

Poultry.

Edited by J. W. Bartlett.

From a village in Quebec comes an exposure of misrepresentation that we never heard equalled. A breeder of Langshans writes a long article in the Poultry Review, in which he expatiates on the wonderful merits of Langshans as layers, and to do this, gives his experience with Wyandottes, pronouncing the latter in every way inferior to his favorites. In the next issue of the Review appears a communication from a neighbor of the first writer, stating that the Langshan man never had but one Wyandotte about his place and that a cockerel. It is not strange that poultry men should be looked upon with suspicion while they have men in their ranks that will condescend to such means to boom the breed of their choice. We do not approve of booms, as the term is generally used, but we can not condemn frank, true statements of the merits or demerits of any particular breed, as we all want the best; but we can not condemn too severely the man that attempts to bolster up his own favorites at the expense of more meritorious breeds. It would seem as though the Langshan required more of this than any other breed, at least it receives it as far as our experience goes, while the breed the Quebec man depreciates is coming to the front faster than any we ever knew. Even the famous Brown Leghorn is acknowledged by those who have kept both to be inferior to them as all-the-year-round layers.

Making New Breeds.

Many poultry breeders are possessed, as it were, of a mania for making new breeds, continually crossing breeds and experimenting with crosses with no particular object in view than to see if the result will not enable them to bring forward some new breed heretofore unknown. But it seems fortunate, rather than otherwise, that there are very great difficulties to surmount before a breed is made, and the greatest skill and experience in breeding is necessary to ensure a slight probability of success. To make a new breed is not simply to cross two varieties and call the result of the cross a breed, but they must be bred together and occasionally fresh blood must be introduced, and which must be procured in the same manner to insure anything like uniformity in their offspring, and when this is attained—before they will be recognized by breeders generally—they must gain admittance to the American standard of excellence, and before this can be accomplished they must satisfy the American Poultry Association that they have genuine merits, and will reproduce their likeness with a fair degree of certainty, and that there is uniformity in color and size of eggs.

As an example, there has been but one breed admitted to the standard in the last decade that was of American make-up. We would especially warn our readers against sending their hard cash for eggs for hatching to parties advertising a new breed of exceptional merit, but which is not named in the standard of excellence. And while we are prepared at all times to give all honor and credit to the man who produces a new breed of genuine merit, as in the case of the Wyandottes, yet we must deprecate the attempts made by some parties to foist new breeds on the public and claim for them superior merits, when in all probability they scarcely know what constitutes a distinct breed.

If, on the other hand, we look at the possibilities within our reach in the direction of improvement of the breeds we have, we think those aspiring to distinction and profit might much better direct their talents and energies in this direction. All poultry breeders know that there is one hen in every yard that will excel the rest in egg production. Now, if her eggs are kept separate for hatching purposes, the result will be an increase in egg production, while if fancy points are the object in view, use only the very best marked birds for breeders. The possibilities are large, indeed, if this method is pursued intelligently, while without such selection, the excellence of individual birds is lost, and it is the sports that excel instead of the sports being inferior.

Early Culling.

Whatever the line of breeding, the best only should be used to perpetuate the species. And the breeding of fowls, perhaps more than any other stock, requires to be carried on according to this principle, and, whether the stock be what is usually termed fancy, or whether it be of the veriest mongrel type, the surplus birds should be killed and marketed as soon as they are large enough, as they will, if hatched in early spring and marketed in July, fetch as much as the same chicks would in October or November. Keep the largest and squarest cockerels for breeding, and slaughter the rest as soon as they are fit for broilers; or, perhaps better still, kill all the cockerels and secure one of fresh blood and mate with half a dozen of the very best females about the place, for next season's breeding. This number will produce enough eggs for hatching for an ordinary farm.

Wake up the Agricultural Societies.

Farmers and others interested in fowls should now wake up the local agricultural societies, and keep stirring them up until they give poultry a fair show. It is a shame that the poultry industry should be so sadly neglected by our agricultural societies. Stir them up lively. Offer a special prize on some variety not before on their prize list. Get some of your friends to do the same, and you will be working wonders for the poultry interests, building, as it were, better than you know. Your special for one season on a breed may, and probably will, be the means of placing it permanently on the prize list.

Shade Indispensable.

While sun is indispensable to chicks, too much of it is almost or quite as bad as none. If the fowls or chicks are confined in a yard void of trees or some natural shade, there must be an artificial one provided. This may be done by leaning a few boards against the fence, or, better still, by placing four posts in the ground sixteen or eighteen inches high, laying strips on them and covering with maple or other limbs with the leaves on. No doubt other means will present themselves to an ordinarily thoughtful mind, but it matters not what the means employed, this is certain, chicks will not thrive without shade. Plenty of fresh, cool water also is decidedly conducive to thrift. Clean the drinking vessels twice a week, and thus prevent green slime from accumulating.

Give the chicks as much liberty as possible; they will destroy many noxious worms and slugs, and will grow and thrive much better than if kept in semi-confinement.

PRIZE ESSAY.**Poultry Farming as an Occupation for Farmers' Wives and Daughters.**

BY DAVID GARVEY, INGERSOLL, ONT.

In treating of an occupation for farmers' wives and daughters, we are touching on a subject which is of vast importance to farmers themselves, as well as to those whom our remarks are directly intended to benefit. Indeed, it may be doubted if any other question so immediately concerns the future welfare of our rural population as this. At the present time a want has begun to be felt for some out-door employment in which the female members of the farmer's family could participate, and thereby not only assist in increasing the profits of the farm, but also obtain the benefits of light physical exercise and plenty of out-door air, which are necessary for all who would enjoy perfect health.

In past years, when the farmer's time was fully occupied in clearing the land, and before the introduction of labor-saving machinery, the garden afforded a very suitable field in which the farmer's wife varied the routine of her daily duties, and, at the same time, materially assisted in defraying the expenses of the household; but in our day this work can be better and more easily performed with the assistance of a horse, and consequently the farmers' wives and daughters are being gradually excluded from this rather burdensome occupation, and left to choose a more congenial one. To what, then, shall our attention be next directed, and what shall we propose that will suit the tastes of our farmers' wives and daughters, and fulfil all the requirements of such an important want? Let us return to our subject and see how it will fill the bill. We will consider:

1. Its profitability.
2. The pleasure and gratification attendant on its prosecution.
3. The scope which it affords for both the mental and physical powers.

If after a careful consideration of these points we conclude that it is worthy of being adopted, it will then be in order to show in what way it can be most satisfactorily carried on.

As to its *profitableness*, I think there is little doubt that poultry well cared for will afford ample returns to their keeper, especially when we consider the amount of food which they will utilize which would otherwise be wasted on the farm. Statistics prepared by those entirely dependent on them for a livelihood, show that under proper treatment they will yield a handsome percentage on the capital invested.

As to *pleasure*, where shall the lovers of animate nature find gratification if not among the gayly plumed members of a large flock of poultry, as they emerge from their sleeping quarters on a bright summer morning and give utterance to their hearty appreciation of their morning meal? And what pleasure to hasten to their joyous cackle at the completion of their daily task. Yes, the farmer's wives and daughters should be the most suitable persons to engage in the keeping of poultry, because, although the coarser and more disagreeable portion of the work, such as erecting buildings, cleaning their apartments and supplying their food, could be performed by the men, the constant care and attention to details which is necessary to secure success, and which which they will not thrive, will fall to the lot of the female members of the family.