

## Poultry.

Edited by J. W. Bartlett.

## The Standard of Excellence.

We have been frequently asked what is the Standard of Excellence, and although all fanciers and exhibitors know all about it, there are many who have never heard of such a thing. To such we address ourselves. The Standard of Excellence is a work published and copyrighted by the American Poultry Association, and accepted by the Ontario Poultry Association as the rule for judging the different varieties by each of which is fully described therein, and any breed not so described is not considered to be a recognized breed. For each breed there are certain disqualifications, as will be seen by score card appended:

## PLYMOUTH ROCKS—COCKEREL.

**DISQUALIFICATIONS.**—Birds not matching in show-pen; feathered legs; color of legs other than yellow (this does not include clouded scales, or those spotted with black); enamelled white in ear-lobes; lopped combs; crooked backs; wry tails; crossed or twisted beaks; splashes of white or black in the plumage, except in wing primaries and tails; red or brassy feathers in any part of the plumage; twisted feathers in wings or tails.

## STANDARD WEIGHTS.

Cock..... 9½ lbs.      Hen..... 8 lbs.  
Cockerel..... 8 "      Pullet..... 6½ "

Deducting two points per pound for any deficit from standard weights.

|                            | Stand'd | Out   | Score |
|----------------------------|---------|-------|-------|
| Symmetry.....              | 10      | ..... | 10    |
| Weight.....                | 10      | ..... | 10    |
| Condition.....             | 8       | ..... | 8     |
| Head.....                  | 7       | ..... | 7     |
| Comb.....                  | 8       | 1     | 7     |
| Ear-lobes and Wattles..... | 8       | ½     | 7½    |
| Neck.....                  | 6       | 1     | 5     |
| Back.....                  | 10      | 1     | 9     |
| Breast and Body.....       | 6       | 1     | 5     |
| Wings.....                 | 6       | ..... | 6     |
| Tail.....                  | 6       | ½     | 5½    |
| Fluff.....                 | 7       | ..... | 7     |
| Legs and Toes.....         | 100     | 5     | 95    |

(Signed)

L. G. JARVIS, Judge.

This is an exact copy of a score card by Mr. L. G. Jarvis, at the St. Thomas Poultry Show, one of the few recognized judges in Canada. It will be seen there are a certain number of points allowed for each part, as symmetry, 10; weight, 10, etc., etc. It will be noticed this cockerel is all right in symmetry, weight, condition and head, but in comb the judge has cut him one point because the comb is ½ lacking of perfection; ear lobes and wattles perfect, and so on, taking off what percentage each part lacks of perfection; and at the foot of the column we find a total of 5 points out; this, taken from the total 100 points (which represent a perfect bird), leaves 95, which is called the score, by which we understand the bird lacks 5 percent of perfection.

This is considered by almost all breeders to be the best and most accurate method of judging; and certainly it is more satisfactory to know where a bird is wrong and why he did not get the prize, as the breeder is thus in a position to avoid the same defects in his breeding stock in the future. Again, A sends to B to buy a bird. B says: "I will sell you for ten dollars a fine bird winning first prize last winter at Toronto." Now this is decidedly tempting to have the first prize bird dangled before his eyes, but when A learns that B had little or no competition and finds the first prize bird an inferior one, he is greatly annoyed. But suppose B is in a position to say: "I will send you a bird scoring 95

points by Mr. Jarvis or by Mr. Butterfield" (as the case may be). A knows at once that the bird is a choice one, whether he ever won a prize at all or not. Again, suppose we ignore the Standard of Excellence and do away with scoring. Each judge will have his own ideal or perfect bird, and what Mr. Jarvis says is the best bird, Mr. Butterfield may say is the worst, as there is no rule to go by, only as each may individually fancy, and no one will know what style of bird to breed.

Now, poultry is our forte, if we have one, but we feel disposed to think that the sooner stock breeders generally formulate a standard for judging their stock by, the better. Again, the standard has proved eminently successful as a guide in perfecting the various breeds of fowls, and pedigree has proved to be of use only to unprincipled persons in fleecing confiding patrons, and what intelligent breeder is not aware of it? We challenge contradiction. And is there not just a slight probability that had other stock been bred to a standard more, and less attention paid to pedigree, that our general stock would have been of a better class at the present time?

## Egg Eating.

There is perhaps no vice that fowls are guilty of that is as provoking as egg eating, especially to breeders of thoroughbred stock. We have been waiting for eggs to fill an order, and found the hens in the very act of eating the much wished for eggs. There are various reasons assigned for this piece of vandalism, and many reputed cures, but prevention is best of all, and is not difficult; but when the habit is acquired it is too late for this. If the hens are kept busy scratching in deep straw for their living, and the nests not too light, there is little trouble in this direction; and when the birds have plenty of room and get gravel and lime in suitable quantities also, there is less. So the next best thing is to give them this afterward, and make a box with long winding passages to the nest, at least make them turn a square corner or two, if convenient; or if the flock be small, we have placed them in the morning before laying in a large box with a false bottom made of lath, far enough apart to allow the egg to drop through on straw placed beneath. Or a hopper-shaped box may be made and straw laced to the sides or tacked down with leather strips, leaving a hole in the bottom just large enough for the egg to drop through out of sight. This vice is highly contagious, and if the first offender can be caught in the act, she should suffer decapitation at once and save the flock, but if a valuable bird, she can be isolated from the rest, and if prevented from getting at her eggs for a month, will have forgotten it, especially if well supplied with lime and gravel.

## Sitting Hens.

Perhaps there is no part of the season's work that tries the patience of the breeder so much as getting the chicks out. It is all right if the hen is quiet and faithful to her business, but, alas! this is the exception rather than the rule. To obtain the best results we find it advisable to keep Biddy on the nest, so she cannot come and go at her own sweet will. To accomplish this, take an old barrel and cut a hole in the side six or eight inches from the top; make it large enough to allow the hen ingress and egress. Invert the barrel on the ground, if convenient; if not, on a floor will answer. Fill up the bottom with short straw even with the bottom of the

hole; form a hollow in the middle, and put in two or three nest eggs. Stone or china eggs are best, but any egg will answer. Now put the hen on and hang a cotton cloth over the hole (which now becomes a door), and leave Biddy to her reflections. If she be a quiet, well-behaved bird, she will at once settle to business, and can be given the eggs for hatching in a few hours; but do not give her valuable eggs until sure that she has decided to act rational. Once a day will be found often enough to feed and water. This should be done late in the evening, just allowing enough time to eat, drink and return to the nest before dark, and not early enough to tempt her to take a stroll. It is well to sprinkle a handful of sulphur in the nest at time of sitting, and again a week before hatching. But avoid doing this nearer than one week to the time of hatching, as there is danger of the sulphur getting into the eyes of the chicks. Insect powder may be used in place of sulphur, but if so, it should not be used nearer than two weeks to the time of hatching. Should the eggs become soiled either from the breaking of an egg or other causes, wash them with a sponge and tepid water, keeping them under water during the process, and returning them to the pen as soon as the operation is completed.

## Chicks in Brooders.

The past season demonstrated that chicks raised in brooders grow faster, weigh more, and sell at a higher price, up to the age of three months, than do chicks raised with hens for the same period. At first, one would naturally be surprised at such a claim; but, when we compare the advantages and disadvantages of the two methods, the chick in the brooder has all the chances in his favor. In the first place, he is never allowed to feel the effect of dampness. He knows nothing about being dragged through wet grass, or seeking a dry place during a rain-storm. Lice are enemies to which he is unaccustomed, and if he feels cold or chilly his stove is within a few inches of his scratching ground, while he can enjoy the heat of the sun without being exposed to the sweeping winds that blow from every direction. The water he drinks is of the proper temperature, and not covered with ice, and the food he receives is not only varied but given in a careful manner and in a clean condition. He has nothing to do for a living, is under the watchful eye of his master, and grows fast because he receives plenty of food, drink, and heat, which are the prime factors to success.

But the chick with the hen, if in winter, comes at a season when his dam cannot properly provide for his wants. If he leaves the warm covering, he becomes chilled. If his stronger brethren persist in roosting off, the hen follows them, in her anxiety, and drags the unfortunate ones with her. She tires them out, does not nestle when they desire, and, if her brood is large, she cannot hover them properly, especially when they are larger, and the consequence is that, though the chicks with the hen may grow rapidly the first few weeks, the time comes when a portion of the number perishes, or becomes stunted in growth, for want of sufficient warmth. There may be exceptions; for, if a brood of chicks with a hen receive the proper care, they will thrive as well as those in brooders, but are more subject to lice, which never attack chicks unless they are in the neighborhood of adult fowls. But, where hundreds of chicks are raised, a much larger number can be made to attain a marketable size, in the shortest time, in brooders than under hens.—[Farm and Garden.

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