

Poultry Raising.

BY A. F. OYERMAN.

A few hints about an enormous industry.

The American hen produced over three hundred million dollars worth of eggs and meat during the past year, exceeding the production of wheat (America's most staple product) by over twenty-five million dollars, and this does not include eggs and poultry produced in city or town lots, nor does it include fancy prices paid for fancy breeding stock. How much this would swell the amount I will not venture to even guess. The highest price paid for this class of poultry that has come to my notice was three hundred dollars, and was paid for a Buff Plymouth Rock cockerel, while \$250 and \$200 sales for Barred Plymouth Rock cockerels are not every day occurrences yet they are not uncommon, and these prices are not paid by novices but by men who are in the business and know what they are doing. However this is only for the fancy or hobby, as I do not think any of the readers of this article have enough of this stock to sell to warrant a lengthy discussion on the merits of so valuable a bird.

I am a firm believer in standard bred poultry, because they are bred to meet a certain demand or requirement. If eggs are the chief object desired, most any of the Mediterranean class will fill the bill. If eggs and meat are wanted we must look to the American class; or if we live in a very cold climate the Asiatic breeds will suit best.

It may not be amiss to mention here a few of the most prominent of each class. The Leghorns, Hamburgs, Minorcas and Spanish families belong to the first named class; all are excellent layers of white eggs. The Plymouth Rock and Wyandottes are of the American class, and are best for broils, and are almost, if not equal, to the first named breeds in egg production. In color their eggs generally range from cream color to brown, while the Brahmas, Langshans and Cochinos constitute the Asiatic class and grow larger than any other varieties, and lay brown eggs. The French

varieties are very similar to the American class, and the most prominent among this class are the Houdans and LaFlechs. While the Indian Games are considered the finest table fowl, they are not good layers.

In the three first named varieties we have all the colors one could wish for. Select the one you like best, all are good, but no matter which we select, none will do well unless they have proper care. Clean quarters, free from vermin and clean fresh water are the most essential points to be considered. Feed as much of a variety as possible, a substitute for grass must be supplied in winter. Cabbage, turnips, and beans are used, but my experience taught me that clover hay or alfalfa cut and steeped and mixed with bran or any other ground feed is best for egg production. But for the sake of getting strong, hardy chicks that will live and thrive I am cautious about feeding soft feed; say twice a week is ample, unless eggs are most desired, then soft food may be fed advantageously every morning. Feed all grain in straw or litter of some kind, especially to the larger breeds as they take on fat very readily and when once over fat are good only for the table, as it is almost impossible to get and keep them in a normal condition after they once get over-fat, for the reason that a fat hen will not lay well, and what she does goes to fat. It seems to be a disease not easily overcome.

A great deal more may be said about this growing industry but I will close this note with a few short paragraphs:

Do not increase your flocks too fast; wait to manage a few well before branching out on a large scale.

Better have good birds and fewer of them. March and April hatched chicks are most profitable.

It costs no more to feed pure laurel than scrubs. Keep a dusty box where the birds can get at it handy.

Very fine sand or road dust make excellent material for the hens to dust in.

Feed ground bone or meat scraps. Give the table scraps to your hens.

Whitewash your poultry house, especially