

Profitable Business of Poultry Raising in America

BY PROF. FREDERIC H. STONEBURN

POUTRY-KEEPING appeals to different people in different ways. To some it offers an opportunity to make productive the idle city yard or village plot, adding to the family income or reducing living expenses; to others, a chance to develop an independent business which will yield a good living and an opportunity to provide for future needs; by still another class it is regarded as a beautiful, interesting hobby, a recreation, which takes one out of doors and increases his efficiency in his regular occupation.

Almost every one can arrange to keep a few fowls, provided they are sufficiently interested to induce them to overcome the obstacles, if any, which confront them. For a modest beginning, but little land, capital and time are needed. If the right start is made the business may be developed as experience is gained and results warrant.

There are a great many people who are deeply interested in poultry husbandry, who really have a well-developed case of "chicken fever," who hesitate to begin actual work because they lack the necessary land, time, money or a knowledge of the subject. Let us discuss these in order.

Land.

The first is a serious consideration, but it affects only those living in large cities, and as a matter of it, only a portion of them. It is true that poultry-keeping is discouraged in the thickly settled parts of large towns and is even prohibited by law in certain of them. If one is so located he had better move to the outskirts of the city, where house lots are larger, or to the suburbs, where plenty of space is available. And at the beginning one does not need a very large plot of land. A backyard of liberal size will comfortably accommodate a goodly flock of fowls, certainly as large as is required to supply the home table or to be maintained as a hobby.

Time.

The busy man who leaves home in the morning and does not return until evening has only a limited amount of time that he can devote to this work. But this is not the serious drawback that it was a few years ago. We now have available perfected automatic appliances for hatching, brooding, feeding and watering poultry, machines which will do this work in a most satisfactory manner with but little attention on the part of the attendant. One can now run quite a plant, even if absent from it the greater part of the time.

Money.

It takes some ready money to provide accommodations for even a small flock and secure the birds themselves, but if one is content to make a beginning in a modest way, the necessary expenditure amounts to very little. In a very short time the fowls should begin to pay all running expenses of the little plant and return something of a profit, which may be devoted to expansion or improvement.

Knowledge.

Knowledge and experience are needed before any great success may be expected. The former may be secured through reading authoritative articles on the subject, from bulletins issued by various Government institutions and from talking with successful poultrymen. Many of our agricultural colleges offer short courses in poultry husbandry and helpful correspondence courses are available. This series of articles is designed to give practical "what-to-do-and-how-to-do-it" information, each instalment dealing with some seasonable subject.

The best way to gain the required experience is to actually begin work with the fowls, even if in the most limited way. Mistakes must be expected, but the lessons thus learned will be turned to good account in the future.

Preparation.

So much for those who wish to

In his current article Professor Stoneburn explains how best to make a start in poultry-keeping, according to the object to be attained. From week to week he will give our readers practical, dependable information and advice on all the activities of the poultryman, laying special emphasis upon how to make the business pay a profit.

In his following article, which appears next week, Professor Stoneburn discusses the various breeds and varieties of poultry and their prominent characteristics. This will serve as a guide to those about to make a choice.

merely establish a home flock. The inexperienced man who wishes to engage in poultry-keeping as an exclusive business can profit greatly from managing such a flock, but he requires much additional preparation before being qualified to successfully manage a commercial poultry plant. To such individuals I would give the following advice. If possible, take a course in poultry husbandry at one of the many institutions offering such courses, and then spend a year or two working on a successful profit-growing poultry plant. In any event, secure the benefit of the latter training and so learn how the successful men manage their establishments and how costly experiments and errors may be avoided.

In the Spring one may start a home flock at slight expense, through the purchase of a small pen of breeding birds, of eggs for hatching or baby chicks. But little equipment will be needed, especially if the hens are used to hatch the eggs and rear the chicks. Broody hens can usually be secured from nearby poultrymen, and after they have performed their work, they may be fattened and dressed for the table, or else retained for another season.

If a small breeding pen is obtained, some kind of a house or coop will be needed, but since the Winter season is past this need be neither large nor elaborate. A small, inexpensive portable house may be purchased or the handy man can rig up a satisfactory outfit from a piano box or two or some large packing cases. The fowls will pay no attention to architectural details. All they require is protection from the weather, plenty of fresh air and dry quarters.

Of course, a poultry yard will be demanded, but this may be a temporary affair made of ordinary poultry netting stretched on light stakes or posts. For house furnishings, as water dishes, feed boxes and nests, one may use discarded kitchen pans and dishes and small boxes from the grocery store.

Equipment.

During the long days of Summer there will be ample time to erect a better poultry house and yard and get everything shipshape for the Winter's work. (Subsequent contributions in this series will contain building plans and descriptions of poultry houses of the more popular types.)

The temporary outfit may not be beautiful, but it will serve its purpose and its low cost will often make possible a beginning in this line.

In many cases there will be available old poultry houses or other buildings which may be cleaned up and used for a time. One very successful poultryman provided quarters for his first flock by merely wiring in the

space underneath an elevated back porch.

For the sitting hens and their expected broods, comfortable coops may be made of packing boxes of moderate size which may be cheaply obtained at any large store. A covering of building paper will make these weather-proof for a season. Such coops are commonly used on many large poultry farms because of their low cost.

When making the initial purchase of mature stock, chicks or eggs, the beginner should exercise the greatest care. He should first make up his mind what breed and variety is best suited to his purpose, whether he is most interested in the fancy points or the producing ability of his flock, and then secure a strain in which the desired characteristics are well established.

Purchases.

It is a mistake to buy either eggs or stock merely because the price is low. Too often this means that the flock will be poor in quality, unproductive and unprofitable and this in turn may cause the amateur to become disgusted and give up the work. On the other hand, high prices do not necessarily mean that the stock is desirable or that the eggs were produced by birds of the desired standard. The beginner should secure the advice of an experienced poultryman in his neighborhood as to the sources from which to secure just what he needs, or else investigate the matter carefully and use his best judgment, based upon the information secured.

If birds of show type are wanted, place your order with some prominent specialty breeder of the selected breed or variety, some one whose stock has regularly won prizes in open competition at leading poultry exhibitions. It is not necessary to buy prize-winning specimens or eggs from the best blood of the strains that have demonstrated their excellence in open competition. Blood will tell, and the proportion of desirable youngsters bred from medium-grade birds of established strains is usually greater than among those bred by freak or chance birds of unusual excellence which have no real breeding.

The same applies to laying stock. The tendency toward great egg-production is inherited, and as there are so many bred-to-lay flocks in America, those who wish heavy-laying pullets should take full advantage of the work already accomplished.

Be sure that the parent flock is healthy and vigorous, as these qualities are greatly to be desired. See to it that the parents of your prospective chicks are free from such diseases as roup and white diarrhea, dis-

orders which will almost surely appear in their offspring.

If you cannot visit the plant from which you purchase eggs or stock, put these questions right up to the proprietor through correspondence. In the great majority of cases you will receive square treatment.

In conclusion: If you really want to keep chickens, make a beginning now. Start small; don't invest much until you have had a certain amount of experience, but make a start. You will never be entirely satisfied until you have tried it.

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The Plaintive Song of the Lazy Farmer

MY neighbor never seems to think his work will put him on the blink, and give him rheumatism; he slops around in slush and snow, to get the chores done up just so, and bed those calves of his. He's up before the break of day, a-throwin' down alfalfa hay, to feed his cows and steers; he warms the water and the swill, the pigs go at it with a will, they like it, it appears. When snow is blowing far and wide, his stock are comfortable inside, and go on getting fat; no matter what the weather is, he babies up that stock of his, and waits on them like that.

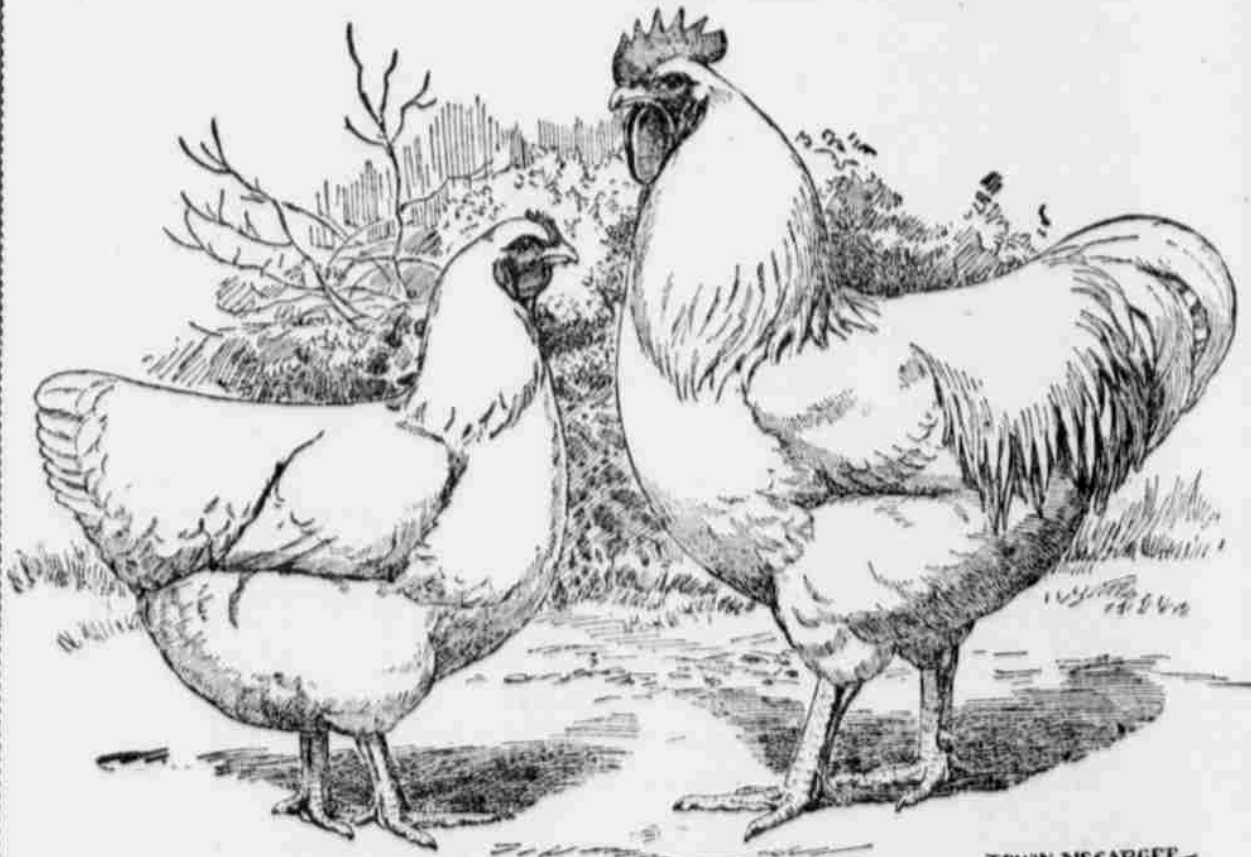
Now my old cows are hardy brutes, they live on cornstalks and on roots, instead of fancy hay; they never have a bite of corn, they get up early in the morn, and strike out in the snow; the cornstalks make nutritious feed, they're really all the old cows need, to give a good milk flow. Some days when it's too cold to thaw, I throw them out a little straw, to whet their appetite. They've got a nice barbed-wire yard, and when it freezes pretty hard, I let them in at night; then when the ice is frozen thick, I drill right through it with my pick, so they can get a drink. I don't spend all my time out there to give my cows the best of care, I want some time to think. This weather it feels mighty good, to have my wife bring in the wood, and build a roaring fire; hard work and worry do not pay, I sit and rest and smoke away, what more could I desire?—The Prairie Farmer.

In Propria Persona.

Mr. Johnsing—Say, Mr. Dorman, what am de meaning of dis here line in de ticket whar it says "Not transferable?"

Mr. Dorman—Dat means, B'rer Johnsing, dat no gen'leman am admitted unless he comes himself.—Exchange.

WHITE PLYMOUTH ROCKS.



EDWIN NEGARCEL
ARTIST

The White Plymouth Rock is unquestionably one of the best general-purpose fowls produced. It possesses unusual utility value, which appeals to commercial poultrymen, and its beauty makes it the idol of many variety, which is the parent of all Plymouth Rocks. The plumage color is pure white throughout. Bill, shanks and feet are yellow. The females are exceptionally good layers of brown-shelled eggs, and both sexes are fine table birds at all ages. The weights follow: Cock, 9½ pounds; hen, 7½; cockerel, 8; pul-