

**THE PEOPLE'S PRACTICAL  
POULTRY BOOK: A WORK ON  
THE BREEDS, BREEDING, REARING,  
AND GENERAL MANAGEMENT  
OF POULTRY**

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BREEDS, BREEDING, REARING, AND GENERAL  
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WM. M. LEWIS.

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## ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE		PAGE
Artificial Hen .....	166	Dorking Cock, White.....	43
— Mother, Graves' .....	167	Dorkings, Pair of Gray.....	44
Aylesbury Drake.....	80	Drake, Aylesbury.....	80
Bantam Cock, Fertile Hen-feathered		— Rouen.....	81
Game.....	169	Duck, Black Cayuga.....	85
— Hen, Barron Full-feathered Sebright	168	— Crested.....	88
Bantams, Black-breasted Red Game....	57	— House, Rustic.....	137
— Duck-wing Game.....	57	— Tent-house.....	138
— Golden Sebright.....	68	— Wood or Summer.....	85
— Pekin or Cochon .....	67	Ducks, Feed Box for.....	136
— Silver Sebright.....	67	— Trio of Musk or Brazilian.....	83
Brahma Cock, Dark.....	30	Egg Carrier, Suspension.....	178
— — Light.....	33	— Case, Canvas-covered.....	178
— Hen, Dark.....	31	— Transportation Case.....	178
Capon Operating Table.....	146	Eggs, Fertility of.....	20
Caponizing Fowls—Implements used..	145	Farmer Foggy's Fowls.....	70
— Position of Fowl on Operating		Feed Box for Ducks.....	136
Table.....	146, 148	Feeding Hopper, A Cheap.....	133
Chicken Coop and Wire Run.....	138	— — Double.....	133
— House, Exterior of Van Winkle's..	127	— — Funnel and Cone of.....	132
— — Interior of Van Winkle's.....	128	— — Perfect.....	131
Cochin Cock, Buff.....	35	— — Scotch.....	131
— Hen, Buff.....	36	— — Standard Self.....	133
Cochins, Pair of Partridge.....	37	— — Stool.....	132
Coop, A Close.....	130	— Troughs (4 Illustrations).....	134
— Barrel.....	130	Fountain, Barrel.....	135
— Pen.....	129	— Bottle.....	135
— Pent or Lean-to.....	129	— Ordinary.....	135
— Rat-proof.....	129	Fowl, Points of.....	10
— The Tent.....	129	— Vulture-hocks.....	15
Creve-Coeurs, Pair of.....	63	Frizzled Fowls, Pair of.....	41
Dominique Cock.....	66	Games, Black-Red.....	53

	PAGE.		PAGE.
Games, Duck-Wing.....	55	Poultry Fountain, Ordinary.....	135
— Earl Derby.....	52	— House and plan for 100 fowls.....	119
Geese, Canada or American.....	89	— — — — Virginia.....	114, 115
— Embden or Bremen.....	91	— — — yards, Van Winkle's.....	110
— Toulouse.....	94	— — Browne's.....	107, 108
Goose, White Chinese.....	95	— — Cheap.....	115, 120
Guelders, Pair of.....	64	— — Elevation, plan and yard.....	122
Hamburgs, Pair of Golden-Spangled..	46	— — Fancy.....	125
— — — Silver-Spangled.....	46	— — Interior of Van Winkle's.....	111
Hen-house, Mount's.....	118	— — Octagon.....	117
Hennery for 200 to 250 fowls.....	121	— — Octagonal (3 Illustrations).....	123
— Plan of Double.....	113	— — Poor Man's.....	106
Houdans, Pair of.....	61	— — Rhode Island.....	114
Incubation—Process illustrated.....	18, 19	— — Rustle.....	106
Incubator, American.....	159	— Mode of Packing.....	27
— Brindley's.....	156	Rouen Drake.....	81
— Geyelin's.....	154	Shanghaes, Pair of White.....	39
— Graves'.....	160, 161	Silky Fowls, Pair of.....	69
— Schroder's.....	157	Spanish Fowls, White and Black.....	59
— Wortley's.....	158	Trap, Barrel.....	171
La Fleche, Pair of.....	63	-- Skunk.....	173
Leghorns, Pair of.....	51	— Common Box.....	171
Malays, Pair of.....	40	— for Mink.....	172
Nest, Turkey.....	139	— Geyelin's Vermin.....	173
— Wicker-work.....	140	— Miles' Vermin.....	174
— Wooden Box.....	140	Turkey, Bronze.....	74
Poland Cock, Silver-Spangled.....	47	— Crested.....	77
— Hen, Silver-Spangled.....	48	— Domestic.....	73
Polands, Pair of Golden-Spangled.....	49	— House and nest.....	139
— White Crested Black.....	50	— Wild.....	75





## PREFATORY AND INTRODUCTORY.

IN presenting this volume, on the subject of the Breeding, Treatment and Management of Fowls to the public, we do so more for the purpose of supplying a need greatly felt by the American breeder and fancier, the amateur and beginner, and placing within the reach of all desiring a knowledge of poultry—the breeds best for market purposes and as egg-producers—a cheap and reliable guide. Not only shall we be able to present our own views and the results of our experience in poultry-rearing, diseases, their treatment, etc., in these pages, but the experiences of the most careful, scientific and reliable breeders and fanciers in this country, (as given from time to time, for the past twenty-one years, through the columns of the *Agricultural Journals* and other periodicals,) and place the same in juxtaposition with each other, so that they will prove of the utmost value to the amateur breeder, as well as to the new beginner.

We have often wondered why our rural population do not rear fowls more universally than they do. It has been demonstrated, beyond a peradventure, that they can be reared with little expense by nearly every house-keeper, and can be made to pay an hundred fold on the investment. Not only can this be done by our rural population, but also by those living in cities and villages. Having had several years' experience in rearing fowls in a city, we can speak understandingly on the subject. Fowls can be bred in cities and villages equally as well as on the farm—not on so large a scale, but with as much, if not more profit to the breeder. It requires but a small space to keep a dozen or twenty fowls in either of the localities mentioned; and then the pleasure it gives a person to know that with a little judicious management he will be able to supply his table with birds of his own rearing, and his larder with fresh eggs the year round, can well be imagined.

Nothing, in our opinion, looks more comfortable, homelike and rural, than to see strutting about the premises of a city or village resident, a few select and well-kept fowls. Thus we have city and country, as it were, combined. Undoubtedly some city people, or the male portion of them, will object to this theory, on the plea that it would take too much of their valuable time to look after the fowls. This objection is easily overcome by

leaving the care of them in the hands of the good housewife, who would esteem it a great pleasure to care for the chicks and teach the children how to rear them.

What is there that the farmer produces of quicker sale than eggs and poultry? The prices which he receives therefor are in the main remunerative, the labor incurred is light and agreeable, and can be performed by the junior members of the family. The poultry yard produces food which is highly palatable and nutritious at all seasons, and in this respect is hardly equaled by any other department of the farm. Is it not worth while, then, to bestow more care and skill in managing poultry? Left to themselves, half their products are often wasted, and half the year they are non-layers. In winter they need simply warmth, light and sunshine, clean, roomy quarters, and plenty of food. Every day they will pay for this. In the summer they want range, fresh earth, shade, water, seclusion, and protection from vermin. An abundance of eggs and broods of plump chickens, either for market or the farmer's table, will result from this care. If it is not feasible to carry on the poultry business on a large scale, it should be done on a medium scale; for every farmer should make a couple of hundred dollars' worth of their products yearly, independent of fertilizing properties the farm receives in the manure saved from the hennery. It is our object, however, to especially impress upon the minds of village and city residents the importance and advantages of rearing and keeping fowls. We take it for granted that large and small farmers know their own interests in this matter.

In villages there can be no excuse whatever for not breeding fowls, successfully and profitably. In nearly all the small villages in Europe fowls are bred by tenants; their children make pets of them. Wherever there is a cottager's family living on potatoes, or better fare, may be seen a little pent-house, with nests of straw or hay for the fowls to lay in, and a speculation in eggs and chickens sought. It is said Americans are shrewd; then why do they not demonstrate their shrewdness in this matter. We know, from past experience, that there is no money lost in keeping and rearing a few fowls, and a great deal of pleasure and profit derived from it. Viewing the matter in this light, with the hope of inducing our city, village and rural population to enter more fully into the breeding and rearing of fowls, we present this volume, and submit it, without further introduction, to the inspection, and we trust, favorable consideration of the public.

W. M. L.

## FOWLS—THEIR GENERAL MANAGEMENT.

THERE is a great diversity of opinion in regard to the management of fowls, the particular and desirable breeds for all purposes, &c. First of all, their

### PROPER CARE AND KEEPING

is essential to success, for a person may have the best known breeds, and if they are not properly cared for they will, in nine cases out of ten, prove a failure. Therefore we wish to impress upon the mind of the breeder, in the outset, that this needs attention more than purity of breed or superiority of kind. As a friend of ours said, "there exists gross neglect of the poor birds generally." This neglect is not confined to persons who have no fancy for fine poultry, but extends even to many who have the reputation of being fowl fanciers. Still, as before stated, for poultry to be remunerative there *must* be good management. In

### STARTING OUT IN THE BUSINESS,

plans should be well matured and digested before hand. A good, convenient poultry house should be properly constructed, sufficiently large to contain the number of birds one desires, warm and dry in the winter, well ventilated, and it should be kept scrupulously clean. The house should not be over-crowded, but just large enough. Nothing is made by over-crowding the hennery; on the contrary, it will prove detrimental. The fowls must be fed regularly and at stated periods. They must have plenty of pure water at hand at all times — this is of as much importance to the health of the brood as proper food. If possible, they should also be given, in addition, a plat of grass for a run. Place within the hennery a dust heap; this may consist of wood or coal ashes, sand, or dust from the streets. It should be kept under cover, so that it will not become drenched with rain or snow, and to it the fowls should have access at all times, to dust, and thereby rid themselves, in a great degree, of the numerous parasites which infest them. The habit of

### GIVING TOO MUCH FOOD,

to poultry, in a short space of time, is a very bad one. If one notices their habits he will perceive that the process of picking up their food under ordi-