

Adding to the "Small" Farmer's Income.

We hear much in the present day about "intensive" farming, which simply means farming less land than has been the fashion, but giving to that which is farmed so much care in tillage, fertilizing, drainage, etc., as to cause it to yield twice, thrice, or even four times as much as under the old system. Particularly does this method recommend itself to the "small" farmer, who keeps Parson Dietrich and his wonderful fifteen acres before him as a model, and hopes to receive, some day, an emolument from his land in some degree as encouraging.

At the same time, the farmer of, say, forty or fifty acres, is, very much more than the extensive farmer, inclined to run into small side-lines as a source of increase to his income, and as a supplement to the actual output of his land. Among such side-lines, the keeping of bees, by those who have the "knack" of success with them, is usually one of the most profitable. Taking nothing whatever from the fertility of the soil, reaping their wealth even from the weeds of the commons, foraging over basswood trees, and clover lands and buckwheat fields, and actually contributing to the successful seeding of such crops by their assistance in pollinization, bees, when properly managed, prove the veritable goose with the golden eggs to the man of little land. His outlay in connection with them is trifling; his income may be proportionately tremendous. There are two conditions, however, which are absolutely necessary in order that one may have any kind of real success in beekeeping. The first is a suitable location; the second, a natural aptitude for working with the honey-gatherers. To these, a third might, perhaps, be added—the virtue of persistence, for no one can hope to succeed with bees who is not willing to give them the time and attention necessary.

As regards location, the district should be one rich in bee-forage, which includes chiefly white clover, alsike, red clover, lucerne, vetches and buckwheat—valuable in the order named—among field crops; and fruit blossoms, raspberry, gooseberry, currant, plum, cherry, apple, pear, etc. Flowers in gardens do not count to any appreciable extent, but dandelions, thistles and basswood are valuable where found in sufficient quantities.

To be a good beekeeper, a keeper must be quiet and gentle in his movements, for the bees are very quick to resent anything like fuss or roughness. One must also be keenly observant, and studious enough to learn what is necessary from the text-books and bee journals that have been found a necessity by nearly all successful apiarists.

The hives should be placed in a quiet spot, as far as possible from public highways, and in a place where they will be sheltered from high winds. It is well, however, to have them close enough to the house so that the movements of the bees may be readily observed in swarming time. The hives themselves may be easily made by anyone who is of a mechanical turn, especially if he have a hive of the kind he wishes to keep as a model. Mr. Broughton Carr, editor of the British Bee Journal, tells of a man who made all his hives at a trifling expense, out of materials supplied by egg boxes, lobster boxes and Quaker Oat boxes. Additional items, comb foundations, a honey extractor, smoker, super-cleaners, etc., do not amount up heavily in expense, while the honey glasses and jars now so necessary for the attractive "putting up" of the honey for the market need not be bought until the harvest has proved itself worthy of the extra outlay.

It is, however, with beekeeping, as with most other ventures, wise to begin on a small scale. There is money in it, if one has the ability to make it in such a way. Experience, on the other hand, is necessary for everyone, and it is better to obtain this experience, step by step, along sure and non-speculative lines, than to plunge into too great an expense in the first place, then possibly fail. A very small venture cannot crush, and may possibly develop into a lucrative industry. Only he can tell who tries.

A Successful Incubator Operator.

My incubator was set in a room 10 x 10 feet, where the sun shone in from ten o'clock until evening. It was set on the 8th of June and hatched out on the 28th and 29th. The temperature was kept from 80° to 110°. It was very irregular, as the afternoon sun made the room very warm, and although the lamp was very low, still the temperature was high. There was not any moisture, with the exception of what came off the eggs. The eggs were not over 36 hours old, and were all a fairly good size of Barred Plymouth Rocks. We use the Cyphers incubator, and have always had the best of results.

In November the pullets dressed five pounds on an average, and the cockerels averaged seven about the last of December. These were sold at 14c. per pound, and paid well for the raising.

Carleton Co., Ont.

MRS. JOS. YUILL.

POULTRY.

Are Leghorns Best for the Average Farmer?

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

I wish to say a few words in reply to Mr. Parker's article under above heading in your February 9th issue. In the first place he makes a slight mistake in referring to my statement, "It is too expensive to raise chickens," which should read, "Help is altogether too high priced for profit in raising dressed chickens for the market." Mr. Parker does not deny this, so I need hardly say that the farmers are few and far between who would care to risk making a profit from dressed chickens when they find it impossible to get men at \$2.00 per day and board to save their hoed crops and hay, or servant girls under \$15.00 per month and board. The fact is, there are hundreds of jobs never done on the farms, which, if help were available, would pay better than producing dressed chickens. Mr. Parker asks, "Does a farmer want a breed of chickens that will lay only in summer, when eggs are worth ten cents per dozen, scratch all over the farm, and fly over any fence, roost on his carriages, and do everything mean that a hen can do?" (Leghorns, I suppose.) "Or does he want one that will lay all winter, in any old shed, when eggs are worth from thirty to fifty cents, lay almost as well as the Leghorn in summer, and when they are through laying, dress from five to seven pounds?" (White Wyandottes, I presume, from his article.) I felt very sorry for my Leghorns when I read this far, and thought they were doomed, but after reading further was pleased to note that on one spot of this broad earth they were the best, according to Mr. Parker, viz., New York State. Did you ever hear of a place called Australia, Mr. Parker, where the Government has been conducting an egg-laying contest THE YEAR THROUGH, and where the year before last the list, including pens of almost all varieties, was headed by a pen of R. C. White Leghorns, and last year by a pen of R. C. Brown Leghorns? Please add that country to your New York State list. With reference to ten-cent summer eggs and fifty-cent winter eggs, let me say that I have hunted up a copy of the Toronto News, dated July 16th, 1904—surely a summer month—and find quotations as follows: "Eggs—Supplies are insufficient to meet the demand, and the market is strong. Prices are unchanged; new laid, case lots, 16c." Then I pick up the same paper, February 11th, 1905—surely a winter month—and find: "Eggs—The market continues easy, with liberal offerings and a fair demand. Prices show no change. Fresh, 20c. to 21c." You will say these are salted and palmed off as fresh, but please pick up the same paper, February 3rd, 1905, and you will note the Wm. Davies Co. were offering 5,000 dozen, retail, at 21c., and GUARANTEEING EVERY EGG. I would now like to say a few words "on the main point," viz., cost of producing eggs in winter and summer. The following advocates of winter-egg production in a late agricultural paper have given the difference between the two seasons as follows: Percy C. Gosnell, Ridgeway, Ont., "The difference in cost of producing eggs in winter is about five cents"; J. D. Walker, Stratford, Ont., "We find the average cost to be about 50% greater in winter"; J. W. Clark, Cainsville, Ont., "About one-third more in winter than in summer." This, remember, with the same variety in summer as in winter. Who has found the difference in cost from a pen of W. Wyandottes in winter and a pen of Leghorns with free farm range in summer? The average farmer, as I know him, provides an implement building for his carriages, etc., not accessible to his hens. If he doesn't, I wouldn't care to endorse his note. I would like to have it explained why a Rosecomb White Leghorn requires a more expensively built house than a W. Wyandotte? The latter is a little larger, and has red ear-lobes instead of the white ones on the former, but I never knew before that Jack Frost noticed these things while at work. Please name also one egg farm in Massachusetts that can honestly be compared with the 5,000 head of laying stock kept on the New York egg farms.

Now, my article made no claim for Leghorns other than as egg producers. If the average farmer kept cattle altogether for butter, he would be quite correct in keeping Jerseys, if they are the best breed for that purpose, as Mr. Parker says they are. In conclusion, Mr. Parker says: "A W. Wyandotte hatched in April or May will start laying in October or November, and will have laid from one to two dollars' worth of eggs before the Leghorn has started," and "In our climate will lay more eggs in a year." For every poultry manager on an experimental farm, in any climate, that he can find to endorse these statements, I will place \$5.00 in the hands of the Treasurer of the Canadian White Wyandotte Club, provided that both varieties were kept under similar conditions. I will have nothing further to say on this matter, as I am quite content with the profits from my Leghorns as received at our village store here, and am not writing to attract customers, as my first article was personally solicited.

Simcoe Co., Ont.

W. J. BELL.

Raising Small Chicks.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

Sir,—It is just possible that some of the readers of your valuable paper may profit by my experience in raising chickens last summer. I was too busy at ordinary farm work to give the chickens the usual attention they had been in the habit of getting on our farm. They were usually raised in coops on a grassy plot of ground near the house. My wife had raised some serious objections to rearing them there any more, as they persisted in the fall of the year in keeping in close proximity to the house, by roosting in the bushes and trees near by. We were led to try some other method. I usually have two or three hens sitting so as to hatch about the same time; then I put the two or three broods together with one hen. Last spring I put the mother hen and chicks in a box stall in a basement barn or stable, which had been vacated by the young stock out at pasture. I simply gave them dry, finely-ground meal, consisting of peas, oats and barley, on the concrete floor of the stall. In a shallow pan, after milking each morning, I poured a little whole milk. A little dry sand for grit was also thrown on the floor. I fed them milk once only per day, and the meal occasionally twice per day, when I thought they hadn't enough to last them all day from the morning feed. I kept them in six weeks to two months, or until they had quite a start in tail-feathers. Formerly I had been in the habit of feeding the first week or two hard-boiled eggs, bread and moistened meals three or four times daily, and had quite a few losses. Last summer my losses were very slight, especially when I had the chickens of one age. When I put in younger chickens, say a week or so younger, with older ones, I had some losses. When the chicks were a month old, I gave them some water as well as milk.

The conclusions I have drawn from my experience last summer is that chickens want a dry, comfortable place, free from vermin, and plenty of good dry meal, with milk, water and grit, where they can get it at will, and they will do well for a month or two with very little attention, and few losses.

T. G. RAYNOR.

Over \$55 Profit from 40 Hens.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

In reply to your questions asked in your issue of January 12th, regarding breeds of chickens, etc., would say in answer:

I prefer Plymouth Rocks, both barred and buff. They are second to none as table fowl. While the Mediterranean breeds may lay well in winter, under hot-house conditions, the Rocks can be relied on to do so in much colder houses, and come out healthy and vigorous in the spring. This one item of less expensive houses is worthy of consideration. Rocks are also good mothers. Even if one has an incubator, it is handy to let the hens take care of the majority of the chicks.

In the year 1903 I kept 40 females, and they netted me \$34.00 over and above the feed bill. In 1904, with 40 females, the clear profit was \$55.22. In 1902 my sales amounted to \$101.40, with net profit of \$43.36. In 1901 receipts were \$103.50, my profit being \$52, but I cannot say how many I kept these two years.

I have always fed a variety of grains—wheat and buckwheat forming the principal part—with very little corn or oats. I give one or two messes of cooked vegetables, mixed with shorts, each week, with cabbage or mangolds for a change. They get green-cut bone or liver two or three times a week; also clover leaves, either dry or in the mash. They get a warm mash nearly every day, either night or morning, and nearly eat me up in trying to get at it.

I strive to keep them busy and contented the whole day long.

Norfolk Co., Ont.

J. F. RIDDLE.

An Experience with Plymouth Rocks.

Having had a short experience in profitable poultry-keeping, I thought it might be of benefit to some "Farmer's Advocate" readers. I bought nine Plymouth Rocks two years ago; now I have twenty-four yearling hens, as many as my henhouse will accommodate. The house is made of inch boards and scantling, twelve feet square, with a ground floor. The boards are put on double, with tar paper between.

The hens are fed in the morning, with about one quart of goose wheat, spread on the floor and covered with about a foot of straw. They exercise themselves in this until noon, when they are given one pound boiled meat, one quart barley, some turnips and potatoes fed hot. At night they get all the grain they will eat—generally a mixture. They have plenty of grit and bones, that I break up fine with a hammer, and lots of water. The pen is cleaned out twice a week at least, and fresh, dry litter put in place of the old. I believe the main thing in caring for hens is to keep them dry. I have had better success feeding the hot feed at noon than when fed in the morning.

Last year I sold 162 dozen eggs, that were sold to a private house in Toronto at an average price of 20c. per dozen. I raised 100 chickens that averaged 65c. per pair, making in all an income of \$64.90, besides what my own family used at home. I did not keep account of feeding, as all was raised on farm except the meat, which was principally livers from a neighboring slaughtering house that cost nothing.

York Co., Ont.

R. E. S.