

# Practical Poultry Methods at Macdonald College

Some Observations Made During a Short Visit with Professor M. A. Jull

THE Poultry Department at Macdonald Agricultural College, Ste. Anne de Bell-vue, Que., is run on a practical, businesslike basis. I can remember when the most of us did not expect a college professor, even an agricultural college professor, to be a practical man. He was supposed to live in the realm of theory and our attitude toward him was almost patronizing when he, the professor, attempted to give us practical instruction and information. This attitude toward our leaders in agricultural learning has changed, however. The change has been brought about by the leaders themselves, because for the most part, while there are still exceptions, our agricultural colleges are manned by men of the practical type who have a lively appreciation of the problems of the producer. Of such calibre is M. A. Jull, Professor of Poultry Husbandry at Macdonald College. The poultry plant of which he is manager is designed on sane lines, is run in a manner that ensures results, and a visit with Prof. Jull is sure to be fruitful to all who, like myself, have a dollar and cents interest in the poultry business. It is now some time since I dropped in at the Macdonald College poultry department, but perhaps this belated account of my observations may be of interest.

We first visited the incubation and brooding quarters which are situated in an ell connected with the main buildings. I found that Prof. Jull is still using several incubators of 144 and 240-egg capacities, instead of the mammoth incubators which have been advertised so extensively in the last three or four years. Altogether the incubators have a capacity of 3,500 eggs. The brooder house adjacent to the incubating room. It is built on the conventional lines with several small inside runs connected with small outside runs and each equipped with hovers heated by a steam coil. I noticed that baled shavings were used exclusively for litter in these brooding chambers. "We have been using shavings now for four years," said Prof. Jull, "and the college repair shop keeps us supplied. The shavings are cheap, they are absolutely dustless and more sanitary than other kinds of litter."

## From Brooders to Colony Houses.

Absence of dust and sanitation are very important points in the litter for baby chicks and it is baby chicks only that are housed in this rather expensively constructed brooder house. Once the chicks have gotten successfully through the first and most difficult three weeks of their lives, they are transferred to colony houses on

range, heated with coal burning brooders. All of these brooders, with the single exception of the Candee, have been giving the best of satisfaction and the Candee itself would be all right were it not for the difficulty of keeping the fire going continually. This difficulty was overcome during the latter part of the brooding season. An oil burning colony brooder stove is also being used with good results, but Prof. Jull pronounced it as



The Laying House Considered Ideal at Macdonald College.

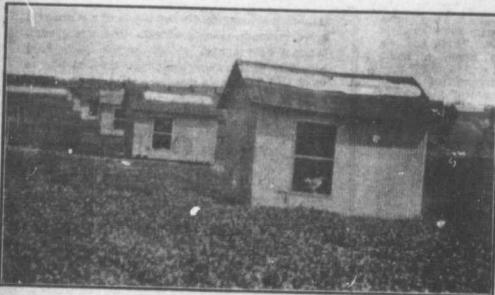
The illustration gives a clear idea of the type of house that Prof. Jull is advocating as a model among the farmer-poultrymen of Quebec. It is 20 feet square, six feet in front, eight to the ridge, and five at the rear. It is single-boarded and battened on three sides and double-boarded to the north.

too expensive to operate as compared with the coal burning type.

The chicken ranges are divided into three fields, with chicken tight fencing around them. These chicken runs are seeded to alfalfa, which has now been down four years, and planted to orchard. In the first of these runs are the colony houses, equipped with brooder stoves. Here the chickens are kept until they are well feathered and in no further need of artificial heat. When nicely feathered out the cockerels are separated from the pullets and they are moved to separate runs, where the pullets are kept in colony houses until transferred to laying quarters in the fall.

## Marketing the Broilers.

Cockerels of some of the heavier breeds are carried on to the roasting stage. The Leghorns, however, are sold as broilers when 10 to 12 weeks old and weighing from three-quarters of a pound to two and one-quarter pounds each. "We usually give the broilers two weeks special crate feeding," remarked Prof. Jull. "The wet mash consists of equal parts



Where the Growing Chicks are Housed at Macdonald College.

Chickens develop best on free range. At Macdonald College small portable houses of the type illustrated are drawn out onto the ranges in summer. Each house, eight by twelve feet, accommodates 200 chicks.

—Photos by an Editor of Farm and Dairy.

testing is all right," was the answer, "and we have even taken them off of range to dress for market. A limited amount of range has the advantage of keeping the birds more contented under special feeding."

"And how about the feeding of the young chicks?"

"The first feed consists of bread and hard-boiled eggs. In a few days cracked grain is given and the bread and eggs substituted by a mash, consisting of 35 lbs. bran, 20 lbs. corn meal, 20 lbs. oatmeal or ground oats, 10 lbs. middlings, 10 lbs. beef scrap and five pounds scrap bones. This mash is fed dry in the hopper, and it is fed

twice a day, in the middle of the forenoon and in the middle of the afternoon. The grain is fed night and morning. As you have noticed, the chickens are by this time on free range and collect their own green feed.

## Handling Layers.

The layers are handled in such a manner as to ensure a good winter and summer egg yield, and at the same time maintain the vigor of the flock. Winter eggs are, of course, the main consideration.

Last winter egg production ran well over 50 per cent on the average, and in June, at the time of our visit, was up to 65 per cent. Every farmer who has attempted to make poultry an important sideline, will immediately class this egg yield as good. One bunch of Leghorns did especially well. There were 54 in the flock and in the six months, from Nov. 1st, 1916, to May 1st, 1917, they made a profit over cost of feed of \$2 a bird.

The open front house is preferred here as at practically every commercial egg plant in Canada. Warmth is not regarded as an essential to profitable egg production. Absolute dryness and good ventilation are more important. Part of the hens are housed in colony houses with dimensions of 8 x 12 feet. These colony houses are scattered around on free range in summer. They have gable roofs and a straw loft, added in winter, absorbs all moisture and keeps the houses dry. One of these houses is sufficient for 25 laying hens and in summer they are used for brooding 200 chickens. Most of the layers are kept in larger stationary houses during the winter months, in flocks of 40 to 100.

Macdonald College has a stationary laying house of their own designing, which they are attempting to popularize through the Province of Quebec. In some respects it resembles the O. A. C. model poultry house, but in others it is radically different. The illustration herewith shows the general lines of its construction. It is 20 feet square, six feet in front, eight feet to the ridge and five feet behind. It faces south and is double boarded to the north. The other walls are single boarded and battened. There are two windows in front and one at the end. The open space in front between the two windows, about three by six feet, may be covered with a screen but lately the screen has not been used as much as it was at first, and the inside is therefore dryer because of the greater ventilation. The

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"How about fattening them in a loose pen?" I asked.

"Loose per fat-