

### For Beginners.

As the ranks of poultry fanciers are constantly receiving recruits from classes of people who have had very little opportunity of acquiring knowledge regarding the care and management of stock, there is always the occasion on their behalf, of going back over ground that has already been travelled over—going back, as it were, to take by the hand to guide over an uncertain road those who, without such guidance, would make slow progress, and be apt to encounter many difficulties. This post of guide to the beginner the Review purposes to take up, under the above heading, making monthly trips during the coming year; and it will be thankful for such assistance in the work by old travellers over this route as they will volunteer to give. The present and next month will be devoted to preliminary preparations, which will give those who have already started, or have made up their minds to start, an opportunity to secure recruits for the journey; for the larger the company the more profit will there be for both the guide and the traveller.

Nearly all grown persons have a hobby of some kind—some with a tendency to good, others with a tendency to evil. Hobbies or fancies are generally the outgrowth of a desire for change or rest after the cares and fatigues of business or study. When a man has worked hard with brain or muscle for a great part of the day he feels the need of change of occupation and thought to fill in his leisure time between work and sleep. The way in which this leisure time is spent is largely influenced by surroundings and example, and if it can be spent at home, and participated in by his family, the more keen will be its enjoyments, and the more beneficial its results; especially is this the case if instead of being a source of expense, it may be made one of profit.

The poultry fancy contains all the elements for a first-class hobby. It is one that can be indulged in by rich and poor, young and old, rugged and weak, in town or country. It adds to home attractions, gives healthful exercise and pleasant thought, promotes ambition to excel, teaches lessons of kindness to dumb creatures, and of man's power to influence their form and qualities. And in order to keep up the interest there are numerous poultry shows, at which success is measured and skill and care rewarded. And last, but not least, it is a hobby that can be indulged in without loss of time or money—it can be made a source of profit without depriving it of any of the above advantages.

Like many other businesses and fancies that of poultry breeding has at times been brought into bad odor by the misdeeds of a few of its members, but it is not right that the whole fraternity should be condemned on this account. We venture to say that were the majority of the businesses of our country carried on the same principle as it is only possible to carry on that in thoroughbred poultry and their eggs, the result would be equally unsatisfactory in either case. No person, no matter what his position, need fear entering into the fancy on this score, as he will make his own reputation in this as in any other business. If this were not the case we would not have as fanciers the many gentlemen we could name, holding the highest positions of honor and trust in the country.

We do not wish to hide the fact that difficulties

and vexatious trials beset this hobby as well as all others. Even in the hands of the oldest fanciers fowls will become sick, will die, will not always lay when wanted to, eggs will not always hatch, and they will not breed up to expectations; but to enable the beginner to reduce these drawbacks to a minimum will be our object, by giving him the experience of those who have studied the causes of such drawbacks, and the means of overcoming them.

### Cages in the Fowl House.

Every beginner—or old fancier, for that matter—should have one or more cages, similar to exhibition coops, placed in a well lighted part of his hen house, so that birds intended for exhibition can have a trial of show life before leaving home. If the birds are given a day now and then in these cages, when they reach the show room, they will feel quite at home, and not fly from side to side, destroying their plumage, at the approach of the judge or every visitor. Especially is this necessary when fowls are to be shown in pairs. By mating the birds as you intend exhibiting them they will become accustomed to the presence of each other, and if either show vicious habits you will know in time what to do with them—to change, or apply for single coops when making your entries.

It is surprising the difference there will sometimes be in the appearance of a bird free in the coop or yard and when placed in this cage. The difference is seldom in favor of the bird. When running at large it may appear almost perfect, "fit to win anywhere," but when caged in a good light the defects show themselves surprisingly. The tail may apparently have been carried quite straight when running free, but now is decidedly awry; the color on shanks, breast and under part of body may before have seemed good, but now is not right, etc., etc. It must be remembered by the fancier that when the birds are in this cage they are in a position similar to that in which they will be examined by the judge, and that his practised eye will not likely fail to discover all defects that are plain to the owner.

The cages should be raised three feet and a half from the floor, and be at least two feet high. They should be well littered with chaff or something of that sort, and furnished with dishes for water and food.

If the exhibitor will put his birds here before making his entries, he will not so frequently be disappointed with the appearance of his birds in the show room, and will save something in entry fees and express charges.

### Feed and Fertility.

Editor Review,

DEAR SIR,—In my last I said I would, in a future article, state some of the causes of egg infertility. My reason for keeping that promise now is, that many are already laying the train of causes which will cause them much discouragement and loss in the spring—from many eggs, but few chicks. I obtained two settings of Plymouth Rock eggs from a friend, who, though an amateur as yet, has obtained an enviable position among prize-winners; I also obtained birds and eggs from one in Ontario, whose honor is unimpeachable, and whose experience is of many years, yet in each case the