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Home Course In Poultry Keeping

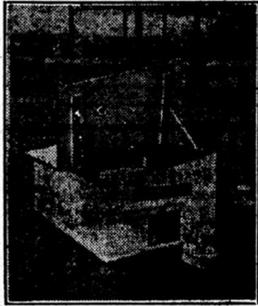
V. — The Raising of Chickens.

By MILO M. HASTINGS.

Formerly Poultryman at Kansas Experiment Station, Commercial Poultry Expert of the United States Department of Agriculture, Author of "The Dollar Hen."

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MOST of the arguments concerning natural versus artificial incubation will apply to the question of using hens or brooders for rearing. The statement is generally made that the hen is the best mother. Recently doubt has been thrown upon this claim, however, for many experimenters seem to have demonstrated that the discredit that formerly fell upon the brooder is due to the fact that incubator hatched



KANSAS EXPERIMENT STATION BROODER.

chicks are not normal and hence not as livable as hen hatched chicks.

This loss of wee chicks is the most discouraging part of the poultry business. If this loss is much greater than 15 or 20 per cent there is something radically wrong somewhere, and the mistake must be found and rectified or failure is inevitable.

Coops For Chicks.

The coops provided for hens with chicks should be one of the most carefully constructed features of the poultryman's equipment. First of all, they must be rat tight and rain proof, but not air tight. They must also be easily cleaned. These points are best obtained by building a platform and setting upon it a floorless coop. The shape of the coop is not important, but it should have an open front protected by a projecting hood, so the rats cannot beat in, and covered with wire netting or in cool weather netting cloth. The coop itself if built of cheap lumber must be covered with roofing paper.

From twenty to forty chicks may be placed with each hen, the number depending upon the severity of the weather. The greatest source of the loss of chicks with hens is from the hungry hen leading the little ones around in the wet grass after rain or heavy dew. The best way to overcome this loss is to keep the hen shut in, opening the coop sufficiently for the chicks to come out and exercise. The hen if provided with corn and water within reach need not be given her liberty for several days after the chicks are hatched and should be shut in for several weeks when the grass is wet.

Brooders for chicks have until within the last few years been heated with kerosene lamps. Lately a great fad has arisen in poultrydom for fireless brooders. These fireless brooders are simply boxes arranged for slow ventilation. The chicks are kept warm by hovering under a cloth arranged in such a fashion as to represent the feathered body of the mother hen. Chicks can be raised in fireless brooders, and in warm climates the method is all right. In the colder seasons and climates, however, fireless brooders have not been found practical by the majority of poultrymen.

Lamp Brooders Best.

Lamp brooders holding from 50 to 100 chicks have been successfully used for many years and are considered the best means yet devised for handling young chicks on a large scale. Steam or hot water heated brooder houses have never proved very successful, and as they are expensive, to start with, I should advise the poultryman to be very sure he knows what he is doing before investing money in a plant of this kind.

The brooder should be large, having not less than nine square feet of floor space. The greatest trouble with brooders in operation is the uncertainty of the lamp. The brooder lamp should have sufficient oil capacity and a large wick. Brooder lamps are often exposed to the wind, and if cheaply constructed or poorly inclosed the result will be a chilled brood of chicks or perhaps a fra.

In a lamp heated brooder one must see that the heat is provided in such a way that the chicks in attempting to get warm will not crowd in corners and trample each other to death. The best brooder heater or burner consists of a tin drum, inside of which circulates the hot fumes from the lamp. Beneath this drum the chicks hover.

The best form for the heating drum is a disk with a hole in the center, something on the order of a doughnut. This hole in the center acts as a ventilating use and causes a gradual circu-

lation of warm air to pass up through the center and down over the sides of the heating drum, thus keeping the chicks uniformly warm and at the same time providing them with fresh air.

The exact temperature of the brooder is of no particular consequence. The warmest part of it should always be just a little too warm so that the chick may go toward or from the heat, as it pleases. The comfortable chick sleeps squatting down with its head stretched out. If cold it stands up in an effort to get near the heat which is above it. These attitudes of the chicks are by far the best thermometer for the brooder.

The arrangement of the brooder for the sleeping accommodations of the chicks is important, but this is not the only thing to be considered in a brooder. The brooder used in the early season, and especially the outdoor brooder, must have ample space provided for the daytime-accommodation of the chick. This part of the brooder must be well lighted and somewhat cooler than the hover. As soon as conditions will permit get the chicks out on a large floor or, better still, on the ground. Keep the chicks scratching in daylight and sleeping stretched out at night, and the most difficult problem of poultry raising has been solved.

Feeding Chicks.

Little chicks should not be fed for forty-eight to seventy-two hours after hatching. Nature has provided for their nourishment during this period, and people who worry about them starving are wasting pity. Another error made by kind hearted people is in thinking the chick needs bread and milk, hard boiled egg yolk or some other soft food or wet food. On the contrary, the chick should be given the same class of food that it would get if it first saw daylight in its native Indian jungle.

The natural diet consists of seeds, insects and fresh sprigs of grass. This we must duplicate the best we can. A chick may be first fed any grains that chickens eat in later life if the particles are small enough for the chick to swallow, and they do not need to be so small, either, for newly hatched chicks can swallow Kamr corn or whole wheat. Hulled oats and millet are two of the choicest grain foods for young chicks. Wheat, cracked corn and Kamr corn are staple poultry food.

Feed small quantities and as often as is convenient. If the food is buried in a deep litter they must work longer getting it out. The idea is to have them always hungry enough to hunt for food and always a little food for them to find. If the chicks are at liberty feeding often is not so important. Three times a day would be sufficient, while if they roam far in the fields, finding much food, morning and evening feeding is all that is necessary.

It is highly important that the young chicks be given a little meat food in some form. Commercial beef scrap, to be had at the feed store, is the best meat food for any sort of poultry. For chicks hatched in the spring of the year and allowed to range outdoors no special provision for green food need be made. If hatched in the winter it is highly important that this be provided in some form. There is nothing better for winter green food than kale, which if planted the season before will keep green all winter in almost any climate. Early lettuce and



FRESH AIR COLONY HOUSE.

other greens may be planted by those who are engaged in chick growing in a small way, but a cheaper and more feasible way is to sprout oats. Oats are sprouted by being soaked in warm water and allowed to remain in a warm place for several days. They are ready for feeding when the sprouts are two or three inches long and are devoured greedily by chicks of all ages. This absurdly simple idea has been extensively sold as a get-rich-quick poultry scheme.

Young chicks should be provided with grit of some sort. Special care is necessary to keep fresh water before them at all times. The water dish in the brooder ought to be partitioned off in such a way that chicks can reach their heads only to the water dish; otherwise they will get themselves wet. The customary chick watering fountain is made by investing a bottle or can in a shallow basin so that the water will run out as the chicks require.

It is especially desirable that all young growing poultry be given free range, as there is no time in the life of an animal when exercise and liberty are so essential as during the growing period. Chicks from the age of four weeks to six months are very easily taken care of, as practically the only loss during this period occurs from the depredation of thieves, human or animal. If good rat tight coops are provided which are closed at night and fresh water, grit and hoppers of beef scrap and cracked corn are kept before the chicks at all times they will thrive upon the ranch and need little care.

The Price Freedomers' union has taken preliminary steps toward starting a campaign against brooms made by Chinese and those made by convicts in prison.

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It has already developed into one of the solid and substantial enterprises which have done much to assist in building up our city.

Duluth contains a number of establishments which combine to give the city its metropolitan character and to promote the best interests of the people.

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The officers of this company are: M. H. Alworth, president; F. W. Helmick, vice president; John B. Helmick, secretary and treasurer.

The honest methods of business pursued at all times by this most enterprising concern has constantly increased their popularity among the jobbing and retail trade of the country.

The company has always shown a most favorable spirit toward their employes, and we are pleased to note that the present managers are gentlemen who can thoroughly be relied upon to be fair and reasonable, courteous and considerate. This concern deserves an era of constantly increasing prosperity and merits the support of all.

The company manufactures the Tip-Toe brand of matches, which have already gained the reputation of being the best matches manufactured in the country.

The superiority of their goods and the fact that the Union Match company is an independent home institution should be sufficient to win them the hearty support of every citizen. It is one of the largest manufacturing concerns of its kind in the northwest. Its product is not excelled in quality and all round satisfaction by any matches on the market. It is strictly a Duluth concern, employs Duluth labor and merits the hearty support and patronage of every individual who takes pride in his home town, and in the public spirited men to whom Duluth and its people owe so much. No home institution is more meritorious or more deserving of your support than the Union Match company, Zenith phone 3138.

DUCHESS AND NOVELIST WERE LIONS AT FEAST OF LONDON AMERICAN WOMEN

LONDON, May 13.—The Society of American Women in London gave its eleventh anniversary luncheon this week and Mrs. R. Noyes Fairbanks, the president of the society, in her opening address said that the three aims of the society were to promote friendship between English and American women, to help poor American women and children in London and to send Rhodes scholarship women students to Oxford.

The guest of honor at the luncheon was the duchess of Marlborough, formerly Miss Consuelo Vanderbilt. The duchess made an earnest speech, in the course of which she pointed out the need of co-operation among women. She urged the necessity of the wider education of women, so that they may be better fitted to take their place as citizens when enfranchisement, which, she declared, is bound to come, has arrived.

The duchess expressed admiration for the courage of the suffragists, saying that all must agree as to that quality, although many might deplore the methods of the militant workers. She said she believed that all efforts for the enfranchisement of women made for good.

Kate Douglas Wiggin, the novelist, made a witty speech, in which she paid a special tribute to the late Mark Twain.

The late Bishop Gallier was once asked to baptize a negro baby boy.

"Name this child," he said, addressing Mrs. Jackson, the mother of the black mite.

"Hallud."

"That's a strange name, Mrs. Jackson," remarked the bishop heartily.

"Scripter name," rejoined the mother, with a confident grin.

"I never saw it in the Bible."

"Why, bishop, how kin yuh stan' up der kiddin' ole ignorant niggar talk I is? Yuh says dat name when-ever yuh says de Lord's prayer—'Hallud be Thy Name!'"

The manager of an asbestos mill in the west conceived a novel idea for New Year's announcements. He had them printed on thin asbestos and enclosed in envelopes of the same material. As he was uncertain of the correct addresses of some of the stockholders, he ordered his stenographer to write on each envelope "Please Forward."

The idea was clever, but one may appreciate the feelings of the widow of one of the stockholders when she received an asbestos envelope addressed to her late husband, and with the inscription "Please Forward" beneath the address.

Employers of New York have voluntarily increased the wages of housemaids 20 cents a day. July 1 another increase of 20 cents will go into effect which will bring the wages up to 45 a day.

The annual conference of the Scottish Miners' Federation took place recently in Edinburgh. A total of 95 delegates attended, representing 74,256 paying members.

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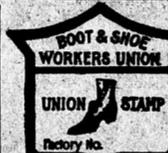
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