

THE HOUSING OF POULTRY.

A GOOD STANDARD HOUSE AND RUNS.

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IN order to obtain the maximum return from poultry it is essential that the birds be provided with suitable houses. The importance of the housing factor is not realized as it should be, especially by farmers who keep poultry as a side-line. It is on the farms that the largest profit should be made out of poultry, and yet there is no doubt that a very considerable proportion of the fowls kept by the farmers do not even pay for the food they consume. One of the chief causes is neglect to provide the birds with suitable and sanitary houses. How many thousands of fowls throughout the country are compelled to roost in buildings which are infested with red mites which sap their very life-blood, or are crowded into ill-ventilated or draughty quarters! It says a great deal for the inherent vitality of domestic poultry that serious outbreaks of disease are not more common.

It is quite unnecessary to provide expensive or elaborate buildings for poultry. All unnecessary expense should be avoided, as the returns will have to be debited with interest and depreciation on the outlay of the plant before the net profit is arrived at. In the construction of the poultry-house the first consideration should be the health and comfort of the birds, and the second the minimizing of labour in attending to them. The first object is gained by providing a deep lean-to building with the front partly open. The second advantage is secured by planning the lay-out so as to avoid having to go through the run to enter the house. The birds should be protected against draughts, dampness, and vermin, while being allowed to enjoy the maximum amount of fresh air and sunshine.

In planning a house for a small number of hens the common mistake of making it too shallow from back to front should be avoided. With the front open a good depth is necessary in order to prevent the birds from being too much exposed.

To prevent draughts the back and end walls of the building must have all cracks and crevices closed up. In long houses there should be a partition of some draught-proof material at