

## RHODE ISLAND EXPERIMENT STATION AND AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

BY H. S. BABCOCK, PROVIDENCE, R.I.

AT Kingston, R I, twenty-seven miles by rail from Providence, are situated the Rhode Island Experiment Station and the Rhode Island Agricultural College. These two institutions, while under the same general management, are separate and distinct. At the former the work is purely experimental, and in its poultry department some valuable experiments, begun by Mr. Samuel Cushman and continued by Mr. Flag, are in progress. The principal ones are upon the crossing of various pure breeds of geese, to ascertain whether for practical purposes crosses are superior to the pure breeds or not, and which crosses are the best for the various uses to which the young geese may be put. In the course of a year or two the results obtained will be published in a bulletin from the station, and we predict it will be of great value to geese raisers.

The Agricultural College has also a poultry department, not yet fully built up, under the charge of Prof. A. A. Brigham. At the time of our visit there, April 12th, 1897, Professor Brigham had out about four hundred chickens of various sizes, from two and a half pounds down to those just hatched. There were in operation five or six incubators in the new incubator cellar, and the probabilities were that the number of chickens would be greatly increased. At the present time the stock consists of Rhode Island Reds, white Wyandottes, barred and white Plymouth Rocks, light Brahmas, buff, white and brown Leghorns, a few white Indian Games and Pekin ducks. Other breeds will be added as opportunity affords, until it will be possible to see at Kingston representatives of nearly every recognized breed of domestic fowls.

While more or less experimenting will probably be done, it is the purpose of the College to keep these fowls for practical use, to provide eggs and poultry for use at the dining hall, and possibly to furnish to others any surplus which may be obtained. But the fowls are to serve another and important use they are to be factors in the educational work of the College. The design is, if sufficient funds can be obtained for the

purpose, to carry into effect the ideas which this writer suggested some time ago in these columns, to give instruction to the students in poultry keeping. The plan, when fully matured, will probably consist of a course of lectures, with demonstrations, upon the embryology, physiology, hygiene, pathology, mating, judging and marketing of poultry, so that a graduate from this College can become a thoroughly informed poultry keeper if he desires. Instruction, it is expected, will be given not only by the resident professors but by various prominent experts. In a word, the plea for higher poultry education which we made some time ago bids fair to be realized in the State of Rhode Island. Since writing the above the College has commenced such a course of instruction. It is recognized by the management of the College that, here in the East, poultry keeping is an important industry, that it opens for young agriculturists an opportunity to obtain a better living than can be obtained from raising general crops, and that by its use lands now considered of small value will become profitable to their owners, that the State will be made richer through the utilization of waste lands and the increased value of the products. To accomplish such results will be a noble work and those who planned it deserve all the encouragement possible to be given.

The State of Rhode Island has been liberal to the College in the past. There is soon to be erected a new building, for which the State has appropriated \$45,000. But even greater liberality will be required to realize all the plans which are now but dimly projected. But money spent on such an institution is wisely employed. It is bread cast upon the waters which will return after many days. If, for example, the plans of Professor Brigham are carried into effect, and a complete poultry establishment is built up and the needed instruction is given, in a very few years, through the increased value of the tracts of land devoted to poultry keeping and the increased value of the poultry products, the State will receive back both principal and interest on the money needed to do this work.

It will pay anyone who has an opportunity to do so, to visit this institution, or rather these institutions. Who ever does so will be assured of the most courteous treatment from Dr. Washburn, the President, Professors Brigham and Flag, and indeed from everyone