

POULTRY.

Profits From a Pen of Barred Rocks.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

Some claim that there is no class of live stock kept on the farm that gives such good returns for money invested, feed and labor, as do hens; others are positive that there is no money in keeping them, especially when grain is high in price, and, according to rumor, many poultrymen are reducing their flocks this fall, while others are going entirely out of the business. If one man can make a profit in keeping poultry, why cannot another? The breed, age of fowl, kinds of feed, housing and methods of caring for them must play an important part. Chickens have been raised and kept at a profit when confined in small quarters and all the feed purchased on the retail market. If a profit can be made under these conditions, it would appear that poultry raising should be a profitable business on the farm, where free range is available and feed is secured at first cost. Then, too, fowl on open range secure an ample supply of green feed and meat feed during the summer. In the winter mangels, turnips, and clover leaves can be secured quite cheaply to supply the green feed. Milk is highly recommended as a poultry feed, and on most farms it is available for the poultry. After the grain is harvested hens and chickens will pick a large portion of their feed in the field, thus making use of grain that would otherwise be wasted. However, with apparently ideal conditions for making a maximum profit, the complaint is made that there is no money in poultry. The past year or two eggs have commanded a high price during the summer months, but, of course, winter eggs bring the highest price. True, it costs more to produce eggs in cold weather than during the summer, but it is the hens that lay when eggs are high in price that make the greatest profit.

In a pen six and one-half feet square, five feet high at the back and seven feet at the front, built of single ply matched lumber, I aim at keeping twelve birds. According to poultry authorities the pen is not large enough for the number of birds kept. However, during the past year the hens laid fairly well and appeared healthy at all times. There is no glass in the building, but on the west and south sides are openings covered with cotton. On warm days this is raised but is kept closed during the winter. The birds get plenty of ventilation through the cotton and as yet not one has had a frozen comb, although the thermometer dropped to twenty below zero a time or two. A layer of straw is kept on the floor of the pen and there is a small yard for them to run in. Barred Rock hens are kept and have proven fairly satisfactory on the limited range. They have paid their way but have come a long way short of the two-hundred-egg mark. Records of egg production and feed have been kept since October 1, 1915. At that time the flock consisted of three yearling hens, and nine May-hatched pullets. The first month only 27 eggs were laid; in November only 5, but the number increased to three dozen in December; nine dozen were laid in January and 15 dozen in February. During these months eggs were fairly high in price, which aided in increasing the profit. High-water mark was reached in June when 19 1/4 dozen eggs were laid. A part of this time two hens were brooding chicks, so in reality only ten were working at egg production. During July and August the egg yield kept up pretty well, but dropped to 3 1/2 dozen in September. The total for the twelve months was 133 dozen, or 133 eggs per hen. At the average price of 27 cents per dozen the returns for eggs alone were \$35.91. Fifteen chicks were hatched and raised and are worth at least 60 cents each for the table, but, as the pullets look as if they would soon commence laying, they are really worth a dollar apiece. However, at the former figure the gross returns for the year are \$44.91, or \$3.74 per hen. The feed bill for the twelve hens and fifteen chicks came to \$19.73, or \$1.64 per hen, leaving a net profit of \$2.10, which is a good rate of interest on the one dollar invested in each bird. The birds were well supplied with a variety of feeds, although at times they no doubt would have done better had more green feed and milk been available. The winter grain ration consisted of wheat and corn, half and half, fed in the litter of straw. The rule was to give each bird a small handful a day. Occasionally a mash of shorts and bran was fed and a couple of times a week rolled oats were fed in a hopper. During the year about 20 pounds of beef scrap were fed, and oyster

shell and grit were always kept in the pen. Occasionally a mangel or cabbage was fed during the winter, but the hens did not get as much green feed as they should have, owing to the difficulty in securing it. For the summer, corn was dropped from the ration and whole oats substituted. A few rolled oats were also fed and occasionally a mash of shorts and cornmeal. Since the first of July the birds have been on free range and were able to procure all the green feed they desired. Scraps from the table were fed, which possibly tended somewhat to keep down the cost of feed. It is doubtful if this average profit per hen could be made with a large flock. The larger the flock the greater the percentage of poor layers; even with a flock of twelve some of the birds laid almost double the number of eggs that others did. It is a difficult problem to pick all high-producers, and a large flock seldom receives the same attention that is given to a small one. This flock is considerably below the records claimed for flocks of bred-to-lay Rocks. However, they laid a goodly number of eggs and it is possible that they would have done better had they received more green feed and meat during the winter. On the basis of profit which I received it would pay well to keep one hundred hens. But, everyone who keeps fowl cannot be getting as high profits, else instead of disposing of their flocks, poultrymen would be increasing them. Feed is higher in price than usual, but, so are eggs.

Middlesex County, Ont.

AMATEUR.

FARM BULLETIN.

The Dentist.

BY A. E. ROBERTS.

Farmers are not much given to "dressing up." The nature of their calling makes it imperative that they wear overalls and jumper jackets, and once the habit of clothes carelessness is fastened on to a man it, like any other habit, is hard to change. Because of this we frequently see farmers going to town even in overalls and jumper jacket. Not long ago a farmer not a hundred miles from here had toothache. For convenience we will say his name is John Raft. This aching tooth bothered him for two or three days. His chewing tobacco failed to stop it. He tried alum and saltpetre and cream of tartar and spirits of camphor, but all to no avail. Finally he hooked up the geldings and went to town. He didn't feel like toggling up so he went in overalls, shoe packs and a battered felt hat. He put the team in the barn and then went over and fortified his system with a finger or two of gin. From there he walked up and down past the dentist's office two or three times, then swung up the steps two at a time and bolted in through the door. He found himself alone in a small outer office. There was a chair or two and a table with some daily papers. A hat rack on the wall contained somebody's hat. He looked around, then tiptoed towards the outside door. Just then the inner door opened and an anaemic looking individual in a clean white jacket looked out. "Got a tooth here I want—" "Just a minute," said he with the white jacket and disappeared back inside.

Considerable time passed and John was just about to break out when the door opened and a fellow from out his way came out. Greetings over and crop prospects discussed our friend passed inside. The dentist waved him solemnly to his big chair. "Got a tooth I want pulled," said John, "it's aching to beat all." The dentist picked up a little mirror that looked like a spoon and went on inside. When he had both hands and his head well in John's mouth he asked, "Which tooth is it?" John crowded a heavy finger in and groped for the culprit. "Thisshun up here," he choked. The dentist looked at it, then pried into it with a red hot Johnson bar, dug out the cotton batting and stuff. Next he hit it two or three cracks with a sledge hammer on the outside. This over he picked up the teaspoon looking-glass and went all over John's teeth upstairs and down. "You've got considerable dental work in there," he said. "Who did it?" "Oh, two or three fellows," said John. "Most of them real dentists."

The dentist went back inside again for a while. "Some awful work in there," he said. "A man that would do that kind of work is a disgrace to his profession." "I know it," John said. "Every dentist always knocks the other fellow's work. Now if

you will tell me I have a wonderful mouth formation, different from anything you ever saw before, we will be through with most of the preliminaries, and you can go ahead and pull the tooth." "Pull it," the dentist said astonished. "Why, no, I won't pull it. I'll treat it for you, kill the nerve and fill it. The tooth is perfectly good." "All right," said John, "go ahead."

While the dentist was mixing his dope and arranging things, our friend read the various inscriptions on the walls. The first thing was a dental college certificate, and it was dated 1914. "A two-year-old," commented John, and read on. The name it seemed was Percival Algernon something. That was as far as he could go anyway. "Lord," he said, "to think of a man carrying around a name like that." Over in front of him a typewritten placard announced that a deposit must be paid on all work. He figured that would be all right in the case of these fly-by-nighters who worked for wages, bank clerks and so on, but, of course, it didn't mean him. Why he had enough money tied up in implements alone to buy this fellow out several times over, besides he had a couple square miles of ground and eight or nine hundred acres of wheat. It was different with him, he had to pay his debts, his home wasn't under his hat. He looked at the rest of the pictures and then the dentist plugged his tooth. "Come in day after to-morrow," he said. "All right," said John. "How much money will you want for the job?" "Three dollars," he said, "ah—ah—" "All right," John said and went out.

On the appointed day he was back. He was head over ears in work but he wanted to have this tooth business over with. The dentist removed the cotton, explored around a bit then put in some more dope and covered it up with sealing wax. "Come in Monday," he said. John expostulated. "You said you'd fix it to-day, I can't be running in here every few days, my time's too valuable just now." The dentist failed to be impressed but looked steadily at the typewritten notice. On Monday John came back again. The dentist removed the cotton and wax, blew out the hole with hot air then plugged it up again. "Come in Wednesday at two o'clock," he said. John began to see red. "Look here," he said. "You fill it now or leave it alone." "I can't," the dentist informed him, "it's not in shape to be filled, needs to be treated again. Come in Wednesday." "All right," said John, "you'll fill it then, eh?" "Ye-e-e-s," said the dentist. "If— if what?" "We require a deposit on all work before it is completed—" "Great Lord," John nearly exploded. He dived into his pockets and came up with 50 cents. He grabbed his hat and went out. In a few minutes he was in the bank. "Got any hundred dollar bills?" he demanded. They didn't, they had nothing bigger than a twenty. He got one of them and went out. He spread the money on the dentist's desk. "There," he said. "Now see if you can fill that tooth." The sealing wax and wadding came out and a silver mixture was jammed in. On the way home John, speaking perhaps to the geldings, said, "Now what in blazes do you think of that?"

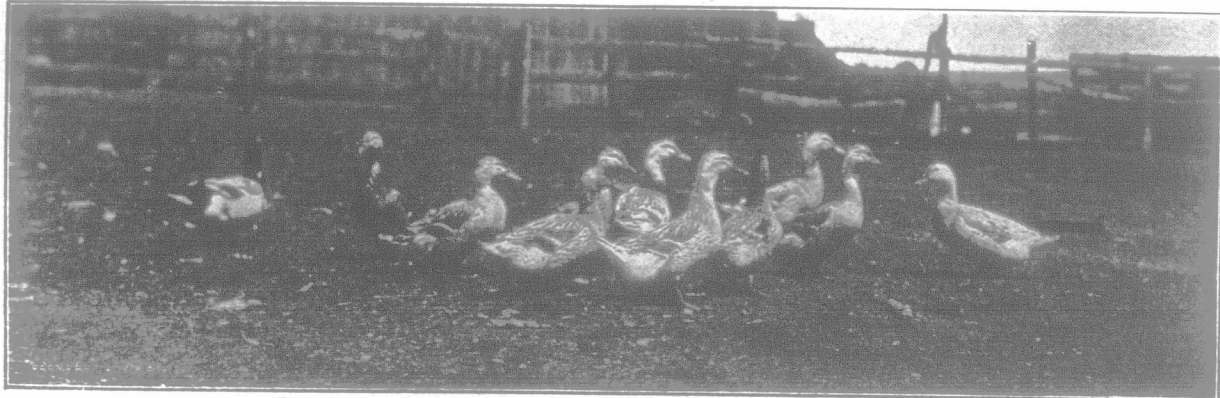
Graft.

BY PETER MCARTHUR.

If a man wants to attract public attention either in the press or on the platform the most effective subject he can deal with is "graft." Everybody is ready to listen to or read about "graft" charges. There are supposed to be grafters in every department of every government, and in all lines of business. The plain people feel that they are being grafted upon by innumerable parasites and they talk about it wrathfully whenever a few of them have met together. Because of this widespread interest in the subject I am glad that I have a new phase of "graft" to discuss this week. You may not like it but I want you to read about it for it gets pretty close to home for a good many of us. While having a heart to heart talk with a Member of Parliament some weeks ago he made a few charges of a kind that he would never dare to make in public. As I am convinced that a majority of our members of parliament are in the same position as he is, I am going to take the responsibility of making the charges for them. It is just possible that we have been less than fair to our representatives in the past. Too many of us are inclined to treat them as the people in Barrie's story "The Little Minister" treated Wearywarlds. They elected the poor man to the position of Constable, and then no one would be seen speaking to him on the street. After we elect our members with much enthusiasm we begin to howl about graft, and in some cases we "use them for our mirth, yea for our laughter when we are waspish." But now that I have heard an M. P.'s side of the story my sympathies have been aroused, and I want to say something in their defense.

The member of parliament who honored me with his confidence complained bitterly that it is impossible for him to make ends meet with the salary he gets. Of course that sounded amazing, for two thousand five hundred dollars a year with free transportation on the railroads should enable an ordinary Canadian citizen to worry along comfortably. I naturally asked him to explain, and this was his answer. "I can't make ends meet because my constituents graft on me so unmercifully."

Listen to that, will you? Now, what have you



Approaching the Last "Quack."