

FARMERS' COLUMN

There remains another subject of very deep and practical interest in connection with the question of poultry raising. In the continuation of this report before the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization Mr. Gilbert deals with it as follows:

During the months of October and November of last year an interesting experiment was conducted in the poultry department of the Experimental Farm in the fattening of 36 chickens composed of the following breeds, viz:

Eight barn-yard chickens which were purchased from a neighboring farmer, at forty cents per pair. Their average weight was three pounds each, and they were perhaps a little better than the ordinary scrub so often found on the market.

Four cockerels of the light Brahma Buff Cochins, first cross bought from a farmer at fifty cents. They were fine large birds weighing respectively six pounds, thirteen ounces, six pounds nine and a-half ounces, five pounds ten ounces and six pounds, three ounces. They were probably hatched about the same time as the first named group but were nearly double their weight, going to show that the nearer the large thoroughbred flesh forming types the crosses are, the better the birds.

The remaining fowls consisted of Barred and White Plymouth Rocks, light Brahmas, Silver Laced and White Wyandottes and four White Indian Game White Java crosses. The birds were from our poultry department and were fine specimens some of the Plymouth Rocks and light Brahmas weighing six and six and a-half pounds each.

The chickens were divided into nine groups of four each and placed in suitable fattening pens with narrow trough in front in an upper compartment of the main poultry building. They were fed morning, noon and afternoon with regularity on rations composed of

Two parts finely ground oat meal.
One part finely ground barley meal.

One part ordinary ground corn meal.

After the fifteenth day beef suet, in proportion of one ounce to the group, was added to the ration.

The whole was mixed with sweet milk made hot. Of these rations the birds were fed all they could eat. No forcing machine was used.

Full particulars of the experiment are given in my report recently placed in your hands and which I trust will be found equally interesting and instructive. I need not repeat all the details but the following will show the weights of certain chickens before and after fattening.

Group two was composed of four barn-yard chickens, which went into the fattening pen on 31st of October weighing 14 pounds 5 ounces and at the end of five weeks weighed 20 pounds 8½ ounces, showing a gain in that period of 6 pounds 3¼ ounces.

Group No. 8 was composed of four Barred Plymouth Rock chickens weighing 23 pounds 12 ounces, when they went into the pen. At the end of five weeks they weighed 30 pounds 4 ounces, making a gain in that period of 6 pounds 8 ounces.

The barn-yard chickens were apparently of the same age as the Plymouth Rocks (May chickens). The barn-yard chickens consumed during the five weeks food to the amount of 36 pounds and ¾ of an ounce, and the Plymouth Rocks consumed during the same period 37 pounds 1½ ounces, showing that the Plymouth Rocks consumed one pound and three quarters of an ounce more food.

Valuing all the grain food at one cent per pound the average cost of one pound of flesh increase in both cases was seven cents. The above shows that the Barred Plymouth Rocks both before and after the fattening were much the heavier fowl.

Four White Plymouth Rocks weighed at the end of five weeks thirty pounds and a half an ounce.

Most satisfactory results were obtained from the four chickens of the Light Brahma, Buff Cochins cross. They weighed on going into the fattening pen 25 pounds 3½ ounces, and after five weeks they weighed 33 pounds 6¼ ounces, being a total gain of eight pounds three ounces, and the consumption of food during that period was 39 pounds 7¼ ounces. I estimate the cost of production per pound in that case at about six cents.

In connection with the foregoing there are certain points which make themselves evident, and which are important enough to warrant my bringing them to your notice and to let it go out to the country.

1. In poultry fattening it is very much a question of breed.

2. If the rapid flesh forming breeds such as the Plymouth Rock, Wyandottes, Brahmas, and Cochins

are kept by the farmers of the country and are properly cared for and properly fed for three or four weeks previous to being killed.

3. No "forcing" or "cranking" process by machine will be necessary to produce the superior quality and quantity of flesh desired for export to English markets or for home consumption.

4. That the ordinary barn-yard chicken does not make as satisfactory a market fowl as the Barred Plymouth Rock on other thoroughbreds. For instance we find a barn-yard fowl No. 8 in our experiment weighing four pounds six ounces, while Nos. 25 and 26 Barred Plymouth Rocks of same age and with the same treatment weighed nine pounds respectively. The Barred Plymouth Rocks showing more than double the weight of the scrub. A very important difference.

By Mr. McMillan:

Q. Were the birds put away from the other chickens?

A. Each bird was in a small pen by itself, isolated entirely.

5. The aim should be to choose such foods and adopt such treatment that flesh will be made rather than fat. Experience has shown that birds penned up in limited quarters and fed all they can eat without opportunity to exercise are inclined to put on fat rather than flesh.

It is quite possible that in case of scrubs or ordinary barn-yard nondescripts, to be found in such numbers on the markets, that the "forcing machine" or "cranker" may be used to good effect, but our advice to the farmer is to abandon the scrubs, which experience has shown to be neither good egg producers nor heavy weight market fowls, and to take those thoroughbreds which are good winter layers and rapid flesh formers. Our farmers want fowls that are good winter layers and heavy flesh makers and they can have them in the Barred Plymouth Rock, Wyandotte and Light Brahma. It is genuine matter for congratulation that our instruction and advice are being widely acted upon, as the letters I have read go to prove. It has been my aim, since coming to my present position, by both pen and voice to bring the fact prominently before the farmers of the country that it costs no more to produce the good winter egg laying, thoroughbred hens or rapid flesh making thoroughbred cockerels than it does to rear the nondescript, which is in most cases a poor layer and equally unsatisfactory as a market chicken.

6. Our experimental work proves our contention to be correct. The fact stands prominently before the farmers of the country that if we are to capture the British market with a superior quality of poultry, and we can undoubtedly do so, it must be done with thoroughbreds and not scrubs.

While on this subject of flesh versus fat I beg to read part of my evidence before your committee in 1896, on the subject of proper feeding of poultry by the farmer, which will show you that the feeding of poultry so as to obtain flesh rather than fat is one that I have been studying and agitating for many years past. The extract reads:—"It may not matter so much to the man who is selling what he has his weight in, but it is a matter of some moment to the producer whether he gets his weight in flesh or fat. Fat would be so much waste. It is important to ascertain if possible, which are flesh rather than fat producing rations."

In connection with this subject I may say that I had a long conversation with a gentleman Prof. Robertson sent to me, Mr. Crane, an English expert, in the rearing, killing and dressing of poultry for the London market. He said that the fowls fattened by cranking machines were not so much sought for in London as formerly, that the birds now most asked for are hand-fed Surrey fowls of large proportions and carrying as much flesh as possible. The following extract from an article on "Specially Fatted Poultry" by Mr. A. F. Hunter, a practical poultry breeder on a large scale and the editor of "Farm Poultry," of Boston, one of the leading journals in America, will be interesting at this point. I may say that Mr. Hunter spent many months in England, France and Belgium the year before last studying the fattening of poultry in the different countries named. Mr. Hunter says:

"For our American markets we are of the opinion that the half-fattened bird is the best, for this reason the bird that has been finished off by the cranking process is very rich, the flesh being quite equal to that of the capon; indeed, it is too rich for most palates, and would only be used where a small slice of fatted fowl (or capon) was served

as one course of an eight-course dinner. If the ordinary fowl is put down to roast fatted to wit, the fowl being the principal dish, as is the joint of beef or mutton, it would be too rich; hence we say with due deliberation, that the half-fatted process, to put our birds in first-class market condition, is better for the million than the hand-cramped, delicate and finely flavored chicken. There are many arguments in support of this position which we shall have occasion to touch upon at a future time."

My experience in raising a superior quality of poultry flesh has been a large one for years past, and I have never had any trouble in obtaining a weight development of one pound and over, per month, on Plymouth Rocks, Wyandottes and Light Brahmas. But there are some important points in connection with the proper fattening of thoroughbreds, or any kind of poultry that our farmers will find indispensable to success. Summarized the most important are:

First. The proper breeds.

Second. Breeding from none but large robust birds.

Third. The proper caring for and feeding of the chickens from time of hatching. It is well to bear in mind that chickens ill fed, or neglected in the first five weeks of its existence will not make an early layer or satisfactory market fowl.

Fourth. The penning up of the birds at three or four months of age for three or four weeks, or less seems to give the best results.

To prove my contention that fowls of the larger breeds, properly treated, require little fattening I may say that at the end of October last I purchased from a farmer in Huntly Township near this city four Barred Plymouth Rock cockerels which weighed 7-14, 7-14, 7-07, 6-05½. Most satisfactory weights, you will admit, from birds brought up by a farmer.

People look round at a nice head of hair on the street, so rare has that beautiful ornament become at the present day. Why is this? It certainly is not LUBY'S Parisian Hair Renewer, which is an almost infallible remedy against premature grey hair. Only 50 cents a bottle.

ECHOES OF THE WAR.

Continued from Page Nine.

on the east, and Pietersburg in the north form their junction, is immediately outside the city on the south side. The railway to Pietersburg, after winding some distance to the westward, passes out of the plain on which Pretoria is situated, through the Daspoort or defile in the range of hills behind the city, through which also the Apies River runs, the railway and river running together across the plain through the Windermere Port, under the guns of a large fort 7,100 yards, and a little to the eastward of north, from the centre of Pretoria.

The westernmost fort is on the range of hills behind Pretoria, and lies at a distance of 10,800 yards northwest of the centre of the city. The powerful redoubt to the southwest of Pretoria, 3,800 yards from the centre of the city, on the range of hills through which the transport road to Johannesburg passes, completes the circle of the larger works defending the Boer capital. Behind this redoubt are the principal magazines, one excavated out of the solid rock with bomb-proof roof, and the other built in the kloof, also bomb-proof. Communication between the redoubt and the last mentioned magazine is by means of a covered way. Roads connect all these forts with the capital, and they have pipes laid for water, as well as electric cables for searchlights.

The number of guns mounted on the forts and redoubts is said to be 120 of large calibre and quick-firing of different kinds. It is stated that some of the guns are of 23 centimetres calibre, but this is doubtful; it is known, however, that there are quite a number of 15-centimetre guns of French make from the "redoubt works and of long range, as has been shown by their performances at Ladysmith. Among the others there are Krupps, Maxims and other machine and quick-firing guns.

The forts are open to the rear toward Pretoria, and are of masonry heavily faced with earth toward the open country. On the east side of the circle of defence there was no regular fort in existence when hostilities began, but it is probable that since then the ridge to the eastward of the city, by which the railway to Delagoa Bay runs, has been fortified.

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EXPERT TESTIMONY ON HAND WRITING.

No man can altogether escape from himself, even in his handwriting. In his signature there can be traced, unerringly, the characteristic features of style and of method that render him different from other men.

Among children differences in handwriting are slight and unnoticeable. All write the same large, open, copy-book style that they learn at school. An eight-year old boy's handwriting like himself, is crude and immature. But as the boy becomes a man his writing gradually develops features that are peculiar and easily discerned by students of chirography. The identifying characteristics of a man's writing are produced by his deviations from this original copy-book style.

All the influences that operate to produce variations in character also tend to produce these variations of penmanship. For example, two boys may sit at the same desk in school and write compositions so nearly alike that the teacher may fail to distinguish between them. But when the boys leave school one goes to Texas and lives an open-air life on a cattle-ranch, while the other becomes a bookkeeper in his father's store. In ten or fifteen years it will be an absolute impossibility for either of those men to successfully forge the handwriting of the other.

Occupation, temperament, environment and all the variations of physical and mental health leave their imprint upon the handwriting quite as distinctly as upon the face or character.

The secret of the expert's success in identifying handwriting lies mainly in this fact which is not uncommonly known, that men do not know their own characteristics.

This is what renders the disguising of one's handwriting an impossible task. A man cannot avoid a hole if he does not know that the hole is there, and neither can a man conceal the peculiar characteristics of his style if he does not know what those characteristics are.

Before one man can successfully forge the handwriting of another he must know two things, one of which it is impossible for him to know, and the other he is very unlikely to know. He must know, first, his own peculiarities of style, and, secondly, he must know the peculiarities of the handwriting which he wishes to imitate. Furthermore, he must have the ability to avoid his own peculiarities as a writer and at the same time to adopt the peculiarities of the writer whose writing he wishes to imitate.

Of course it is not difficult for a forger to deceive the unpractised eye. He may use different pens, hold the pen in different positions or vary the quality of the ink. These are slight modifications which are taken into account by experts and which do not conceal the essential character of the handwriting.

A clever impersonator on the stage may personify a number of quite dissimilar celebrities and may possibly even deceive many of his audience; but his make-up would not endure the close scrutiny of a sharp-eyed sceptic, who would pull off the false whiskers and wash off the deceptive paint. This is just what the expert does in his identification of handwriting. His task is to trace those inevitable and inseparable peculiarities of style which reveal the identity of every writer.

While, therefore, the degree of conclusiveness must vary according to the peculiar circumstances of every case, it is a fact beyond dispute that circumstantial evidence of the most convincing and unassailable kind may be adduced from handwriting.—W. J. Kinsley, in the N. Y. World.

MARY ANDERSON'S GIFT.

Mary Anderson's loyalty to her religious faith while on the stage, says the Louisville Courier-Journal, was a subject of favorable comment among her friends all over the English-speaking world. On Sunday, no matter which city she happened to be in, she attended the services of her Church. Since she left the stage, it is stated, she has become even more devout, her attendance at Church devotions at her home in England being daily instead of only on Sunday. Few of Mrs. de Navarro's friends, however, are aware of the fact that her love for her Church and her generosity have prompted her to endow one of the oldest religious orders in the Catholic Church with lands on which to build a monastery devoted to the cause of religious education or charity, as the head authority in the order may determine. Still fewer people are aware that this monastery is already built and is situated not more than 12 miles from Louisville.

Mary Anderson's uncle was a Franciscan priest, P. Anthony Miller, O.M.C. He was for some years rector of St. Peter's Church, 1618 Southgate Street, in Louisville. He died in November, 1873, and is buried in St. Michael's Cemetery, on Gode Avenue, near the city limits, which is the usual burial place of

German Catholics in this city. His older members of St. Peter's congregation often remember P. Miller, as he was generally called, with reverence and affection.

It was the training which Mary Anderson received from her uncle, the priest, and from her mother, that had much to do with her fidelity to her Church.

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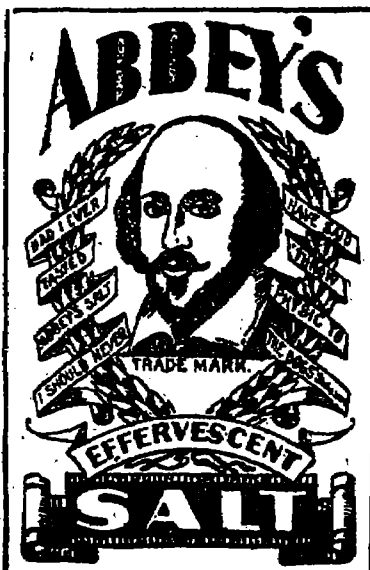
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