

then, that while specials are regarded in this light, any system permitting inferior birds to win over the superior in a show is very wrong. This is the case in a great number of instances as shows are now conducted.

One evil leads to another in this matter. The principal cause of this state of things is found in the nature of the prizes offered. A glance at the special prize lists of many of our shows will convince that a majority of the specials are in fowls or eggs. While the value placed on these articles on the list may not be in excess of what anyone in need of them might be willing to pay, the chances are ten to one that the breeder of the variety on which the eggs or fowls may be put, does not want them at all, and, under these circumstances, would not be willing to give the society's fee and pay the express charges on them to his yards. It cannot be wondered at, therefore, that the competition is not keen for such prizes, and that in so many cases the owners of the best birds in the class will not enter for them, so they go begging, as it were, to some one who does place some value upon them. Thus may specials fall to birds not placed in making the regular awards.

The most simple way of remedying this evil is to do away entirely with the offering of fowls and eggs as special premiums, and let the special awards follow those of the society, as far as possible, that is, the first prize bird or birds to take the special also, the society deducting the usual percentage.

Another objectionable feature is the manner of donating the specials. For instance: A. has a splendid cock bird of a certain variety, and B. a splendid bird of another variety, both sure winners. A gives a cash special, specifying that it be put on the class and section to which B's bird belongs, and B does the same for A. We cannot say there is anything wrong in this, but in reality it is not giving specials, but loaning or placing them on exhibition. The competition for these specials is never heavy, as fanciers generally feel that it is not the expectation of the donors that any one can successfully compete with either one or the other, in this particular case.

Specials, in our opinion, should be donated to the society without being hampered with any restrictions, and should be placed by the executive as they think best for the interests of the society and the fancy. Even if the sums then given were small, the society would be able to place them so that the competition would be greater than by the present plan. If each fancier who has birds to exhibit in a class would contribute a small sum to form one or more special prizes for that variety, the competition would be made keen, and the specials

then won would be worthy of more distinction as they would seldom go by default.

In the awarding of specials for large collections, there is often room for dissatisfaction. The collection of one fancier may be made up of the most popular breeds, and all though he may have had to win his prizes against very strong competition. The collection of his opponent may be even larger, but composed principally of such varieties as are not popular, consequently they do not provoke as much competition and are awarded a great number of prizes. It does not seem to us either in the interest of the societies or the fancy, that in such cases the special must of necessity go to the collection that takes the most prizes. The competition against which the prizes are won should be considered, and have a good deal of weight with the judges in making their awards, or those varieties in which there is little or no competition be barred from the count.

We hope to see better specials offered in the future than there have been in the late past, and such legislation that it will be impossible for any but the best birds to win them.

Give the Chicks a Run.

We do not mean a *run* in the ordinary sense of that term, as applied to poultry quarters, but we mean a release from the necessary confinement to pens and cages during the day, to which most broods must be subjected. Indeed, there is scarcely any flock so large that it might not be indulged in at least a half hour's liberty toward nightfall. The eagerness with which this favor is seized by every individual, old and young, shows how grateful it is to the captive birds, whose wild, natural condition is unlimited freedom. Even when chickens are confined to save them from the ravages of hawks and other enemies it is safe to open their doors for an hour before sunset; and if your presence is needed to secure their safety you will feel amply repaid for your watch by observing the wild delight with which they hail the opening of their prison doors. Children let out of school on a summer's afternoon are no objects for comparison. The leaps, the short flights, the eager running this way and that, the seizure of gravel and grass, and the rush after insects, make it a scene of such enlivening interest that you come to watch for it yourself as well as the chicks, and you are tempted to prolong the hour till the little creatures themselves become so tired and sleepy that they are glad to crawl back to their sheltered quarters and "lie down to pleasant dreams." We do not envy any man his disposition who looks with carelessness or contempt on the *little things* that add to the cheerfulness and comfort of any life, human or animal.—*Poultry World*.