

NESTS.

In constructing nest boxes, three points should be kept constantly in mind : (1) The box should be of such a nature that it can be readily cleaned and thoroughly disinfected ; if it is removable so that it can be taken out of doors so much the better ; (2) it should be placed in the dark, or where there is only just sufficient light for the fowl to distinguish the nest and nest egg ; (3) there should be plenty of room on two or three sides of the nest. It is a well-known fact that some hens in seeking a nest will always drive off other hens, no matter how many vacant nests may be available. If the nest is so arranged that it can be approached only from one side, when one hen is driving another from the nest there is likely to be more or less of a combat, the result of which is often a broken egg. This, perhaps, more than any other one thing, leads to the vice of egg eating. To our knowledge, the habit of egg eating is not contracted where the nests are arranged in the dark and open on two or three sides. Nests for Leghorns or Hamburgs may be made of 6-inch fence boards nailed together so as to form boxes 8 by 10 inches and 6 inches deep. Where perches are arranged with the platform underneath to catch the droppings, as previously described, the nests may be placed on the floor underneath this platform, the opening in front closed with a door which either lets down from the top or lifts from the bottom. Where nests are placed side by side it is necessary to have the partitions between them of sufficient height so that it will be impossible for a hen to draw eggs from one nest to another. Whenever the nest boxes are filled so full with nest material that a hen can draw an egg from one nest to another, some of the eggs are likely to be broken.

**ARTIFICIAL INCUBATION.**

Some readers of these columns may be testing artificial incubation for the first time and meeting with some trouble. First, it is a thing that cannot be learned by reading alone, but requires a great amount of careful practice and thinking. I found upon my first attempt, that my knowledge on the subject was exceedingly limited, even after having carefully studied it in books and papers. However, I must say that I gained much information from these sources which would have lost me much time and trouble had I relied wholly upon my own experience.

In purchasing an incubator, get a good one. I know of no cheap machines that are worth using. Poor eggs will not hatch. You may be having trouble with the eggs not hatching well. This is due to many causes. Poor eggs, eggs that have been handled with greasy hands, and old eggs never hatch well. Finding full grown chicks in many of the unhatched eggs, generally is due to chilling by opening incubator too often while hatching, to a weakness inherited from the parents, or to having used too much moisture. The first two difficulties can easily be corrected, but the last one is hard to understand.

Too little moisture is also bad on a hatch, so that to know just how much is required is quite a puzzle. I found that I had been using too much moisture, so I decreased the amount till now I use but very little and that not till the last few days of the hatch. Nature has so arranged the constituents of the eggs that but little moisture is needed where the ventilation is not too great. The egg has more moisture than is necessary to produce the chick, and this over amount and no more, must be taken out. So during the first few days of the hatch no moisture is needed, as too much water causes the chick to become too large to turn in the shell so as to pick its way out. After it is evaporated from the egg, just enough moisture is needed to keep the air in the incubator thoroughly saturated so that not another