

eggs, in summer, when the price is cheap and keeping them until the winter season. I would suggest, in view of the importance of the matter, that experiments should be made of certain well recommended methods, in order to ascertain the best and simplest.

ENQUIRING FARMERS—INFORMATION
THAT WILL BE USEFUL TO THEM
AND OTHERS.

During the past year numerous farmers from the locality and a greater distance have visited the poultry department with evident desire to gain all the information possible as to the most profitable sorts of poultry and the best methods of caring for them. It afforded me great pleasure to impart all the information in my power, and the interest displayed in the different points of merit in each breed was a source of great gratification. From the tenor of the questions asked on the occasion of such visits, the following general information may be found of service, and anticipate many questions others are desirous of having answered. As preliminary, I may state that the best authorities hold that the poultry department of the farm ought to be of the best paying. The same authorities state that a hen will yield a profit of one dollar per annum. This result, however, cannot be obtained without a thorough knowledge of the best methods. A farmer can no more receive a return from neglected hens than he can from neglected fields. It is not a whit more unreasonable for him to expect paying crops from frozen ground than it is to anticipate a crop of eggs at winter prices from frozen hens. A profit from his fields can only be derived by the systematic, intelligent and industrious manipulation of the soil. So it is with poultry. He must understand what he is about. He knows that his fields must be properly fed to ensure a paying return. The laying stock must be equally as well fed. They must be comfortably

housed in the cold season. They must be given food best calculated to furnish egg-forming material and to gently stimulate; material to furnish lime for the shell, meat to make blood. There is a constant drain on the resources of the regularly laying hen as there is on the fields from which successive crops are reaped. The farmer supplies the drain on his fields by a liberal supply of manure. He must supply the drain on the resources of the laying hen by similar generous treatment in food. In summer, when the hen can roam at large, she supplies herself with all the necessary egg-making material. But when she is confined to limited space, in winter, she must be furnished with all she has been accustomed to help herself to when abroad. And this is the whole basis of winter laying. Let the hens be supplied in the house as nearly as possible with what they can pick up outside, and what is it? We will speak about it directly. First, it is absolutely necessary that the laying stock should have good winter quarters.

A GOOD HOUSE NEEDED.

A comfortable fowl house can be cheaply and expeditiously made in the corner of a barn, shed or outbuilding. It should be cheerfully lighted and face the south-west if convenient. Tared felt paper makes a good lining and is obnoxious to vermin. The house should be divided into pens, large enough to hold 20 fowls, and no more. Fowls do better in small colonies. The laying stock must not be crowded or they will not be layers long. The temperature in the coldest weather should be high enough to keep the water from freezing—at any rate, warm enough to prevent the combs of the layers from freezing. A wooden floor is better than any other kind. In the cold weather the best earthen floors will get damp, and keep so, and damp is disease and death to poultry.

WHAT SHOULD BE IN THE HOUSE.

The best roost is a 2 by 4 inch scantling, put broadside over two 12 inch boards, forming a platform to catch the droppings, which as manure, is worth 75 cents to \$1 per barrel. Heavy fowls should not have to jump more than 18 inches. Each pen should contain a dust bath, so that the fowls can roll in dry dust and keep down lice. A small box to hold broken oyster shells, old mortar, gravel, crockery, broken into small pieces, &c., &c. Some of the substances are absolutely necessary to furnish grit to grind up the food. They are the hen's teeth. A certain amount goes to furnish lime for the egg shell, but not much of the lime for this purpose can be given in the shape of proper food.

TREATMENT OF LAYING STOCK.

The hens should be kept in constant activity. A lazy hen is never a laying one. Cut straw, hay, chaff or dry leaves should be scattered liberally on the floor of each compartment, and in this all grain feed should be thrown, so that the hens will be kept scratching for it. A cabbage suspended from the roof or ceiling high enough to make the hens jump at it is a capital way of keeping them busy. Occasionally substitute a piece of cow's liver, lights or any tough sort of meat for the cabbage. In very cold weather the chill should be taken off the water for drink. Laying fowls require plenty of fresh water, hence the importance of having the house warm enough to prevent water freezing. Take away all the male birds from the laying hens. The cock bird is a nuisance in the pen of layers. He not only monopolises the most of the food, but teaches them to break eggs, and so learn to eat them. Besides, the stimulating diet is too fattening for him, and will ruin him as a breeder.