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All About Eggs

D. GUNN, BROTHERS & CO.

The importance of the egg trade is not sufficiently appreciated. American statisticians place the total value of the eggs produced in the United States in excess of that of dairy products, cotton, wheat, the mineral output or other staple industries of the country. The same may be said of Canada, although the industry is here carried on without the detailed publicity which characterizes other branches of the trade. As an article of food, especially for working people, the use of eggs could with advantage be extended. No other product can be as inexpensively and quickly prepared for the table, while few table products are capable of being served in such a variety of ways, and none offer more nourishment to the consumer.

The inhabitants of the British Isles appreciate more than any other people the value of eggs as food. In addition to the enormous consumption of domestic laid eggs, nearly $15,000,000 is spent each year in purchasing foreign supplies. France, Belgium and Denmark contribute more than two-thirds of this supply, and the monies received in the trade represent a great deal to the farmers and peasants of those countries. Although the consumption of eggs in Canada is capable of vast expansion, there will always be, as there is to-day, a surplus available for exportation. In competing for the egg trade of the United Kingdom it has always to be borne in mind that scrupulous care and pains must be exercised if the trade is to succeed. A fast steamship service and cold storage carrying facilities will do much to offset the advantage which Continental producers have over Canadians. But something more is required to win a good place for Canadian eggs in British markets, viz.—the unanimous co-operation of producers, merchants and exporters in marketing the eggs in the best possible condition.

It is the little things that often make or unmake great industries. We do not intend to offer any advice as to the best breeds of poultry, further than to say that farmers do not, as a rule, look after their poultry with that intelligence and care that is bestowed on other live stock of the farm. Experts tell us that by selecting only the best layers for breeders, and mating them to suitable pure breds, the average egg production of of whole flocks has in a few years been raised from 150 to 250 eggs per annum. In addition the size of the eggs has been increased, a very important item, as in the export trade it is essential that the eggs should average 1½ lbs. per dozen. When it is taken into account that competent authorities place the average yield of hens for a season in the Province of Ontario at less than 100 eggs, it will be readily seen how much is to be gained by paying more attention to the hennery. In this connection it is interesting to note that on March 18th, when a committee was in session considering a bill to amend the Weights and Measures Act, Mr. McMillan, of Huron, gave notice that when the bill came up again he would move in amendment that eggs be sold by weight, and that the standard weight of a dozen eggs be 1½ lbs. It is expected that the Bill will soon come up again for consideration.

The loss in the value of eggs offered in Toronto and other markets through careless handling, is each year considerable. The slightest crack renders the egg valueless for pickling or cold storage purposes, and when sold as 'checks' or cracked eggs, from two to three cents per dozen less than standard prices must be accepted. Collected from the nests in a haphazard way and carried over rough roads in an ordinary basket, there is usually considerable breakage before the eggs reach the store, where they run the chance of further loss by the handling of the merchant or his assistants. Loss in this way is inevitable so long as proper egg carriers are not used. These egg cases can be purchased at a very nominal figure, say twenty-five cents for a thirty-dozen case, and by careful usage will last for years.

"Keep the eggs clean," is the advice which every merchant would impress upon the owners of poultry. An abundance of straw in the hen house is not a heavy expense, and it is essential to a profitable market. If in spite of care the eggs should become dirty, then by no means wash them, as this process removes a glutinous covering from the shell and impairs their keeping qualities.

We do not pretend to be able to prophesy as to the course of the egg trade in Great Britain this coming season. It, however, does not require any prophetic gift to make a forecast of large receipts and comparatively low values the season through. The prospects are that in the British Isles the production of eggs will be larger than ever, while in addition to the usual supplies from France, Belgium and Denmark, a phenomenal movement of eggs from new sources in Russia is predicted. Although these egg are inferior to those of Canada and cannot be shipped to Great Britain under as advantageous conditions, they must be counted as entering into competition with our product and will, beyond doubt, have an adverse effect upon market values. Last year, it will be remembered, the Americans made a somew at spirited bid for the export trade, and it is estimated that they sent more than a million dozen eggs to Great Britain. This year it is reasonable to expect very large shipments from the United States, as last year's operations were in the nature of an experiment. Egg dealers in that country have suffered serious losses for a number of seasons by the cold storage of eggs, and now prefer to divert a portion of their stocks to British markets.

Neither the Provincial nor the Dominion government has provided statistics as to the production of eggs in Canada, and it is impossible to compare, with accuracy the present situation with that of past years. Our government agricultural officials might render great service to the trade if they would turn the present organization for the collection of farm statistics to secure more complete and better classified returns as to poultry and products. Our own observations lead us to believe that there will be material increase in the output of eggs this year, and offerings are now much larger than at the same date in previous years.

What are the lessons to be drawn from the experiences of past seasons and the prospects for the present season? In addition to care, intelligence and promptness in marketing on the part of producers and merchants, eggs should be purchased at a reasonable basis of prices. In the large centres of production in the United States dealers are now paying seven cents per dozen for eggs, and count on purchasing the bulk of their supplies at six cents per dozen. The low price of corn in the western States has enabled poultry men to feed it with good results. The interests of producers and merchants in Canada will be best conserved by an absence of exaggerated values at the opening of the season, which must lead later in the summer to a reaction and consequent demoralization of the markets. The following table will show the prices of eggs at New York and Toronto at the end of March, during the past eight years:

	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898
Toronto	16c	14c	17c	16c	15c	16c	11c	10c
New York	24½	14½	18	14½	15	11½	10½	10

Recently Mr. H. F. Hoover, of North Bruce, left at the Times office, Port Elgin, two or three samples of the eggs of snakes. When they were opened the young snake was found to be well developed, about six inches long, and quite natural looking in every respect. The eggs were found in a low, marshy piece of ground on the farm of Adam Maas. They were the first of the kind that many who saw them had ever seen and were a study to an amateur naturalist if there were any of of such.

One day lately, when the river was lined with ice, a dog belonging to Mr. J R. McCrae fell into the water in the rear of the Cockburn block, and was unable to get out. It swam up and down the stream a few times, trying at different places to get upon the ice only to fall back again into the water. At length a rescuer appeared upon the ice. It was a little dog belonging to the boy, Solomon Collins, who is well known in the village. The dog seemed to take in the situation at once, and going to the edge of the ice, it grabbed the struggling dog by the back of the neck and pulled him out.—Campbelford Herald.

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Societies

A O U W meets every first and third Monday in each month, in their lodge room, Christoe's block, Flesherton, at 8 p m. Jas Blakeley, W M; A M Gibson, Recorder; W Bellamy, Financier. Visiting brethren invited.

PRINCE ARTHTR LODGE, No 333. A A M, meets in the Masonic hall, Drake's block, Flesherton, every Friday on or before the full moon. R McGill, W M; W J Bellamy, Secretary.

COURT FLESHERTON, I. O. F. meets in Christoe's Block the last Friday evening in each month. Visiting Foresters heartily welcome. T. Henry, Chief Ranger, W. A. Armstrong, Secretary.

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M D S, D D S, L D S,
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L G CAMPBELL
L D S, D D S, Dental Surgeon, Markdale
Office over McCullough & Young's bank. Hours—8.30 a m to 6 p m. Visits Flesherton the second and fourth Thursday of each month. Office at Munshaw's hotel

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