

Rodolphe Lemieux, Postmaster-General, for honoring the county of Wentworth with the first service.—Jas. Forsyth.

A 50 PER CENT. INCREASE IN MAIL

"We are enjoying the free mail service to the fullest extent. We find it most convenient, receiving our mail and sending it right from our door four times daily. The mail carrier informed me that since the inauguration of this service, the mail matter on this route has increased 50 per cent. This goes to show that people are taking advantage of the service. This mail carrier could serve twice as many people at the same cost by making a circuitous route, and make two deliveries on each route."—E. J. Guest.

The evidence to hand regarding Free Rural Mail Delivery as outlined by the foregoing letters is right in line with the testimony of the farmers in the United States who were interviewed by Farm and Dairy over a year ago and much of which was published in these columns. The service is popular wherever it has been tried and is an unqualified boon to the farming community.

The question of free rural mail delivery will not down. We must have not only the service as at present outlined by the post office department, namely, along existing mail routes, but in all sections where the population is of such a density as to warrant its establishment. Now that the thin edge of the wedge of rural free delivery has been introduced in Canada, let us not fail to utilize every opportunity to agitate for the extension of this service to all parts that can justly claim it. At the same time we must have patience that we may allow the government opportunity to introduce it in the most economical manner possible that we may avoid the costly mistakes that were made by the United States government in connection with the inauguration of the service in that country.

What the Trap Nest Shows

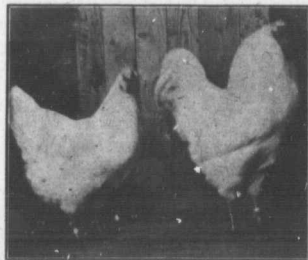
Prof. F. C. Elford, Macdonald College, Que.

Trap nests are to the poultryman what the weigh scales and the Babcock test are to the dairyman. For accurate results they are just as important.

Trap nests tell which hens are doing the work and which are merely boarders or "thieves and robbers" as Mr. Stevenson, of Ancaster, calls certain cows. The trap nest showed that in a flock of 230 hens at Macdonald College one hen gave

there are signs that point towards a good layer, they are not infallible. Very often the hens we think are doing the laying when put under the trap nest prove otherwise. I know of one hen that had all outward indications of a persistent layer but when tested with the trap nest failed to lay a single egg in six months.

For the one who wishes to know what hens are worth keeping the trap is advisable, as it is also for the one who wants to breed up a good laying strain. True, to use the trap nests requires a considerable amount of extra work and some people



Favorites from a Favorite Breed

The White Wyandottes illustrated are the first prize cockerel and the second prize pullet at the recent Peterboro Poultry Show. Note the blocky type and the graceful curves which are characteristic of Wyandottes.

are not so situated that they can install the system, but the results are worth an effort and those who can might do well to try it.

A trap nest is just what the word implies, a trap so attached to a nest that a hen on entering the nest springs it and shuts herself in. The purpose of it is to confine her there until she is released by the attendant, when her number is taken and marked on the egg. A record is kept of the flock on a record card for the purpose. A combination trap nest suitable for farmers' use is shown and described on page 13 of this issue.

Breeding and Feeding Poultry

N. C. Campbell, Brant Co., Ont.

Statistics tell us that the average hen in Ontario produces but 80 eggs in a year. The average hen in experiment stations produces approximately 100 eggs in a year.

The great room there is for improvement in the matter of the laying proclivities of our average hen is well demonstrated when we learn that individual hens have been found, by means of the trap nest, to have laid 250 eggs and more in a year. It is an old saying that the hen that lays is the hen that pays. As farmers we need to pay more attention to the egg producing capacity of the hens kept upon our farms.

But how can we bring about this increase in egg production, desirable as it would be? It is granted by all that such an increase would be a great stroke of business. The surest way to bring about this desired increase is to breed from stock that we have records of. These records to be obtained by the use of the trap nest. To the average

farmer, however, the trap nest is impracticable on account of the labor involved. Their advantage, however, has been vouched for by users of trap nests when they have expressed their surprise at the large percentage of poor layers and drones, and the small percentage of really good layers, that their flocks contained.

Fortunately there are several outward signs whereby we can judge more or less accurately as to the laying ability of the average hen without resorting to the trap nest. A hen, over-fat with internal fat, is sure to be a drone. Kill her at once for use on the table. The hen that matures early is usually a good layer. A large crop is also a good indication. This may be determined by feeling them at night when the hens are on the roost. The pullets that laid well last year will usually repeat the same performance this year. The hen that is broken-down behind had better be disposed of, as the little boy well knew when he said to his father: "Pa, kill the hen with the crop behind."

Much depends upon the selection of the male. A good deal that applies to the hen as outlined above is equally applicable here. Get a male bird of strong constitution, of good size and bone, that matured early and if possible one that crowed early.

The feeding is not a difficult problem when the breeding and the housing are right. Most attention should be given to the breeding, selecting and the housing. A variety of foods should be fed, as well as considerable animal material. Be sure that all food fed is wholesome and clean, and fed in sufficient quantities to produce eggs. This latter is an important point as many do not feed their hens enough to get eggs.

Successful Experience with Incubators

Geo. Pazman, Peterborough Co., Ont.

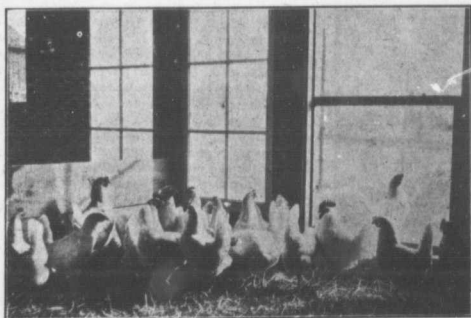
Artificial incubation, as applied to the poultry industry, is one of the cases where artificial means has nature beaten in many ways. I make this statement of my own opinion after many years of successful experience in hatching chickens by means of the incubator. One can never depend upon the hen. He never knows when she will quit. With the incubator it is quite different.

Most breeders look upon a 60 per cent. hatch as a good one; to me a hatch would be "rotten" if it were not at least 75 per cent. In all my experience I never obtained less than 80 chicks from 120 eggs set and I have gotten as high as 107. In this latter case on the seventh day, I tested out eight infertile eggs, leaving 112 and from these 107 chicks were hatched and every one lived through until the time of marketing.

At the outset one must have hatchable eggs before chickens can be obtained. The fertile egg is not always a hatchable egg. On one or two occasions, when hatching eggs for neighbors, the truth of this was simply demonstrated, as I did not get the same measure of success as when eggs from my own flock were set. The breeding stock must be in the best of shape in order to obtain hatchable eggs. They must be exercised and made to work for every bit of food which they obtain. This can be done by burying all the grain in a litter and by feeding green stuff tied up to the ceiling in such a way that they must jump for it. Plenty of fresh air in the house is absolutely essential.

CHOOSE A GOOD MACHINE

In selecting a machine nothing but the best should be chosen. It is advisable to get one of a capacity not smaller than 120 eggs. With the machine that I have (The Chatham) I can hatch anything that can be hatched with a hen. There is a wonderful difference in machines, even in machines of the same make. It is absolutely necessary that the machine be heated evenly in



Healthy Birds in a Healthy "Cold Air" House.

In order to insure success in winter egg production we must provide a suitable poultry house. One that is dry, free from draughts, and in which there is no smell of hens, is the ideal. Another photo of this same house, and a description of it by its owner, Mr. Barlow Cumberland, appears on page 15 of this issue.

four dozen eggs while another gave over eighteen dozen. It showed that ten hens averaged 140 eggs while another ten averaged 14. One hen laid just as many as 14 hens.

In most of these cases there was very little difference in the appearance of the birds. Though