

POULTRY YARD

Scrubs vs. Pure-Breds.

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We who are interested in poultry have been waiting for some time interested in a reform in a branch of our industry that should interest all keepers of fowls. I refer to the custom of keeping the poultry or non-poultry in the poultry yards everywhere. It is to be regretted that so many intelligent stock keepers who annually pay out much to secure good animal stock, do not see the folly of harboring these excuses for they are not fowls, but mere makefishes and a class that will not bring credit to a barn yard.

It is quite obvious that they are deficient in many respects. It is not possible that they could be otherwise, years of careless handling must show itself in the end and mark the stock with physical deficiencies. The years of careless mating must bring up the evil side of the birds. As a rule in the fall the poorest birds are left for next season's matings; the early maturing ones are killed for market because they are early. Those runts that are kept fall easy prey to the diseases of winter. Their slow development is still further retarded by being huddled in damp quarters over-crowded pens and often kept in most unsanitary conditions, for what stimulus is there in a scrub to encourage their keeper to give them better quarters? They won't lay because they can't; they are back to their old place which nature gave them, that is, they lay only in the spring and when they have laid their quota of eggs then, bird like, perforce they must hatch them, and brood they will, no matter how they are treated for they are beyond discouragement in this particular. Other causes are also at work in these flocks to tear them down. No attention is given to mating. All birds run together and they look after themselves. No attempt is made at compensating the defects of the hens by a male showing strong points in his make up where his mates are lacking. There is no attention given to know whether the males are hatched from the eggs of the best layers or not, no care is given to have them uniform in either color, shape or size. Let them run their own show is the policy, and run it they do.

TOUGH CHICKEN AS A RESULT

The consequences are quite evident in the chicks, they are small little runts mostly feathers and bones, the best of them when dressed and plucked are tough scrawny rascals of chicken carcasses weighing about three pounds, tougher to eat than a surveyor's shoe pack and about as tasty as nourishment. What is there in them to encourage their stay on our premises? There is certainly much to discourage.

Supposing some one does take a notion to improve them, decides to se-

lect and breed to a type he will set up in his mind. What has he to work on? Advance with there is dismaying. He finds no two alike in shape, size or color he finds them deficient in size and vigor, and many of them diseased, showing themselves to be but a poor foundation for a good stock. We will suppose he buys a good male bird at \$3 or more and raises his chicks, picking out the best. In the next year he gets \$1.00 for his old bird and pays \$3.00 more for another and keeps this one two years. At the end of five years his males has cost him perhaps \$10.00 or more, his stock has been built up in size and color, but you hear him say, "It's maddening to see these blotches of stray colored feathers in a fine flock and worse still to see the nice ones showing up the diseases of the old stock."

START WITH PURE BRED STOCK

How much better to start in the pure-bred stock where there has been a good foundation laid already. Others will say, "Why not start in the existing breeds and strains of breeds that are good foundations upon which to build, so why waste time improving poor stock?" The answer is, "Pure-breds can be improved upon still further." Pure-breds also offer many good points in the utility field that cannot be found in scrub and to people given to look for the best in business these points should appeal. They have first of all a similarity that makes them valuable in the several markets to which they and their product—the eggs—may be sent. Fruit growers can get better prices for fruit when it is all of a size, so with poultry men, if they get their birds all of about a size they can get a better figure.

With scrub it is impossible to get them even, hence the smallest rules the lot and it is generally the worst. The same applies to color. The birds and their color are a matter of flesh and lays, whereas the pure breeds are similar and when it comes to placing these birds on the market a workkeeper can sell more for a better price than he can for the scrubs. This also holds good along the line of shape. Birds of an even shape when dressed command more attention and through that, a better price. The eggs as a rule from pure-breds are similar in color and size and by selection can more easily be brought to a similarity.

Good stock induces a person to keep them well and healthy which is easily done in an average hen house that is kept dry and clean. Pure-breds respond most readily to care and out respect for their beauty and utility they generally get good treatment. Why not this year get a start? It is easy and good stock costs no more to keep than poor. They give you another market which no scrub can enter; and that of the exhibition. It is a market open to all who have time to put on it and will pay its way.

Any one looking into the arguments put before the public from time to time cannot fail to see that a reform in the poultry branch of the farm is advisable from almost any standpoint. It offers more to pleasure, pride and cash and is worthy of support from all bird fanciers.

Emden Cheese

This variety of geese are pure white, with very soft and pliable feathers and with plenty of down, which brings a good price.

The Emdens are a large breed of geese, the adult gander weighing twenty pounds and the young ganders weigh sixteen or eighteen pounds. Adult and young geese weigh respectively eighteen and sixteen pounds.

They lay very large eggs, a hen being able to cover only five.

The young goslings do not care for the mixtures that are fed the chickens, but live principally upon grass and weeds. They are especially fond of plain and if you keep them penned up you can kill this troublesome weed by moving the goslings' pen every few days to a fresh spot where there is a patch of plain.

For market purposes the Emdens are as good as any other variety, but are not as good layers as some other breeds.

Rape for Young Chicks

As a succulent fresh and palatable form of green food, one on which chicks and old fowls, also, for the matter of that, thrive and do well on, rape answers the purpose most admirably. It is relished and devoured eagerly by birds of all ages, and poultrymen, who are sometimes at a loss to know just what to provide in this line, should spend a few cents for it as cheap enrichment with a reliable seed house, and grow a small crop for their maturing birds. Many who have limited space for their flocks, have often been puzzled over this question of green food. For them we would suggest the following plan, which is a record of ours, and which we think a very good one.

The difficulty in providing chickens with green food, lies in the fact that they will eat while there is green in sight, unless, of course, they have unlimited range. The aim is to provide a constant supply. Take three boards, say 12 ins. wide, by 6 ft. long, 1 in. thick, using one for the bottom, the other two for the sides. Nail together securely, and fill in the ends with pieces 1 in. x 12 in., then fill up with good earth to a depth of six inches, sow your seed, after which the top should be covered with fine wire netting. Through this the birds will be able to just keep the tops of the juicy plants nibbled off, and if watered occasionally, if the summer be dry, the supply of green food will last all through the summer. The baby chicks of course will not be able to

get at the rape in a box of this kind, but the rape can in that case be fed to them and of course will grow much quicker. The rape could be started in a hot bed and thus be available long before it could be planted out of doors. When different broods of chicks are kept in separate runs (as they should be) one of these boxes placed half way between the two runs would provide food for all that would eat, but enough for them to get along with, more would be desirable.

For old birds, rape is a fine food, it can be sown broadcast and allowed to attain full height, before the fowls are permitted to feed in it, and then every other day is all it will stand, unless of course the patch is very extensive. The small fancier is then advised to grow box patches of rape, or larger patches if he can, the larger breeder is reminded of its value. Try, and see for yourself, as others have done.

Try moving a hatch of young chicks to a small movable colony of pens, locating it near a corn field. Run a wire netting fence around it for a few days. This fence can then be removed and the chicks will go to the house to roost without further inducement. Splendid results are reported by the Agricultural College from this method of keeping chicks. A large hopper, kept full of grain does away with daily attendance, as the chicks can even get along without water in such a place.

The Editor of the Poultry page cordially invites its readers to discuss questions relating to poultry in its columns. Letters are solicited containing experience, suggestions, records, new ideas in house and fixtures, buildings, methods that have brought success in any branch of poultry raising, etc. Let us hear from you and we will try and make our poultry page the most helpful one in the journal. Questions answered quickly.

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