

POULTRY CULTURE.

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WRITTEN FOR POULTRY ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO.

QUING to the multiplicity of pamphlets, journals, books, etc., published, it would seem at first sight to be almost waste of time to indite anything further, yet I think that every observant and careful poultry breeder will have some little practical knowledge not possessed by his brothers of the fraternity, and as these essays are to be brought before the Association, we may expect considerable results from the wide and far-reaching dissemination of the practical knowledge contained therein.

A very old and true saying runs somewhat in this way. "If you wish to reform a boy, it is necessary to commence with his grandfather," which, applied to poultry, simply means that if the future generations of the feathered world are to be strong and vigorous, excelling in points of color, symmetry, sectional perfection in general, and utility, we must endeavor to make the present and rising generation healthy and vigorous, first, by choosing the most thrifty of our young stock in making up our pens, and, secondly, by proper care and attention, being careful to supply good wholesome food, pure water, and clean, dry, well ventilated, well lighted apartments. But let me say right here that all the literature in creation upon poultry and poultry culture will avail little if the breeder does not possess at least a modicum of common sense in applying any principle or hints to the management of his flock.

Assuming that the breeder has a good, healthy, vigorous flock to start with, properly mated, half the battle is won, for then the chickens will at least have a fair start in the race for life. A word as to hatching. First, with the old "biddy," secure comfortable quarters, placing each hen in a separate compartment so that there will be no danger of more than one hen crowding on the nest, to the spoiling of at least one hatch of eggs. Supply each with a liberal quantity of good sweet grain, corn preferred, grit of some kind, and good fresh water at least every day. I believe a little earth in the nest box under the litter will do no harm although there have been excellent results with-

out this. Before placing the eggs under the hen give her a dusting with insect powder, which will keep her comfortable for some time to come, repeating this two or three days before we expect the hatch to kick out, which should occur about the twentieth day if the eggs were all equally good and fresh. Now place them in a coop out of doors if the weather is mild, and if cold, in a comfortable brooding house. For the first ten days supply them with plenty of clean, fine grit, rolled oats, sweet milk, clean, pure water, which should be placed in almost anything except a tin vessel, and a little out of the scratching reach of the old hen. A liberal supply of clover tea to the young brood will in a great measure obviate bowel trouble; also a supply of charcoal will be of material value along this line; also scatter plenty of millet seed in the litter for them to exercise themselves in scratching after. I believe the day is past when mush is considered a good thing for young chicks. Stale bread can be used to advantage. After two or three weeks old, if the weather is mild, a good range with plenty of good water and milk, also good clean grain, is all that is necessary. Some of the best chicks the writer has ever raised kicked out of the shell, started off with the old hen through the corn field and never received a bit of attention until the cold weather set in. An acre or so planted with corn and sunflowers provides a splendid shelter, and insures a supply of insects and grubs, which are essential to the proper development of the flock.

Assuming now that the summer is past, the most important point is the proper housing and care of the already nearly developed flock. Be sure there is no overcrowding, because this, with poor ventilation, will spoil your summer's work; roup will take possession, and many a promising show bird will be so checked as to be unfit for exhibition. Not only so, but I have known a pen of B. P. R. pullets, although recovering from an attack of roup contracted in the fall, rendered entirely unprofitable for the breeding pen, not more than ten per cent. of a poor yield of eggs proving fertile. The cock bird was above reproach, more than ninety per cent of eggs hatching from other matings. Fit up your pens and house early, before the bleak winds and cold fall rains set in, if you would have