Poultry Interests

BY H. L. BLANCHARD.

Overfed and Had Insufficient Exercise.

An Ellensburg correspondent writes as follows:

"I wish to write you in regard to some young chickens I am having trouble with. They are incubator hatched, full blood Black Minorcas. I only had a few and as the weather has been cold I have kept them in the house in a box 18x24 inches. Have always kept them warm and at night covered them in a small basket. Thirty-six hours after hatching I gave hard boiled egg for two days; then bread made as directed in poultry book. Kept water to drink and sharp sand on paper in bottom of box. They seemed very bright and strong until about two weeks old, when all but one or two were ailing with a weakness which seemed to come on suddenly. At first they commenced to totter around and to sit down mostly, as if the legs were very weak and they seem to grow a little worse and sometimes the toes seem to draw up a little but straighten out again. They act as if they would soon lose use of the legs. Now, can you tell me the cause and a remedy, if there is one, for the trouble, as I hate very much to lose them?"

We apprehend that the trouble in this case comes from over-feeding and lack of proper exercise. That the chicks were hatched well and got a good start is evident. But the manner in which they were so carefully cared for in the house precluded the "scratching for their living," as Nature requires of them. If not too late, no doubt the trouble can be overcome. We would advise a change of diet and manner of feeding. Avoid mashes and Johnnycake and feed dry small grains of wheat, hulled oats, sifted cracked corn (a little) and any other small seeds at hand. Provide a scratching place, the floor of which is to be covered with two or three inches of chaff from the hay loft and mangers. Scatter in this chaff a little grain three or four times a day, so that they will have to scratch for what they get. Give them a little fresh sandy earth with a little green grass on it for them to work upon. Keep fresh water before them, and, at their age, in a room where the temperature is about 50 to 60 degrees with temperature of the brooder about 70 to 75 degrees. Throw to them a bit of meat now and then, keeping fresh green food, such as grass or roots, before them all the time. In case they do not begin to improve very soon use in their drinking water twelve tablets of nux vomica and sulphur comp. 2x to each pint of water. It is to be hoped that this correspondent will save her chicks that she justly prizes so highly.

"It Pays to Advertise."

Mrs. H. M. Lichty, of Sunnyside, says: "It pays to advertise. I have sold all my fancy Barred Rock cockerels and at fancy prices. The best birds were most in demand. My first pen eggs are $2 a setting and I am making an offer to home breeders of first pen eggs on shares that they should consider. It is a sure proposition, sure to make money for both parties." Mrs. Lichty was carrying an advertisement in The Ranch last winter, but received so many orders she had to discontinue the advertisement along toward spring.

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The Oregon Railroad & Navigation Co. will sell tickets at above rate, three days each month, May to September, good for 90 days, account of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. This line and connections form the shortest route to the East and Southeast. Tickets also sold via Salt Lake and Denver. Excellent service and fast time. Full particulars at 608 First avenue, Seattle. E. E. Ellis, General Agent.

More Silo Suggestions.

(H. L. Blanchard.)

Mr. Herbert Dykers, of Oak Harbor, writes as follows:

"I am contemplating the building of a silo and have seen your name in recent communications in regard to building and the operation of such structures. I would be more than pleased to have your opinion of the plan I will submit: I have the advantage of having a side hill, or rather a steep bank on the side of a ravine, about 20 feet deep. I can go four feet in the bottom of said ravine without interference of water. My intentions are to make the silo 15x30 feet, having the basement made of stone to the height of six feet, the superstructure to be made of 2x6x25. How many hoops will it require and how far apart? Will there be any advantage in having hoops in three lengths and pass same through studding 6x6, instead of using lugs to tighten same? Could the silo be made air tight by having the studdings groved and cavity filled with tow and tar used freely?"

We cannot see any advantage in Mr. Dyker's building his silo in the ravine, unless it should be that the ravine happens to be the best location for same, with reference to the feeding place of the silage. It has a disadvantage in this, that the surface water naturally drains towards the silo, and further, that generally the work of filling can be done to better advantage on a site that is comparatively level. Mr. Dykers omits to give the location of his barn in relation to the proposed site for the silo, which fact ought always to be kept in mind when selecting the site for the barn, as well as the silo. Silage is mostly fed out at that season of the year when mud and water are in superabundance; especially is this true in the Puget Sound region. Therefore, the convenience of getting the silage to the manger is all important, and at the same time have the silo outside of the barn. The proposed height, 30 feet, is very desirable, especially if the material is to be put in uncut, as it has been clearly demonstrated that from 40 to 50 per cent. more tonnage can be put into a silo when cut than when uncut.

The lug hoops are all right, and ought to be about two feet apart at the bottom and farther apart as you approach the top when four feet apart is as near as need be. The silo, no doubt, could be made temporarily air tight in the manner suggested, but with the shrinkage of the staves from dry weather effects, the tow would likely become loose and admit air, and possibly be in the way sometimes of tightening the joints by the use of the lugs on the hoops. A neighbor built a stave silo last summer of 3x6 staves, in which the workmanship was of the best; the same was at once filled, with the best of results. Upwards of ten feet of silage yet remain unfed, and yet, thus early in the season, daylight can be seen between the staves from the top down nearly to the silage. Such was our experience with the stave silo. We corrected the trouble, to our entire satisfaction, and in the manner detailed in the last issue of The Ranch. In our opinion the cement silo is likely to prove the most satisfactory in this climate.

One of The Cheapest Silos Built.

(By the Editor.)

When the silo was first suggested, years ago, it was the general opinion that it had to be absolutely air-tight, but most people seemed to forget about the large amount of moisture there would be in the silage and that this moisture would quickly close up every air hole. Today those who have had extended experience with the silo do not worry themselves about making the structure strictly air-tight, but for good effects they of course try to make it as air-tight as the materials at hand will permit. The chief difficulty in keeping the silo air tight the year around is the alternate wetting and drying up of the timbers. Since the silage keeps the timbers moist and as the silo is air-tight as long as the timbers are not allowed to get dry and shrink, the question of making it air-tight need not bother the builders very much.

I have seen so much discussion of the silo and its air-tight qualities lately that I shall give an account of a couple of silos that I often helped to fill. I was living in South Dakota at the time, and the larger of the two silos was the second structure of the kind ever erected in that state. The first silo built in South Dakota was erected by the same man who built these two. It was a very large, square silo, built inside of a large barn and costing several hundred dollars. Its capacity, so far as I can remember, was about 240 tons. I believe the builder secured his ideas as to its construction from C. P. Goodrich, of Wisconsin, and H. B. Gurler, of Illinois. It was a great success, but as the owner gained experience he decided its construction was too expensive and too carefully done, all things considered. He figured out that a round silo

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My Orpingtons are New York prize winners and were purchased from Mr. Cock, the originator, directly after exhibition. Others prize winners and from prize winning stock.

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