

## Popular Premiums.

This is the season when readers, both young and adult, can most readily obtain new subscribers for the "Farmer's Advocate." The growing popularity of the paper with farmers is shown by the splendid increases in our subscription list this winter; also by the growing demands on our space. To meet this and carry out our determination to give our readers the most complete and practical service possible, we are compelled for this issue again to enlarge the size of the paper. Show your copy to some friend who is not a reader, and he will appreciate its worth to the farmer and the home, and subscribe. We believe in encouraging our friends to do missionary work for the "Farmer's Advocate." No other periodical offers such valuable and useful premiums. Our full premium announcement is crowded out, but we call attention to a few of its most attractive features:

**THE FARMER'S POCKETKNIFE.**—The run on this premium was so great as to completely exhaust the consignment received from Sheffield, Eng., where they were specially made for us. So delighted are those who have received the knife that we decided to order another lot, which are now on the way from the manufacturer. It is a superb knife, with nickel handle, and can be secured by sending 2 new subscribers for the "Farmer's Advocate."

**BAGSTER'S TEACHER'S BIBLE.**—A truly magnificent volume, with flexible leather cover and useful S. S. helps; retailed for from \$2.50 to \$3.00. Can be secured for 2 new subscribers. Do not miss such a privilege.

**THE BRACELET AND PADLOCK.**—The beautiful silver filled curb-link bracelet and padlock for young ladies' wear is giving great delight to all who earn it by sending us 2 new subscribers; sterling silver bracelet for 3 new subscribers. Both are gems.

**FOUR FARMERS' PICTURES.**—The agricultural and live-stock public are appreciating as never before our offer of the four masterpieces—"Canada's Pride" (draft horses), "Canada's Glory" (light horses), "Canada's Ideal" (Short-horns), and "Canada's Columbian Victors" (Ayrshires)—for only 2 new subscribers, or any two of the four pictures for 1 new subscriber. Any or all of these engravings, properly framed, make a grand ornament for the home, and are an educator, creating a love for superior animals.

**A COLLIE DOG.**—A choice young pure-bred collie can be secured by sending us 12 new subscribers; or one of the WINNIPEG HEATERS (best drum ever made to save fuel and make the house comfortable in cold weather) for 10 new subscribers.

**GENTS' WATCHES.**—We offer a long list of watches for clubs of from 2 to 25 new names. Here are some of the most popular: Yankee Nickel, for 2 new names; Trump Nickel, 4 new names; Trump Gun Metal, 5 new names; No. 14 Silver, for 8 new names; and 7-Jeweled Elgin, in 3-ounce nickel case, for 10 new names.

**LADIES' WATCHES.**—Gun Metal, Swiss Chatelaine, for 4 new names; Sterling Silver, Swiss Chatelaine, 5 new names; Nickel American O. F., large size, 5 new names; Gun Metal American O. F., large size, 5 new names; and Nickel, small size, for 9 new names.

The above are all handsome watches and good timekeepers.

**BOOK PREMIUMS.**—Complete list of all standard works for farmers. For titles and terms, also for complete list of watches, see page 100, February 1st issue "Farmer's Advocate."

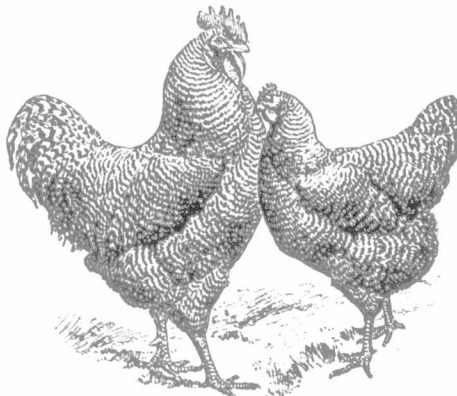
If you need a free sample copy of the paper to help you in getting subscribers, drop us a post card at once. Address:

FARMER'S ADVOCATE,  
London, Ont.

### Poultry: Selection of the Breed.

I do not wish to be understood as speaking slightly of our bird fanciers, for I believe we could not get along without them. They have made a special study of bird production, and have it down to a scientific point, and can produce almost anything they want.

A grave mistake that is continually being made is that a farmer buys a setting of pure-bred eggs or a trio of birds from Mr. X, a fancier of some repute, and straightway advertises pure-bred poultry for sale of such a strain of breeding. He is not able to distinguish between a standard bird and one that is off color,



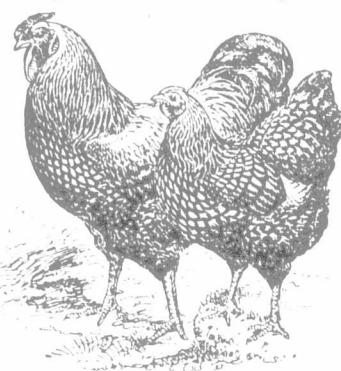
BARRED PLYMOUTH ROCKS.

and when one tries to show him the difference, one is met with the remark, "I bought the original stock or eggs from Mr. X, who had the best birds at all the leading shows." Mr. X, if he knows his business, will cull and cull, and is very careful in his matings, and understands the science of breeding. He will tell you that in his best breeding and mating there will always be birds that are not up to the standard, and must be sold for the table, and if he is an honest man he will not sell such birds for breeding. The fancier has a right to a fair recompense for his trouble, and when he asks what seems a big price for a bird, we must, as farmers, take into consideration the time and money expended in the production of first-class birds. Let us, then, give him a few dollars for his birds, and demand the best. Some fanciers are so short-sighted as to sell all they have, irrespective of quality, and thus damage their reputation, and may give as an excuse, "I told the party that the birds were not up to the standard."

A few days ago I saw two White Plymouth Rock cockerels that had been purchased in Eastern Ontario; my next neighbor has far better birds. I consider them a disgrace to the breeder, and shall not deal with that breeder if I know it. What agreement was made between the parties I do not know, save that the birds are far below the standard.

Now, the great difficulty is to settle on the best kind of hen for winter production of eggs. If eggs only are wanted, we might settle on some of the smaller kinds, but if eggs and meat are the objective point, then we must turn our attention to the larger breeds.

As I said before, I do not think any one breed is perfect, but I believe the Plymouth Rocks and Wyandottes are as near perfection as a general-purpose fowl as any we have. They are my favorites, and have justly earned the position, for I have tried nearly every breed, and I know whereof I speak; yet I have somewhat against them. If the Wyandottes were only a few pounds



SILVER LACED WYANDOTTES.

heavier and as good in other ways, I should consider them the ideal farmer's fowl. If the Plymouth Rocks would only lay more and not sit so often, then I would be much better pleased. I am aware that many persons claim that they have non-sitters in Plymouth Rocks, but I have never got hold of such birds. The Plymouth Rocks generally lay about a dozen eggs and then want to sit. True, they are easily broken up, but when there is a break of several days in the laying. Since we have incubators about perfect, I think it would be a good idea if our fanciers would turn their attention to producing non-sitters and greater egg-producers, with a little more meat on breast, and in the case of the Wyandottes, a heavier bird.

I have Wyandottes that will lay in November

and December, and right through the winter, spring and summer, till they commence to moult, and not offer to sit. Although some want to sit in the spring, I have never had one wanting to sit in the winter. The Wyandottes mature quickly, and will stand cramming better than any other kind.

I have Plymouth Rocks that are wanting to sit already; am just breaking up the third one this winter; they are last spring's birds. The Plymouth Rocks are a fine, large bird, good winter layers and mature early, and will stand considerable cramming.

J. B. POWELL.

### Mongrel or Pure-bred Fowls?

BY JOHN B. PETTIT.

People going into the poultry industry, whether it be upon a large or small scale, as a rule have their ultimate financial success in view when embarking upon the sea of chickendom. They are very few in number who go into it "for their health," but the mighty dollar is what prompts men to take up this work. To ensure this success much thought is given to sites, poultry-house plans, and breeds, and we find that the most success has attended those who have been extremely careful about these matters.

But there is a common error that the majority of farmers make, into which practical poultry-keepers do not fall, and that is the keeping of mongrel fowls. It is astonishing what foolish notions so many people have in their minds concerning the merits of fowls of this description. A good many claim that mongrels are more hardy than thoroughbreds, and, as a consequence, require less attention and care. What an extremely foolish idea to imagine that simply because a hen is a mongrel, the fact of its being so makes it more hardy. We will admit that at times we see pure-bred fowls that do not appear as healthy and hardy as some others that are a cross between a haystack and a sawhorse, but it is the consequence of improper or too close inbreeding, and not simply because they are pure-bred. Again, some claim that they will lay a greater number of eggs with less feed than will pure-breds. It may be that we do not just understand the term mongrel, but if we do, we have as yet failed to hear any satisfactory arguments to prove such statements, and we have never yet seen that class of birds excel as egg-machines.

While there are no reasons why we should continue raising mongrels, there are many reasons why we should discard our old whims and stock and spend our time upon something that may be improved, and in this short article we will attempt to make clear only a few of them.

Our first source of revenue from the flock is the supply of eggs. Some will say, "An egg is an egg." Certainly it is, but we have found out that there are many different sized, shaped and colored eggs, and also that these do not sell as well when all colors, shapes and sizes are mixed as when they are kept separate. In some markets dark-shelled eggs will bring two or three cents per dozen more than will white-shelled ones, while in other markets the direct reverse is the case. It stands in hand, then, to meet the demand of our market, and use the breed that produces the color desired. When we want white-shelled eggs, suppose, for instance, we take the Minorcas or the Leghorns. These will give us the color desired, and the Minorca will give us the largest egg in existence. Many breeds give us dark eggs, but probably Cochins give us the darkest. So when our birds are of one pure breed we can get the color desired and the eggs will nearly all be of uniform size and shape, and, as we all know, such can be, and are, sold at a higher price than eggs of every size, shape and color in one grand mixture.

The very same argument will apply to the sale of the carcass when the hen's work as an egg-producer is over and she is introduced to the hatchet. A pair of birds with nice white skin and yellow shanks will sell for a higher price any time than will a pair of the same size with one having the kind of skin and shanks mentioned and the other with a bluish-black skin full of black pin-feathers, and having black shanks.

Then, when we know we have a pure-bred flock it will not be very long before our neighbors and friends will know the fact also, and when they see that we are making larger profits out of our flock they will want some of the same stock. Then will be our chance to sell a few settings of eggs for hatching purposes. There is always a demand for eggs for this work, and, as a rule, they are sold at a figure much in advance of regular market eggs. And they are often sold at from \$3 to \$5 per dozen. And who ever heard of a man buying mongrel eggs to hatch a few cockerels therefrom to improve his pure-bred flock? Many do not care to go to the trouble of buying eggs of pure-bred fowls and hatching them themselves, but instead buy a cockerel or two to infuse new blood and improve their flock. Then you have a chance to sell a bird at from \$2 to \$10. Sometimes they go as high as \$100 for a single bird. But do we ever hear of a mongrel cockerel being sold at such a long price?

When feeding to produce eggs, if we have a