POULTRY NOTES

THE POULTRY INDUSTRY LOSES ONE OF ITS PIONEERS AND A MAN OF HIGH CHARACTER AND NOBLE IMPULSES, WHILE THE WRITER LOSES A FRIEND

BY POLK T. BRAMBLE

(Proprietor Bramble Poultry Farm)

A few weeks ago my friend, Mr. R. Snowden Thomas, passed to that greater region, known as The Beyond. The writer had known Mr. Thomas for many, many years, and his high ideals, his clean life, rich with experiences and usefulness, his many acts of kindness, entitle him to all the honor that a long life, well spent, so richly deserves. Many people, who have spent their lives in benefitting others, pass away unnoticed almost, while the pages of history glitter and flash with the lives and deaths of many who should only be remembered for the murders they committed or the crimes of cruelty and hate for which they were responsible.

Mr. Thomas was the pioneer poultryman of this section of the country. Long before the great poultry centers were established, with meager equipment, but with undaunted courage and persistence, he kept at the business of commercial poultry raising. Many thought he did this work for a hobby, and perhaps he did. But Mr. Thomas had a great ideal. He believed that the poultry business could be made to pay, and he instilled this spirit into others, who became, perhaps, more successful than he was, because of the fact that it was necessary that they did so in order to exist.

A pioneer in any line of endeaver must, necessarily, suffer the hardships that go with it. And Mr. Thomas endured those hardships unuflinchingly. He gathered thereby a great source of information, which helped a great many others with their many problems. The writer of this column secured much of his early information from Mr. Thomas, and he considers that he owes a great deal of his success to advice and wise counsel received from his friend, as well as encouragement at times when encouragement was needed.

Mr. Thomas became more interested in the beauties of poultry than he did in the financial benefits derived therefrom. He loved the intimate touch of the rare colors of his birds, and his association with them seemed to cause them to know him and his moods.

He was one of the best poultrymen we ever knew, even if not the most successful. He was a courthy gentleman, of great ability and of great nobility of thought. He loved good literature and good music and good paintings and good sculpture, as well as the good in everything. He had a keen understanding and was charitable to the weaker ones, and lovable and kind to all. He had a good mind, and while perhaps he never reached what are considered the summits of fame, he climb even higher in the scale of life because of his honesty.

Mr. Thomas was a man of reputation. Reputation is made by what we do in life, and what others know we do. Added to this he was a man of great character. And, whatever else we may think is immortal—love, religion, fame, loyalty, truth—we know that character is immortal.

Poultry feeding is not simply throwing feed out to the birds, nor is it merely filling a mash hopper and leaving the rest of the birds. An old poultryman once said that a man should go out to feed his chickens with a pailful of feed in one hand and a pailful of brains in the other.

There is skill in feeding poultry. A prominent poultry authority has said, "Skill in feeding is the art of stimulating the appetite." And that's true. A poultry keeper must watch his birds and not reply too much on mechanical devices for supplying the birds with feed; he must be able to gauge the amount to be fed—to know when they have had too much and when they need more.

This skill can only be obtained by actual practice and by carefully watching the birds. Suggestions can be given to the beginner to feed a ration that is palatable, one which the birds will like and eat; to be regular in feeding, for birds are highly responsive to regularity in feeding and if not fed at the regular time will become irritated and fretful, which will eventually —if irregular feeding continues —result in a decreased consumption of feed; to gauge the amount of feed to be fed by the amount that is left on the floor of the house.

It is important that the male receive special attention during the breeding season. Many males are so attentive in looking to the welfare of the hens that they do not get enough to eat. It is important that the males be kept in a vigorous condition; maintaining body weight is necessary to this end. If the males are not getting their share of the feed, they may be fed apart from the hens.

Another point to watch, especially in heavy breeds, is the claws and spurs. These should be kept blunt on the sides and points, to prevent the hens' backs from being torn. Filing or trimming may be necessary from time to time.

The feeding and management of a flock are extremely important, for unless birds are properly housed and properly fed and cared for, good results will not be forthcoming. Yet breeding is tremendously more important; if the ability to produce eggs is not present, good breeding and care will not—can not—bring it out. A good draft horse never yet has made a good race horse, yet years of selection and breeding have built up a number of well-known families of race horses that continually produce winners.

So it is with poultry. The stock must have the ability to produce bred into it if production is to be obtained.

Everybody is going to insist on getting the fullest possible value for the dollars they spend this year.

Economy doesn't mean that people are going to hoard their money. It means that people are going to use their heads. Operating costs will be cut down to gain profits. Every effort will be made to get better results.

Poultrymen, as a whole, are pretty well aware of the value of sunshine in the brooding and rearing of chicks and in the maintenance of health in adult fowls so good egg production may be obtained. However, the effect of sunshine on the quality of eggs is sometimes overlooked.

This is particularly important just now as the incubation season appoaches, for eggs of good quality, with good, strong germs are wanted for hatching. It is a matter of common knowledge that hatches are better, as a rule, in the sections where there is the most sunshine.

This bespeaks the necessity of getting the breeders out in the sun so the germs in the eggs that are laid will have the vitality to go through 21 days of heat and moisture and hatch into chicks with vigor and pep that will carry them through the brooding and rearing periods to maturity. A poor start right from the egg is a big handicap, for hatching a chick is not the end; brooding comes, then rearing, and after this egg production. The number of eggs laid by the new pullets and the health of these pullets depend largely upon the way in which these pullets are grown and the way in which they were hatched.

Not only will the hatching qualities of the eggs be improved by sunshine, but the eating quality also. "Sunshine in sealed packages" is the term applied to eggs. They are all of that, but the more the birds that lay these eggs can be subjected to sunlight, the better it is for the eggs.

Where the sun does not shine much during these next couple of months, cod liver oil can be fed to very good advantage, for this oil, made from the livers of the codfish that have basked in sunny waters, is especially rich in the vitamins that are necessary for the maintenance of health and vigor.

Kennedyville

Miss Sue Johnston has returned to Washington after spending some time with relatives.

Mrs. Acca Crew, of Massey, spend the week end with Miss Lula Van Dyke.

Mr. and Mrs. Glenn McKelvey and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Garey spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Harry Garey.

Miss Helen Stokes, of Fairlee, Md., visited Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Garey.

Messrs. Robert and Lloyd Kennedy spent part of the week with their mother, Mrs. Mary Kennedy in Baltimore.

Mrs. Madeline Bouldin, of Cecilton, has been visiting Mrs. Robert Van Dyke.

Mr. Hoover and friends, of Baltimore, spent Sunday at the parsonage, Mr. and Mrs. Hagar returned home with them.

Mrs. Pearl Walls and daughter, Miss Harriett visited in Baltimore over the week end.

Mr. Bert Newton, of Baltimore, spent the week end with his mother, Mrs. Will Newton.

Those on the sick list are: Mrs. Rachel Redmile and Miss Catherine Urie.

Mr. and Mrs. George Ringgold spent the week end with friends in Salisbury.

Miss Mary Robinson and Mr. Charles Smith, of Philadelphia, visited Mr. and Mrs. James Robinson.

Mrs. Howard Clendaniel entertained the Embroidery Club on Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. Hedley and Miss Mary Oliff, of Philadelphia, were visitors at Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Oliff's.

Mr. Roger Kennedy spent some time in Baltimore during the week.

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