPT.

Conducted by S. Short, Ottawa

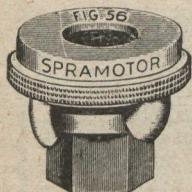
December is the most important month in many respects to the poultry-keeper. If eggs are to be expected in January and throughout the winter, regular and intelligent care must be given to the fowl from now on and, in fact, those who began a month ago to give their hens proper conditions for laying, are most likely to get the best egg harvest. Proper conditions in-

clude the whole situation, which may be divided into three parts; viz., the poultry house, the fowl, and feeding.

The house should be in thorough order in every respect. The windows should be sound and scrupulously clean. This is very necessary. The days are now very short. At the earliest, the fowl cannot see to eat before seven a.m. and after four p.m. at the latest. This means a period of fifteen hours between the last meal of the day and the first of the next, which shows the need of all the light that can possibly be given. In cities and towns this long gap between supper and breakfast is shortened by giving a fourth meal between eight and nine o'clock at night by electric light and, in some cases, the result has been very encouraging and successful. This can be done by lamplight but it takes from half to three-quarters of an hour each night, which may not be considered worth while unless large flocks are kept.

The fowls should be healthy, in good condition, and the pullets mature. There is a wide difference of opinion about the number of layers that should be kept in each flock or pen. Personally, I think twenty-five or thirty is plenty for each pen. One expert says: "When you think you have room for twenty layers only keep ten." This is good advice. If you have to lessen the number of fowl kept, begin by removing all the spare males, young and old, keeping only those needed for breeding next spring. Next, remove all hens over two years of age, except if the breed kept is Leghorn or any of the Mediterranean class, when they may be kept until three years of age. After the old hens, remove the very young pullets. This should leave only serviceable birds that, with proper food, should return eggs in profitable quantities.

The layers should be fed three times a day, twice with grain and once with soft



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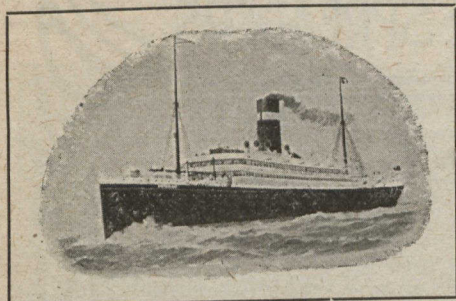
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