

### The Number of Eggs a Hen will Lay per Year.

HERE is occasionally seen an old time account of an investigation made, covering an unlimited time, to discover the pro ratio of eggs a hen will give in the first four years of her life, and what she can accomplish after that period. Some celebrated naturalist made the discovery (?) that a hen will lay 20 eggs the first year, 120 the second, 135 the third and 144 the fourth, and after that decrease; but we are not informed as to the backward gradation. In mercy perhaps it was withheld from us. Now we are always pleased when a great man condescends to graft his powers on the hen-tree, but we are afraid that in this instance they did not co-mingle satisfactorily, the tree was too much for the graft we expect. There may be cases where a hen will lay a given number as stated. But any experienced breeders can "floor" him as to it being a general thing. Thanks to increased poultry interest and higher culture we can get 144 eggs per year long before the four years are due, as stated by the specialist, and we can keep up to 144 per year till after that period too; tho' not too often we admit, as we do not often keep the hens long enough to prove their powers after the four years. Some twelve years ago we were given as a legacy a three year old Black Hamburg hen, that had been a pet bird, we kept her four years after that, and even to the last day of her life she was a splendid layer. She didn't die she was killed by accident, as Pat would say, or she would never have been killed then for her decrease in laying powers. We have now an old Plymouth Rock pet bird that is seven years old this spring and an everlasting layer; as good as ever at present; besides others that have come under our personal observation. There is no certainty as to what any hen will do in the matter of egg production, and certainly there is no decided number for her to lay predestinately, in the first, or any other year of her age. It is largely theory that presents to us these facts (?) and only a practical knowledge of what is possible can avail anyone in refuting them. An early hatched Leghorn, Wyandotte, or Plymouth Rock pullet will lay more likely 50 eggs the first year than 20. We

are not disposed to regard excessive egg producing stories with too much confidence either; the experienced poultryman will know where to draw the line between truth and the stricture that is applied to it in cases of egg and fish stories. Still unreasonable accounts of anything relating to the powers of poultry stock, do much harm to the cause. We are now reaping the reward of several extravagant booms that have been taking place the last three years, but it will find its level and the business will rest on a more solid foundation. Booms in the poultry business, which have a tendency to and do create false estimates of its profit, and character generally do much harm to this industry, as false and fictitious values in land act to the detriment of a country till the excitement is over and a business like life takes its place.

### White Faced Black Spanish.

OUR illustration represents an old-time favorite variety. As the name implies, the plumage is black throughout. Any foreign colored feathers found in a specimen disqualifies the bird, that is, rule it out of competition in the show pen.

It is within our memory that the Black Spanish fowls were a hardy, vigorous breed. But a great deal of value in late years has been placed on the white face, in fact so much, as to greatly destroy the vigor and fecundity of the race. For, to obtain this white face, inbreeding to a destructive degree has been resorted to. The consequence is, that public opinion is against them, because of the lack of hardihood that has become their heritage.

This variety lays the largest white egg of any breed, and used to be noted for good laying power, and still where common sense guides the breeder we can find large stocks of hardy, handsome birds, but they are not typical show birds at this date. Personally we fail to see any added beauty in the extension of the white face to such extremes as it is now seen. Of late there has been a falling off even in show stock as to numbers; but these showy birds still have their admirers, and no doubt when some of the new booms are over we shall find one or two old fanciers