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MODERN POULTRY CULTURE

By PHIL. MARQUAM

Hatching and Brooding

In reviewing the results of experiments carried on through a period of years by various Agricultural Colleges to determine the relative efficiency of hens and incubators in the hatching of chickens, the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. That the hen is more efficient than the incubator in

hatching chicks from any given number of fertile eggs.

2. That the incubator shows more chicks "dead in the shell", the proportion being about fourteen per cent, on the average, in the incubator, and about three per cent under the hen.

3. That chicks hatched by hens weigh more than chicks hatched by incubators.

4. That the hen hatched chicks will have greater vitality.

The hen is not only more efficient than the incubator in hatching chicks, but she is a better brooder than the oil heated hover or the coal burning brood-

er stove. She will raise a greater proportion of chicks than can be raised by artificial brooding. Moreover, hen raised chicks will weigh more and have greater vitality than chicks brooded by artificial means. The chicks get something from the hen that the artificial brooder can not give. There is a difference between the heat supplied by coal oil or coal and the animal heat of the hen. In order to attain to the very greatest weight and vitality of which a chicken is capable, it must have the advantage of the natural animal heat supplied by the body of the hen. Not that

chicks raised by artificial means are always deficient in weight and vigor, but as great as their vitality may be, it would be greater still were they raised under hens.

If the conditions are right, and the setting hens are free from vermin and "scaly leg," are gentle and faithful setters, there is no other method which can equal them in raising strong, sturdy chickens. One of the main reasons for poor success in raising chicks with hens is due to the vermin often present on the fowl. She will convey these to the chicks she broods. Lice, with the possible exception of White Diarrhoea, kill and stunt the growth of more chicks than any other disease or pest. It is a waste of time and energy to set a lousy hen. She should be dusted with lice powder several weeks before eggs are given her; then dusted again about seven days after the first dusting. But a more effective method of ridding hens of lice is by the use of Blue Ointment, a small amount of which, about the size of a pea, should be attached to the base of the tail feathers, where the nits (eggs) of the lice are clustered. The Blue Ointment, which the lice eat, is very effective, and soon rids the hen of these pests. Moreover, this ointment not only kills the lice then on the hen but it destroys all lice which subsequently hatch from the eggs, or nits attached to the tail feathers. This treatment will rid a hen of lice for six months or more.

The coops in which the hen is to be set should be sprayed with a good disinfectant to destroy any mites which may be lurking in the cracks. Coal oil will kill the mites, but it is a question whether it will destroy the eggs from which the mites hatch. A good coal-tar preparation, of which there are several makes on the market, not only destroys the mites but the eggs also. A constant fight must be kept up against mites and lice, for the "Charge of the Mite Brigade" is a frequent one.

(To be Continued)

We are glad to report that Mrs. E. S. Womer is recovering nicely, from the shock of her accident by which she lost the top joints of two fingers on her left hand.

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