

In the Poultry Yard

Some Common Poultry Troubles

Catarrh.—Catarrh in poultry closely resembles the common "cold in the head" of man. It is accompanied by sneezing, difficult breathing and watery discharge from the nostrils, and is apt to develop into roup. Among the causes are lack of ventilation, drafts, dampness, exposure, and improper care and feeding. The prevention and treatment are much the same as for roup.

Roup.—The following are some of the symptoms of the various stages of this infectious disease; puffed or swollen eyelids, watery discharge from the eyes and nose; eyes swollen and closed by offensive, cheesy matter, thick gelatinous discharge from the eyes and nose; frothy mucus in the mouth and throat, throat covered with thick, cheesy matter. In the early stages of the disease the inflammation can be reduced by bathing the eyes and face of the fowl with a mixture composed of equal parts of sweet oil and whiskey. The fowl should be removed from the flock and fed on soft food. If the disease has reached the offensive stage the fowl should be killed, and the house disinfected with sulphur fumes or a three per cent. solution of creolin to prevent the spread of the disease. If it is desired to save a valuable bird, it is a good plan to loosen the discharge in the nostrils and eyes, and immerse the head for 20 or 30 seconds in a one or two per cent. solution of permanganate of potash. The treatment should be given twice daily until all symptoms have disappeared. Roup is most prevalent in drafty, overcrowded and dirty poultry houses. Inside of the house should be well cleaned, and the ventilation and lighting so arranged that the house will be perfectly dry and free from drafts.

Gapes.—This disease usually affects only young birds, and as its name indicates, is characterized by the chick gaping—opening its mouth at frequent intervals to get breath. As the disease proceeds the breathing becomes very labored. Gapes result from the presence of worms in the windpipe. The windpipe becomes inflamed, and this, together with the worms, is apt to cause suffocation of the chicken. When the inflammation extends to the lungs, death usually ensues. The worms may be removed by the fumes of sulphur or coal tar, or by dropping one or two drops of spirits of turpentine or salicylate of soda into the windpipe. A fumigator can be made from an old barrel. The ends of the barrel should be removed, and the chickens to be treated placed on a grating inside the barrel. The top of the barrel may be covered with an old sack, and a plate of burning sulphur placed on the ground inside the barrel. Instead of using sulphur, the inside of the barrel may be painted with a mixture of coal tar and coal oil, of the same consistency as paint. The chickens should be swathed while under treatment, and removed as soon as they show signs of being overcome by the fumes. Three treatments usually suffice; they are given night and morning. The worms are killed, lose their grip upon the internal surface of the windpipe, and the chickens cough them up.

Chickens contract the disease when allowed to run on ground which has been infested with the gape worm; the worms are conveyed from the ground to another through the medium of food and drink. When the worms have

been destroyed by fumigation, it is advisable to remove the chickens to dry, uncontaminated ground, or if this is impossible, to plow or dig up the earth about the pens and to scatter air-slaked lime around. The disease is rarely present among chickens that are reared on well-drained soil, and away from the dampness about the farm buildings.

Leg Weakness.—Leg weakness is found among chicks that are housed in badly constructed brooders, overfed with unsuitable food, or not allowed sufficient exercise on an earth floor. Chicks that are affected should be placed on ground that is covered with chaff, and animal food and small grains made the principal part of their ration.

In conclusion it may be said that at least one-half the cases of diseases in poultry are due directly or indirectly to lice and other parasites. Chickens that have had their vitality sapped by vermin fall an easy prey to diseases like catarrh and roup. There is not likely to be much profit from a flock of poultry unless it is housed in clean and comfortable quarters and kept free from lice and mites.

The Way to Utilize Poultry Manure

It is frequently the misuse of poultry manure that causes many farmers and others to have a great prejudice against it. It has been used in too large quantities in its crude state without regard being had to the chief elements it contains; consequently, it has almost completely destroyed crops it would have fed had it been properly applied. As a top-dressing or hand tillage for gardens the manure should never be used in lumps, but thoroughly pulverized, and applied to almost any crops at the rate of 4 oz. a square yard. Carefully used in this quantity, it should prove more fruitful than the compound fertilizer made up of the chemical manures. It may also be made into a liquid manure by adding to one part of hen manure eight parts of water. In this form it is especially good for the growth of vegetables. It may be poured round the roots of fruit trees after the bloom has passed, with benefit to the future crop. When it is remembered that each fowl will produce from 80 lbs. to 100 lbs. of manure in the year, it will be realized how important it is that this branch of the industry should not be neglected.—F. W. P., in Poultry.

How to Keep Boys on the Farm

The question of how to keep boys on the farm is a perplexing one, and it is important. "The Rural New Yorker" publishes the following article, which may give an idea as to the possible solution of the question:

"Many years ago I was talking with Gen. Sheridan. He told me that when he was a major of cavalry in Arizona, he was in charge, on behalf of the government, of a tribe of Indians, the Colorados, and his duty was to confine them to their reservation. His principal difficulty was on account of their nomadic character; no matter what effort he made to make their homes comfortable for them, still they would leave them and tramp away, and had to be brought back by the cavalry at short intervals. He finally decided that if he could give them some interest in the way of live stock it might be an anchoring influence, so he succeeded in having the government give them a stock of horses. That, however, did not answer the

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purpose, for they drove the horses, and continued to travel with the horses and mares and colts, as they did before. Then the government's experiment of giving them cattle, but after the cows had produced calves in the spring of the year the Indians traveled and the stock traveled with them. Finally he hit upon the idea of giving them a stock of poultry, and the squaws promptly realized the value of the product of the hens in the domestic economy, became attached to the eggs and attached to the chickens, and when the government proposed that they should make their summer migration, the squaws said "No." The result of the poultry experiment was that for the first time we were enabled to attract these Indians to the place where the government desired to keep them.

There are many boys on the farm today who could be anchored to the old home if they could be interested in a good hen.

"Milk" Chickens

The rearing of "Petits Poussins," or "milk" chickens, is a branch of the poultry industry which yields a quick and profitable return, but has not yet been much exploited in England. These dainty little birds are great favorites in Belgium and France, and most of those which appear on the table of the London epicure come from abroad; but there is an increasing demand for "milk" chickens in health resorts and the wealthier provincial towns which might well be met by local poultry keepers. The chickens should be hatched in June and April, as the Petits Poussins trade does not extend beyond the end of June, and English Game-Dorking, Game-Favorelle, and Houdan-Orpington crosses give the best result. Soft food only must be given to the birds—ground oats, oatmeal, maize-meal, or barley-milk mixed with hot milk, and a little fat added during the last fortnight. Sand or fine grit should be supplied, and sweet milk instead of water, for drinking. At six weeks the birds weigh from 12 to 14 ozs., and are sold at 1s. 6d. to 5s. They are fasted for a few hours before being killed, then are plucked (but not drawn), and with the string run as to throw up the breast, and are packed in flat cardboard boxes containing one dozen, with rice-paper round each bird. For private trade they can be finger-drawn and neatly prepared. The birds are very profitable to the government, and an ideal delicacy for an invalid.—E. Roberts.