

Strains of Poultry.

The intending purchaser of poultry generally think it necessary to enquire from whose strains the bird were obtained. This question is often put by the initiated with a definite purpose, viz. to avoid *mixing up* different strains; but more often it is asked from a vague idea that for success in poultry breeding there is nothing like crossing as many strains as possible. As a rule, the answer given to such queries, save by really careful breeders, are very misleading and unsatisfactory, from the real ignorance of most poultry keepers of the antecedents of their stock. The sender has, perhaps, had eggs from a yard, some of the birds of which came in the eggs from the celebrated yards of Mr. So and So. They are therefore called of his strain, though possibly the eggs which originally went out of the famous yard were laid by birds which had only just come into it! We are not, however, dealing with the chances of that part of the question, but are presupposing that the eggs or birds really come from their represented strains.

It is a well known fact that fresh blood must *at times* be introduced to keep up the vigour of any race. This principle has been exaggerated into the belief that constant "changes" as people call them, are necessary. No greater mistake can be made; the idea must be discarded by any one who wish to breed scientifically, that is who wish to acquire and keep up a breed with certain definite characteristics of *form and feather*. It is, we believe, a fact that almost every fancier who has established what may be called a strain of his own has obtained it either by originally purchasing a considerable number of birds from one good yard, and breeding judiciously from them, or by selecting particular families from among his own birds, in which he has observed certain excellence hereditary, and mating selected birds from these families together up to a certain point. The former course is probably the shorter route to former, but the "goodwill" and stock of a famous yard are seldom bought for little. The latter takes time; but it is the method most suitable to the true fancier, and ever full of interest to watch the gradual development of peculiar beauties in individual birds, and to trace them among their descendants. We have done it with several breeds, and to us half the charm of watching the daily growth of the young stock rests in observing their strange likeness to ancestors of the third and fourth generation back, often some famous winner, perhaps the very father or mother of the race seems veritably to live again in a descendent. As in old family portraits looking down upon succeeding generations, the very image of themselves; so, to, in birds have we seen marvellous resemblances, combs, feet, movements ex-

actly like those of some favorite of past years. The possession of a strain that year by year may be relied upon almost unerringly to produce stock of the highest merit, and of one particular, type is something to be proud of; it is what money can hardly procure, it is the result of much care, accurate observation, and generally of a retentive memory. We do not consider that a fancier who procures a cock from one yard and a few hens from another, mates them, and is fortunate to win a few prizes with their produce, has any right to talk about his "strain." Success for a year or two may be the result of a lucky hit, and may reflect little credit on the breeder.—*C, in J. of H, and C. G.*

To be continued.

Canadian Poultry Association.

Editor Review,

I am glad to see that my remarks in January number were the means of producing an article from the pen of friend Gibson. He takes hold of it in good shape, and promises to give his strong support. Now, Ontario fanciers, we wish to hear from you. To you will belong the honor of the formation of this society. Jealousy has been the ruin of many worthy projects sprung by Canadians, but because Upper and Lower Canada could not agree as to whom the credit should belong, they have fallen through. In this case we wish to establish an association, one of the objects of which will be to dispense with that commodity, and in its place supply good-will and unity.

Every month I am more and more convinced of the necessity of this association. Were you to ask any of our fanciers down here who Sharp Butterfield was, they would tell you they did not know; and you could not blame them. What common interest has Nova Scotia and Ontario in the poultry fancy at the present time? Sharp Butterfield, (excuse me, Mr. Butterfield, for being so familiar, but by the fraternity thus I think you are called,) if I am creditably informed, is one of the best judges of poultry on this continent; and what can be said of him can be said of very few of our American cousins, he is an honest judge. He has judged a number, in fact the larger number, of the Upper Canadian shows, but down here we know but little of him, and would know still less had we not your valued REVIEW to instruct us in these matters.

Ontario is far ahead of all the other provinces in the fancy, and thus has the precedence. Wake up, then, brethren, and let us hear from you! Your words will carry weight, and whatsoever you may think proper will receive attention. If you are opposed to the formation of such an association, put your reasons and arguments before the public, and let them be met and answered; are you in fa-