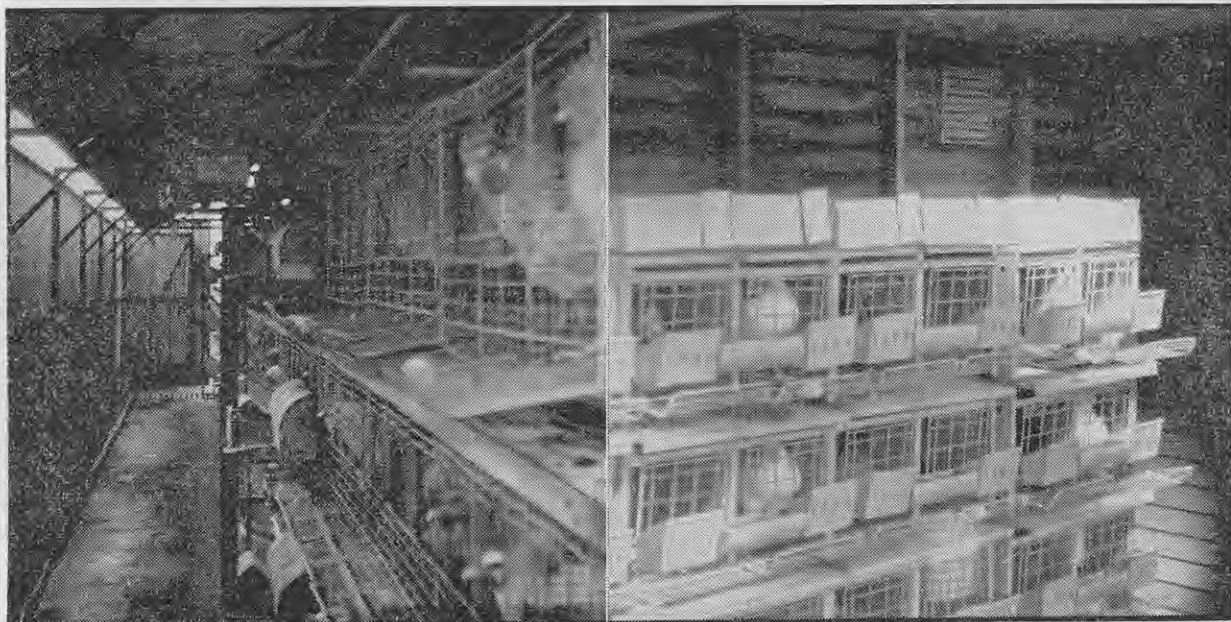


Commercial Egg Production in Britain



IN the first article of this series on poultry husbandry in Britain in the February issue of the "Journal" F. C. Bobby, Superintendent, Poultry Industry, Department of Agriculture, Wellington, described the poultry industry organisation and referred to poultry breeding practices in Britain. This article describes the practical aspects of table egg production and refers to the changes in management methods which have taken place in the last 10 years.

TWO features of commercial egg production in Britain at present as compared with, say, 10 years ago are the greatly increased use of crossbred pullets and the marked swing toward management under intensive conditions as opposed to the use of the semi-intensive and free range systems.

Crossbred Pullets

The introduction of sex-linked crosses in poultry was a breeding development which gave the first real impetus to the use of crossbred birds for egg production. In particular the Rhode Island Red cross Light Sussex proved most popular before the Second World War, as the brown pullet proved to be a good laying bird when satisfactory parent stock was used, and the white cockerel could be turned into a profitable table bird. In addition the sex-linked inheritance for colour permitted the separation of the sexes at a day old.

With the establishment of chick sexing by the Japanese manual method as a routine practice for separating the sexes of chicks at a day old the importance of sex-linked inheritance for colour was appreciably lessened.

Laying battery cages for poultry. Above left—The cafeteria system of cage feeding. Note the opening between the wall and the eave of the roof. A development of this type of house would be suitable for use in most parts of New Zealand. Above right—Cages with fixed feeding equipment. Below—Less elaborate battery house.

