

THE POULTRY YARD

BIG PROFIT IN HENS

That the egg industry affords an excellent opportunity for investment is the opinion of Prof. M. M. Hastings, scientific assistant animal husbandry office of the agricultural department at Washington. The best estimates available indicate that the income from poultry products is one of the four or five most important sources of the agricultural wealth of the nation. The proof of this statement is attributed to the fact that the price of eggs for the last ten or twelve years has shown not only an absolute rise, but a relative rise, when compared with the general average of values of either farm crops or food products.

One of the principal requirements generally considered is the degree of freshness. The rule, however, is sometimes variously applied. An egg forty-eight hours old that has laid in a wheat shock during a warm July rain would probably be swarming with bacteria and be absolutely unfit for food, while another egg stored eight months in a first-class cold storage room would be of much better quality. For food all fresh eggs are practically equal. The tint of the yolk varies somewhat, being more yellow when green food has been supplied the hens. The flavor of the egg is also influenced by the food given to the hen.

Particular attention is called to the loss sustained by reason of dirty eggs, broken eggs and fertile eggs exposed to heat. The loss of eggs that are actually rotten forms only about 1 to 2 per cent of the year's output.

The farmer receives 15 cents for a dozen eggs, the shipper $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cent, freight $1\frac{1}{2}$ cents, receiver $\frac{1}{2}$ cent, jobber $1\frac{1}{4}$ cents, candling 2 cents and gross profit to retailer 4 cents, making a dozen eggs cost the New York consumer about 25 cents.

The high price of strictly fresh eggs is counterbalanced by the price at which cold storage can be secured.

"The industry as a whole," Professor Hastings says, "is of great benefit to both the egg producer and the egg consumer. It has tended to level prices throughout the year and has resulted in a large increase in the fall and winter consumption of eggs. This means a larger total demand and a consequent increase in price."

THE UNSPOKEN CODE

Lane was becoming desperate. Dorsett's offer seemed his last chance. Luck had been against him in this long fight for fortune and—Dorothy.

He realized that she was not the kind of woman who would have forced this struggle upon him, or who would have demanded that he prove his metal; yet he would not go to her empty-handed.

"Are you sure it's a safe thing?" he inquired.

Dorsett regarded him through half-closed, speculative lids. "I've placed all I have in it," he replied. "But as a favor, a personal favor, I'll let you in."

"For how much?"

"For two thousand."

Lane straightened his shoulders and a quick flush sprang to his face. "It seems a square proposition," he jerked out. "Count me in."

A month later he stood before Dorothy, white-faced and grim. His gaze lingered wistfully upon her slender loveliness and he shrank from the sweet confidence of her gray eyes.

"I'm not going to hold you to that promise, little girl," he said, bitterly.

"What do you mean?" she breathed.

"I trusted a friend and lost every dollar I had."

Her eyes flashed for a moment with keen resentment. "And do you think that I"—she hesitated. "How are you estimating me, dear?" she asked more gently.

"I'm not going to tie you to a failure."

Dorothy laughed with a suggestion of raillery. She surveyed his broad shoulders and the firm, square chin, then laughed again. "A failure at 28!" she taunted. "You haven't even begun to pay the price of success yet. Nor have I begun to tire of—waiting. When I do I'll let you know." She



Jane and the Bunnies—Amateur Photo by Mrs. G. M. Dodds

spoke slowly with a sweet, deliberate candor.

He stooped and gently kissed her lips. "After that," he cried, "I can't fail; no man could. But waiting comes hard. I want you badly, little one."

On his way home he met Dorsett. They faced each other moodily. Dorsett extended his hand.

"I'm sorry, old man," he said unsteadily. "I was a scoundrel, but I was hard pressed."

Lane flung aside his hand and laughed bitterly. "Sorry!" he goaded. "You!"

When he reached his rooms he found Bruce Wyman awaiting him.

"Let me in on that new scheme of yours, will you, Lane? I have a few odd thousand. Dorsett told me he thought you'd be willing to sell out."

"Has he been talking to you about it?" demanded Lane.

"Yes, it's a great proposition."

Lane grew white to the lips. Here was a chance to retrieve. A turn of luck at the last moment. It meant a push toward success. But what else did it mean? The thought of Dorsett's outstretched hand and his broken words flashed before him: "I was hard pressed." Lane also was hard pressed. The woman he loved was waiting—too long.

"It's a sure thing, isn't it?" Wyman asked.

"Nothing's sure," parried Lane, tensely.

"Come, old chap," tempted Wyman. "Do a fellow a good turn. I need it badly."

"Why are you so willing to take Dorsett's word?" Lane jerked out.

"I'm not. He showed me proof. That stock will double its value in a month."

"You'll not hold me responsible if it falls?"

Wyman hesitated. "Why, it is a good investment, isn't it? It must be; he's got Sherman to back it."

Still Lane fenced. "I'll think it over," he conceded huskily. "Come again tomorrow."

After Wyman had gone he paced the room with set lips, then suddenly he shifted the burden. "I will tell Dorothy. She must decide."

The next day he went to her. She greeted him with a sweet confusion,

Her sleeves were rolled above the elbow and there was a smudge of flour upon her cheek.

"I'm practicing," she confessed, shyly. "I know I shall just love it."

"What?" he questioned, with stupidity.

"Doing things. Sweeping, sewing, baking. I can, too." Then she laid her head against his arm. "Let's not—wait, dear," she whispered. "We'll win out—together."

He caught her hands, seeking the downcast eyes. When she raised them he met her steady, earnest gaze with a quick drawn breath. Could he voice such a question to her? Would she be willing to accept success, wrought by another man's wreckage? A flash of shame tingled his cheek. There was no need to ask her. In her presence he was humiliated by his previous hesitation. He knew instinctively that she would have demanded an instant decision. With her there could have been no compromise with honor.

"Yes, Dorothy, little woman," he said tenderly, "you're right. I need you by my side to help me fight square. I'm not a rich man, dear, but we'll be far from poor."

He felt by the quick pressure of her hand that she understood something of his meaning. The warm contact of her

fingers stirred him with strength. He was no longer tempted and marveled at his own despicable reluctance to play fair.

He did not wait for Wyman's visit, but sought him immediately.

"Better keep out, o'd man," he said. "I can't sell and I advise you not to buy from Dorsett."

"Way?" demanded Wyman.

Lane met his eyes squarely, but did not speak.

Wyman had understood. "Thanks," he said simply.

Then Lane went to Dorsett. It was perhaps the hardest task he had ever set himself. He found him white and haggard.

"I refused your hand last night," he said bluntly. "I'll take it now. I know what you had to fight. You were hard pressed and you didn't have—her!"—Boston Post.

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