

than the Cochins first introduced from Asia, was spoiled by exaggerating the feather development. The same thing happened to the Brahma and to many other breeds.

It is characteristic of fanciers first to improve and then to destroy the real value of everything in which they interest themselves. The very qualities of the fancier which up to a certain point are useful to the poultry industry, beyond that point becomes a detriment to it, and discreditable to fanciers.

The essential element in "fancy" is imagination. The "true fancier" is pre-eminently an idealist, and men who are fanciers in less degree are so just as far as their idealism goes, or as they will allow it to go. It required fanciers, men with imagination, to see possibilities which lay in early and generally crude types of fowls. Not only so, but when the fancier takes up a new type and begins to develop it toward the ideal which stands in his imagination, it is almost inevitably improved in every quality for a little while, and becomes a better "utility" fowl than before, because of more careful breeding and selection, and more special and persistent effort to develop the possibilities of the type. Such improvement is maintained or lost in different flocks, or in the breed as a whole, according as individual breeders, or breeders collectively, follow safe methods of breeding, or resort to methods which may prove detrimental to practical qualities.

Beauty, according to authorized standards, and utility may go together, but do not necessarily do so. When fanciers, of whatever degree, take the beauty, though the specimens having it lack in utility, they take immediate profit at the expense of their own reputations and the future popularity of their breed.

Imagination, or fancy, is essentially unstable. The "fancier" of the extreme type has no fixed ideals. When an ideal is attained he is not satisfied, for it is then reality. His ideal has disappeared and must be replaced by another. In the course of this evolution of ideals he at some time reaches, approximately, the finest type of any kind of fowl he may work with. When that point has been reached, further developments are abnormal. He is no longer developing beauty; he is manufacturing monstrosities. Then the public drops the breed. The fanciers whose fancy has not been perverted are likely also to drop it and take up new breeds in which they can make improvement that still tends toward perfection. A few enthusiasts continue to make monstrosities until it becomes evident even to them that the public has no use for races of freaks however curious it may be to see occasional specimens of that character. *Farm Poultry.*

Establishing a Flock

In those cases where a man is going into the poultry raising business, he makes his start in the fall. As a general rule, if he has never kept poultry before, he buys a few fowls from a neighbor and embarks in the industry. Choosing the breed, or even seeing to it that he is getting a breed at all, are points that are frequently neglected. Anything, almost, with fatness on it, providing it belongs to the hen tribe, goes. Speaking generally, this is about the safest and cheapest way for a man of limited means making a start. He has to purchase within his means, and in a good many cases pure-bred stock are out of reach as regards first cost. So he starts with a bunch of ordinary barnyard hens, either by necessity or choice. The flock is established, but if he stops there and just throws in a mongrel cockerel to run with the hens, there is a big long chance that he will never make a great deal out of his venture. Dunghill hens generally are pretty poor stuff so far as either eggs or meat go, and unless some effort is made to improve the strain by using a pure-bred cock, to grade the flock up, the man at the end of ten years or so will be in about the same place as he started from. He will have a yardful of nondescripts, but very few individuals turning anything into his egg basket at the season he wants it.

The usual way to improve a bunch of hens is to introduce a pure-bred cockerel and use him to grade the stock up. In one year's work, practically the entire original outfit of mongrels may be gotten rid of, and their places taken by young stock, half-bloods of the breed the cockerel represents. The beginner should select a cockerel typical of the breed he favors, and for his own benefit he should favor some utility breed, say Plymouth Rocks, Wyandottes or Orpingtons, then by the method advocated, and by some closer attention such as the selection of eggs for hatching from the best laying individuals in his flock, he can quickly bring a bunch of nondescript hens and indifferent producers, up into a fairly well graded flock of profitable layers or useful table birds. The best farmer's flocks in this country have been built up in this way. Fancy breeding in some cases may be all right, but, as a general rule, it pays to stick to the utility breeds. Any of the three indicated are of established worth.

HORTICULTURE

British Potato Crop

The average yield from fifteen of the leading centers of potato production in Britain points to a record potato output this season. These 15 centers represent over 10,000 acres devoted exclusively to potatoes. In each instance they show a return of 6½ tons to the acre. Figuring upon this basis the total harvest of potatoes in Britain this year will consist of over 3,250,000 tons, which is regarded as an immense and satisfactory output. The yield in Lincolnshire alone is the greatest for a quarter of a century. Yorkshire will turn out not under 390,000 tons. The crop in Lancashire, Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Fife, Perthshire, Forfar, Kent, Norfolk and Devon is highly satisfactory. The quality and size of the potatoes are all that can be desired.

In certain sections of Scotland the output will average as high as 15 tons to the acre. Single farmers have planted as much as 500 acres to potatoes. The utilization of high-grade seeds has done much to improve the potato farming industry generally. In respect to quality and productiveness, Scotland, it is claimed, is far ahead of England and Wales. The Scotch farmer pays more attention to the preparation of the land. Attention to the needs of the tuber pays handsomely.

The increased potato harvest in Britain this season will have an important effect upon the imports from the continent through winter especially. At Plymouth, which is a large import depot, foreign producers are already offering specially favorable terms for supplies for delivery during the late autumn on contract. British farmers are pointing with pride to the fact that the acre average for Britain has during late years been considerably increased.



COLLECTION OF VEGETABLES GROWN IN A LUMSDEN, SASK. GARDEN.
Photo taken Sept. 17th, 1908.

What is an Acre of Fruit Land Worth?

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:—

This has been a live question throughout British Columbia during the present year. It is a well known fact that fruit land has been selling at what is considered a high figure by the average man. An unknown wilderness a few years ago, and land selling now for \$100 an acre, is rather inexplicable to the man from the outside, and he is apt to make the charge that the price is being forced up by speculators. Further, it is contended by those who hold such views that the result will be a disastrous reaction in the near future. The writer has heard such opinions expressed continually.

As a matter of fact, \$100 an acre is about the average price of fruit land in the valleys of British Columbia. That is, land in good locality and close to transportation. In some sections of the Okanagan it is selling at a much higher figure than this. Unimproved, irrigated land at Summerland is selling readily at \$200 an acre. And very naturally comes the question:—Is the price too high?

Perhaps it should be explained in passing that these prices only prevail in small areas. Getting back from a railroad a few miles, unimproved land will hardly average half of one hundred dollars an acre. So that settlers who are not so particular about location can get good land at a much lower price than prevails close to a railroad. And by close to a railroad, I mean within a mile or so, not four or five miles, which might be considered close on the prairie.

Mr. W. H. Lanigan, of the freight department of the C.P.R., started the ball rolling by stating in an interview in Vancouver that the progress

of British Columbia was being retarded because the prices charged for fruit lands were too high. He compared the opportunities offered by the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta to those offered by British Columbia, to the disadvantage of the latter. He said that in the former provinces good land could still be obtained for from eight to fifteen dollars an acre. On this land, he contended, a fair return could be obtained the first year, while the fruit-grower had to wait for his trees to grow and commence bearing before a return in keeping with the investment necessary could be obtained.

The ink was scarcely dry on the paper on which his statement was printed when Mr. Maxwell Smith, Dominion Fruit Inspector, made a reply. He did not attempt to deny that fruit land in British Columbia was selling at a high figure. But he claimed the revenue derived justified the investment necessary. He instanced the results at Peachland where, three years ago, the growers sold the whole output of their peach orchards for \$300 an acre, the buyers doing all the work of picking and packing. He cited other instances where as much as \$1,200 an acre had been realized. "Take for instance," said Mr. Smith, "a settler buys two acres of land for \$200 an acre, and I am quoting a higher figure than Mr. Lanigan. By planting in small fruits, namely, strawberries, at the expiration of one year they may be in full bearing and bringing in a net annual revenue of at least \$1,000. That, of course, means intensive cultivation, but is quite an ordinary thing for a plantation of strawberries to give returns of \$500 an acre over and above all expenses, and the idea of comparing British Columbia fruit lands with the prairies is simply absurd. The comparison in ultimate cash results is favorable to the fruit lands of British Columbia."

Other prominent fruit-growers throughout the province made similar statements. In view of so much discussion, a great deal of interest centered in the auction sale of Government fruit lands at Creston. This is the first time that the Government of British Columbia has taken a hand in the selling of fruit land. There were not a few of the opinion that these lands would be sold at a much lower price than had hitherto prevailed, and that the price of fruit land would thus be settled for some time to come.

The phenomenal success of the sale was a surprise to all. Prices in the open market soared higher than ever before, going as high as \$300 an acre in one instance. Quite a number of blocks were sold around \$150 an acre, and in every instance the prices realized were three hundred per cent. above the upset prices. Only one block offered for sale was left unsold, and this one happened to be rocky and of very little value. Without a doubt, the success met with by Creston growers in the growing and cultivation of strawberries was largely responsible for the good figures realized. It is also worthy of note that about two-thirds of the sales were made to local Creston parties who have been on the ground for some time, and who know just what the land will produce.

In the face of these facts, it hardly seems likely that B. C. fruit lands will decrease in value, but on the contrary the movement will, in all probability, be in the other direction, until the standards of Washington and Oregon have been reached.

Nelson, B. C.

C. W. D.

Forestry on Dominion Lands

The season of 1908 has been marked by the extension of the operations of the Forestry Branch in its several lines of work, an extension which finds its chief limitation in the scarcity of trained men qualified for carrying on forestry work. A number of additions have been made to the staff, however. The appointment of Mr. A. Knechtel, B.S., F.E., as Inspector of Forest Reserves has been followed up by the appointment to the permanent reserve staff of Messrs. H. R. McMillan, B.S.A., M.F., who this spring graduated from the Yale Forest School, and J. R. Dickson, B.S.A., M.S.F., a 1908 graduate of the forestry department of the University of Michigan. Both these gentlemen are Canadians and graduates of the Ontario Agricultural College, and each has spent a couple of seasons on Dominion forest service surveys in subordinate capacities. In the work of planting on the prairies the staff has also been increased. Mr. Angus Mitchell having been appointed permanent assistant to Mr. Norman Ross; Mr. Mitchell will reside in Indian Head. Part of his work will consist in the giving of lectures before Farmers' Institutes during the winter months.