

tors for much more than wise discrimination. They are vehicles for the expression of the opinions of their readers, who are in one sense a club, and who are every year more and more able and ready to take part in the written discussions. As another has said "The isolated farmer needs this means of association with others, and his ideas are sharpened and cleared by joining in the discussions. I can say for myself that I have rid myself of much error by the investigations which I have been induced to make before venturing an opinion into print. And my practice has been much modified through joining in such correspondence." (1) W. G. W.

Why Eggs do not Hatch

EDS. COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.—I am an advocate of early chickens; they escape many diseases that are ruinous to the midsummer flocks. Still there is such a thing as getting them out of the shell too soon to be advantageous. There is often some difficulty in hatching early eggs, which is not experienced later in the season; yet as a general thing the early eggs hatch best with me, as they are better fertilized. The fowls are fresh and more vigorous. One difficulty with the non hatching eggs is placing too many under one hen, when fewer eggs should be used early in the season. Another trouble with the early eggs is the lack of strength in the shell, and many are broken. Under the hen they never last long enough to become even addled, while in an incubator they might hatch.

Hens that are to produce the eggs for hatching purposes should be separated from the flock and fed differently. This must be done quite early in the season, so that the fowls may become domesticated in their quarters before producing the eggs. This is necessary, because any change or removal

(1) The last paragraph is worthy of my readers' attention

A. R. J. F.

of laying hens hinders the production of eggs. If in full laying, it will almost entirely break them up, and it will be some time before they commence again. This has been my experience. Avoid overfeeding as much as possible. They should have good food and plenty of it, which gives vigor to the egg and strength to the shell.

In choosing breeding fowls, care should be taken to discard all which manifest any weakness, choosing only those that are strong and healthy. If the broods had been much afflicted with the gapes the year before, it is well to reject any known to have survived the attack, although they may not show any signs of debility whatever. Not that it is hereditary, or that the distemper is catching. I hold that any fowl is weak which shows all the signs and symptoms of the gapes, although with careful nursing and surgical operation they may withstand the disorder and survive. The vigor is impaired, and there remains only sufficient for the fowl itself, and none to impart to the offspring. Early eggs are apt to become chilled when first set. This is another cause of failure to hatch. The first ten days is the most critical period of incubation. Later than this, the shell becomes tougher and harder, the inner skin thickens and protects the rapidly increasing embryo, which at this stage begins to show life.

It is often the case that full grown chicks do not break from the shell, although the chick is strong in the unhatched shell and cries lustily. However, it dies in the shell the following day. This is frequently the case with eggs from old hens. I have attributed the cause of this to too much heat and a lack of moisture. At the start, the shell of the egg is thick and strong, and the increased strength that is added from incubation makes a wall so strong that it resists all the efforts of the young chick. These eggs should be set on the ground.

C. B.

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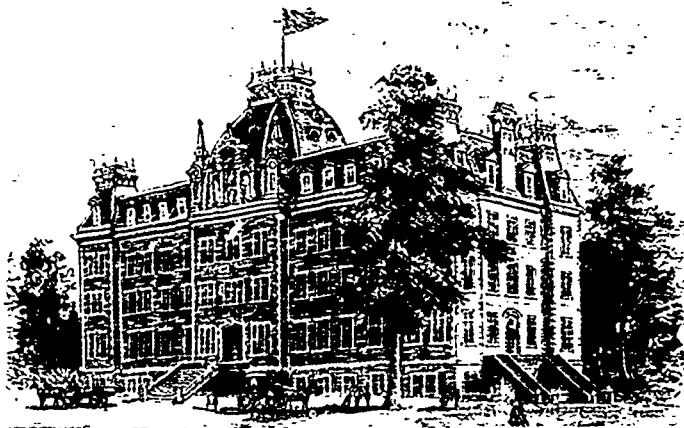
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