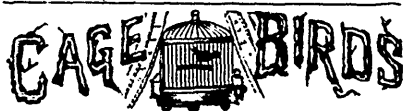


make his name famous in the annals of the Silver grey. In regard to the breeding and-pairing of this variety, as of all others, it is well to remember that in most cases like produces like; therefore procure specimens for your breeding stock as near perfection as you can get them. However, it is to those who cannot procure such I preface my remarks, and in them will endeavour to show how, by careful selection and pairing, good results may be obtained.

(To be continued.)



THE BREEDING AND MANAGEMENT OF CANARIES.

BY G. H. D.

(Continued.)

BREEDING.

Having previously (about the beginning of January) selected the birds you intend to breed with, and given them as much room as possible for exercise, with an occasional treat in the way of a little egg food now and then, and a little extra mixed seed, you may about the end of March or beginning of April, according to the state of the weather—but don't be in too great a hurry—place your hens in the breeding-cage. If you intend to run two hens with one cock you can put the two hens together, so that they may become used to each other; but if you think of putting one cock to each hen, which I think is the best way, put in your slides (I am supposing you are using a four-pair-cage). My own are made of obscure glass; I like them better than wood. Place one hen in each compartment, and leave them to themselves for a day or two. If the birds were in good health to begin with you will soon have the satisfaction of hearing them "calling," and seeing them jump about, flapping their wings, and carrying anything they can find. Now is the time to introduce the cock bird; see that he is light in

feather, bright in eye, and loud in song. It will be advisable to keep your eye on your stock for the first day or two after pairing, for it sometimes happens that they will not agree, and take to knocking each other about very seriously. I have seen birds laid up for a whole season through being injured in this way. Take no notice of petty quarrels, they seldom lead to much harm; generally in a few days you will find they have settled down to the serious duties of housekeeping together. When matters have arrived at this happy condition, hang a nest-pan in each compartment, and give each pair a little nesting stuff (moss and cow's hair), only a little, for they will only play with it for a while, carrying it about, putting it into the nest and tossing it out again, nearly all day long, but when you see that business is really intended—and you will soon know if you take notice of your pets—clean out the cage, put a good coating of sand, and await results. We will now suppose the birds have been paired ten or twelve days, and so far things have progressed as we could wish. The hen is on the eve of laying her first egg. It will be noticed that she does not look so bright as usual; in fact she appears decidedly mopey, as slowly, and with evident trouble she hops in and out of the nest, and we leave her at night, not without some anxiety as to how we shall find her in the morning. Well, the morning comes, and with it the egg, and, to our great satisfaction, we find her ladyship hopping about as lively as ever. I always remove the eggs as they are laid, until she has laid three. Then having cleaned out the cage, and put the eggs into a clean, felt-lined nest, I give them to her to commence sitting, and do not disturb her (except to examine the eggs on the eighth day of sitting) for three weeks, or until the young ones are about a week old. Some breeders do not examine their eggs, but I do, and this is how I do it: I take the opportunity when the hen is

off feeding to lift the nest out of the cage, and take the eggs one by one (an expert can tell by simply looking at the eggs in the nest) with the finger and thumb, and hold them between the eye and a strong light. The eggs that look dark are fertile; those that are clear are barren. A lot of valuable time may be saved in this way, for it sometimes happens that the whole batch may be barren, or just one may be "full." When such is the case the hen may be set at liberty to begin again. But when the eggs are proved all right, lose no time in returning the nest back again so that the eggs may not get chilled, and that the hen may resume her duties with as little delay as possible. On the twelfth day of sitting be sure and provide a fair supply of egg food for the young ones that may be expected to make their appearance on the morrow (a canary sets thirteen days), and also a moderate supply of greenmeat. The egg food and greenmeat must be given every day until the young ones can crack canary seed; it is advisable to gradually reduce the greenmeat after the young ones are three weeks old—for when they have an unlimited supply and constant access to it, they are very apt to eat more than is good for them, so limit the supply as soon as they begin to begin to peck for themselves. When the youngsters are able to crack seed and look after themselves, put them in a flight cage (the bigger the better). Nothing is so conducive to health, growth, and condition as exercise.

NESTS.

Canaries, as a rule, are bad nest-makers—some, apparently, have not the least idea how to construct a good substantial nest. Some few there are who could run a wild bird a close race for neatness, compactness, and stability, but these are few and far between. I always make my birds' nests. It is very simple. Just line the nest-pan with thin felt or old carpet, fasten it in