

APPENDIX No. 2

I now call your attention to my second subdivision, and it is a most important one, viz.:—

WHAT EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN TO BE THE BEST VARIETIES OF FOWLS FOR FARMERS, FROM THE STANDPOINTS OF EGGS AND FLESH.

I make no apology for bringing this phase of poultry keeping to the notice of your Committee, because I have continuous and numerous inquiries for such information from all parts of the Dominion—especially from the newer western provinces, which are being so rapidly settled. That such information is appreciated, in the shape of evidence given before this Committee, and does good is shown by the following letter which I beg to submit to your attention.

‘BRIDGEWATER, March 11, 1908.

‘Mr. A. G. GILBERT.

‘DEAR SIR,—I have at present one of your books of evidence given before the Select Standing Committee, on farm and poultry breeding, and as I keep about 30 hens, I want to ask you to send me the latest evidence on poultry—the one I have is 1904—or any information you can give me. I have taken great pleasure in reading the evidence. I have learned a lot from it. I have kept hens but did not know how to have eggs in the winter, but since having your evidence I have had plenty of eggs, this winter, since the last of November. The pullets commenced to lay the last of November. I am keeping account of the eggs they lay in each month.’

There is direct proof of practical results from the evidence which I have given before your Committee. Nothing could be more satisfactory, I am sure, than to find such practical results.

KNOWLEDGE OF POULTRY KEEPING NECESSARY TO SUCCESS.

It is well to understand at the outset that poultry keeping cannot be made profitable without a knowledge of how to make it so. The letter I have read shows this. No matter whether poultry keeping is carried on by joint stock companies, amateurs, or farmers, a certain knowledge of breed, feed and management is absolutely necessary. The farmer, beyond doubt, is the most favourably situated as to making his poultry pay. As I have said in one of my reports. ‘It is essentially his business. He has already a certain knowledge of live stock, in the majority of cases of poultry keeping. His stock may not be pure, or his poultry house of the latest or best pattern. But these are obstacles which can quickly and cheaply be removed. He has the grain, the green food and other essentials in abundance, in many cases almost in the shape of waste.’

HOW MANY FOWLS SHOULD A FARMER KEEP?

But despite this it should ever be remembered that to the farmer his poultry is only one of many branches of his farm work. It would certainly be misleading him to advise him to keep more fowls or hatch out more chickens than he can properly—which means profitably—handle. From 100 to 150 hens is all that I would advise the ordinary farmer to keep. And he should be able to hatch and rear from 100 to 150 chickens. If he has help from his family a greater number may be hatched and raised. I wish to emphasize what I have said before, that the great bulk of our supply of poultry and eggs must inevitably come from you farmers. And that supply will not come from the few farmers with a large number of hens each, but rather from the many farmers with a few hens each. Should a farmer, however, desire to make a specialty of poultry in combination with fruit growing or dairying, there is no reason why he should not profitably do so.

By Mr. Schell (Oxford):

Q. In feeding grains is it advisable to throw it amongst cut straw or litter so as to compel the hens to scratch in order to find the food?