

were in a condition to astonish an American purchaser used to seeing eggs shipped in proper condition. They were quite dry and in no way injured by the voyage. About one-half of them were actually encased in one-eighth of an inch of hard dry filth, a mixture of manure and mud. I did not wonder that these did not hatch. I wrote the seller plainly, and I think if he ever ships eggs to America again they will, at least, have the merit of cleanliness.

In the meantime, determined to give the experiment a fair trial, I got another setting, this time from Ireland. These arrived in excellent condition, clean and apparently fresh. My hopes mounted high about this time. A gentleman who was coming out brought them to me, taking special care that they should come without injury. When on board he wrapped them in a blanket and placed them in his state-room, where they remained untouched until his arrival at Quebec, from there he brought them in his hands. Excellent hens had them in charge, sat just right, were undisturbed, and all conditions seemed most favorable. On examination the 22nd day the eggs were found clean and unstained, full number there, but not the sign of a chick. On breaking the fifty-two eggs no indication of life was found.

All the packages were boxes, covers nailed, and tied down with cord. The expenses averaged about \$8 dollars a setting, laid down here.

If others have tried the experiment—I hope, they have succeeded better than I have—perhaps they will let us hear from them.

Next year I am going in for an incubator—200 egg capacity. I have read Mr. Rowe's letters with pleasure, and hope some others of your numerous readers will give us their actual experience with the machine, what ones they have used, and full particulars, especially as to care of chicks after hatching, as this would seem to me the most difficult part of the business.

You will pardon the length of this letter; it is much longer than I intended.

Yours truly,

W. L. BALL.

Richmond, P. Q., July 31st, 1882.

### Hints to Beginners.

One of the perplexing things which often happens to the breeder of fancy poultry is the neglect on the part of the purchaser when ordering to state whether he wishes exhibition birds or breeding stock, or that he really does not know when ordering which he wants. Of course veteran breeders do not make this mistake, as they always buy with one of the two objects in view; this difficulty is mostly confined to beginners. They would

save the seller much trouble and anxiety, and themselves frequent disappointments if they would give this matter careful consideration before sending their orders. In most of the parti-colored birds, noticeably the Plymouth Rocks and Light Brahmas, birds mated for exhibition, as at present judged, do not give the best satisfaction as breeders. The purchaser therefore should state what shade of plumage he prefers both in male and female, or he should state for which purpose he wishes the fowls, and leave the seller, with his better knowledge of the strain, to make the selection. The latter is probably the better way for all but experienced breeders, as the seller, if he be a person of experience, as he should be, can decide more certainly as to the probable results of certain matings than any one else, since he is perfectly familiar with the make up of his stock, and he is thus enabled to avoid mistakes. The trouble with many beginners seems to be that they do not know themselves what they do want.

Almost daily I receive letters from parties describing show birds according to the present interpretation of the *Standard* as the birds they desire to purchase, and closing with the statement that they wish to secure the best breeding stock procurable. Now, if I send the latter the purchaser is not satisfied with the color of plumage, or rather with the matching of color in the male or female; If I send the former he will very likely not be satisfied with their progeny; therefore I am obliged to write him explaining the difference, and ask for further instructions. All this costs time and money. How much better it would be if the beginner would first endeavor to understand just what he wants by a careful reading of all the works he can procure treating on the variety he intends purchasing. Then he will be able to order intelligently, and will find the great majority of fanciers willing to send as good birds as they can afford for the money sent them, for fanciers as a class, are as fair minded and honorable as any other. In the meantime

If your neighbors' chickens chance

To stray across the way,

Don't let you angry passions rise,

But fix a place for them to lay.

"GUINEA-PIG,"

Woodstock, Aug. 1st, 1882.

PERIODS OF INCUBATION.—Hens and all gallinaceous birds, 21 days; geese and pheasants, 35 days; ducks, turkeys and pea-fowls, 28 days; pigeons, 17 days; swans, 42 days.

Don't be sparing of coal oil about the roosts, nest boxes and chicken coops during this hot weather, and keep everything clean.