

ONE, OR A DOZEN?

THIS being the season for big gooseberries and sea serpents, I will add my mite to the wonders of the age, by telling you a tale of an egg. It was laid by a Pekin duck last week, and weighed four and a half ounces. Supposing it to hold a double yolk, I broke it, and, to my surprise, out of it fell an egg, measuring one and a half inches long, and almost round, and stranger still, on opening the second egg, I found a third inside, with a strong shell, one side being partially flat.

So that I might not be taken for a second Baron Munchausen, I enclose you the eggs, the third still inside the second. Possibly, on breaking the third you may find a fourth inside, if so please let me know.

I have been a poultry fancier and breeder for over forty years, but it has never before, been my good fortune to own a duck or a hen that laid three eggs at a time.

Yours,

SANEX.

Ottawa, June 9th, 1892.

[Egg safely to hand in exact condition named.—ED.]

OYSTER SHELLS AS FOOD FOR LAYING HENS, &c., &c.

THE New York State Experimental Station Bulletin for January 1892, contains the following interesting reports:—

It is explained that the value of oyster shells as a source of material for egg shells has been questioned, it being claimed that its value for poultry lies solely in furnishing grit. To test this an experiment was made with six 1-year-old Leghorn hens, three of which were fed coarse ground oyster shells,

and three coarse broken glass instead. Both lots were kept confined in cleanly swept pens, having a floor of matched boards. In the first period, March 30 to April 19, wheat, fresh cabbage and a grain mixture composed of corn meal, wheat bran, wheat middlings and old-process linseed meal, were fed to both lots; and in the second period, lasting until May 3, boiled eggs [oats probably intended. ED. REVIEW] were added. The eggs were collected the last 10 or 12 days of each period. The percentages of water, ash and calcium carbonate contained in each kind of food and in the eggs laid each period, and the amount of food consumed are tabulated for each lot. The results for the lot receiving oyster shells were as follows:

During the first period the hens laid 12 eggs, 1 pound of eggs being produced from 3.95 pounds of water-free food. These eggs contained calcium equal to 48.43 grams of carbonate of lime, the shells alone containing 47.74 grams. The grain and cabbage consumed and the drinking water given them contained altogether calcium equal to 7.62 grams carbonate of lime. The oyster shells taken by them contained 93.80 grams carbonate of lime.

During the second period the hens laid 21 eggs, which were produced at the rate of 1 pound for every 2.59 pounds of water-free food. These eggs contained calcium equal to 87.88 grams carbonate of lime, the shells alone containing 86.6 grams. The food consumed and drinking water given them contained calcium equal to 10.08 grams carbonate of lime. The oyster shells taken by them contained 180.99 grams carbonate of lime. Of the carbonate of lime contained in the eggs during the first period, 40.81 grams (over 84 per cent.), and of that in the eggs during the second period, 77.80 grams (over 86 per cent.), are unaccounted for, except by the carbon-

ate of lime in the oyster shells, of which 99.2 grams were consumed during the first period, and 191.4 grams during the second.

The difference is so great that no other conclusion seems possible than that the egg shells were constructed from material supplied in large part by the oyster shells.

These hens lost in weight a total of 5 ounces during the first period, and a total of two ounces during the second, a change in weight of little consequence and one that might have occurred at any time within a few hours.

The lot receiving pounded glass did not lay as well as the other lot, and two of the hens became sick, but recovered after a few days. The sickness is believed to be due to the excessive amount of glass swallowed, which amounted to 31.3 per cent. of the total water-free food when given *ad libitum*, and to 26.1 per cent when the consumption was limited.

These hens gained in weight during the first period 11 ounces and lost during the second period 9 ounces. Although fewer eggs were laid by this lot, the shells were lighter, being in the first period 8.12 per cent of the total weight of the eggs, and in the second period 6.18 per cent, while the shells of eggs laid by the lot having oyster shells formed 9.67 per cent and 9.5 per cent of the total weight of the eggs.

The egg shells contained 92.42 per cent of carbonate of lime, and the ash of the eggs, exclusive of shell, 4.96 per cent of calcium, equal to 12.4 per cent of carbonate. The eggs for the first period contained 1.01 per cent, and those of the second 0.98 per cent of ash. * * *

The amount of lime calculated as carbonate found in the eggs exceeded that in the food and drinking water by 3.9 grams for one period and nearly