

then, if the cages are at all dirty or left uncleaned, they will appear in myriads, and sap the life-blood of young and old alike. Look at the ends of the perches. If vermin are in the cage you will generally find them clustered round the ends of the perches. Hold the ends over the flame of a lamp for a few seconds, and then dip them two inches deep in coal oil. This will effectually destroy them here. We have found coal oil also very good to brush into all cracks and crevices. Some people object to it on account of the strong smell, and say it stupifies the birds, but we have never found it to have this effect. By sprinkling a little flour of aniseed (which is also a vermin killer) over the coal oil it does away with a great deal of the strong smell.

Change the nest when the fourth egg is laid first making it warm by rolling a hot egg in it before returning the eggs. Change again when the young are ten days old. Some fanciers change a third time, just before they are to hatch. You may sprinkle a little of the aniseed powder in the nests too; it will assist in keeping the hen free from insects.

### Questions and Answers.

R. Young.—Carriers.—Carriers do best when flown till six months old, then confined. Put the grain in a hopper, not on the ground, as some heavily wattled birds cannot see to eat off the ground.

"Canary."—Young Canaries.—You can generally tell the sex of canaries when about a month old. The throat begins to expand a little in the males, and they begin to warble a little.

A. Brown.—Wing disease.—Wing disease in pigeons is generally a sign of scrofula, and is hereditary. It is sometimes occasioned by an accident. If it takes the form of a tumor, pluck out all the flight-feathers in the wing affected, also all the small feathers near the tumor. The growth of the new feathers will generally reduce the swelling.

### The English Skylark in America.

Two years ago eighty-four English skylark were imported and loosed in Bergen county, New Jersey. This was in the spring, and it was ascertained afterwards that about fifty of them paired and remained not far from where they first beat the free air of America with their wings. The lark is not a migratory bird, and it was feared that our northern winters would prove too severe for them, but during the next summer they were heard in Bergen and Passaic counties. This, the third summer of their liberty, shows yet stronger proofs of their

naturalization and ability to breed here. They have been heard in more places. The New York *Sun* says that "one thing said to be much in favor of the increase of the lark in this country is its hardiness. It can endure cold and heat. It takes a long range of distribution, from the south of Europe as far north as Norway and Lapland, and American ornithologists lay claim to it as an American bird, from its being occasionally found in Greenland and the Bermudas. Vigilance, it is thought, may be required to protect them from enemies, and to discover what are their worst enemies. From the fact that skylarks increase most rapidly in highly cultivated grounds, it is inferred that man is not his worst enemy, although large numbers are destroyed by man. As it sleeps and nests on the earth, it is thought probable that its worst enemies are small animals, such as minks, weasels and skunks."

A parrot belonging to a railway signalman named Jackman, living at Wimborne, Dorset, was stung to death by bees recently. The bird had been hung out of doors almost daily in fine weather, and had never been attacked before. It is supposed that it must have struck at a bee with its beak or wings, and that the bees near at once flew into the cage and attacked the bird.

### Breeding Dark Brahmas.

By L. O. R. NORRIS-EYLE, IN "POULTRY".

Having been asked to put on paper my notions as to the mating of Dark Brahmas with a view to producing first-class specimens for the show pen, I readily acquiesce, partly in the hope that I may be able to give some useful advice to beginners—of course there are many skilled breeders who know all that I can hope to tell—and partly in the hope that my views may give rise to discussion, and that I and others may learn something we did not know before from the experience of those who may be willing to publish what has struck them as important during their career as breeders of Dark Brahmas.

Firstly I must premise that I accept, for the purpose of this article, the following ideals:—1, That the show Brahma cock should have either an entirely black breast and fluff, or that the breast and fluff should be slightly, and only slightly, laced with white, the white to be confined to the edge of the feather, and in no degree to be splashed on the feathers. (A splashed breast in a cockerel I dislike exceedingly, and also in an adult cock though in adults it is far more excusable.) That whether cock or cockerel, the white of his neck, saddle, and and shoulder should be of the purest blue-silver, this being far more difficult to obtain on the sad-