

Poultry Department

all of the rat poisons are good, so is arsenic, strychnine and barium carbonate; but they must be varied frequently as well as being alternated with traps for the rats are very cunning and only a few can be exterminated before they discover the means employed and avoid it. The "out of sight" snap trap is effective for a while and so is the water barrel with the tip up section in the middle of the cover.

As the selection of a good breeding cockerel is a matter to be considered at this time, I clip the following from Jas. Shackleton in the Pacific Poultryman:

The males should be thoroughly masculine. They should have larger heads than females, quite a different and masculine eye, quite a different and masculine voice. They should be valorous and protective of the females' good rather than their own greed. They should fight if the females are attacked by vermin or dogs or humans.

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I Was Wrong.

Well, I had it handed me, and I guess it serves me right. My intentions were good but I didn't stop to consider and took up the cudgels for another party whom I thought to be getting the worst of it and—oh well, what's the use? I got it and I guess it was coming to me all right.

It happened this way: Last month the Pacific Poultryman pitched into the Western Washington Experiment Station for selling day old chicks in large quantities, very large quantities too, in opposition to the men regularly engaged in that business—following it as a means of livelihood in fact. I thought the editor of the Poultryman must be misinformed, and I said so in these columns; said it pretty emphatically too; and now he comes back at me like this:

"In order to maintain the high standard of accuracy with which the poultry editor of The Ranch gracefully credits us, we feel called upon to say something that will substantiate the editorial referred to.

We hold Mr. Blanchard in high esteem and are not willing to concede that whatever he might have done in the line of competitive commercial business, was done with any thought of wrong doing. But the fact remains that the experiment station has been conducting a commercial poultry business, and on rather a large scale; and the editor of The Ranch would not have to go outside his own bailiwick to find customers of the station—and mightily dissatisfied ones at that.

It has been reported to us from many sources that the Puyallup station has been selling day-old chicks at eight and ten cents each, and cockerels at \$1.50 each; and while it seems to us there should not be but little—if any—surplus stock to sell, it ought to go to the markets instead of being sold for breeding purposes in competition with poultry breeders who depend upon their sales for their livelihood."

There is more of it, which I regret the lack of space to print here, and the worst of it is, its right, and I got it wrong. When visiting the Puyallup fair last week the whole bunch of Pierce county poultry breeders went for me about it and, with great unanimity, denounced the attitude of The Ranch in the matter and declared the Poultryman to be right and extremely moderate in its statements; and, as the station is located in their county, they doubtless know what they are talking about.

That isn't the worst of it either. Acting upon the Poultryman's hint, a little scouting in the vicinity of Kent brought to light some customers of the station who had contracted for thousands of chicks from the station, at what I consider a most unprofitably low rate, and who had suffered great loss from the failure of the station to deliver the chicks within many weeks of the dates specified in the contracts. The contracts were fulfilled—or rather not fulfilled—in most unsatisfactory manner in other respects and in consequence two of the largest and, in other seasons, most successful chicken ranches in King County will be without laying pullets this winter, having been stocked with August hatched pullets from another hatchery in a desperate effort of the owners to retrieve some of their loss.

Having said this much in justification of, and in apology to the Pacific Poultryman, I propose to let the

matter drop and I hope the editor of the Poultryman will do the same. The station should not be condemned too strongly for what appears to have been only a mistake of policy or error of judgment. Nothing would convince me that opposition to the professional poultry breeders was intended and, as the contracts made by the station seem not to have been fulfilled satisfactorily anyway, no great harm has been done the professional breeders after all, and they seem to be the ones who are doing the most of the complaining. No doubt when the station has been a little longer established and gets down to practical experiment work, much good will be accomplished by it and the very men who are kicking the hardest now will then be its most loyal supporters.

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