

POULTRY.

Maine Station Improved Trap Nest

been given a secondary place to form. A well-turned horn, pleasing symmetry of outline, and a neat, trim, "correct" udder have been features which have received consideration with judges above the ability to produce milk. This has been so true that an old Scotch herdsman gave me the caution to "beware of the records of exhibitions." It must not be thought, however, that good cattle have not been bred in herds where show-ring standards have been followed. It may be true that many of the best animals have been bred on farms whose names do not appear in the newspapers, but the type sought has indeed been such as we believe to be the one which gives largest promise of milk production. The trouble has been that high condition, tightness of udder and irregular breeding have not permitted the full development of the powers that were latent and inbred, and the tendency has been for the generation to deteriorate rather than to improve.

The trend of public opinion, however, is now working in the other direction. The subject of milk records is at present receiving much attention in Scotland. A system of testing has been in vogue for some few years, but the difficulty lay in the fact that the work did not receive the endorsement, or, at least, sympathy, of the Herd-book Association. Of late there has been a combination of interests, and Ayrshire breeders as a body have now committed themselves to the policy of cow-testing. Scotch people know that milk records do not make animals, but milk records are beginning to be held in such regard as should presently be very salutary in its effect. A few conservative breeders are still somewhat careful of their goodwill, but the movement is setting in in a safe direction, and commands the interest of men who should bring it to success.

A general idea of the care of the cattle I can scarce give in the space that remains. Pasture, of course, is depended upon almost entirely for feed in the summertime, except that much cake is fed, at the rate of from one to two pounds each, given in the stable at milking time. Oil cake, cotton cake and Bombay cake is used, and I believe that much of it is imported from Asia. It is mostly bought in slabs, just as it comes from the mill, and is broken for use as it is needed. Maize is not grown in Scotland, but mangels and swedes are, and in large amounts, and come into use for winter feed. Cows are usually bred to calve down in the spring, though there is quite a large trade in what are known as "back-end" or fall calvers. Calves are rarely housed through the summer as with us, but are given the run of a pasture at an early age. They get milk on the pasture for a time, but not much meal, that I could see. Most that we saw were in good growing condition, but never fat. The milking cows were generally lean, but with just enough flesh to give them a thrifty appearance. The dairy farmer adjusts the balance very nicely, and has rather a keen eye for the dollars and cents. Dairying has become a very stable business in the country, and the master on the farm is usually a pretty fair judge of what best suits his interests, and trifles and fads receive scant courtesy at his hands. The policy of breeding has, perhaps in some respects, been off somewhat at a tangent, but it is settling down now upon a more matter of fact, and, I think, more useful basis. If I may prophesy, Ayrshires are to have a large future before them both at home and elsewhere. Macdonald College, Que. H. S. ARKELL.

Cows and Cash.

Is it not time that all dairy farmers in Canada came to think seriously of what might easily be accomplished by a little, a very little, extra effort? Very few would pass by the opportunity of picking up five or six 5-dollar bills, if the conditions were not difficult. There is a huge sum of money waiting for owners of dairy cows.

Not only is present cash value assured for the application of a little brain power, but a solid and permanent improvement of dairy conditions, a distinct raising of the whole status of dairy farming, a measurable gain in contentment and self-respect, a notable and enviable addition to our reputation among the nations of the world as high-class dairymen, would quickly result. Unfortunately, we have to go on record, even in these days of widespread and easily-available dairy knowledge, as owning lots of cows that produce only 2,800 or 2,500 pounds milk during their best six or seven months. Such cows are no credit to their owners, and such owners scarcely do credit to the dignified title of dairymen. As Canadians, we should zealously guard against such a condition of affairs being possible. It is easy to detect those poor cows by recording weights of milk, and it is injurious to any district to retain such wretched specimens—mongrels, not real dairy cows. The queen of the dairy, the select cow, will do infinitely better if handled right by men who put dairy intelligence into daily operation. To return to that pile of cash: If only half the cows in Ontario were made to yield just ten dollars' more milk, it means an extra five millions of dollars within easy reach. C. F. W. Ottawa.

Two years ago, issue Nov. 7th, 1907, "The Farmer's Advocate" published a sketch and description of a trap nest used by the Maine Experiment Station. One of the young men of the Station has succeeded in improving on the style then in use. The nest is a box-like structure, 28 inches long, 13 inches wide, and 16 inches deep, inside measurement. A division board, with a



Fig. 1.—Top View of Trap Nest, Closed.

circular opening $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, is placed across the box 12 inches from the rear end, and 15 inches from the front end. The rear section is the nest proper. Instead of having the partition between the two parts of the nest made with a circular hole, it is possible to have simply a straight board partition extending up six inches from the bottom, as shown in Fig. 1. The circular opening is, however, recommended. The front portion of the nest has no fixed bottom. Instead, there is a movable bottom or treadle, which is hinged at the back end (Fig. 1). To this

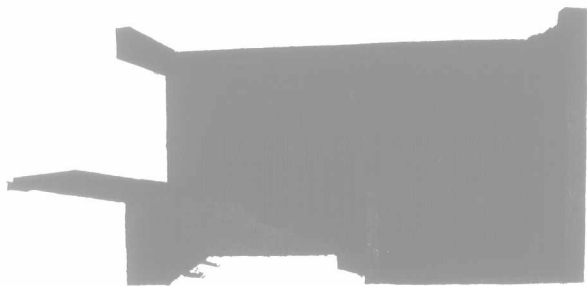


Fig. 2.—Trap Nest with One Side Removed. Nest Open.

treadle is hinged the door of the nest. The treadle is made of $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch pine, with hardwood cleats at each end to hold the screws which fasten the hinges. It is 12 inches wide, and $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. Across its upper face, just behind the hinges holding the door is nailed a pine strip 4 inches wide, levelled on both sides, as shown in Figures 2 and 3. The door is not made solid, but is an open frame, on the inner side of which is fastened a square of galvanized screening. The frame of the door and the cross-piece on which it rests are made of hardwood, as giving better

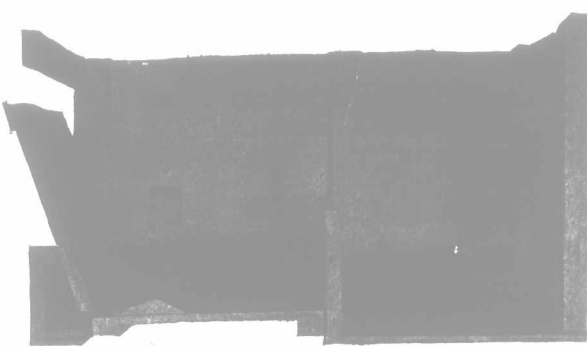


Fig. 3.—Trap Nest with One Side Removed. Nest Closed.

wear and smoother working than pine. The hinges used are narrow 3-inch galvanized butts, with brass pins, made to work very easily.

The points to be desired in a trap nest are:

1. It must be so constructed that it will be impossible for a hen to enter it without causing it to close and lock, whether the hen be a Bantam or a Leghorn.

2. The nest must be so constructed as to be

absolutely certain to lock after it has once been sprung, so that a second hen may not enter. To see seven hens and three eggs taken from the same trap nest at the same time, has been the experience with some styles of trap nests.

3. The nest must be so constructed that it will be impossible for a hen to lay in the front compartment (as they sometimes do) without causing the trap to operate.

4. To be ideal, a trap nest must be as simple as possible.

5. The nest should be durable, and not likely to get out of order.

The trap nest above described was devised to meet these requirements, and has been found to do so in a very satisfactory manner.

Government Crate-fattening in Saskatchewan.

During the past few years the Government of Saskatchewan have been doing a great deal for the farmer along dairy lines, by aiding companies in the erection of good buildings and finding suitable markets for the produce. In conjunction with this three fattening stations have been started for the purpose of getting farmers interested in poultry and educating them as to the proper methods of breeding, feeding and preparing birds for market. The Government runs these plants in much the same way as it does the creameries. Birds are taken in and an advance price is paid. When they have been fed for four to five weeks they are shipped to suitable markets and the farmer receives what is left after the expenses of fattening and shipping are deducted.

On October 22nd a meeting was held at Moosomin Fattening Station by the farmers of the district who were interested in that line of work, and W. A. Wilson, Superintendent of Dairying, gave an address and practical demonstration, which proved very interesting and profitable. The meeting was well attended, and the growers seemed quite satisfied over the work the station had done in the past.

"The great reason," says Mr. Wilson, "for taking up this system of fattening chickens is to educate producers along the right lines of breeding, feeding and preparing birds for market, so as to command the highest price. Farmers, as a rule, do not like to go into a system by which they do not see their way clear for good profits, and thus by helping a year or two we may get the poultry business in a position where the farm poultry-raiser can carry it on himself.

Three years ago, when we began this work, we only handled about 500 birds. Several reasons may be given for the low number of that year. The hatch was small, the season late, and farmers wished to see how the experiment worked before they went in for raising poultry to any extent. The first year proved a success, the growers receiving 19¢ per pound. As a result of that, last year we handled about 2,000 birds, paying 17¢. The price was lower last year, on account of a better supply of birds. This year we expect to handle nearly 4,000 birds.

The first year we received birds we did not make very much distinction, but took what we could get. Now the supply is larger, we sort our birds and make a difference of 3¢ per pound between good birds and poor ones. As the birds are brought in they are sorted and an advance price of 10¢ is paid for good feeders and 7¢ for those of poorer quality. This is one of the greatest ways we have of educating the producer, for, as you all know, when a man's pocket is touched he begins to wake up.

Conformation is one of the points we lay most stress upon. We have beef types and dairy types in poultry as well as in cattle. The beef type is what we want. The low-set chicken with short legs and well-covered breastbone takes less time to fit it for market. Birds of this type present a better appearance on the market than the high breastboned, long-legged chicken. As the supply becomes larger we will sort the birds we sell as well as the ones we receive. In this way the farmer who brings in poor birds will receive a low final price, as well as a low advance price. The first lot of chickens we fed cost 5¢ per pound for fattening, while last year the cost was lowered 1¢, in spite of the advanced price of feed. This shows that sorting brings in a better class of birds, which lowers the cost of fattening.

Our markets are established wholly upon the reputation of our birds. A sample crate is sent to the firm, and the birds sold according to the sample. There yet remains to be sent away the first crate to bring poor returns. Every firm speaks well of our quality. One firm in Vancouver, on receiving a sample crate, wired for 1,200 birds, and made a voluntary offer of 20¢ per pound. Price is a secondary consideration to a great bulk of our trade, providing quality is present, and any one who has eaten a crate-fattened bird knows how superior it is to any other.

Our feed consists of one part finely-ground oats, with the coarse hulls removed, to twelve parts of buttermilk, or mixed so as to give a thin