

and breakages. The case is made in such a way that there is free circulation of air through it at all times. The eggs are carried in a special chamber at a temperature of about 34° F.

It was realized that if these eggs were to hold their own against other competing countries a high standard of quality was the first essential. There being no regulations to enforce compulsory grading, an arrangement was made between the Department of Agriculture and the Poultry Association whereby the whole of the grading, testing, packing, &c., was carried out under the supervision of the Department's Poultry Instructors. As the eggs came from the producer they were first unpacked and graded. All eggs found to be under 2 oz. in weight, or with dirty shells or of bad shape, were rejected. The good eggs were then passed on for testing. The testing is carried out by placing the egg before a strong electric light, which is contained in a small box. In the latter there are two apertures barely the size of an ordinary egg. The operator takes an egg in each hand and places them before these apertures. By this means the internal quality can be at once detected. All eggs with large air-cells (indicating staleness) are rejected, while addled eggs or those containing pale yolks or blood spots are also discarded.

By this examination it was ensured that the eggs contained in these trial shipments were of excellent quality, good size, and clean and inviting in appearance. In addition they were carefully packed, while the case itself bore a well-got-up, attractive appearance. The loading on board ship was carried out in a most careful manner by those in charge of the work. Therefore, if the eggs retain their good qualities during transit in the cool chamber, there should be everything in favour of their opening up at their destination in a satisfactory condition.

The next question, and one which is of the greatest importance, is whether or not the experiment will prove a financial success. Information bearing on this matter will be anxiously awaited by poultrymen generally.

It is pleasing to note that the egg-circle agents and others who were entrusted with the arrangements for the shipments on behalf of producers at the four centres did everything possible to help myself and assistants in having the work of grading, &c., carried out to a high standard. One of the worst features in connection with the work was the large number of inferior-quality eggs sent by producers to the collecting-depots. With a view to eliminating weaknesses likely to crop up in this respect, the Department recently issued a bulletin (reprinted from the *Journal* of July last) setting forth in a clear manner the class of eggs required for export and those that were unsuitable. This bulletin was distributed gratis to producers, but, judging by the very large number of poor eggs sent forward to some depots, it is questionable if many even took the trouble to read it. Unfortunately, the trouble was not confined to a few producers, but to all but a small minority. Some shocking examples of how not to market eggs were observed when sorting out the various lines. For days it was not uncommon to see from 50 to 70 per cent. of the eggs that came forward rejected, chiefly because they were undersized, stale, or in a dirty condition. It must be admitted that few overripe eggs were sent in, so that the great bulk of the rejected eggs were quite fit for human consumption. Some allowance might be made for a few small eggs finding their way to the collecting-depots, but there is no reason whatever, except carelessness on the part of the producer, for the large number of dirty-shelled eggs that came to hand. Thousands of eggs of the desired size, and wholesome in every other respect, had to be rejected for no other cause. Yet it is safe to say that, with few exceptions, they were deposited by the hen in a clean, fresh condition. Of course, all poultrymen were not alike in this respect so far as the export eggs were concerned, for at each centre lines of eggs were to be seen which were a credit to the producer. It was a pleasure to handle such eggs. Indeed, some lines were so good that with the exception of an odd egg containing a blood spot or a crack (which was no fault of the producer) the whole of the eggs in the line were ready for packing in the export cases. This is how it should be.

Another unsatisfactory feature of the whole business is that the cost of handling, such as unpacking, testing, grading, &c., must be borne by the smaller margin of eggs passed for export. Mistakes—indeed, costly mistakes—have been made which cannot be rectified now, and care should be taken that these are not repeated. If one man can send forward his eggs in a well-graded, clean condition, then surely others can do likewise. If further shipments are to be made, each producer must be made to realize his responsibility. Above all, he should be made to understand that the work of removing dirt from his eggs should be done at home