

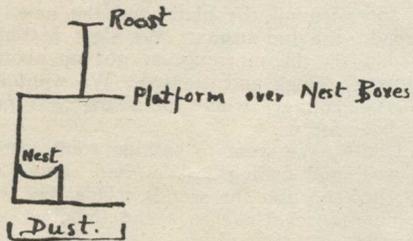
# THE GIRLS ON THE FARM

A Friendly Talk With All of You

"FROM ONE COUNTRY GIRL TO ANOTHER"

DID you ever try to talk to a person to whom you had never been introduced, or to force yourself into a position where you didn't know whether or not you would find a welcome? If you have ever felt either of those uncertainties you can readily understand the state of my mind when I wrote that first letter to "all the girls on all the farms." I felt like a shy young man trying to call on a girl at boarding school—if he isn't a brother, or a cousin, or an uncle of the girl, he finds it hard to explain to the lady principal just why he is where he is. However, the editor deemed me eligible for an introduction, and now I feel free to work my way toward your sympathy, and your approval of my ideas and sentiments.

Please bear in mind, if you consider the matter at all seriously, that I am not setting myself up as capable of giving advice or dictating as to the proper course anyone should pursue—no indeed!



End View of Nest Box and Roost

I'm merely giving you some of my opinions and theories, and surely everyone who has a mind at all, has some independent ideas concerning the things which most closely touch his or her own life. I don't ask you to agree with me, but you are quite free to question me, my notions, and anything that I have said. I'll stand by my guns and try to prove that I meant what I wrote, and that my statements, although perhaps a bit conflicting, in some minds when the utterances of one article are compared with those of another, are tucked away in my mind in unison and harmony. And now we're ready to be friends, so let's to business.

In my last (and first) letter, I talked of generalities, trying to look at this quiet country life of yours and mine in such a way as to get the most out of it, and not have our minds too much trampled upon by the common round. It was only the lack of space that kept my enthusiasm tied down to the discussion of hobbies alone, for I wanted, as I told you, to go on and talk of that indefinite quantity, our special talent. However, I have decided to be very practical this time, to leave theories and mental adjustments strictly alone for a season, and, in short, to talk about the subject of hens. Hens, chickens and eggs are always in demand from the Atlantic to the Pacific, so it surely is a subject which will appeal to one and all of those who have the necessary facilities and requirements for caring for a feathered flock.

I WAS calling on a woman once who lived in another part of the country from me, in what I thought was an ideal situation. Her home was on the side of a long, gentle slope of ground which came right up from the river. In the stream were several small islands, which brought Ellen Douglas to my mind at once, and on the other side of the water, hill after hill showed all those wonderful greens of late summer. When my hostess complained of loneliness and dissatisfaction I could not but draw her attention to the beauty which she had at her very door, and which I was sure would rest and soothe. She gave me such a pitying look, and exclaimed: "I never heard of anyone living on a view." Of course, that is very true and very practical, so let us go back and roost with the chickens a time.

I have raised hens and taken charge of hens in each and every season of the year. I have never made any great amount of money from the venture because I did not go into the business seriously enough, but I know, if I had given up more of my time and attention, I would have had a greater measure of success. That reveals one of the first principles—to get thoroughly grounded before going into the hen business. Your flock must have a good share of your time and intelligent attention. The following of that rule will bring pleasing and satisfactory results.

I cannot give you definite figures of the cost of a flock of hens or the cost of their keep, or the profit you should have. Prices, both of feed and of eggs vary in different parts of Canada, and I can give you only an approximate idea of the expense and profit of keeping hens.

I have laid down the first rule—Be prepared to give your hens a generous share of time and attention.

Secondly, I would say—Have hens that are worthy of your best efforts. Have a flock of which you are proud, and if you have only a single-roomed henhouse and one general run, have but

one variety, and keep that strain as pure bred as possible.

The choice of a special breed of hens is influenced by the object one has in view, whether the market nearest at hand offers better opportunities for eggs or chickens.

For all round flock, the egg basket and the dinner platter both considered, I think fifty Buff Orpington or Rhode Island Red fowls should delight the heart of any proud owner. The Buff Orpington is a gentle, placid fowl, always of the same clean light brown color, and the spring chicks develop into the plumpest, most satisfactory table fowl one can imagine or find. The Rhode Island Red is but a handsome, much showier edition of the Orpington.

The White Plymouth Rocks or Barred Rocks are of the same high class as the above-mentioned breeds, but will give better results as egg producers than the chicks will as early broilers or for general market. Of course, there are many varieties of fancy fowls, but, as I said before, the ordinary hen raiser will do much better to get a flock of good reliable fowls best suited to her needs, and work with that variety and that alone.

I am sending with this the plan of a henhouse which is ideal, and would make it possible to keep more than one variety of flock. It is quite a pretentious building which would cost seventy-five dollars to build, and which would moreover require a large piece of land, not to mention the wire, for the runs. The plan, however, is a splendid one and could be simplified to meet individual requirements. The separate rooms in this house are most convenient when the hens are setting, as it gives them an apartment quite by itself, while the third room may be used for the baby chicks. I have never used an incubator—an encourager of race suicide—and had naturally hatched chicks in April of this year, which made excellent broilers in June. I am sorry I haven't space enough to dwell on the merits of this henhouse and to tell you of an excellent plan for caring for the young chickens, whether from the hen or an incubator, when one has not a regulation brooder. However, I must keep to the subject in a general way.

HAVING chosen your flock in general, the number of fowls to purchase is the next question. If you want to make a business—and a profitable business of your hens—have a large flock. It is almost as easy to care for fifty hens as for twenty-five or thirty, and your additional profit will overbalance the extra cost and effort.

I seldom winter the same fowl twice, and a year-old fowl is always in good demand in the market, so it is easy to keep one's flock in a flourishing con-

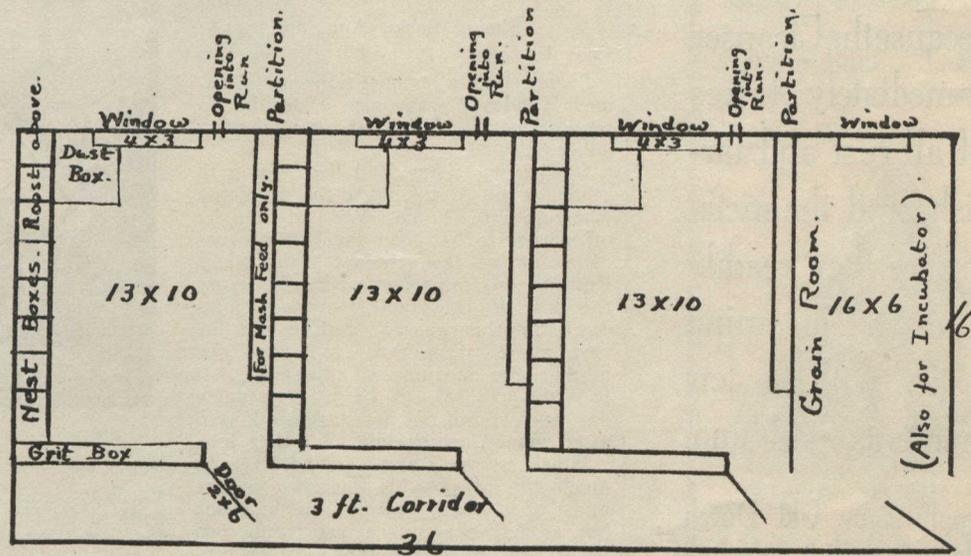
dition. Look over this list and see how many of these articles are grown or procurable on your own farm or home-stead. This lessens the expense of raising hens materially, as you can readily see, and simplifies the problem. One can procure ground oyster shells, bone foods, and other preparations from poultry supply manufacturers. There are several excellent farm and poultry journals published in Canada, which deal extensively with the raising of hens and the proper care of a flock. When one has made the start, has discovered that her private income can be satisfactorily increased by giving up some time and attention to fifty or more or less hens, and has got a proper house and a suitable flock, then she is in a position to profit intelligently by the advice offered in the columns of a poultry journal.

Trap nests, for instance, are explained explicitly, and one can readily appreciate their practical effect on one's profit after a little experience, but my idea is merely to arouse interest and to point out that many a girl and woman, who longs for an opportunity to go to a larger field and earn a wage, may stay at home and be happy in an occupation which can be made profitable and pleasant.

Have a good henhouse, a good flock, and use judgment and common sense. Don't starve your hens nor feed them until they are sluggish and stupid. Keep them active and cheerful and ready to appreciate such a treat as a raw turnip or a cabbage suspended by a string. Give them the variety of food which the hen nature craves. Keep everything in connection with your flock and its abode clean and sweet. Do all these things and you'll be so satisfied with yourself and your acquirement that you'll want to learn more and more of the subject and the best methods to pursue. You cannot expect to get that all at once any more than you can expect to learn all the reasons why you should keep hens or all the fundamental principles of the business, in one small article.

I've been so very practical that mayn't I digress in one paragraph? Have you been enjoying the autumn sunsets and the wonderful alluringness of the autumn atmosphere? I wish I had the space to quote you Bliss Carman's poem "Vagabondia," it is so thrillingly applicable and appropriate to our Canadian autumns. These sunsets of September and October must surely appeal to you girls who live in the free, uncramped open—the sunset of the mountains which ceases so abruptly but leaves such a marvellous afterglow on the fresh white peaks, or the sunset of the prairie with its "long light" so like Tennyson's "Bugle Song," or the quiet, peaceful, beautiful sunset of the East.

You girls can one and all do two things at least—you can raise hens and you can enjoy the sunset.



Hen House for 60 Hens. 36 X 16

dition. When one is thinking of eggs only, this may not be a good plan, but I think it is.

I will give you a few figures, calculated in accordance with the conditions in my vicinity. To keep a flock of sixty fowls (of any of the varieties I have mentioned) for a year, and pay for their entire maintenance, would cost about one hundred and ten dollars. These hens, if they are doing their part of the contract, should produce eggs to the value of one hundred and thirty-five dollars. The fertilizer would put five dollars more on the credit side of the sheet, giving you a profit of thirty dollars for one year. Now, don't be disgusted at the smallness of my figures: that is your actual profit. Each of you can for herself figure up her possible profit.

Food for a flock of hens includes grain, such as oats, buckwheat, barley, wheat or corn—some ground, some whole; vegetables, as potatoes, mangles or turnips; meat, raw or cooked, such as the liver, heart or waste portions of any domestic animal; gravel, oyster shells and ground bones.

Don't overlook the latter in the excitement of the former occupation. Make all the money you can with your hens and enjoy it, but don't forget to take time to marvel and be inspired by the glory of the setting sun.

## Consumption of Candy

"THIS feminine craze for being slender has knocked the bottom out of our business," said the man in charge of the down-town branch of a big candy concern in New York the other day. "Some men who were good for at least \$10 worth of candy each week never come inside the door now, and when I see them trudging past the store with a package of fruit I make up my mind their wives and daughters or sweethearts have taken a stand against candy. One man with a wife and four daughters who used to be a splendid customer, told me the other day that he'd as soon come home with a viper as a five-pound box of candy."