

## PRACTICAL UTILITY POULTRY NOTES

BY A. D. BURHANS.

### Setting Hens Correctly.

One chicken man declares that there is a science in setting hens. Any way it is more or less work to set a hen properly and take care of her in a manner that will help her to perform her duty in good shape. No hen will set well if she is forced to incubate her eggs in a noisy place where she may be disturbed by any other fowls or farm animals. Some years ago there was an invention put on the market which claimed to be a natural hen incubator. It was nothing more nor less than a series of small nest boxes attached one to the other and in front of each nest box was a small yard. This was to be set under a tree on a well drained piece of ground and the nest was easily gotten at and the hens could be taken out and put in at will. There was a sliding door in front of the nest which could be closed during the last day or two of the hatching when the hen would need to be kept on the nest to keep the chicks warm and to keep her from getting off when but a few of them were hatched. This was a good plan but we found it to be too expensive to buy lumber for such a device, so instead we used the small brood coops and placed a hen in each one of them and set the brood coop in a shady place and provided each hen with water and feed and a couple of handfuls of fine gravel for grit. We secured for each nest box, a duplicate box exactly the same size which could be inverted and placed over the hen on her nest during the last day or two of hatching. This was just as effective and as good a scheme as the other and had the advantage of allowing the hens to be placed each in a separate location, thus reducing the danger of having a hen worry over the noise and disturbance of another. A hen must set peaceably in order to do her work well. If she is covered with lice and mites, for which the nest boxes are good breeding places, she will not perform her duty in a satisfactory manner. When she commences to set, give her a thorough dusting with a good tobacco dust lice powder and then in a few days repeat the operation. Two or three days before hatching repeat the dusting again and she will be thoroughly rid of all lice and vermin. Do not make the nests for hatching in too dark a location but give them plenty of light and above all see that they are quiet and unmolested.

### Health in the Flock.

A poultry man said to me the other day that he had just been to visit a poultry plant where the fowls were found to be exceedingly healthy. He said that they looked so much different from his that he noticed it immediately on going into the poultry house and yards of the party he referred to. About three or four weeks previous the writer had also been through the same flock and house and yards and had noticed that the fowls were exceedingly healthy. There was no secret about this good health of the inmates of the yards and houses declared the owner of them to the writer. He worked to keep his fowls in fresh air and the houses dry the year round. Firstly, I noted that his chicks were started on the right plan. Each hen with a brood of chicks had a small brood coop to herself, this brood coop having a tight floor and being so arranged that it was easily cleaned. It was kept clean and in front of it was a small attached yard covered with netting to keep the chicks in during the first week or two when they were too small to run out and search for bugs and worms for themselves. Each one of these individual coops and yards was set under a tree in the orchard which sloped south and east. This is an ideal slope of ground for poultry keeping. It was the first ground on this farm that was warm in the spring. The slope and its perfect drainage are to be taken into account for this when we search for the cause. After the chicks were weaned from the hens these coops were left in the same location and the youngsters knew just where to go at night and they hardly missed the mother hen at all when she was taken away. From twelve to fifteen chicks were in each coop and they were not crowded, and grew almost to maturity in them. The pullets were all saved of course, but the cockerels were taken out and sent to market from time to time as they became plump enough. The fronts of these coops were open all the time. From these coops the pullets were put in their winter quarters, and the windows and doors of the winter quarters were open from one year's end to another excepting when snow, wind and sleet blew into the houses so badly that it was essential to close them for a day or two. Even at this time there was an open space of four to six inches

left at the top of the windows so that the temperature of the house could nearly adjust itself with that outside thus preventing frost from forming on the walls. Breeding from good healthy stock each year had more to do with the general health of the flock than could be estimated by the casual observer. Healthy, husky fowls are the basis of successful utility poultry keeping or even fancy poultry breeding. Good health and a predisposition to it are half the battle.

### Early vs. Medium Hatching.

It has been demonstrated by practical poultrymen time and again that chicks hatched too early in the spring do not thrive as readily nor grow so well as those hatched when nature is more mild and kindly towards them. If the breeding pens of birds are mated up in the latter part of December or January and fertile eggs are secured, nothing but the very best of artificial means of bringing about the conditions that effect good fertility in the spring, will avail of results. The average poultry keeper tries to hatch too early in the season and to secure fertile eggs too near the dead of winter. Chicks hatched in April and May will attain as much size as those hatched in March unless the very best of conditions exist in the caring for the earlier hatched birds. The average poultry grower can set a few hens in March and take off chicks the fore part of April and if they have good dry quarters the April showers will not bother them considerably. If the eggs are set April 1, however, the chicks will come out in time to take advantage of a season that is more favorable for their growing. Leghorns hatched in April will lay in October if they come from a good strain of blood and are well cared for. Those hatched in February will scarcely commence laying before the first of October and it costs in time and money twice as much to care for them the first two months than it does the later hatched chicks. A good deal depends on the poultryman or poultry woman as a feeder. I know of several poultry growers who raise as large Wyandottes and Plymouth Rocks from their April and May hatched broods as do others who breed the same varieties, from broods hatched in February and March. Successful poultry growing depends more on the man or woman behind the work than it does on the breed that is selected. The biggest half of the work is in the feeding and care. This applied intelligently to a good breed will double or triple the receipts usually earned by keeping ordinary barn-yard fowls.

### A Farm Woman's Poultry Success.

It is always interesting to learn of the success of a woman who has made a go of pure-bred poultry breeding. Mrs. Emm J. Herzog of Nebraska is one of the type of women who has taken up the breeding of poultry, commencing in a small way and pushing the work along until her business has grown to be of considerable importance.

Seven years ago Mrs. Herzog purchased her first setting of pure-bred eggs from a breeder of Single Comb Buff Orpingtons back in Pennsylvania. The price she paid was indeed large for her, inasmuch as it was the first time that she had ever purchased pure-bred stock of any kind. She paid \$5 in gold for the first fifteen eggs of pure-bred Single Comb Buff Orpingtons that were brought into her yards but the results are that now she has a flock of something over one hundred and fifty chickens which she is very proud of and which many poultry breeders and enthusiasts go to visit.

Mrs. Herzog has been very fortunate in the selection of a variety of poultry on which to spend her time and efforts. The Orpingtons are now almost as well known as the Plymouth Rocks throughout the east and their popularity is steadily extending westward year by year. The Orpington fowls are large in size, the males weighing from nine to twelve pounds each and the females from seven to nine pounds. They are excellent layers, are very hardy, growing quickly and feathering out medium fast and as a table fowl they have never been excelled. These fowls originated in England in the yards of a certain poultry breeder, Mr. Wm. Cook by name, some twelve or fifteen years ago. They are a combination of the Buff Cochins, Dorkings and Hamburgs. They possess the laying qualities of the Hamburgs, the table qualities of the Dorkings and the excellent size, color and vigor of the Buff Cochins. When they were first introduced into this country their popularity spread swiftly for the leading poultry breeders of the United States introduced them into their

yards. Mrs. Herzog saw that the great popularity of the Buff Orpingtons was not going to wane within a long term of years so she pinned her faith to them and has made a great success as a breeder of Orpingtons in this western county. She declares that there is as much difference between the Orpingtons and the ordinary fowls as there is between a finely bred and gentle driving horse and one that is vicious and unsafe, being always on a bad behavior. She makes this assertion in view of a comment which was made concerning the domesticity of this most excellent breed.

The first poultry houses that Mrs. Herzog built on her place were very small and inexpensive. From year to year the numbers of the fowls in her pens have increased until now she has three good houses. The first is ten by sixteen feet floor plan, the second ten by thirty feet floor plan and the third ten by twenty feet. All have good shingle roofs and are tight floored. They are in good locations, never being damp or otherwise unsanitary for the fowls housed in them. The yards from these houses extend southward a sufficient distance for the number of birds kept in each breeding and laying pen. To the north of the houses is another series of yards which might be called small pastures because of their size and the excellent forage provided for the fowls in them. Attached to each house is a scratching shed thirty feet long and eight feet wide, where during cold, blustery weather and rainy days the fowls can scratch in the deep clean litter for their grain, thus providing themselves with good exercise and at the same time being under cover. All louses and scratching pens have southern exposures and are amply lighted by large windows which admit the sunlight to the floors of each pen. There is good shade in the yards and every convenience that can be secured, which will aid in the systematic and facile care and work of handling the birds in their pens.

It was with considerable temerity that Mrs. Herzog first exhibited her birds in a poultry show. It is no more than natural that the first time out with poultry at a poultry show where the competition is very keen and the best breeders in the land have their fowls on exhibition, that the amateur or novice should be somewhat timid and frightened when bringing birds into an exhibition, but Mrs. Herzog learned that the one secret of selling pure-bred poultry was the test for quality in the keenest competition and also the little interest which poultry people knew of what she had in the way of good stock.

At the Nebraska state poultry show in 1906 she had some of her birds at the exhibition here. They were greatly admired and commented upon. Again in 1907, the third week in Jan-

uary, at the large auditorium in Lincoln, she exhibited some of her birds and also made a large display of fresh Orpington eggs. Every year at the Nebraska state poultry show there is a big display of fresh eggs numbering from one to two thousand. Nearly thirty breeders, all competing for the cash specials and silver loving cup which is offered for the largest and best display of fresh eggs, are represented in this contest. Mrs. Herzog was fortunate enough to win the silver loving cup this year, for the best fresh eggs on exhibition. These were laid by her Orpingtons and were judged by experts, being scored by the score card method of placing awards on utility poultry and eggs. The score card which is used for egg scoring, allots so many points of the total hundred (which stands for perfection) to color, shape, size, weight, freshness and cleanliness, and it was under such a card that Mrs. Herzog's Buff Orpington eggs carried off the \$20 cup.

Mrs. Herzog has built up by judicious advertising, a trade which takes all of the eggs for hatching that she can spare at \$2.50 per setting, and if she can in addition raise a large number of fowls each year, these are readily taken up by purchasers and interested people at good prices. She obtains for good Orpington cockerels from \$2 to \$7 and \$8 each, and for good pullets and hens from \$2 to \$5 each, and for breeding pens of one male and four females she secures ordinarily from \$18 upward, according to the quality that the buyer is demanding and willing to pay for. Her fowls increase the revenue of the farm several hundred dollars annually.

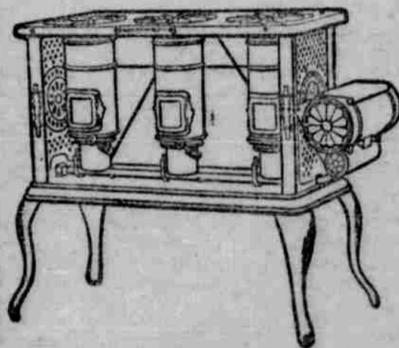
Mrs. Herzog breeds Orpingtons for utility as well as the beauty demanded in a show room. Poultry exhibitions not only demand beauty of form and feathers, but they also require size, color of skin and legs and weight, all of which are of market utility. From the 1st of January, 1907, to the 19th of March this year, Mrs. Herzog's flock of about 140 hens laid 2,410 eggs and she informs the writer that four dozen of these pullets were not then laying and that about twenty of them are not laying at yet. They had been hatched too late in 1906 to commence their early laying this winter.

The work that Mrs. Herzog has accomplished is nothing more than that which may be done by any other woman on the farm who has the inclination to devote her spare time to the breeding of good fowls.

### Tabled of the Fraacas.

Leesville (Col.) Light: Do you know why that show at the opera house didn't have any crowd to speak of? Well, the juggler got full yesterday afternoon and went around telling people he was going to juggle five cans of dynamite at the evening performance.

## A Wonderful Oil Stove



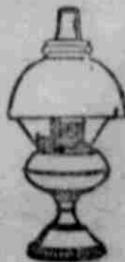
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