

hardly a fair test, but every little bit of experience which one may pick up comes in useful. It has been a splendid season for young Pheasants, though there have not been a great many hatched so far. The last ten days and the next fifteen is about the time when most of the Pheasants are hatched, so that my remarks on the young ones may be hopeful. I trust any Pheasant breeders who read these lines will not think I am bigoted, because I am only giving my own ideas on the subject; different people have different opinions, and no man knows everything. First of all, many buy Pheasant eggs who have not the slightest idea how long they take to hatch. I was speaking to a man who had never had any Pheasants under his care, and he told me he had set a lot of eggs. I asked whether they were not hatched. "No, sir," was his reply. "But surely the time must be up considering the time you have had the eggs; how long should Pheasant eggs go?" "I do not know, I am sure, sir," was the reply. It is a remarkable fact, but still true, that many people who buy Pheasant eggs, and often those who keep stock birds, too, do not know how long Pheasant eggs take to hatch. Twenty-four days is the proper time; sometimes they will come out on the twenty-second day, and it is possible for them to go to twenty-six days. As a rule Pheasants hatch well, they always appear to chip the shell much more easily than chickens. This may be because the eggs are very small in proportion to the size of the stock birds, and there are not so many die in the shells as there are chickens. As soon as they appear they should be taken away very carefully and put in a little box or something to transfer them into a coop. Suppose there are three or four hens sitting at the same time (the common hens are used for sitting purposes) it is best to take a quiet one to

put the first batch of youngsters under, then the next quietest hen for the second lot, and so on till the wildest hen is left till the last. The latter should then be put in a coop and have some of the strongest Pheasants given her, those which were first hatched; if not, she is likely to kill them. Little Pheasants are very shy. When they are first hatched they should be fed on Spratt's biscuit meal and chopped eggs, and if chopped onions are mixed with that it helps them very much. After they are a day old they should have some split (or cut) groats. One large kernel is divided into about three parts. It is well to give them just a sprinkle of broken dry rice about once a day, because young Pheasants are always liable to become relaxed in the bowels, and they are so fragile the least thing upsets them, which the rice prevents. After they are four days old they may have a little hemp seed. This warms them, and is a good thing to give first thing in the morning, as they are always from under the hen before it is daylight. It is very chilly about three quarters of an hour before the sun rises, and coming straight from under the warm hen the sudden change gives them congested lungs. Thousands of young Pheasants die from this cause, brought on by a sudden change. I have many sent to me every year for post mortem examination, and I believe there are far more die from that complaint than there are from any other, especially when they are let run out in the damp grass first thing in the morning. Young Pheasants should always have something put before their coop—say a board from 3 to 6 feet long, and about 12 inches high on each side of the coop, with a piece of half-inch mesh wire nailed over the top, as if not they will jump over the boards. The latter should be fitted right up close to the coop, and instead of having a board at the other end the

wire netting should be brought right over the top and nailed on to a piece of quartering, which should be previously fixed on the two ends of the boards for the purpose, so that it forms a little run. If the place is boarded up the young Pheasants cannot see; but by having the wire at the end it does away with this difficulty. Occasionally, it is rather awkward when the young birds are first hatched, and cannot see about them before they go out, as they are apt to get away. It is, therefore, well to use these little frames which I have described, especially in wet weather, as it prevents them getting on to the dewy grass. This is often the means of saving at least 25 per cent. of them.

(To be Continued.)



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