

POULTRY.

Poultry Keeping as a Business.

BY JOHN J. LENTON.

In establishing any business of a commercial nature, it is of great importance that the right locality be chosen. First determine which branch of the business offers the greatest inducements, viz., the production of eggs, early chickens for broilers, or dressed poultry for market. In the vicinity of large cities and towns, the first two are by far the most profitable, as there is always a very strong demand for these. For dressed poultry for the general market, the locality is not so important. In practical poultry farming, all three branches will naturally follow in order during each season. A good locality where there is a firm market for all branches promises the best trade. The first essential requisite to success in poultry-keeping is

A GOOD HOUSE.

It should be adapted especially for the branch of the business for which it is to occupy the owner's attention. The very frequent mistake made by nearly all beginners and amateurs is that of building without regard to ventilation, or inside conveniences in caring for the fowls. In constructing our poultry houses the first point to be considered is economy in all of the details, not only in cost of the materials and the constructing of the house, but in the arrangements, so as to save both labor and time in the daily care of the flock. Too often these very essential points are lost sight of, and right here is the very place that decides the results of the net profit or loss.

Next in order is

CONVENIENCE.

Too much care cannot be paid to this particular at the very start. Practical poultry farming is a business made up of small items, which of necessity takes valuable time and skilled labor to perform; so we must be impressed with the importance of making all arrangements in and about our poultry house of the most convenient shape. We must remember, in the construction of the roosts, nests, feed boxes, etc., to have them placed beside the main walks of the house, to be readily removed and quickly replaced at the time of cleaning and lime-washing the interior, as time is money. To have an economic house we must have a convenient, labor-saving one, especially so as regards the grain bins, the vegetable pits, and the water supply, which should come from a capacious cistern and be drawn by an inside pump. Of course a commodious shed will be attached to one of the houses, to be used as a work shop, a feed room, a store house for coops, etc. A stove or range should here be set up for boiler use, to heat water and cook food, vegetables, etc.

Turkey Culture.

BY E. JOHNSTON.

The raising of turkeys on any farm within reasonable distance of a good market is a profitable side issue of farming. Turkey culture solves the problem of the wife's or daughter's pin money better than almost any other occupation open to them, with a smaller outlay and quick returns. Yet the many who begin with great expectations, through inexperience, fail, and have not the persistence necessary to work out success through failure. The object of this article is to furnish beginners a few instructions, which, sensibly applied, will save them some mistakes and consequent disappointments.

It has been my experience that the best way to start is to buy a trio of good birds of the preferred variety. The first expense is greater, but the money comes back the first year in the greater number marketed. And it pays to start with good stock. Among the several varieties, I prefer the Mammoth Bronze, on account of their disposition to pull down the scales when it comes time to fat and sell. The toms of this sort, when six months old will weigh from eighteen to twenty pounds; the hens from ten to thirteen. A three-year-old tom often tips the scales at forty-five or fifty pounds, but as the old birds grow ugly, and as turkeys deteriorate by inbreeding quicker than any other class of fowls, it is not best to keep them beyond this age. If one's neighbors raise turkeys also, to choose a distinctively different breed will be a great aid in separating the flocks when they get together, as they almost surely will if at large, and avoiding any disputes over ownership. The White Holland is good under such circumstances. If this cannot be done, there are leg bands sold for marking, which are useful but rather expensive; or a system of clipping the wing feathers slightly may be adopted, though this disqualifies the birds for exhibition purposes. Strict watch must be kept on the hens when they begin to lay, for they are very secretive, and often wander to quite a distance to hide their nests. The first eggs should be set under a hen (common fowls) not over nine days. The hen turkey will lay from thirteen to fifteen eggs, then stop a few days and begin again. The eggs set under a hen will hatch about the same time, then one or other will do two broods of eggs. Thirty days being the period of incubation, the first brood are good faithful sitters, and much more so than the second brood.

If possible, let the hen turkey sit where she has made her nest, as she does not, generally, bear removal well. Her food must not be neglected, for she is so faithful that she will almost starve before she will leave her nest to seek it. Only one person should visit her, and that person should be very quiet and gentle in every movement, that the hen may become tame and easily handled when she "comes off." The turkey retains enough of its wild habits to always hatch best when allowed to sit on the ground, and if turkey eggs are given to common hens in nest boxes, fill the boxes half full of earth and put a little chopped straw on it.

When the little fellows are hatched trouble begins. They are very tender and require careful looking after until they are six weeks or two months old. Movable coops on sod ground are preferable, and should be surrounded by yards fenced off with boards a foot high. The coops and yards are to be changed as the soil becomes foul. The coops should be roomy and have good roofs, for the little turks are to be confined in them during wet weather. When they are strong enough to fly out of the yards, the mother may be given her liberty and allowed to lead her flock about after the dew is off, and in dry weather. Young turkeys must not get wet—nothing will thin their ranks so quickly as being out in a shower or getting drabbed in wet grass. As soon as the common hens show a disposition to discard their families it is well to put the broods all together in charge of the hen turkeys, and that the young may be accustomed to each other they should be cooped near together. Whatever provision is made for housing the young, look out for the tom, for he has a way of killing them that is very unfatherly and particularly exasperating.

The newly-hatched turks will not eat much for a couple of days. They should have a little egg custard before them (which may be made of stale eggs if they are on hand), or crackers or bread and milk—not made sloppy, however—to teach them to eat. Then the curd from sour milk comes in good, and in a few days cracked corn partly boiled is stirred into the curd, with a pinch of pepper in rainy weather. They are particularly fond of green onion tops, cut fine, and sweet milk is given for drink. They should be fed five times a day for the first two weeks, as their growth is so rapid they need constant supplies of food, but only what they will eat up clean should be given at one feed. When they are three weeks old a corn-bread moistened in milk, or a bread of mixed cornmeal, coarse flour and bran, takes the place of curd, and they are fed three times a day. Never feed raw meal, unless you want dead chicks. When a month old give wheat screenings and cracked corn scalded. As soon as they are past the danger point, or six or seven weeks old, they can be left pretty much to themselves, after their breakfast of boiled potatoes, made thick with bran or meal, but should be fed every night a grain ration to induce them to come home at night.

The first year I kept turkeys I wore out my temper and a pair of shoes chasing after them. Then I decided they roved by nature, and let them do so. By feeding at night they were prompt in coming to the roost. Always count them every night. If any are missing, hunt them up. I have always allowed mine to roost on trees, or under an open shed, as they chose, and most of them take to the trees. But I always market the flock at Thanksgiving, and after that those I keep over are caught and put in a large henhouse by themselves, which is not too tight and with high roosts. I keep over a tom and about six hens. I prefer a two-year-old tom and year-old hens, as they lay better, earlier and give more eggs, and, as I work for an early market, the quicker I can get them hatched and growing the better the results. Do not be content with an average of less than fifteen pounds. Change your male bird every other year, at the very least. This is some trouble and expense, but turkeys will not bear inbreeding to any extent. Allow not over ten hens to one male. Unless you are going into the business quite extensively, five or six hens are enough to keep over. Keep the best birds.

You can safely calculate, one year with another, on a loss of twelve per cent. of all that are hatched. Sometimes they seem to "turn up their toes" out of sheer perversity. When this is the case lice will usually prove to be the cause of the trouble, and especially on those hatched under common hens. Insect powder should be freely used on the hens and in the nests; and if lice are found on the young turks, grease their heads, under the wings and round the vent, remembering that too much will prove as bad as the lice.

One must make up his or her mind to constant care and a good deal of hard work for a couple of months. One "forgot" may undo all the labor that has gone before. And neglect is the prime factor in failure. The turks get soaked in a sudden shower, or go half a day without food at the critical age, and die off as if they had the plague. But I have raised \$125 worth of turkeys, at an expense for food of \$38; I do not count my time and the countless steps I took, because if I had not chased after turkeys I should have trotted after something else, and I felt well repaid with \$80 in my pocket—after paying the little helper, to whom I said, "Run for the turks, dear; its going to rain!" so many times, and paying for the grain fed. I had every bushel of the latter measured out to me with scrupulous exactness, because of a conviction on the part of my other half that "the damned turkeys would eat

more grain than they'd ever pay for." And aside from the cash, there was a solid satisfaction in saying "I told you so!"

Lest any one be too envious of my success, I will say it was only after four years' experience I made the above record. The first year I cleared five dollars, and never worked so hard in my life. It made me sick to hear anyone say "turkey," and I am sure I should never have tried it again but for the pitying silence of the man of the house, who meant to be very considerate, but to my disposition was peculiarly exasperating. I made up my mind I could raise turkeys "after I got the hang of it," and now find the work—not easy, by any means, but fairly remunerative; and a plump roll of greenbacks on market day makes one forget past discomforts.

GARDEN AND ORCHARD.

The Effect of Marketing Poor Fruits.

BY J. R. HOWELL.

The fruit grower of the future will appreciate fully the damage he does to himself and to other fruit growers when he sends a barrel or carload of unsightly fruit to market, or that which is of poor quality or small size.

I acknowledge that this is a difficult question to handle. Fruit growers are not so much interested in the public weal as they are in their own personal welfare. Therefore, so long as the individual can make it appear that his own personal interests are consulted by selling his grapes before they are ripe, or by selling small strawberries with the large ones, or wormy pears with the good, small and colicky apples with the perfect ones, it is possible that he may continue to do so, and yet cannot everyone see that it would be profitable if all fruit growers could consider the advantages resulting from their sending to the market only the finest specimens?

It seems to me too much cannot be said on the subject. Test the question for yourself. Go into the market and buy a basket of oranges, take them to your home and divide them among your family; if these are of fine appearance, juicy and sweet, will not every member of the family smack their lips and will you not be tempted to return to the market often for a new supply? But, on the other hand, supposing these oranges prove to be sour or almost all rind, do not you and other members of the family decide that these few oranges are more than enough? Or, supposing you are not living in a section of the country where grapes are grown, and you purchase for your family a basket of grapes that have a fine appearance, and distribute them among the different members. It is soon found that while they appear fine, they have been gathered before they were ripe, and in consequence they are extremely sour and scarcely edible. Are you tempted to enter the market again and buy more of these grapes? Not at all. Yourself and your family decide that no more grapes are wanted; they have had enough of this kind of fruit, and as they can get bananas or berries, the grapes are no longer patronized. Or, supposing you go into the market and purchase a very handsome basket of Kiefer pears—this variety is exceedingly beautiful to look at, "and being among the best varieties for canning is one of the poorest for desert"—and you anticipate great pleasure in dividing them among your friends. But when they attempt to eat them they find the quality is disappointing, hence you decide that you do not want to buy any more pears. Someway, you are not fond of pears as you once were. You are not informed about the different varieties of pears, and judge all varieties by this very poor one. This is the natural consequence of everybody who buys a poor fruit of any kind; they condemn everything from the poor specimens which they have tested. Or, supposing you buy a barrel of apples which have a fine appearance on examination at the top of the barrel, but on opening the barrel at your home you find that the good specimens are all on top and that the remainder are small, knotty and wormy. Are you not tempted to get along the rest of the season without apples? If this is the case with yourself or with one family, what would be the result if all families and all the people of the country had such an experience in similar lines of purchase? Can you not see how they will be discouraged from buying fruit after having bought these which possessed poor quality, or were poorly assorted, or not what they were represented? Is it not plain that if our fruit could be marketed in more reliable shape so that customers could be assured that the grapes they purchase would be of good quality, and that the apples would be well assorted, and that the peaches would not be bitter from yellows, would not the consumption of the country be increased ten-fold within a short time. You who are complaining of the glut in the markets think of these things and be spirited enough to attempt a reform, even though it may not appear to be largely profitable to you at the beginning. But it is profitable to the individual, for those who buy this superior fruit will sooner or later learn what manner of man he is who puts it up. On the other hand, if he sells fruit that is picked before maturity or fruit that is dishonestly packed, his customers will avoid him and he will lose his trade.