

POULTRY YARD

Care of Poultry in December
S. Short, Carleton Co., Ont.

December is the most important month in many respects to the poultry-keeper. If eggs are to be expected in January and throughout the winter, regular and intelligent care must be given to the fowl from now on and, in fact, those who began a month ago to give their hens proper conditions for laying, are most likely to get the best egg harvest. Proper conditions include the whole situation, which may be divided into three parts: viz., the poultry house, the fowl, and the feeding.

The hose should be in thorough order in every respect. The windows should be sound and scrupulously clean. This is very necessary. The days are now very short. At the earliest, the fowl cannot see to eat before seven a.m. and after four p.m. At the latest. This means a period of five hours for the birds to do the work of the day and the first of the next, which shows the need of all the light that can possibly be given. In cities where the lighting is so good, the birds get their evening and morning meals, and their water, at the same time as their supper and breakfast is distributed, by giving a fourth meal between eight and nine o'clock at night by electric light, and, in some cases, the result has been a very marked improvement. This can be done by lamp light but it takes from half to three-quarters of an hour each night, which is a very serious matter, while only a large flock here kept.

The fowls should be healthy, in good condition, and the pullets mature. There is a wide difference of opinion about the number of lay or brood fowls to keep. Some think that there should be kept in each flock or on each acre a number of males or that there is plenty for each pen. One expert says: "When you think you have room for twenty layers only keep ten." This is good advice. If you have to choose the number of males to keep, begin with one male to the spare males, young and old, keeping only those needed for breeding the next spring. Next, remove all hens over two years of age, except if it is a Mediterranean class, when they may be kept until three years of age. After the old hens, remove the very young pullets. This should leave only serviceable birds that, with proper care, should return eggs in profitable quantities.

The layers should be fed three times a day, twice with grain and once with soft food. Give the soft food whenever most convenient. Many breeders give it the first meal of the day, others at noon, and others again, at night. There are arguments in favor of each method, so that, as far as now known, it is best to let convenience decide the point. Wheat and oats make a good grain ration—half of each. To this may be added a small quantity of whole corn, say one part to ten of wheat and oats. If white birds are kept and are used

for exhibition do not add corn—it makes the plumage creamy. The soft feed may be made up of five parts bran, four parts whole grain provender and one part corn-meal, but omit the corn-meal if white birds are kept. This covers the main feeding. In addition, there should be in each pen, hoppers or boxes containing grit and oyster shell. Cabbages, mangels, beets, or other green food should be fed in reasonable quantities.

For stimulating the egg supply, green bone may be given three times a week. Feed this very lightly. If it is not convenient to feed green bone, use beef scraps or meat-meal. This may be mixed in the soft food. It is far better to feed too little, say about a tablespoon to each fifteen fowl. It is far better to feed too little of either green bone or meat-meal than too much.

Government Work in Poultry

The departments of agriculture in Alberta and Saskatchewan seem to think that most farmers will require something more than wheat to make western farms continue to pay, and that to keep the rural population contented and happy, the departments of farm work must increase. The article in our issue of September 16, giving rules for the conduct of the fattening stations, shows what is being started in Saskatchewan. The Department at Edmonton has been carrying on poultry fattening demonstrations for three years, and last year the agricultural department at Regina started this year up with the result that this year's winter enlarging its operations.

The work being carried on as outlined by these two provinces is along the right lines. It first shows the producer what is required by the market, then raises it, or helps the farmer to, and when it finishes the product ready for market by showing the farmer how, it does not leave him to find his own market, but completes the job by assisting to turn the product into the most possible cash.

There are people who claim governments should not enter the commercial field, and there may be some truth in it, yet when it comes to assisting an industry in which every man, woman and child in Canada shares, directly or indirectly, why should it not be done? This is work that need not take many hundred dollars out of the treasury, but even if it should take thousands it is money well spent.

Taking the average rate of increase from 1890 to 1901 as having continued up to the present, there is now in Canada about twenty-two million head of poultry. Granting that about two-thirds of these are laying hens, that laid an average of eight dozen eggs in the year, at 25 cents a dozen, it would mean a yearly income to the country of nearly thirty million dollars. Surely this is worth looking

I doubt if there is another department of the farm that responds to good treatment more readily than the poultry department. If by means of instruction and illustration the farmer is led to improve his poultry, the Canadian hen is induced to increase her yearly lay six eggs—one half a dozen—the revenue would be increased over one and three-quarter million dollars. If the same instruction showed how much more profitable the raising and marketing of the eggs resulted in a more palatable egg reaching the consumer, which made every dozen of eggs worth one cent more, there would be added to the national revenue another million and a half. These figures are not really based on anything so anything about the depressed poultry side of the question. We

know what instruction has done in producing a better article. The Dominion Government did considerable in assisting this industry, but it was only a little to what might be done. Still the results of illustration work are plainly seen wherever one of these illustration stations was situated. A lot of work has been done in the care is taken in producing fresh eggs and especially marketing the chickens. Enough is done to show what might be done, and the fact that these two new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan are doing what they are for poultry, only goes to show that all our businessmen are not in the east.

F. C. F.

The Pullets to Buy

Buy 20 Plymouth Rock pullets hatched in the first part of March. Get those that stand high on good heavy legs with clear eye and bright comb, with long straight back, and glistening plumage. Put them in their home not later than November 1st. Feed them sparingly during the first half of November of whole wheat and oats equal parts, one-eighth gal twice a day, and 10 to 16 ounces of green bone every second day.

Let them run outside as long as the weather is fit—cold will not hurt them as long as it is dry. If they are inclined to stay inside, chase them out and shut your barn. This is absolutely necessary in order to have them lay during the winter months. If you have to chase them out, see to it that they can get out of the wind. A canvas screen 3 by 8 feet put on the ground in "L" shape is about as good as anything I have found. Don't let them into their scratching part of your barn as long as they don't lay and it is not too wet outside.

Towards the end of the month start to increase their feed, adding corn on the cob to same—from four to six fair-sized ears ought to be sufficient—given at noon each day. Fill your hopper with grit and oyster shell, 2 parts grit and 1 part shell.

On December 10th to 15th the first eggs should commence to appear, each pullet laying four to six of the first cluster; then quit to get her second wind December 20th to 30th. They should be laying 10 to 12 eggs every second day if it is cold and stormy. If good weather, 12 to 15 each day (and some of mine have done better) from February 1st to April 1st. On the first day of April sell them to the butcher, as they have about outlived their usefulness.—Standard.

The White Diarrhoea Scourge

We clip the following from a report of the American Poultry Association's annual meeting, held at Niagara Falls, where two experts gave their opinion as to what causes white diarrhoea in chicks.

"From our experience we are inclined to believe that Dr. Morse is nearer correct, though few have given more intelligent study to the matter than Mr. L. F. Baldwin."

A carefully prepared paper was read by Mr. L. H. Baldwin, Deer Park.

ment on the subject of white diarrhoea in chicks. Mr. Baldwin took the position that this disease or ailment is chargeable mainly to imperfect incubation. B. Morse, of the Bureau of Animal Industry, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., delivered a paper in which he discussed the same subject and gave it as his belief that white diarrhoea, or what is commonly is meant by this term, is a distinct disease, but that it is the ravages of coccidia. He quoted numerous authorities including German and American investigators, in support of his belief. He also gave in detail the multiplication and fatal work of coccidia, especially in chicks hatched from debilitated stock. He said that the disease in question is being made up largely of 'fancies' and remarked—with charming affability—that he would proceed to furnish his audience with a list of the 'fancies' as the result of research and repeated pathological investigations, that the coccidium germ is transmitted by the faeces of infected birds and that any form of neglect or abuse which results in debilitated breeding stock or chicks, predisposes to the ravages of coccidia. Dr. Morse talked thirty-five to forty minutes and his descriptive explanation was received with rapt attention.

Nova Scotians Want Rural Delivery

Ed. The Canadian Dairymen and Farming World,—I must congratulate you on the interesting and able articles you published in The Canadian Dairymen and Farming World in regard to the introduction of Free Rural Mail Delivery in Canada. Now that Free Rural Mail Delivery is an assured thing for the farmers in Canada, the farmers in this section, which is a thickly settled county, are going to be up and fight for rural delivery.

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