EGG PRODUCTION.

Conditions Necessary to Insure It During the Winter Months.

Complaint has been made against the moon because it only shines on light nights and against the hens because they only produce large numbers of eggs at times when they are very cheap. One complaint is about as reasonable as the other. Birds in this climate lay eggs during the spring and early summer for the reason given by the author of a pious and popular nursery song for the habitual growling and fighting of bears and lions: "'Tis their nature to." If they produce eggs out of the ordinary season and so late that they would most likely be frozen in the nests before they incubated, it is because they were hatched early in the spring, arrived at the degree of development when they naturally begin to seek to propagate their species, are kept in quarters where the temperature will be nearly like that of early spring, have abundant opportunity for taking exercise, and are supplied with the variety and kinds of food they can ordinarily obtain during warm weather, and they are allowed to go about without restraint.

When all these conditions obtain, there is a good prospect for securing eggs during cold weather. It is a matter of common observation that pullets hatched early during the previous spring are much more likely to lay in the winter than old hens. Old hens that brought up flocks of chickens during the summer are likely to produce eggs during the winter if they are supplied with suitable food. They will take on flesh and fat after their chickens begin to take care of themselves, and be recuperated to such an extent that they will commence to lay. Authorities on poultry management generally caution their readers against allowing hens from which they expect eggs to become fat, but many have observed that old hens shut up in coops for the purpose of fattening them for the market soon commence to produce eggs, that are found in them, partially formed, when they are dressed. That some breeds of hens are better winter layers than others is certain.

Hens that are expected to produce eggs during the winter should be kept in dry, light, warm and well-ventilated buildings. It is generally impractical to warm a poultry-house by means of heat generated in a stove. A fire in an outbuilding is likely to be a source of danger, is expensive and troublesome, and if not carefully attended to will produce too high a temperature for the comfort and good of the fowls. If it "goes down," the birds will suffer more from the cold than they would if no artificial heat had been employed to warm the building. Glass windows on the east and south sides of poultry-houses afford the best means of warming them. The rays of heat that pass from the sun through glass do not go back the way they come. This is shown in cold frames and fruit-houses that are covered with glass, but in which no heat is generated by combustion or the fermentation of manure, as in the case of a garden hot-bed. The temperature produced by solar heat is more constant and uniform than that produced by the combustion of any kind of fuel in a stove.

A poultry-house should be well ventilated. Provisions should be made for an outlet for the vitiated atmosphere. The air should be "changed" every fair day by opening the doors and windows and allowing a draft to pass through the building. During this time it will be best to allow the fowls to have the run of a yard and to take exercise in running about, picking up scattered grains and scratching the ground. All birds are active by nature, and are likely to fall off in condition if they are prevented from taking an amount of exercise during the winter by giving them bundles of grain and cabbage-heads to pick from. They should have shallow boxes of fine earth, sand, or ashes in which they can take a dust bath, and in that way keep their feathers clean and prevent insects from remaining on their bodies. The water supply of the poultry-house should receive strict attention during the winter if hens are expected to lay, as eggs are very largely composed of water.

Birds are very fond of a variety of food, and domesticated fowls are no exception to the general rule. They will do very good if allowed no more kinds of food than horses are supplied with. They require seeds of various sorts, vegetables, fruits and flesh. They need in addition lime for forming the shells of eggs, and sharp gravel for supplying the crop with material for preparing the food for digestion. Bones, reduced to pieces about the size of the grains of wheat, are excellent for both purposes. Corn should be one of the leading kinds of food for fowls during the winter, but they should have some wheat, oats, rye or barley. Cooked peas and beans are fed to fowls in France with the best results, as are cooked potatoes, carrots and parsnips. Boiled pumpkins and squashes, in which Indian meal is mixed, constitute a good morning meal. Lean and fat meat are very desirable. They are needed to take the place of insects that are abundant during the summer. Pepper and ginger benefit fowls, as do most of the condiments that are used by human beings.—*Chicago Times.*

—There is a man living in Clarke County who has a coat and vest that he has been wearing for fifteen years. The material is nearly as good as when new, and he is still using it. He has been married in this apparel twice.—*Savannah News.*

HOME, FARM AND GARDEN.

—Neatness pays in preparing for market.

—For scraping kettles a large clam shell is excellent.

—Bad signs—poor fences and shackly tools and implements.

—Remember that stirring cream makes more and better butter.

—It pays to send small fruits to market in new, neat and handy packages.

—What is prettier than the tasty flower-bed before the house or in the garden, or what better indicates culture and refinement inside?

—Milk Toast—Slice stale bread thin, toast to a delicate brown, lay in a dish; melt a pound of butter in a pint of new milk and pour over the toast.—*Indianapolis Sentinel.*

—Filling for Jelly Cake.—Fine apple sauce, sweetened more than usual, and flavored with lemon essence, makes a nice filling for a jelly cake.—*Exchange.*

—The south side of a close board fence induces earliness and greatly protects against the winds. It is an excellent place for raspberries, and is sufficient protection for early lettuce.

—It would pay fruit and vegetable growers occasionally to visit our great city markets, and note the extra price which consumers are willing to pay for choice selections, carefully gathered and packed.

—Some who have fed fish to hens, claim that the flesh of the fowls and their eggs have a fishy taste. We have fed fish freely to fowls in the spring, and never noticed a bad flavor. Cook the fish before feeding.—*Farm, Field and Stockman.*

—The importance of soft water for domestic purposes is illustrated by the experience of a large London asylum, in which a change from hard to soft water has resulted in an estimated annual saving in soda, soap, labor, etc., of more than $4,000.—*Arkansaw Traveler.*

—To clean silver: One half pound of sal-soda added to eight quarts of water; when at a boiling heat, dip the pieces of silver, and immediately wash in soapsuds, and wipe dry with a piece of cotton-flannel. This method is recommended by one of the largest britannia works in New England.—*Boston Budget.*

PRESERVING EGGS.

Some of the Best Methods for All Practical Purposes.

We have printed, several times during the last few years, directions more or less full on the subject of preserving eggs, but still our readers continue to write us for information.

When farmers or poultry dealers only wish to keep eggs in good condition for a few weeks, it is not necessary to use any particular mode of preservation. All that is requisite is to have a good cellar, larder, or even closet, fitted with perforated shelves. The eggs should be placed broad end downward on those shelves, but they may with advantage be turned about twice a week, keeping them, however, almost all of the time with the broad end downward. The reason for this is that when so kept the air space does not increase in size, and the egg seems to keep better. It is a very good plan to arrange the eggs in uniform rows from front to back, so that those laid first can be used first. Another plan, much advocated by some writers on the subject, is to keep the outside air as far as possible from the egg. This is done by wrapping each egg in wadding or cotton wool, packing them in jars and sealing a waxed paper over the top. But it is no less essential in this case that the eggs be stored in a cool place, for eggs are not in so much danger from the germs of decay in the air without as from those within the egg itself. And these will certainly grow and destroy the quality of the egg, however carefully it may be covered and sealed, if the necessary condition of a high temperature is furnished.

Gypsum is said to be a good preservation for eggs. It is stated that they have been kept, packed in finely powdered gypsum, for six months. But this was in a cool place, and perhaps the cool air had as much to do with keeping the eggs as the gypsum. In fact, whatever substance is used for packing the eggs, the place of storage should be cool for the reason that we have given above, to protect the egg from the development of its own internal germs.

The most generally used mode of egg preservation is that of keeping them in lime water. This is undeniably the best for practical purposes, whether for house use or for sale. It involves the last expense and the least trouble and has the least objectionable effect upon the taste of the egg. Pack the eggs, with the small end down, in casks or jars, and then pour over them a solution of lime-water and salt. Take a bushel of lime to fifty gallons of water, and add six quarts of salt. First slack the lime with part of the water, then add the rest of the water and the salt. Stir at intervals, and when the solution is cold and the sediment has settled, dip out the liquid and pour it over the eggs.

The objection to packing eggs dry in sawdust, bran, oats and the like is that the egg absorbs through its porous shell something of the musty taste that seems to belong to these substances. This may be prevented, however, by dipping the eggs first in a hot solution of alum. When cool they may be packed in any dry substance, the pores of the shell being now so entirely closed that no gases, taste or smell can be absorbed.—*Chicago Inter Ocean.*

COMICAL PLANTS.

Singular Blossoms That Stir the Risibilities of Their Beholder.

There is Jack-in-the-Pulpit, the flower of the plant known as Indian turnip (Arisæma triphyllum); who could ever look at one of these singular blossoms without that same stirring of the risible faculties which one experiences in perusing a parody or caricature, or witnessing a pantomine? The very sight of one is provocative of mirth. How many times in my school-days did I challenge the teacher's frown by involuntary giggles at the whimsical look of the imprisoned Jack! Monk's hood of the genus aconitum has quaint, comical flowers, suggestive of an old lady's head in a night-cap. The well-known fly-trap (Dionæa muscipula) strikes the mind with all the effect of a joke. The leaves of this plant are fringed with stiff bristles, and fold together when certain hairs on their upper surface are touched, thus seizing insects that light on them. Seeing the leaf stand temptingly open, a poor fly pops in for shelter or food. No sooner has it touched its feet than some sensitive fibers are affected, and the cilia at the top closes in upon the intruder, imprisoning him as effectually as if a boy had taken and closed him in a box. The pitcher-plant or monkey-cap of the East, although not particularly ludicrous, has a whimsical arrangement which borders closely upon the human economy. To the foot-stalks of each leaf of this plant, near the base, is attached a kind of bag, shaped like a pitcher, of the same consistence and color as the leaf in the earlier state of its growth, but changing with age to a reddish purple. It is girt around with an oblique band or hoop, and covered with a lid neatly fitted, and movable on a kind of hinge or strong fiber, which, passing over the handle, connects the vessel with the leaf. By the shrinking or contracting of this fiber the lid is drawn open whenever the weather is shadowy or damp. When sufficient moisture has fallen and the pitcher saturated, the cover falls down so firmly that evaporation can not ensue. The water is thus gradually absorbed through the handle in the footstalk of the leaf, giving sustenance and vigor to the plant. As soon as the pitchers are exhausted, the lids again open to admit whatever moisture may fall; and when the plant has produced its seed, and the dry season fairly sets in, it withers, with all the covers of the pitchers standing open. The flower of the bee orchis is like a piece of honeycomb, and the bees delight in it. Then there is the snap dragon, the corolla of which is cleft, and turned back so as to look like a rabbit's mouth, especially if pinched on the sides, when the animal appears as if nibbling. The flower of the cock's comb and the seed pod of the Mostynia proboscidea bear curious resemblance to the objects which have suggested their names. Some kinds of the mendicago have also curious seed pods, some being like bee hives, some like caterpillars, and some like hedgehogs—the last being itself an essentially ludicrous object.—*Floral Cabinet.*

What It Means.

To the man or woman who has never been ill, the word "health" is meaningless. But to the one who has suffered and despaired, health appears as a priceless boon. To the thousands of unfortunate women, who are suffering from some of the many forms of weaknesses or irregularities peculiar to their sex, Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription holds forth the promise of a speedy restoration of this "priceless boon."

TIP the waiter heavily if you would heavily tip the scales.—*Hotel Mail.*

OLD pill boxes are spread over the land by the thousands after having been emptied by suffering humanity. What a mass of sickening, disgusting medicine the poor stomach has to contend with. Too much strong medicine. Prickly Ash Bitters is rapidly and surely taking the place of all this class of drugs, and in curing all the ills arising from a disordered condition of the liver, kidneys, stomach and bowels.

A NICE, cheap country seat—a stump.—*Texas Siftings.*

FAIR Fashionables patronize that standard beautifier, Glenn's Sulphur Soap. Hill's Hair and Whisker Dye, 50c. The best.

NATURALLY a little yeller—a Chinese baby.—*Norristown Herald.*

ONLY half maid—a tomboy.—*Whitehall Times.*

IT is quite appropriate for the press to claim press-edence.—*Texas Siftings.*

THOUGH the dice-box gets the shake, the man who holds it does the shaking.—*Hartford Times.*

"CAN you recommend for me a good home course of botany?" asks a correspondent. Yes, the flour barrel.

A BAD vegetable to have aboard a ship—a leek.

A COAL chisel—the ice man's bill.—*Boston Courier.*

PHIL—"What is it that is oftenest lost at sea?" Will—"The sight of land."—*Golden Days.*

A CHINAMAN can make money by running a T store, while some Caucasians might peddle the whole alphabet and starve.—*Texas Siftings.*

THE best belt road is that around a pretty girl's waist.

THE butcher is hard up indeed when he can't raise a steak.—*Merchant Traveler.*

THE fisherman has no difficulty in making both ends meet when he catches an eel.—*Boston Courier.*

NOTHING succeeds like success or a woman who has made up her mind to make a man marry her.—*Fall River Advance.*

AS LIKE as two peas—two beans.—*Harper's Bazar.*

THE land question—how much an acre?—*Harper's Bazar.*

THE best thing for a snob is a snub.—*Lowell Citizen.*

THROW physic to your neighbor's dogs.—*Boston Transcript.*

SURE to come—rent days.