

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

HOW TO MATE FOWLS.

It is during the fall and early winter especially that fowls do not receive the attention they should have. It is quite an important season for them. The old hens are in the midst of the moulting season, and it is then they need especial attention and care. The young chicks are by this time nearly as large as the old ones, and the pullets should all be put up in a department by themselves, and thus be separated from both the old and the young roosters: it would be an excellent idea to have the old hens by themselves, or they could be put in the same department with the pullets, or anyway, so as to separate them from the young, ambitious roosters, and give them a season of rest for eight or ten weeks. It would be much better for them, and they would be in better breeding condition the following spring. But be sure when you separate them in this way that they have a good roosting place, as the nights grow cooler, and it is essential that they have a warm resting place.

Do not mate up the breeding pens too early; nothing is gained by it. It is better to wait until they are well formed, and if the breeder is observing and notes down which are the earliest and steadiest layers among his flock, and studies the characteristics and condition of the fowls he intends to use for breeding, then he will be able to mate them with good results.

The first of January is early enough to mate up the breeding pens for all practical purposes, but it should not be delayed much longer than this, especially when early chicks are desired. Of course a few early chicks are desirable for nearly all breeders to have, for they want a few, choice, early chicks to take to the fairs the following fall and winter; but nothing is gained by having any considerable num-

ber of chicks hatched out too early, unless you have a glass house to receive them, hens and all, for ordinarily they are a source of trouble, annoyance, and generally a large percentage of them are lost; but of course, if an incubator and an artificial mother are used it is a different thing; but even then it hardly pays to hatch out chicks intended for breeding before the first or middle of February. This is plenty early enough for all practical purposes, for when hatched at this time they will make fine, large pullets in the fall, and if judiciously taken care of will commence laying early, and will keep laying right along if they are properly managed.

The large breeds should be mated together sooner than the smaller varieties, for it takes an Asiatic chick much longer to mature than it does a Leghorn, and for this reason they should be set earlier, and the chicks hatched out earlier in the season so as to give them more time to grow and become matured.

When hens are used for hatching chicks they should not have more than nine or eleven eggs given them for the first setting, for if they have more the eggs are liable to be exposed and get chilled through, and thus destroy the chicks in them.

Incubators are quite valuable at this season of the year, if for no other reason than that they can be set going at any time, for in many cases it is a hard matter to get hens that will sit early enough; but with an incubator you can put in as many eggs as you want, and of course they will all hatch out together; and if a good brooder is used in raising the chicks, they will not give near as much trouble and vexation as they would if the hen had them. — H. S. Waldo in *Poultry Monthly*.

THE SHEEP BREEDERS' CONVENTION.

The fifth annual festival of the Central Wisconsin Sheep Breeders' and Wool Growers' Association was held at the fair grounds, in this city, May 1st and 2d. The weather was extremely disagreeable and the number of entries was there-