

either in the interest taken, or in the number or quality of the birds raised. In England, Canary Societies have been in existence for more than a hundred years, and for half of that time, shows, equal in importance to those of our Poultry and Columbarian Associations, have been held, and prizes have been awarded for both song and plumage. Though some thirty odd varieties are known, still the grand division of canaries by American dealers are in color, the plain and the variegated; in shape, the long and the short birds.

As the breeding season will soon be at hand, and many fanciers will be getting their breeding stock, it may be in place to answer through your columns many of the questions this time in the year brings to me, relative to the demands and requirements for success. In the selection of breeding stock one kind is no more difficult to manage than another; but quality must be considered, and I must urge the fancier to procure the very best the means will permit. Age, beyond twelve months, is immaterial as long as a healthy condition continues. At twelve months old a canary may be deemed matured, as male and female by that time display all the natural instincts. If male birds are desired, mate young males with old females. Clearly marked birds of the same color mated produce handsome young. While the clearly marked, with either the brownish or linnet-colored, or with the greenish, produce equally as fine. But a crested-head must be mated with a plain head to produce crest. Both crested will produce baldness. But let health in both, and beauty of song in the male, supersede beauty of plumage, especially when mating for singers.

The time of year in which birds should be put together varies with circumstances; the condition of the birds, the situation of the breeding room and the season all being considerations. But it is best to make haste slowly. The penalty of forcing young birds into action before the days of winter are fairly over is too often loss, as the return of cold weather produces reaction in the birds, causing death from inflammation of the egg passage. A good and safe rule is, "Wait to put the birds together until they can see to feed at six o'clock in the morning." They retire early to roost, and the fast from even six to six is long, even though the young birds go to sleep with full crops. Therefore the rule will seem to have common sense for its basis.

The location of the breeding cage rarely receives the consideration its importance demands. It should be hung as high as the condition of the air in the room, and convenience in attending to its necessities will permit. All needless disturbance must be avoided to ensure success. A room with

a southern aspect is preferable. An equable temperature must be maintained, and though fresh air is a necessity, draughts of air must be avoided. If an old cage is used for breeding, disinfect, clean and thoroughly rid it of vermin. Remove all furniture and scald thoroughly before returning. Scour the cage with scalding soda water and soap, searching every crack and crevice. It requires but a few moments' work, but thoroughly done will save much annoyance and trouble afterwards. A good size for a breeding cage is twenty inches in length by ten in width; height fifteen inches, with back and top of wood. Perches should be oval, the greater diameter three-fourths of an inch.—Each cage should be provided with two nests, else the female, should she desire to go to nest soon after her young were hatched, as is frequently the case, will, if she has but one nest, crowd the young from it before they are sufficiently matured, and their death results. In the selection of nests avoid all contrivances such as wicker, chip or wooden baskets, which shall afford a chance for the lodgment of parasites in their breeding places. Old and experienced fanciers use small turned wooden bowls or wire boxes. For the lining, provide dried moss, bits of wool or cotton, short bits of horse hair or string, and a few downy feathers. These are best, either tied in a loose bundle into a corner of the cage, or upon the outside where the birds can reach it, and take but a little at a time.

Canaries with the best of care are liable to be infested with vermin. Their parasites are so minute and hide so closely by day, it is almost impossible to discover them. When cleaning the cage, examine the ends of the perches, especially at the back, the nest boxes and bars of the cage. If a white flucy substance is seen, cover the part with oil and the danger is over for the time.—O.B. Deane, in *Fanciers' Journal*.

DURATION OF LIFE OF ANIMALS.—The following table of the duration of life in certain animals is translated from an old German work.—The elephant, 150 to 200 years; camel 50 to 60; ass 30 to 50; horse 20 to 30; deer, 20; bull, 30; ox (draught), 19; cow, 20; lion, 60; bear 20; wolf, 20; dog, 25 to 28; fox, 15; sheep, 10; hog, 20; cat, 18; squirrel, 7 to 8; hare, 7 to 8; goat 10. Of birds:—Parrot, 110; eagle, 100; swan, 100; goose, 50; sparrowhawk, 40; canary—if it breeds annually—10, do. if it does not couple, 24; nightingale and lark, 16 to 18; peacock, 24; turkey, 14; hen, 10; duck 25; quail, 6 to 7. The alligator and crocodile, 100; tortoise, 100; pike, 40.

It is calculated that if all the insects of the world were piled in one mass the heap would be greater than that of all the beasts and birds.