

AGRICULTURAL

THE FARM HORSE IN WINTER.

Throughout a large part of the country the winter is a season of comparative rest for the farm horse. There are many exceptions, as there are to all general statements, but this is the rule. Where wood is used for fuel most of it is, or at least should be, drawn in the winter. Ice must be secured in the winter if it is obtained at all, but upon a great many farms none is used. Upon some farms manure is drawn upon the fields as it is made, and there are various other things for which a team is required. Yet, when all these matters are summed up, it is found that the work required of the horse upon an ordinary farm is very much less than is that which it is obliged to do in the summer.

While the average farm horse is not worked nearly as hard in winter as he is during the warm weather, it does not follow that the season of comparative idleness is the pleasantest time in his existence, or that the circumstances in which he is then placed are more conducive to his health than are those of other periods of the year. On the contrary, he is at this season exposed to various ills from which he does not suffer during the season of hard but regular toil. One of these ills is irregular and injudicious feeding. When hard at work in the summer the horse is given a pretty regular grain ration and a moderate quantity of hay. In winter, when he is doing but little work, the grain is greatly diminished, or is withdrawn altogether, and the quantity of hay is largely increased. Upon some farms the horses eat in the winter season a quantity of coarse fodder that is out of all proportion to their needs, and which proves a serious injury to their health. They are kept so "stuffed" with hay that when needed for service they are in no suitable condition either for drawing loads or for driving on the roads. Probably more cases of heaves are caused in this way than in all other ways combined. When as is too often the case, the hay that they consume is dusty, the evil results are still greater than they are from mere overfeeding. In many cases, too, the supply of water for the farm horse, though not as liberal, is as poorly regulated as is the quantity of hay. The water is often offered when the horse wants to eat, instead of drink. As it is then refused, or only a small quantity is taken, and no more is supplied until night or the next morning, as the regular watering time may be, the horse gets very thirsty, and when another opportunity to drink is afforded he goes to the other extreme and drinks a great deal too much. Then, again, during a large part of the winter the water that the farm horse is given to drink is altogether too cold, either for his health or his comfort. If he drinks a sufficient quantity to quench his thirst, his whole system is chilled and the processes of digestion and assimilation of food are retarded. If he goes without the quantity of water that he needs, there will be more or less suffering from thirst, and this will be accompanied by a disturbance of the digestive functions. During the winter months many farm horses suffer a great deal from cold. In some cases this is because the stables are not properly constructed. In others it is due to careless exposure after the animals have been brought into a state of perspiration by working or driving. Such exposure not only causes discomfort, but it often brings on colds, catarrh, pneumonia, or some other form of disease which proves more or less serious according to the condition of the animal and the circumstances of the individual case. One more evil from which many a farm horse suffers in winter is overwork for short periods. Not that he is usually required to draw heavier loads in winter than he is in summer, but he suffers for the reason that his work is irregular. Some days he works, other days he does not. He is "out of practice" and is not in good physical condition for hard work, even though that work be required only for a short period. This fact is too often ignored. The horse is driven as rapidly or loaded as heavily at these occasional periods as he is when he is in full training for work. He may not do as much as he could do safely, or even easily, if he were working regularly, and yet he may be seriously injured simply because he is not in proper condition for this kind of service. Various other evils to which farm horses in cold regions are exposed during the winter might be named if it were desirable to pursue the subject further, but perhaps for a single article enough have been noted. It will be evident to the man who gives the slightest thought to the subject that each of these evils is largely preventable. Feeding, watering, protection from cold, and the quantity of work required are matters that are very largely under the control of those who care for the horses. And as discomfort or injury to animals invariably means a loss to their owners, it should not be necessary to add anything to what has been said in respect to the evils noted in the present article in order to insure the immediate adoption of the proper remedial measures.

FOODS AND EGG PRODUCTION.

When the poultryman has made his preparations and begun his operations, he is often disappointed at not receiving a fair return of eggs for the care and attention bestowed on his flock. The majority of failures arise with those who have given the fowls all they can eat, and with a liberal supply of ground bones, fresh water gravel and green food, wonder why they receive no eggs to reward their care.

The most potent cause of their failure is that the hens are being overfed. It is a great mistake to always keep feed before them. While a variety must be

except at night, just before they go to roost, as a hearty meal during the day renders them satisfied and slothful; destroying any ambition they may have to seek food for themselves. If the quantity of food fed during the day is not quite enough rather than a full allowance, they will hunt for more and thus be kept busily at work overcoming idleness, feather-pulling and a disposition to lay on fat, which is fatal to egg production. It is best to scatter what grain you feed them in the day time, among straw, gravel, or any place where they will have to scratch to get it. This gives them the exercise they need. In the winter, when large snow drifts gather about the sheds and buildings, the careful poultry-keeper will try to have a warm, sheltered yard, opened to the sun's rays, where his flock can exercise without being chilled by contact with snow and inclement weather. By keeping the hens warm, busy, and not too fat, a bountiful supply ought to be the result.

To the novice in poultry keeping, the question of proper food is a perplexing one. Opinions differ greatly on this subject. Different people may each have a different method of feeding, and each may feed a different kind of food, yet all may be, in a measure, successful. But it is well to remember that all kinds of soft foods and mealy doughs are generally relished by poultry, and result in better egg-production than where a grain diet alone is followed. A judicious mixture of both food is best; not too much of either. While the right proportion may be somewhat difficult to obtain, it can be learned by a close watch on the flock, their actions, health, and the number of eggs gathered. By varying the amount of each kind of food as the necessity requires, it will not take long to strike a just proportion. But some grain food is always essential. Where too much soft food is given, it is apt to impair the health of the flock.

One essential to good health and egg production, is an occasional change of diet. Charcoal, burnt bones, green cabbage, potatoes, if cooked, all the better, are greedily eaten. All fowls are fond of milk, which if fed in cold weather, should be warmed. They seem to eat it fully as well if soured, thick, or clabbered. A good feed is to mix corn meal with milk, stirring well, and adding some black pepper. Cook about one hour and feed hot. The quantity must be regulated by the size of the flock. Care should be observed in feeding corn meal, nor should it be fed too often, as it is very fattening, and fat is laid on at the expense of an empty egg basket.

A spoonful of sulphur stirred in with cooked foods is a good thing to preserve the health and give tone to the system. To those who object to the feeding of sulphur, I would say that sulphur is largely present in the feathers of poultry, and where birds are kept in confined spaces, as is sometimes necessary, it is quite reasonable that a certain amount of sulphur should be given them occasionally. Lime also, should be fed occasionally. A good way is to give it as a solution in water.

Before closing this article we want to say that it is of the utmost importance that nothing but wholesome food should be fed to fowls. Cast aside the thought, that they will eat any old refuse, no matter what its condition. They will eat it if they can get nothing else, but there will be no profit in the result.

FARM GLEANINGS.

A few oats given to young calves or colts daily will pay a big interest on the investment.

When cuttings are made during the winter they should be taken from trees or vines after a few days of warm weather, and not cut when the frost is in them.

Turnips are a natural feed for sheep, and may safely be pastured, permitting the animals to eat all they desire; in fact, root crops are always good for any of our farm animals.

On old, thin land the cultivation of the young orchard should begin several years before the old one fails and before the new one is set, by heavy manuring, deep tillage, clean crop culture, and the growing of clover.

The sucking pigs may be growing nicely, but do not cheat yourself with a false idea of the profits unless you are also observing the mother. She may be failing off as fast as her progeny is gaining. Give her the best food obtainable to keep up both flesh and flow of milk.

The frequent trips made from the barn on most farms make it desirable that the buildings be in reasonable distance from each other. On some farms a good deal of valuable time is spent in an unprofitable manner trudging over the long path between farm buildings.

Take good care that the pigs have a sufficient supply of salt, ashes and charcoal; keep it in a box under shelter where they can help themselves, and never let the supply entirely run out. There is no danger of them eating too much, for their own cravings will measure that.

If your poultry house is so cold that water freezes in it, it would be a good plan to give the poultry water three times a day. Have it slightly warmed and after the fowls have drunk what they wished pour out the remainder. In this way the hens will have a full supply and also be invigorated by the warmth from the water drunk.

We have frequently seen in papers, where the writers did not know what they were talking about, that frosted grass is not good for sheep. This is all bosh. We have pastures where sheep run during the entire winter, and they will graze, even pawing off the snow to get at the blue grass. Some of these writers heads are frosted over

HOUSEHOLD.

CHICKEN IN VARIOUS WAYS.

Chicken soup is usually relished and, of course, the size of the chicken or chickens used depends on the number of people to be served. Take a chicken of ordinary size and cut up into small pieces, crushing the larger bones. Cover it with about three quarts of water and when it boils skim carefully. Set it over a slow fire to simmer for three hours. Add two teaspoonfuls of salt and a tiny onion if desired. A half hour before serving add a cupful or more of boiled rice, after removing the chicken. Chop a part of the chicken fine and put it back into the soup. If it is too strong, or if it has boiled down too much, a little hot water may be added. The remainder of the chicken may be used for salad or croquettes. Instead of rice, dumplings may be added to the soup, and this is delicious.

For chicken croquettes take for each cupful of finely-minced chicken a quarter of a cupful of dry bread crumbs and one egg; salt and pepper to taste. Mix in enough gravy or melted butter to make it moist. Then form with the hands into balls, roll in egg, then in dry bread crumbs and fry a golden brown in butter.

Baked Chicken.—Unless the chicken to be baked is very tender put it in a kettle of boiling, salted water and let it boil about an hour before baking; then remove it from the pot and treat it as you would a young chicken. Stuff it with a dressing made as follows: Chop a loaf of stale bread from which the crust has been removed, moisten it with hot water or with some of the broth in which the chicken was boiled, season it with salt, pepper and sage, add a teaspoonful of sugar, a heaping tablespoonful of butter and one or two well-beaten eggs. If liked, a little chopped onion may be added or chopped oysters. When the chicken is well stuffed sew up the incision, tie the wings down, placing a thin slice of salt pork under each one, also between each leg and the body, then tie the legs together and place the chicken in a dripping pan. Pour hot water around it, or, if it was boiled, add the remaining broth and bake until very tender, basting it often. For those who like celery flavor in their dressing here is a nice recipe: Boil two or three heads of celery until soft, mash them and add them to an equal amount of bread crumbs. Season to taste with butter, pepper and salt. If this does not make enough to stuff the fowl add more bread crumbs.

Escalloped Chicken.—Cut the meat from the bones of a cold, baked fowl, rejecting the skin and gristle, and chop it fine. Cover the bottom of a pudding dish with cracker crumbs, moistened with milk, then spread on a layer of the minced fowl with bits of the stuffing, adding pepper, salt and butter to taste. Have alternate layers of the cracker crumbs and chicken until the dish is nearly full. The top layer should be of the crumbly stirred milk, to which two well-beaten eggs have been added and pepper and salt to taste. If over the dish before putting on the top layer, then spread on the crumbs, stick bits of butter all over the top and bake from a half to three-quarters of an hour, according to the size.

Pressed chicken.—Cut the chicken up and boil it in as little water as possible. It must be cooked until the meat drops from the bones. Then chop it fine, season it with salt and pepper and press it into a bowl, putting slices of hard boiled eggs here and there through it. When the bowl is nearly full add the chicken jelly, made by boiling down the water in which the chicken was cooked, after having added a large pinch of gelatine. There should be just enough of the jelly to cover the meat, and it must be strained through a coarse cloth before pouring it over the meat. Set the dish in a cold place to harden, then cut it into thin slices and serve.

Stewed Chicken.—Cut a chicken into pieces, put it into hot, salted water and let it boil until tender; remove it from the pot to a frying pan and fry it a nice brown in hot water, then put it back into the pot of boiling water, add more water, if necessary, chicken with a little corn starch or flour and season to taste with a little salt and pepper. Make a tiny pie-crust, bake them a nice brown and put them into this gravy, allowing them to just reach the boiling point before serving.

Fried Chicken.—Cut the chicken into pieces, put it into frying pan, with a little water and half a teaspoonful of butter, season to taste, cover closely, turning the chicken often that it may be thoroughly cooked through. There should only be enough water in the frying pan to keep the steam enough to fry, and produce a nice brown. When it is cooked through the water should have been boiled away and should then fry a nice brown. When brown on both sides remove it to a hot platter and make a gravy of milk or water as preferred.

Chicken Pie.—Joint your chicken in the usual manner, boil it until tender, having water enough to make gravy. Make a rich baking powder biscuit. Roll it out quite thin, line your pudding dish, carefully place the pieces of chicken in it and pour over the gravy made from the water in which the chicken was boiled, by adding a little flour, seasoning to taste, and a generous lump of butter. Put on the top crust and bake it for about three-quarters of an hour. Always have a bowl of gravy to dip on the chicken when it is served.

Chicken Salad.—There are many ways of preparing chicken salad and almost all of them are good. The best way is to have the meat minced, instead of shredded, as it is not so coarse and the ingredients mix better. To every quart of the minced chicken take a quart of finely chopped cabbage, celery and lettuce.

The lettuce is not a necessity. Mix thoroughly and pour over it some of the liquor in which the chicken was boiled. Salt to taste and set away to cool. About fifteen minutes before serving mix it with the following dressing, which should be thoroughly cold: For each quart of the salad allow two eggs well beaten; a tablespoonful of melted butter, a teaspoonful of mustard and a small cup of vinegar. Stir the mustard smooth with a little of the vinegar, add the rest with the eggs and a pinch of salt. Cook slowly, so as not to curdle. When cold pour over the salad. Chop a hard-boiled egg or two and sprinkle over it.

A BUSINESS MAN'S MISTAKE.

Stranger (who has yelled himself hoarse over Jinks' telephone without getting any reply)—See here, I can't do anything with this telephone.

Jinks (with an air of innocence)—Did you wish to speak to anyone sir?

Certainly. Oh! It has been disconnected for about a month.

Disconnected? You didn't say anything about it. I thought everybody knew we had disconnected our telephone on account of the bores. I didn't know you wished to talk to any one, sir. I supposed you merely desired to exercise your lungs.

AN ARCHITECTURAL MISTAKE.

Phelim Murphy was a Connaught man who went to Dublin in search of work, and during his first night's stay in the city he put up at a lodging house having a bow window in front.

Phelim was up before daylight in the morning, and, groping around the room in the dark, he came on what he thought must be the door; so, opening it, one step brought him out on the window sill, and the next deposited him on his shoulder and ear on the ground, six feet below.

After recovering somewhat from the effects of his fall, he ejaculated: Holy St. Patrick! but whoever saw a step to a dure like that?

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