

would have annihilated them, but in egg production they could hardly have been excelled.

Now I noticed in a pen of five hens, that one was higher stationed than the others, while the others were short legged and compactly shaped. It was also observed that she of long legs, etc., did not lay every day in the spring months, which the others did. I am certain that those four did not fail to shell out the four eggs daily for months.

Now, if cattle breeders place so much weight on the deep milking and butter producing qualities of both dam and sire, why should not the same be true of poultry? It is a well known fact that two Jersey cows fed on the same diet or ration, and kept under the same conditions, will differ materially in amount of butter produced. Again, the progeny of butter makers, especially if dam of male be of a great butter making strain, will be invariably great butter producers. Why then shall not poultry follow the same rule?

It is admitted that the Brahmas, both light and dark, were invariably inveterate sitters not two decades since, while at present some strains are almost non-sitters, and this has been all brought about by selection. It has often occurred to my mind that even short legged compact shaped Brahmas were the best layers, not too heavy and coarse. Another notion, and it may be only a notion, that for layers, birds heavy behind and broad, were preferable to a great breast with narrowness behind. I am aware that a man often explodes his own theories by trying to put them into practice, but after all there is a certain degree of pleasure in even proving that one is wrong, much more than at having some one else do that charitable task for him.

Having to build a-new, I set out to record a few notions of how I intended to proceed to secure a comfortable, cheap hen house, suitable for say two dozen hens, but having wandered off

the track, I shall reserve it for a future letter. In conclusion, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Editor, but more especially your readers on the improvement of the REVIEW, which is marked and valuable.

THE OYSTER SHELL QUESTION.

BY SCIENCE

The following experiment throws light on the above question.

A hen was confined for ten days, and fed exclusively on oats. During this time she laid 4 eggs, the shells of which weighed about 409 grains of which 276 were carbonate of lime, 17½ phosphate of lime, and 10 grains gluten. As the amount of lime carbonate in oats is small, the larger part must have come from transformations effected within the hen herself.

In other words the hen is a sort of chemical laboratory, and the crude material for the work is her food and the air she breathes.

Does the above experiment show that a hen can get all that is necessary for egg formation from oats? Apparently so, but on closer examination this will be seen not to follow. The hen during these ten days may have been drawing on her own laid up resources (flesh, bones etc.) The experiment must be interpreted in the light of many other facts. Before we conclude that the oats suffice, we must analyse the hen after the experiment, and compare her with one as near like her as possible, of similar weight, age, breed, etc., as analysed *before* the experiment began.

There is no doubt that a hen can live and do well for a little while on oats or any one grain, but *all experience* shows that a mixed diet including grit, ground oyster shells or equivalent, is needed for the best results.

Science believes in experiments but their *interpretation* is of the utmost importance.

A VALUABLE TABLE FOWL.

THE INDIAN GAME.

Some reference has previously been made to the Indian or Cornish Game fowl, which is one of the best birds for table purposes we have leaving out the Dorkings and the very best of the French varieties. It is a handsomer bird than the Malay, which it resembles in some respects, and is not near so quarrelsome while the quality of meat is much finer. At several of the dead poultry shows which have been held in this country, specimens of the Indian Game fowls have taken a leading position. There is both length and breadth of keel, and though the breadth of breast is not equal to what may be found on some breeds, yet this is to be expected from the conformation of the bird. And of course there is a greater weight of bone than with the Dorking or Creve, in proportion to the entire weight of the body; but if it is unable to claim any equality with the breeds named, it is superior to nine-tenths of the other varieties. For crossing, it is invaluable, and where table fowls are the chief object in view, I know of no better variety than the Indian Game and the Dorking. When in Ireland some time ago, I found a breeder who has introduced these two varieties with the greatest success, and those who have adopted the cross find that it is a rapid-growing large fleshed fowl so produced. The Indian Game may, also be crossed with the Langshan, or the Plymouth Rock, and in both cases the progeny is first rate for table purposes. I do not know whether it has been tried with the Wyandotte, but should think it would answer equally well. The following is a short description of the leading points to be sought for in this breed.

General Shape—More after the full-sized Game than Malay, but resembling each.

Head—Bears strong affinity to the Malay, and the expression of the eye denotes cruelty.