



XXIII. Description of a new method of rearing poultry to advantage

Mrs. Hannah D'Oyley

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a key the screw which moves the balance contained in the bottom of the inner tube.

Certificates from Mr. J. W. Gooch, Mr. Charles Layton, and Mr. Benjamin Holmes, testify that they have seen in use the level invented by Mr. Richard Drew, and that the business is done by it with accuracy and dispatch.

Reference to the Engraving of Mr. Richard Drew's Balance Level. Plate IV., Fig. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Fig. 1. The balance level, mounted on a ball and socket joint, with a tube, *a*, to fix on a stand.

Fig. 2. A section, *b b c c* two tubes of tin which slide on a short tube, *d d*, placed in the middle, and having an iron wire soldered round it to stiffen it, and to serve as a shoulder.

e e Two eye-pieces, with glass in both, one at each end, and sliding into the tubes *b* and *c*.

f f The balance level, hanging by a sort of staple *g*, on a point fixed upright on the middle of the bar *h* (shown in Fig. 3), which is fastened across the tube *d*.

i i Two eye-pieces sliding into the ends of the level *f f*, and having a narrow slit horizontally across the middle, with a hair before each, shown by the dots *h h*.

k An adjusting screw, which acts by drawing the piece *m*, (which moves in a dove-tail slide,) in one end of the tube.

n The key-hole through which the screw is turned.

Fig. 4. An end view of the case and level, showing the eye-pieces *i* and *c*, one within the other.

XXIII. *Description of a new Method of rearing Poultry to Advantage.* By Mrs. HANNAH D'OYLEY, of Sion Hill, near Northallerton*.

SIR,

I BEG leave to communicate a most desirable method of rearing poultry, which I have proved by experience. The œconomy and facility with which it may be performed,

* From Transactions of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, for 1807.—The silver medal of the Society was voted to Mrs. D'Oyley for this communication.

would,

would, if generally adopted, lower the price of butchers' meat, and thereby be of essential benefit to the community at large. I keep a large stock of poultry, which are regularly fed in a morning upon steamed potatoes chopped small, and at noon they have barley; they are in high condition, tractable, and lay a very great quantity of eggs. In the poultry-yard is a small building, similar to a pigeon cote, for the hens to lay in, with frames covered with net to slide before each nest: the house is dry, light, and well ventilated, kept free from dirt by having the nests and walls white-washed two or three times a year, and the floor covered once a week with fresh ashes. When I wish to procure chickens, I take the opportunity of setting many hens together, confining each to her respective nest; a boy attends morning and evening to let any off that appear restless, and to see that they return to their proper places: when they hatch, the chickens are taken away, and a second lot of eggs allowed them to set again, by which means they produce as numerous a brood as before. I put the chickens into long wicker cages, placed against a hot wall at the back of the kitchen fire, and within them have artificial mothers for the chickens to run under; they are made similar to those described by Monsieur Reaumur, in his "*Art de faire éclore et d'élever en toutes Saisons des Oiseaux domestiques de toutes Espèces,*" &c., in two volumes, printed at Paris, 1751: they are made of boards about ten inches broad, and fifteen inches long, supported by two feet in the front four inches in height, and by a board at the back two inches in height. The roof and back are lined with lambs' skins dressed with the wool upon them. The roof is thickly perforated with holes for the heated air to escape; they are formed without bottoms, and have a flannel curtain in front and at the ends for the chickens to run under, which they do apparently by instinct. The cages are kept perfectly dry and clean with sand or moss. The above is a proper size for fifty or sixty new-hatched chickens, but as they increase in size they of course require a larger mother. When they are a week old, and the weather fine, the boy carries them and their artificial mother to the grass-plot, nourishes and keeps

keeps them warm, by placing a long narrow tin vessel filled with hot water at the back of the mother, which will retain its heat for three hours, and is then renewed fresh from the steamer. In the evening they are driven into their cages, and resume their station at the hot wall, till they are nearly three weeks old, and able to go into a small room appropriated to that purpose. The room is furnished with frames similar to the artificial mothers, placed round the floor, and with perches conveniently arranged for them to roost upon.

When I first attempted to bring up poultry in the above way, I lost immense numbers by too great heat and suffocation, owing to the roofs of the mothers not being sufficiently ventilated; and when that evil was remedied, I had another serious one to encounter: I found chickens brought up in this way did not thrive upon the food I gave them, and many of them died, till I thought of getting coarse barley-meal, and steaming it till quite soft: the boy feeds them with this and minced potatoes alternately; he is also employed rolling up pellets of dough, made of coarse wheat flour, which he throws to the chickens to excite them to eat, thereby causing them to grow surprisingly.

I was making the above experiments in the summer for about two months; and during that time my hens produced me upwards of five hundred chickens, four hundred of which I reared fit for the table or market. I used a great many made into pies for the family, and found them cheaper than butcher's meat. Were I situated in the neighbourhood of London, or any very populous place, I am confident I could make an immense profit, by rearing different kinds of poultry in the above method for the markets, and selling them on an average at the price of butchers' meat.

A young person of twelve or fourteen years of age might bring up in a season some thousands, and by adopting a fence similar to the improved sheep-fold, almost any number might be cheaply reared, and with little trouble. Hens kept as mine are, and having the same conveniences, will readily set four times in a season, and by setting twice each time, they would produce at the lowest calculation eighty chickens each, which would soon make them very plentiful.

If

If this information should be so fortunate as to merit the approbation of the Society, I shall consider myself highly honoured, and my time as having been usefully employed.

I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

HANNAH D'OYLEY.

Sion-hill, near Northallerton,

Nov. 28, 1806.

To CHARLES TAYLOR, M.D. Sec.

SIR,

ACCORDING to your request, I have sent you a model of an artificial mother. The most convenient size for forty or fifty young chickens is about fifteen inches long, ten deep, four high in front, and two at the back; it is placed in a long wicker cage against a warm wall, the heat at about eighty degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer, till the chickens are a few days old, and used to the comfort of it, after which time they run under when they want rest, and acquire warmth by crowding together. I find it advisable to have two or three chickens among them of about a week old to teach them to peck and eat. The meat and water is given them in small troughs fixed to the outside of the cage, and a little is strewed along from the artificial mother, as a train to the main deposit. It would have given me great pleasure to have been able to send a specimen of my superior feed and management, if the season had been rather more advanced, for I think it is not possible for turkeys and chickens to weigh heavier, be whiter, or altogether better fed than mine are.

After a certain age, they are allowed their liberty, living chiefly on steamed potatoes, and being situated tolerably secure from the depredations of men and foxes, are permitted to roost in trees near the house.

I have the honour to be, sir,

your most obedient servant,

Sion-hill, near Northallerton,

May 11, 1807.

HANNAH D'OYLEY.

SIR,

ACCORDING to your request, I herewith send you a rough sketch of the apparatus I use, which probably will convey

an idea of the business; and not be too complicated for persons employed in poultry-yards fully to understand. But to prevent trouble and prejudice in the first outset, I think it necessary to remark, that if the chickens do not readily run under the artificial mother for want of some educated ones to teach them, it will be proper to have the curtain in front made of rabbit or hare skin, with the fur side outwards, for the warmth and comfort to attract them; afterwards they run under the flannel ones, similar to the one I sent, which are preferable for common use, on account of cleanliness, and not being liable to get into the mouths of the chickens.

I have had great amusement in rearing poultry in the above way; and if my time was not occupied with my children and other family concerns, I should most assuredly farm very largely in poultry.

I have the honour to be, sir,

your most obedient servant,

Sion-hill,
May 20, 1807.

HANNAH D'OYLEY.

TO CHARLES TAYLOR, M.D. Sec.

Reference to the Engravings of Mrs. D'Oyley's Method of breeding Poultry. Plate IV., Fig. 5, 6, 7.

Fig. 5. The apparatus called the artificial mother, with a curtain of green baize in front and ends, and holes through the top to allow the circulation of air.

Fig. 6. Another view of the artificial mother, but without the curtain, in order to show its sloping direction, and interior lining of woolly sheep-skin.

Fig. 7. A wicker basket four feet long, two feet broad, and fourteen inches high, with a lid to open, and a wooden sliding bottom similar to a bird cage: the artificial mother is shown, as placed within it.

O. A trough in front to hold food for the chickens.