

578. In the Poultry Department of the Central Experimental Farm, which is in charge of the Poultry Manager, there are fourteen of the most serviceable standard breeds of fowls with which experimental work—with the view of finding out the best egg-layers and flesh formers—is carried on. Particular effort is made to find out the breeds which give the best egg yield in the winter season, at the least cost. It is in the winter season that high prices are given for the new laid article, and it should be the aim of the farmer to make his hens lay at that time rather than in the late spring, or early summer, when prices are low. Crosses of the different thoroughbreds are made with the same object in view. Particular care is also given to the hatching and rearing of chickens, the treatment and foods best calculated to cause vigorous and rapid growth, and record is kept of the weight development of the offspring per month, so as to show which thoroughbreds, or crosses, give the most satisfactory results as rapid flesh formers for market, or table fowls, in the shortest time. Attention is also given to the behaviour of the different breeds during the long winter term of artificial existence, and every effort is made to have the conditions of that period as like the natural as possible. Some valuable data have been secured which will be found in the reports issued from year to year. Experimental work is at present carried on with the following breeds, viz. :—

EGG LAYERS AND FLESH FORMERS.—Barred and White Plymouth Rocks, Silver Laced and White Wyandottes, Coloured Dorkings, Light Brahmas, Langshans, Houdans, White Javas and Crosses of the Plymouth Rock and Coloured Dorking and Indian Game and Langshan.

FOR EGG PRODUCTION ONLY.—White Leghorns, Black and White Minorcas and Andalusians.

The conditions, as to housing, rations, care and management, are the same in all cases.

There is yet a large field for further extension of experimental work in trial of the different methods of artificial hatching and rearing of chickens, so as to have them early and on the market when they are worth most ; caponizing ; the hatching and rearing of broilers ; the grouping of pullets of the same age to be placed on rations of different composition ; the best plan of winter house arrangement so as to prevent egg eating, feather picking and other vices which poultry are addicted to when kept in close confinement, also regarding the diseases of poultry. Much information has already been given on most of these subjects in the annual reports of the Poultry Manager.

579. When the Central Experimental Farm was acquired sixty-five acres of land were set apart for an Arboretum and Botanic Garden. During the past seven years the planting of this section of the farm with trees, shrubs and perennial plants has made much progress, special attention having been given to the obtaining of as many of the trees and shrubs native to Canada as possible, and such species and varieties from other countries as were likely to prove hardy enough to endure the climate here. A large proportion of the native trees have now been secured, and many of the shrubs and perennial plants, most of which are doing well. A large number of species and varieties have also been introduced from other countries, such as the United States, the colder parts of South America,