

## The Poultry-Yard.

### POULTRY.

**Better Poultry Wanted.—How it can be produced.—Rapid Flesh Formers.—Proper care and ration for chickens.—What are our farmers doing?**

The season is now at hand when the farmer and poultry breeder who has hatched and reared out his chickens by mother-hen should pick out and pen up his chickens, in order to fatten them for market. The expert who is skilled in the artificial hatching and rearing of chickens by incubator and brooder, or brooder-house has long since marketed his early birds and reaped his harvest. Probably he has a second, or, third lot of his chickens to place on the market. But whether incubator, or hen-hatched, or artificially or naturally reared, results satisfactory to the breeder or purchaser cannot be attained without complying with certain conditions, viz. :

1. Handling the breeds which make large and rapid flesh formers for market.
2. The proper treatment of the chick from time of hatching until killed and dressed for market or shipment.
3. The penning up of the chickens for 3 or 4 weeks and properly fattening the same, previous to killing them.
4. Feeding the best flesh forming rations, in the most approved methods.

#### *Rapid Flesh Formers.*

It has been pointed out in the columns of this JOURNAL, many times during past years, that the best all round fowls for farmer, or breeder are Plymouth Rocks, Wyandottes and Brahmas. Why? Because they are good winter layers, and their progeny are rapid growers. Two important points. There are certainly prolific layers to be had in Leghorns, Minorcas, Andalusians and Hamburgs, but they are more of the egg machine type than the general purpose fowl. Taken at the proper age, White Leghorn chickens have been found to make an early but very small broiler. But the experience of many years goes to prove the first named breeds are the best to fill the dual requirements of winter eggs and early market fowls.

#### *The proper treatment of the Chicks.*

After leaving the nest the care of the chicken begins. It must be borne in mind that a chicken neglected in the first five weeks of its existence never afterwards completely recovers. In other words chickens that are allowed to pick up their own living, or allowed to be dragged about by the energetic hen-mother in her efforts to find food for them are more likely to develop bone, linen and muscle rather than the luscious flesh so desirable and only to be had in the properly fed and cared for chicken. The past numbers of the JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE will furnish all directions as to how to feed and care for the chicks from nest to marketing time.

#### *Penning up and fattening the chickens for market.*

Experience has taught that it is wise to pen up the chicks either singly or in groups and feed regularly twice or thrice a day on such rations as are given further on. In the case of Plymouth Rocks or chickens of the other heavy breeds of 4, 5 or 5½ months of age, it may be only necessary to place them in an ordinary run where they may have a limited amount of exercise, but they must be regularly fed. I do not write now of the cramming of the chicks by machine, which is no doubt beneficial where poultry of indiscriminate age, size and sort are put into the single fattening pen. If Plymouth Rock, Wyandotte or Brahma chicks are bred and properly cared for from time of hatching, experiment has shown that no cramming machine is necessary to get a satisfactory amount of flesh and of a very superior quality. There can be no excuse for farmer or breeder not penning up his market chicks and giving them extra care and rations for two, three or four weeks before killing and dressing them for market. Results in better quality of flesh and price for the same will be his reward.

#### *The best flesh-forming Rations.*

The ordinary farmer will find that the waste of his house and farm can all be put to good account in fattening his chickens. A mash of finely ground oats, with the waste of his table and mixed with milk sweet, skimmed, or sour and fed three times a day to his penned up chicks, will be found a cheap and effective ration. He may add if so inclined, a part of ground barley or ground corn, but feed in the shape of mash for it has been