

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF MODERN METHODS OF POULTRY CULTURE.*

Almost every one now realizes the great importance of the poultry industry. Although rapidly extended of late, this country (the United States) still uses more eggs and poultry meat than it produces. England pays \$50,000,000 a year for what she imports from other countries. Russia has won the lion's share of this trade. Other European countries get some of it, and even Australia sends eggs to England. Canada not only produces her own poultry and eggs, but sends quantities to England. As yet, the United States is practically out of it. The Government Agricultural Department is opening up a market for American butter in England. How about the foreign egg trade? Why should not the United States take a good share of it? Our home market for poultry products may not yet have become so congested as that for dairy products, but it will be easier to win the foreign market now than later. It is cheaper to ship poultry and eggs to England than corn and wheat; besides, these products will not impoverish our land.

Although Massachusetts farmers are working hard to make money, this State does not produce but a part of the eggs it requires. Millions of dollars' worth are brought from other States. It is the same in Rhode Island. We do not want to sell our eggs for what Western eggs will bring, but we are not compelled to do so. We can deliver them when fresh. If of the highest quality, they will also bring an extra price. The eastern farmer can surely make money on poultry. How can he best do it and compete with the western farmer who has such cheap grain? Most people think there is very little to poultry production, until they take it up as business; then, after a few years, they change their opinions, and realize they must thoroughly know the business to succeed.

Those who undertake to teach them almost always have stock they want to sell, and they are generally fanciers and pure breed breeders rather than poultry farmers. Even editors do not like to publish the faults of the different breeds, as it offends their admirers. The public really has hard work to get at the facts. The inexperienced have to try half a dozen breeds to learn which are most suitable, and then may not know. Thousands repeat the same experiments. This would be needless if the reliable experiences of a few were made public. A great expense would be saved the country. The methods taught in most poultry papers are suited to the fancier, rather than adapted to the poultry farmer. Too many agricultural papers have simply echoed the teachings of the fanciers' papers.

The commercial end of the poultry industry, representing a permanent interest in the United States of two hundred and forty millions, certainly is worthy of attention. As with market gardening, boot manufacturing, and other lines of business, the specialist, the large producer, is getting a grip on the business, and taking it away from the small operator. But there is a chance for the farmer in poultry pro-

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duction. The more complicated the poultry specialist makes his business, the more skill it requires, and the greater the chances of failure. The risks are greater, as well as the profits. He uses breeds adapted to a special purpose; buildings planned to save labor, secure sanitary conditions, and best protect the stock; follows the best methods of feeding, and, above all, has a well defined plan that is adhered to and carried out in every detail. He is thus enabled to secure at a slight cost the very best product, even when there is the greatest scarcity and when it will bring the very highest price.

Each season the different breeds of fowl are being improved for their special purposes, and new information gained as to best and cheapest methods of feeding and management. Therefore, the up-to-date man must constantly study the problem.

I do not believe that it is best for the farmer to undertake to follow the specialist; or that he can produce poultry and eggs cheaper and with less risk. The farther you go from the old methods, the more work you must do and the greater the chances of disease. The old pioneers did not have to take the precautions against disease that people in cities do now. If you keep large numbers and follow improved methods, your obstacles are greater.

The specialist who confines his flocks in yards and provides all their feed the year around, may get a greater product than if they were allowed free range, but fowls thus cooped are wholly dependent upon their keepers. If he does not give them fresh water, meat, gravel and green food, they suffer. If the yards and houses get foul they cannot get away and must breathe foul air. Such neglect the specialist cannot be guilty of and be successful, but it has been my experience that many farmers, who attempt to improve, do this very thing. Those who take up advance methods, build modern buildings, get good breeds and then fail to carry out the details, are worse off than if they were following old methods.

I have seen men who kept bees try to improve and have a similar experience. They understood just how to keep them in the old box hives, and made a little honey and money every year. They made no great thing out of it, but as far as it went it was pretty sure. A few years after they took up modern methods there were no bees on their place. It was not the fault of the new hives or methods. They had simply gone further than they understood, and did not carry out the details. So my advice to the farmer who wants to progress, is to adopt the stock and management and buildings best suited to his circumstances. It is better even to keep bees in box hives, or poultry in the old way, than to strike too high a key and fail entirely.

(To be continued.)

THE WESTERN DAIRYMEN'S CONVENTION.

The annual convention is to be held in London on January 19, 20, and 21, 1898. A good programme has been prepared. Besides addresses from leading dairymen in Canada, Prof. W. H. Jordan, director of the N.Y. Experiment Station, and Mr. H. B. Gurler of Deklab, Ill., have promised to attend and deliver addresses.

CHANGE OF ENVIRONMENT.

GEORGE RICE, CURRIE, ONT.

Under the above head in your issue of Dec. 28th, page 133, we find some very sensible remarks which I desire to endorse. Kindness always pays, and with a dairy cow more than anything else, there is nothing a cow likes better than a good brushing, but don't scratch her. Long ago I dispensed with the use of a dog, for my cows will come as far as they can hear my voice, when at pasture; and not being accustomed to a dog they are very much afraid of one. It struck me, when reading this article, that we sometimes "save at the spigot and waste at the bung-hole."

In the recent dairy test at Brantford, we had dogs in all parts of the building, some tied there, yelping all the time, others passing along, and one ran between my cow's legs when I was milking. Now, in the name of common sense should this be allowed? True, the directors said the dogs should not be in, still they came. We were told to kick them out, we did kick one, but he yelped so it made matters worse.

All thoughtful dairymen will admit it is an outrage to allow dogs around the cows—excitement always affects the amount of butter fat given. It will not do to say that all cows are under similar conditions, as some cows are more highly strung than others. Besides our work is compared with records made in other tests where such unfavorable conditions are not met with. It is hoped that the officials who have charge of the dairy test will see that all these things are looked after another year.

There are other matters, too, in connection with these tests that could be managed a great deal better—for one thing, more supervisors are necessary, to see fair play.

Under the best of management, there is much for a cow to contend with in these tests, especially the best cows. People are continually handling them and this causes an unnatural disturbance; but if the show is to have an educational effect this cannot very well be helped.

We have never been able to get in a show ground test anything like a normal test for butter fat. Some days are worse than others. At the same time we have got as much and a little more milk than we got the week previous at home. We can make the milk but cannot control the fat, as that depends upon the nervous organization of the cow. We get more milk following a shrinkage in the percentage of fat; because the cow's system is not taxed so heavily.

We had our sweepstakes cow, Calamity Jane, officially tested for a week previous to the provincial test, and in another article I will endeavor to show the difference between a home test under strict supervision and a public test.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

A. J. C., Arnprior: (1) What are the false teeth in young pigs? At what age should they be removed, and when will the true teeth come?

(2) In the old country they alter young sows that are not wanted for breeding purposes. How is it done?

(3) Last September I had two litters of

pigs, one twelve, the other ten in number. The litter of twelve did very well, but of the litter of ten only four lived. When they were ten or twelve days old they took some disease. First their nose would get stopped up, and one side of the face would swell up, the breathing would become difficult and their flanks drawn up. Both sows and litters received the same kind of feed. What was the matter with them?

Ans.: (1) The false teeth as you call them are the temporary teeth or milk teeth, and like the first teeth of all animals will drop out of them selves, and others grow in their place without any attention from you. You do not need to knock them out.

(2) The operation of altering or spaying young sows consists in removing the ovaries, the seat of the seasons of heat. An incision is made from the outside and the ovaries are drawn out with the finger. It would be useless to give a detailed explanation, as it would be impossible for you to follow it. Many a man can do this work, and it is best to get practical lessons from some one that knows how to do it.

(3) Your description of the disease is so indefinite that we cannot say what it was. It might have been due to the sow. In such cases it is always best to consult a veterinary if one is near at hand.

CANADIAN JERSEY BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION.

The annual meeting of the Canadian Jersey Breeders' Association was held December 31st, in the Albion Hotel, Toronto. A number of breeders were present from different parts of the province, among whom were J. H. Smith, R. Davies, R. J. Fleming, B. H. Bull, Capt. Rolph, R. Willis, S. Weeks, John O'Brien, D. Duncan, R. Reid, W. H. MacCartney, W. E. H. Massey, and others.

In the absence of the secretary, Capt. Rolph was appointed secretary *pro tem*. After the reading of the minutes, the election of officers was proceeded with and resulted as follows: President, B. H. Bull, Brantford; vice-president, J. H. Smith, Highfield; secretary-treasurer, R. Reid, Berlin; Board of Management, Messrs. R. J. Fleming, E. H. Duncan, W. H. MacCartney, R. Willis, D. O. Bull; delegates to Industrial Board, Capt. Rolph, D. Duncan; to Western Fair Board, John O'Brien; to Ottawa Fair, J. H. Fife and W. Conroy; judges at Toronto Industrial, J. C. Snell and Geo. O. Green; at London, R. McCullough and Prof. Day.

It was decided that all cows be milked out at 7 o'clock the evening before being judged.

Considerable enthusiasm was manifested throughout the meeting over the "Dairy Queen," and a determined effort will be made during the year to interest every man in the Dominion who owns a Jersey cow, in the association. The meeting adjourned to accept the kind invitation of Mr. W. E. H. Massey to visit his barns and Jersey herd. Nearly all present availed themselves of the opportunity, and a very pleasant and profitable time was spent; all being delighted with the unbounded hospitality of Mr. Massey.