

has just about 5 to 1 against him. Think over this fellow workers and just give the hens a trial in this way, come out and show your stock and see whether you will not be more than successful.

For the POULTRY WEEKLY

Stray Feathers.

I AM hoping that by this time I may exercise my friendly privilege of a grumble at some of your remarks. What's the matter with caponing? I have no doubt you have driven many a gelding, partaken of many a leg of pork never grown on a boar, even perhaps maltreated poor Thomas Cat with a view to curtailing his midnight caterwaulings and love songs, and yet even object to caponing. Now doesn't it strike you as a trifle inconsistent?

With your second paragraph however I am in hearty accord. Novices ought never to attempt it. But with skilled hands I do not see why our birds should not be treated as horses, bullocks, cats, pigs, etc. are if it be to our advantage to do so. I must confess, however, that if such practices could be altogether abolished I for one would not regret it.

Now for the advantages. First size, delicacy of flavor and tenderness are increased by the operation. Secondly, it is not very difficult to train young capons to mother a flock of chicks and thus in some sort earn their keep. Third, after the wound is healed they do not require quite so much attention—at least so I have been told. Fourth, it is profitable or it would never have been undertaken as a business by so many in the old country.

Mr. Christy, of hydro-incubator fame, publishes a pamphlet giving full directions and also sells instruments for the purpose, and he estimates the loss at about one per cent. less than you do, and gives fourteen weeks as the usual age for the operation. I regret that I have mislaid his address, and the pamphlet.

To obtain skill it is best to see some old hand at the work, and then to practice on the dead bird until perfectly sure of cutting on the right spot and without wounding any other part than that necessary. The bird being tied or held down it is as easy to operate on the live bird as the dead bird when once you know what to do. I have never practiced this operation and will not venture, therefore to give instructions.

With respect to the answer to W. A. L., last paragraph, I have tried over and over again to raise chickens on a wooden floor and failed. That horrible leg weakness always foiled me.

Even an inch of earth laid on boards did not check it. Nothing but the bare ground seemed to answer. So I don't think a dry upstairs would answer, through perhaps with several inches of moist (not wet) earth it might.

One clergyman I was with did his level best with incubator and indoor rearing for one year with a sickly, solitary, 3-months-old chicken as the result. I persuaded him to let me try the next brood he hatched out of dohrs, and although it was a cold January I raised the entire lot to seven weeks old and strong, and healthy, and then a cat scooped the crowd. I was mad.

By the way, how can one cure a cat of this propensity? I was advised to tie a dead chicken firmly around the neck for a week and that to say chicken to Monsieur Felis after that would be enough to scare him. I did so and Thomas bolted up the chimney. Two hours after he came down, licking his lips, and without his necklace. I was mad some more but that did not mend matters. And now Mr. Editor a merry Christmas to you and many of them.

ROBT. W. RAYSON.

Lombardy, Ont.

The above from our esteemed correspondent, Mr. Rayson, is for and against us. But let us explain. We are not at all averse to your "friendly grumble" friend R. And our objection to caponing in this country, is that the work is often undertaken by those to whom suffering in the lower animals is entirely unregarded. And in the case of caponing, as the subjects can be disposed of after the operation, for table use, there is not even the consideration of a few cents being lost in event of non-success to cause them to learn the art, but they will engage in it and cause a great deal of pain and misery through endeavoring to learn to operate by continual practice, totally regardless of suffering. As you will notice by our remarks in last week's JOURNAL, it was mainly in answer to queries by intending amateur operators, that we opposed it. The advantages are exactly as you describe, as the remembrance of many a toothsome dish can bear witness. And certainly it pays in the old country. But we think, sir, you will agree with us in saying that in Canada at present the business is not, and will not be for years, sufficiently lucrative to warrant us advising anyone us to engage in it. It is a luxury in living that not many are able