

PROFITS OF KEEPING FOWLS.

A correspondent of the "Boston Cultivator" says: Being rather skeptical about keeping fowls as a matter of profit, I was determined to make a trial. Accordingly I commenced the 1st December, 1860, with ten hens and a rooster, and kept an exact account of the food given them and the income. At the close of the year I find the account to stand as follows:—

146 dozen of eggs, average 15½ cents	
per dozen	\$22 39
10 chickens sold.....	3 12
10 " on hand, 25 cents each .	2 50
Total.....	\$28 01
Grain and potatoes fed to them.....	8 21

Balance in favour of fowls \$19 80

My hens were kept during the cold season in the basement story of a shop, which opened to the south, and the side fitted with windows. They were thus kept comfortable, and laid best through the coldest weather—laying during the months of January and February about 26 dozen of eggs.

I do not give this trial thinking it anything remarkable, but only to show that by proper treatment fowls may be a source of profit.

SOULANGES AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

To the President and Directors of the Agricultural Society of the County of Soulanges.

GENTLEMEN,—Allow me to congratulate you on the success of last year's operations, and in making a few observations and suggestions on the past and future, I trust you will not think that I am actuated by any motive but a sincere desire to see our society prosper and become useful to our county and country.

That agriculture and industrial enterprise of all kinds, being now freed from the baneful domination of the Feudal Tenure, have not sprung from under that load with the rapidity and vigour that was anticipated, is owing to many counteracting causes, unconnected with the salutary influences of that measure. A few of the most prominent I shall take leave to comment upon.

First, was and is the great indebtedness of the farmers. To liquidate these debts a forced and ruinous system of over-cropping is resorted to, which, of necessity, causes a rapid deterioration in the quality and productiveness of their lands. Then, the alteration of the usury laws, let loose a horde of money lenders; many trading on their own capital, others with money borrowed from the Trust and Loan Company at eight per cent, to be re-lent at fifteen, twenty and even twenty-five per cent. Of course no farming operations can ever cover these rates, and many of these Shylocks will, at the end of their term, find that they are in possession of more land than money. Of course, it must come to the hammer, and this result, though a cause of much distress and suffering, will ultimately improve the country. The negligent and unthrifty will be replaced by energy and capital free from a grinding interest and accumulated debt. Then, I expect, we shall have a better system of cropping, and

more attention will be paid to the quality of the stock raised, and a more careful husbanding of the manure made on the farm. This latter object must be the foundation of all good farming. Show me a man who is careful of his manure heaps, and you need not look into his barn to see the result.

With regard to the improvement of stock, I would suggest the following alterations in the by-laws of the society, in respect to stallions and bulls. That these should be shown on the 1st of May for inspection, and the prizes awarded, but not paid until the show in the following October, and proof given that the animal has been kept for the purpose intended. The proviso is now the same, but who will keep a horse or bull from October to the next season for the sake of the six or eight dollars, and so the present by-law has become a nullity. Each one sells his beast when he gets a chance, and the premium is thrown away.

In respect of horned cattle, we have made one effort in the purchase of a thorough bred Ayrshire bull, but we parted with him too soon. You all saw what an improvement there was in the young stock shown last autumn, but this will not continue if we have not a pure fountain to draw from, for it is a well known fact that a good breed, not to say pure stock, will run down much faster than you can improve it. The only way to prevent this falling back is continued crossing the grades with pure blood. It is not enough to get a good looking bull from here and there, if the object is to obtain thorough bred stock; you must have pure blood to cross grades with. See a very good article on this subject in the *Lower Canada Agriculturist* for January 1st, 1862. Would it not now be well to form two classes, one for native stock and another for grades? These were shown together, and the biggest took the prize without reference to form or blood.

Again the sheep were a disgrace to any country. Something should certainly be done to start an improvement in this class. Perhaps some of the harder breeds would be preferable to the Leicestershire. I see in other counties they generally have a junior class for ploughing. This is a very good arrangement and would be of great service here, where there is so much room for improvement.

Can nothing be done for the improvement of our winter roads? The farmers now loose from six pence to a shilling per bushel on grain from not being able to take their grain to market. They cannot drive into Montreal with trains, and they cannot use double sleighs in the country, as the roads are too narrow. I think a small tax on all winter vehicles having the horse straight before them would correct the evil. And now, in conclusion, let me add that if some counties surpass us in some things, we excel most in one respect, viz. we have no distinction of class or origin. No question is asked of who or what are you, but is the article produced the best? if so, you have the premium whether Saun or Gaul.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

H. ROBSUCK.