

**PROFITS IN POULTRY.**

*To the Editor of the JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE.*

DEAR SIR,—Knowing the money that can be made out of a small number of hens if properly attended to I pen this article. Our friend Mr. Andres, who conducts your poultry department, gives some very good articles from time to time. There is only one opinion of his in which I differ from him. He always speaks highly of the Plymouth Rock breed, and says his preference is for the white breed in preference to the barred. I, on my part, think there is no comparison in the two breeds, as far as the fattening is concerned. In the same care and feed, cockerels of the barred type will give at, say, 5 or 6 months, an average of 2 or 2½ lbs more weight than the white, while as winter-layers, they are equally as good if not better than the white. At the experiments made so far at the Government illustrating stations, the barred Plymouth Rocks had had no equals, some of the other breeds, such as Brahmas, Leghorns, making fair seconds, but in no case was the White Plymouth Rock variety in the race at all. I should be the last one to make such a statement against such an eminent authority as Mr. Andres, but I have noticed this same thing occurred two or three times quite recently by his able pen. I might state that in all other respects I quite agree with him, in the profits that can be made with a few well kept hens, properly managed and cared for.

If any farmer wishes to go into egg production as a principal thing, he ought not to have his eggs fertile, as he can certainly get a better price for them; while a fertile egg, in warm days may be greatly injured, although laid in the morning and not gathered until evening, by some broody hen, sitting on it for say 12 or 14 hours. The flavor of that egg is certainly greatly injured, while with an infertile one, no great harm has been done. Some maintain that they cannot very well have the eggs infertile and at the same time have chicks to renew the flock yearly. But it is much easier than some imagine. Pick out a few of your purest bred hens, good layers, well marked of the particular style you like best, and mate them with your pure bred male bird, and keep these eggs altogether for hatching purposes. They must be kept separate from your other laying hens, and in this way, I am sure you should

make an arrangement with some first-class grocer who will always be able to get an average of 5 cents a doz. more for your eggs than the ordinary store eggs will fetch at any season of the year. Take, for instance, when eggs are selling at say 8 or 9 cents a doz. as they very often do in May and June and sometimes in July, and a boarding house wishes to buy say 2 doz. of eggs; the keeper of the house pays 8 cts a doz., the chances are that two-thirds of them will be bad and the balance of the lot only fair flavor. Would the majority of customers not rather pay 5 cents a doz. more for real choice eggs, and be sure they were real fresh good eggs. In winter, it would not matter so much, as hens are not usually so broody and the weather keeps them fresh, but in hot weather they should certainly be kept separate. I have heard some people ask the question will hens lay without a male bird, of course the question is a very ridiculous one, but nevertheless it is a fact that hens will lay equally as well without male as with one.

I wish to give the results of a friend of mine in the Civil service at Ottawa who kept 2 hens and 10 pullets, Barred Plymouth Rocks. The pullets were hatched in April 1898, and began to lay in January 1899. There was no record kept until the first of February, and the results for the next 12 months are as follows: February, 138 eggs; March, 231; April, 312; May, 303; June, 227; July, 215; August, 250; September, 200; October, 153; November, 70; December, 55; January 1900, 40 eggs, a total of 2194, it just lacked two eggs of an average of 183 eggs for each hen and pullet for the 12 months; and my friend remarks that his fowls are doing about the same as they did this month last year or perhaps better. I consider this is a record to be proud of! If every hen in Canada would only do half as well, what an income we should have from the hen! I cannot say what my friend got for his eggs, but had he lived near Montreal, he could have averaged between 20 and 25 cts a doz for his eggs; at this lower estimate his eggs would have fetched \$37.00 for the year. Prof. Gilbert says that 50 hens can be fed on 4 cents worth of grain during the summer season, and about double that for the winter months. This would make a total cost for feed \$5.25, leaving a net profit on the 12 hens \$32.25, a net profit on each hen of \$2.68, a very big average; and, as I said before, if all the hens in Canada did half as well, how many millions of