

to each other, is another means by which artificially reared families are certain to become weak and the seed of various diseases quickly sown, and the constitution degenerated with an inevitable certainty. Seeing, therefore, the means by which the stock is to be prepared for resisting the simplest disorders, should an attack come upon them in the form of a cold, take a few precautions for removing the cause, if it can be found by extra dryness of the soil upon which they rest, and taking special care they are not in the vicinity of stagnant moisture. There are few cases of simple catarrh that will not speedily yield to a little more generous feeding than that they have been used to. Crumbs of bread soaked in spiced ale are wonderfully efficacious, and should be given in addition to other meals if they will partake of so much. If the birds have not been carefully looked after in the first stage of the complaint it invariably runs into a worse condition. From the clear discharges from the nostrils as before mentioned, it here takes the most offensive forms; becomes thick and clotted, stopping up the nostrils; and the cavities of the air passages, being highly inflamed, continue to secrete the discharge. The eyes also become inflamed, and the frothy secretion exudes from the eyelids. The face and eyelids at once become swollen and the bird cannot see to feed. Here we have a troublesome case, and if the bird is valuable it should be removed at once to warm indoor quarters. We do not hesitate to say that there is no more contagious disease known to the feathered tribe; and any bird so attacked should be immediately removed from the rest. There is no doubt the disease is communicable in various ways, such as drinking out of the same water vessel, the liquid being contaminated by the discharge. In the same way the food they peck over, or the grass in their runs holds upon it some of the matter coughed or sneezed up. It is only with birds of value that real attempts at cure should be made, which should be to purge out with a dose of castor oil first. Bathe the head and nostrils with a warm, weak solution of carbolic acid; keep it from the bird's eyes. When the matter is free from the nostrils, slightly syringe (with a small ear syringe) some of the solution up the same. Well dry the feathers about the head and neck. Pills of the following parts should be always at hand, and one, night and morning, administered while the birds are ill: Quarter of an ounce of camphor, quarter of an ounce of valerian, quarter of an ounce of cayenne pepper, quarter of an ounce of lobelia seed powder, quarter of an ounce of gum myrrh; make into forty-eight pills.

Fattening Fowls.

The old plan of fattening fowls was to put from eight to a dozen in a coop with an open front, feeding them regularly three times a day. By employing a railed or barred floor, so that all the dung can fall through. Very good results may be obtained in this way, though either of the processes of cramping are now considered quicker and more economical, as compared with what we may call the natural plan. The coop must be arranged so as to be perfectly dry and free from draught, and should have a canvas cover to draw down and keep the inmates in darkness. Only fowls which have run together must be penned up in one coop, or their disagreements will prevent any increase of weight. Before commencing, the coop should be white-washed and the bottom bars cleaned, to prevent annoyance from vermin; and when put in, the chickens should be left for several hours without any food at all. This is essential and the neglect of it is why many amateurs in their first attempts in fattening their surplus, completely fail; as the birds being naturally fretful at their confinement refuse to eat heartily, and rather pine away; whereas by well fasting them before any food is given, they begin to feed at once. The quantity must be measured by the appetite, and none on any account left, but clean fresh food given as much as can be eaten without leaving, and water being supplied at the same time. When the feeding is done the canvas covering should be drawn down and the birds left in darkness till an hour before the next meal. The times of feeding must be observed with the greatest punctuality, or the fowls will fret and lose condition. The best food will be a mixture of barley-meal and oat-meal, or buckwheat meal with the husk sifted out, and mixed with milk. A little suet or lard added is recommended by some good authorities, and increases the fattening, but only to the advantage of the basting ladle. The process will be completed in from fifteen to twenty days, and should be carefully watched, as when the proper point is once reached, the chickens if not immediately killed, rapidly decline away.

Designs for Chicken Coops.

If there is a weak point in the culture of poultry, taking the country through, it may be said it is in chicken raising. Various diseases, inclement weather, rats, weasels, hawks, owls, and even crows, to say nothing of such vexatious and insidious enemies as various species of internal and external parasites, combine to make young chickens very uncertain property under the slipshod, unmethodical management that prevails on too many farms. In the first place, success depends very much upon the kind of coop used. In contriving coops, not all the foes liable to beset the hatching hen during incubation, but also the chickens during chickenhood, must be anticipated. Under favorable circumstances any old box, or crate, or barrel turned on one side, will do, or the hen may be left to wander with her brood, but this is by no means a satisfactory way. The following sketch of a hatching box will be found convenient, its simplicity being its chief recommendation:

Get a large tea chest, A, cut a hole round or square in the front of it, and nail two pieces of wood with a groove, or easier still, nail two pieces, the one over the other, but the edge of one projecting one-fourth of an inch over the other, and nail them on, on each side of the hole, they will form a groove for the door to slide

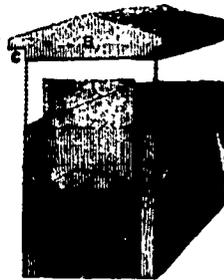


Fig. 1. Hatching Box.

in. To form the roof, cut two pieces of inch board in the form B, just to fit inside the chest, going in about one inch at C, and forming a projection or eave; nail some thin boards across these pieces, the edge overlapping, or it may be boarded straight, if afterwards a piece of felt be nailed on the boards to keep out the wet. This roof lifts off under so that a hen and eggs may be examined at any time, and the space between the boards and edge of the chest when the roof is on admits air. To construct the cage D, get some laths and nail them together as shown in figure 2, and the apparatus is complete, see figure 3.



Fig. 2. Cage D.

Any old box, any old pieces of chests, a few laths (sawn ones the best), a few nails, hammer and saw, and the coop may be constructed by a non-professional. The hen is put on the eggs, and is generally shut in at night by letting down the sliding door. Place food and water in the outer cage in the morning, and she will take care of herself and cannot get out, will return to her eggs, and cannot be molested by other hens. When the chickens are hatched they may be left with the hen in the same coop, and will stick to it when she is again in the poultry house if allowed. During the time the chickens are with the hen the box ought to be shifted every day or so, to give the hen the benefit of fresh ground, this may be done at night after the birds have gone to roost and no trouble is entailed. For people in bush settlements, there is no better, quicker, or cheaper plan of accommodation for a hatching hen and chicken coop than the foregoing, but if a more elaborate contrivance is required by people in towns and cities we suggest the following:

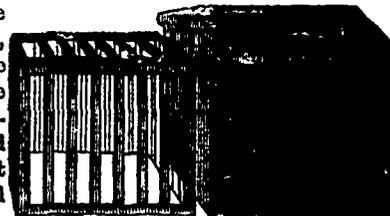


Fig. 3. Hatching Box Complete.

Figures 4 and 5 represent a very simple affair, designed merely to restrain the hen and protect at

least partially from rain. For the sake of warmth, the further side in the illustration is boarded and a board hinged at the edge and opened as in figure 4 to admit the sun in day time, and may be closed as in figure 5 to keep

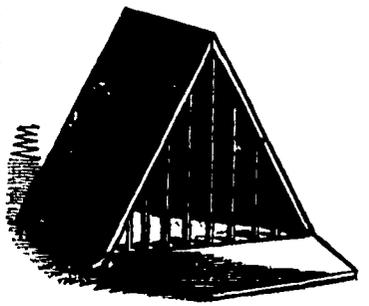


Fig. 4.

the cold out at night, but such coops will not answer either for extremes of heat and cold, driving rains, or for what is worse than all the rest, rats. Rats will climb up and enter at the top of the coop if there is an opening sufficient, or what suits them equally well, will burrow underneath if there is no floor. In figure 6 is represented a section of a coop with a moveable floor, arranged so that in wet weather the rain which falls on the roof will not

Fig. 5.

touch the floor. Figure 7 is an elevation of the same coop. Of course a board must be propped against the coop under the eaves next the slatted part if there is a driving rain from that quarter, and rats must be kept out in the same way. The benefit of this coop is that having a tight bottom, rats cannot get in under-

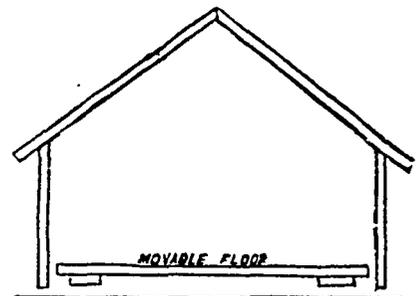


Fig. 6.

neath, and chickens are less liable to injury from that cause, but in a coop of this kind earth should be placed on the top of the floor, and frequently renewed, ordinary damp soil will do, placed in the coop an inch deep, it soon dries and forms an excellent deodorizer. The sides and ends of the coop must not rest upon the floor, but lap over so as to enclose it, the chicks thrive best when in contact with the earth. When the floor is wider than the coop, driving storms all the wet dripping from the roof would of course be caught by the flow and run directly underneath and under the hen while brooding her chickens; whole broods have in this way perished in a single night.

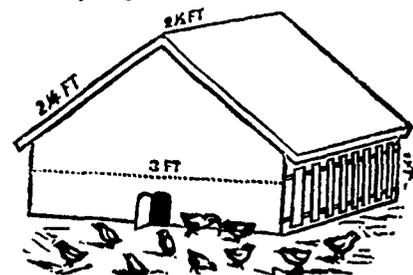


Fig. 7.

To impart a flavor to the flesh of fowls, such as constitutes the "game flavor" of the wild state, the Boston Journal of Chemistry recommends cayenne pepper, ground mustard, or ginger to be added to the common food of fowls.