

97

FOR THE WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 4, 1915

How Many on the Hundred Acre Farm Hens BY THE FARM & DAIRY POULTRY MAN

OW many hens should be kept on the average 100 acre farm? Of all the questions I am asked about poultry, this one crops up the most frequently. In discussing the subject I shail first state the conclusion to which I have come, and then tell why: The ideal farm flock for an average 100 acre farm with an average dairy farmer at the helm, is 100 laying hens. "A hen to the acre," is a slogan as wise as it is popular. The subject, however, is still open for discussion as many successful dairy farmers are running much over 100 hens on the side, and at a decided profit. The great majority, I believe, are running less. In the latter case the poultry is usually the exclusive charge of the farm women. The women are our great poultry keepers, and responsible for the greater part of our \$50,-000,000 total of poultry production in Canada. With their other multitudinous duties they do not care to handle too large a flock of poultry. Even in this case, however, I regard "a hen to the acre" as the economic unit, and almost as easily cared for as the smaller flock,-if the men will lend their assistance for some of the heavier work. Let me state my side of the case:

Objections to Small Flocks

My greatest objection to the flock of 20 or 30 hene is that it is too small. The returns seem insignificant. The poultry is apt to be regarded by the man of the house as more or less of a nuisance, and his cooperation in securing suitable housing or the right kind of feed is not easily secured. The income is so little that no special effort is made to market the produce in first class condition for a first class price. The small flocks of the country, I believe, are responsible for practically all the bad eggs that reach the market. Such flocks of poultry can hardly be called a "sideline." They just happen. If they did nothing more than supply the people of the country



The Source of "Pin" Money

with fresh eggs and a chicken occasionally, the small flocks of the past have justified their existence; but to-day farming is a business, and successful farming is successful business, and there is no room in a successful business for a branch so unimportant that it does not merit attention from the managers and is not worth pushing to the limit of profitable production. The revenue from 100 hens is sufficient to command respect, even from the prosperous dairy farmer, and to merit thought and care in the management of the poultry.

With 100 hens we have labor charges at a minimum. The whole flock may be accommodated in one house. It takes no more time to carry the feed to a flock of one hundred hens than to a hock of 20. No more trips are necessary togather the eggs. Even the labor of hatching and brooding, while it will be increased with the 100 hen flock, will not be increased anything like in proportion to the number raised. With the small flock natural incubation must be followed. and success more or less dependent on the whims of broody hens. With the larger flock we get an incubator and brooder, which do the work of many hens and, on the whole, require less attention, although the attention required must be intelligently given at the right time. Housing, too, may be more economically constructed per hen than for the smaller flock. These are some of the reasons, I believe, why the dairy farmers who value their poultry side lines most highly, have about 100 hens .

Prof. Reynold's Experience

At a dairyman's convention recently, Prof. J. B. Reynolds estimated the returns from poultry on a 100 acre farm. Prof. Reynolds spoke from experience. As well as being an instructor of English at the Ontario Agricultural College, he is a successful, practical farmer and is getting results from his little 63-acre farm a mile or so from the College campus. For the year 1913-14, Prof. Reynolds sold eggs to the value of \$166.40, and poultry for \$22.60, or a total of \$189; an increase sufficient to merit the attention of most dairymen. Prof. Reynolds has given me an estimate of his expenses as follows :

at, at cost, 4 acres at \$15 ap acre , 35 bus. at 40c (grown on farm) ... gels, 25 bus. at 8c

(Concluded on page 28)

893.17







An Ideal Farm Poultry House and an Improvised One With Commendable Features.