

Our Farmers' Column.

We will conclude this week the leading portions of Mr. Gilbert's report before the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization, on the subject of Poultry Raising. The last and most important statement of Mr. Gilbert concerned Brooding Houses with artificial incubation. On this subject he spoke as follows: "Permit me for a moment or two to call your attention to the subject of the artificial hatching and rearing of chickens by incubator, and brooder, or in brooding houses, and which is becoming so much in vogue, as some of the letters I read at first, go to show. To the specialist incubators and brooding houses are indispensable. The farmer may be slowly, but he is surely realizing the necessity of having his chickens out as early as possible, and at the same time. The chief complaint of the farmer is that he cannot get early pullets, so as to have early layers, because his hens do not sit early. No doubt the principal cause is due to his hens not laying in winter, but with an incubator and fertile eggs—which he certainly ought to have in March or April—he should be able to bring out all the chickens he will require in one or two batches. Incubators are now made to operate simply with no trouble and almost with certainty. The following letters will prove my statement. Mr. Kinnear of Sussex, N. B., who I quoted before, says in a letter: "Would you be kind enough to tell me at what age chicks are subject to the disease called gapes and the remedy therefor. I have hatched out of a Cypres incubator (220 egg machine) 162 chickens, now two weeks old, and I want to know what to guard against in the way of disease." I have been told by Mr. Evans, of Kingsley, Que., that he hatched 55 of 120 eggs by incubator. His first time, which is very good. Mr. Allan, of Carleton Place hatched out 50 or 60 chicks out of the same number of eggs. It was also his first attempt, and that also was very satisfactory. It must be understood that incubators are now much improved and are much better than ever they were before. They have been for some time beyond the experimental stage. There are concerns in the United States in which there are tens of thousands of dollars invested, and these joint stock companies depend upon incubators for their dividends, in some cases they have 20, 25, 30 and even 40 200 to 400-egg incubators at work. They trust entirely to these machines and to their brooder house to hatch and rear their chickens, and so make their money. "You can readily imagine that they have not gone into these enterprises for fun, but with the prosaic aim to make money, unless they make money they will drop the business. A large enterprise was started lately in Toronto, viz: The Toronto Poultry and Market Garden Produce Company. I had the pleasure of visiting the farm in the latter end of April. They had started operations in poultry raising only during February, and when I was there they hatched altogether by incubators, 900 chickens and expected four or five hundred more very soon. They had incubators hatching out every day. In such a case, or where a number of incubators are hatching out daily it does not matter whether one incubator gives forty or fifty per cent. They get a large number, in the aggregate, of chickens every day. The man experimenting with one incubator, if he does not meet with success, hears a good deal about it. But if he has thirty or forty at work, it does not matter if two or three do not produce good results. But it makes it all the more important to a man, who has but one machine, that he should have a reliable one. And that is the object with which we are conducting our experimental work now, to find out the most reliable."

"Q. Where does this Toronto firm get their eggs?" "A. They have their own hens on their premises. They intend to put up this year 360 foot poultry houses."

By Mr. Featherston: "Q. Is that firm just east of the Don?" "A. Yes, sir."

"Q. That is the firm that does the duck fattening?" "A. No, that is another. That is Thompson's duck fattening establishment. The establishment I mean is the Toronto Poultry and Garden Produce Company. It is a new firm with a large poultry plant. There are two or three other plants now going up. Success is just a matter of skill and management. The Toronto poultry establishment is in charge of an expert, Mr. J. M. Wilson, and he undoubtedly will make a success of it."

"Q. I have seen the ducks fattened by Mr. Thompson and it is surprising to see them. Their feathers lie so smoothly. They looked fat and heavy and inviting when I saw them?" "A. They are all hatched by incubators."

"Q. Do they castrate their drakes?" "A. I cannot say. That is something like caponizing chickens. Capons are rather too expensive and I do not think with our heavy breeds that they are necessary. I am told that Thompson's ducks cannot be supplied in sufficient quantity to supply the local demand."

"Q. Parkes Bros. sold them for one dollar a pair?" "A. In Boston they sell for thirty-five cents a pound in season. In a conversation I had with Mr. Hunter, he showed the possibility of making money in poultry by producing broilers, if one is expert in making the product. He said: "You are content with a dollar and a half to two dollars profit per annum per hen. I want four and five dollars per hen profit, and so you know how to calculate to get it? A ou-

get a dozen eggs in January and sell them for thirty or thirty-five cents a dozen. I hatch out the dozen eggs in my incubator, and sell I only get six chickens, which I sell at \$1.50 a pair, less the cost of rearing the chickens; you get thirty cents."

"Q. But that is in big cities?" "A. That is in big cities, but just now Canadian poultry is in just as great demand as the ducks we have been taking about. Despite the unlovely duty, I have been told that both eggs and ducks have been sold to the Boston and New York markets and with profit to the producer. We aim to produce the superior quality for the high price market. I do not care where."

By the Chairman: "Q. Have you visited any of the successful American institutions of that kind recently?" "A. No, but I have met some of the successful operators and they have just told me what I have been telling you; that their incubators are certainly far beyond the experimental stage, and their results satisfactory."

"You heard Mr. Robertson tell you recently that some man in England was making \$5,000 a year by fattening chickens. The man in the United States are making equally good sums by putting on the market early broilers worth a dollar and a half a pair. I went to Montreal some time ago, to inquire into the requirements of the trade and the dealers told me they had no poultry of the quality their customers wanted, and they would willingly pay a dollar to a dollar and a half a pair for broilers. The manager of Brown Bros., told me that, and for a good quality of poultry later, ten cents a pound."

By Mr. McNeill: "Q. What would that mean, what month?" "A. Chickens hatched in January and properly cared for and reared so as to reach the market two months and a half would fetch a dollar and a half per pair. Early broilers one dollar and a half, later on a dollar per pair and the price keeps decreasing until the hatched chickens come into the market."

By Mr. Featherston: "Q. Is that Brown Bros. of St. Catherine street, Montreal?" "A. Yes, there is also Mr. Harry Gatehouse and Mr. Lamb of Lamb's market. The latter said he would give me nine and a half cents a pound for two or three tons of poultry, if I could get it at that time for him, early summer. The point I wish to bring out is that by artificial incubation you can get the early chicken which brings a high price. I do not mean to say that the farmers should take to artificial incubation at once although like Mr. McNeill whose letter I read, some are doing. I would have them raise by ordinary methods a superior quality of poultry. When I go among the farmers, I find that a great difficulty with them is to get early pullets, so as to have early layers when the old stock are moulting and eggs are worth twenty-five cents a dozen. I wish I had a letter here from Mr. Collingwood, the managing editor of The Rural New Yorker, to read to you. It would show the interest taken in having early layers. Mr. Collingwood wanted to know how we managed our department. Farmers must realize that in order to have satisfactory returns they must adopt business like methods. They must have their hens lay in winter and have early and a superior class of chickens for market. A market gardener offers no excuse for not putting his product on the market at an early date. His aim is to get his green stuff on the market early by means of hot beds. The farmer may use his incubator with the same object in view. The American poultry firms place their products on the early market and receive the highest compensation."

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HOUSEHOLD NOTES. According to the New York Herald Conservative old New Haven is soon to have a twentieth century convenience that will make one of the dreams of Edward Bellamy a practical realization. In his famous book entitled "Looking Backward," Bellamy describes great co-operative kitchens from which whole cities are to be fed. New Haven will shortly have a big kitchen from which her residents may order their meals and have them sent piping hot to their homes already to be served. This, in brief, is the latest idea of Yankee invention, designed to solve the servant girl problem.

This scheme is not a mere dream. It is an idea of a New Haven business man who has made a success. It is backed by over twenty other New Haven business men, every one of whom is a practical and successful business man in his line of business. These men have put their money into this idea, because they believe that they have in this scheme a big fortune.

Many schemes have been tried in different parts of the world to supply food for families through co-operative kitchens. These schemes have never been very successful, because it has been impossible to keep food hot during transportation from one place to another. The scheme of many families eating together in one building has also proved objectionable. New Haven has apparently solved this problem by the invention of heat retaining devices by which a plate of soup or a roast of beef may be kept piping hot for as long as seven hours. The protectors say they can deliver cooked and ready to serve, many dishes at a price equal

to that which the housekeeper pays for the raw product. In speaking of his scheme Mr. S. H. Street said: "This is not a mere dream. I have been studying this subject for years. I have discussed it with the best business men of the country. I have placed my ideas before them, and they have told me that the scheme is practicable. "People do not realize that it is possible to cook the cheapest portions of meat in a scientific manner and get as delicious dishes as are served in the finest restaurants of the country. It has been demonstrated that you can roast beef that costs four cents a pound—that is, sections of the beef that are not usually used for roasting—and get a more nourishing dish than you can from the choicest cuts. This, however, can only be accomplished by cooking the meat slowly and cooking it in a scientific manner. "Cereals are very difficult to cook properly. So are baked beans and some kinds of vegetables. We will devote ourselves at first to cooking things that require long and careful cooking. We do not propose to muddle with steaks and chops, which are easily cooked. Later on we may take up all sorts of cooking. "When I put this scheme before the gentlemen who have formed the company I cooked a supper at three o'clock, packed it in my heat retaining device, took it to a restaurant, put all the packages in his refrigerator until six o'clock. He thought I was crazy. At six o'clock we opened all the packages and found them steaming hot. I did this in order to prove that this device will work as well in cold weather as in warm weather. "We have not yet arranged the full schedule of prices, but in many instances we will deliver to private families food cooked and hot and ready to serve for the same price that the raw food would cost a private individual. For example, we will serve enough oatmeal for a family of seven or eight persons for ten cents. We will be able to put within the reach of the poor man many good things which are now only possible for a rich man to obtain. The secret of Mr. Street's scheme lies in his patent device for retaining heat. This apparatus is apparent-

ly nothing more than a big bucket, metal covered and lined, with sides and bottom about two inches thick. There is a close fitting top or lid of similar thickness. What the sides of the wall of this package are lined with Mr. Street does not say. Into this heat retaining package are put porcelain cans, which fit tightly and have close fitting covers. Mr. Street proposes to have various sized packages, in which breakfast, luncheon and dinner can be arranged. In the bottom of the bucket is placed the desert, then the meat and vegetables, and then the soup. This is for a dinner bucket. These buckets are to be delivered in big waggons, in which there will be an arrangement along the side for holding them in place. The scheme is to have a large number of waggons which will make trips through the various sections of the city, to deliver food and take orders for the following day. There will be small waggons for quick delivery of late orders.

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