

Putting away the exception, and allowing the hen no other natural condition but that of hatching on the ground, the result would not pay. We must remember that the facts of sod nesting are (1.) hens in high, artificial condition, (2.) sod or board and in an atmosphere far from moist; (3.) hen not off daily, running about in dewy grass and feeding on food calculated to keep her blood at right temperature, &c.; (4.) that whatever aids we may give the hen they are of a sudden nature, not gradual as in nature's methods. The sod does not draw its moisture from the earth gradually, and the air is not, as in nature, regulated by steady law. Therefore the sod is soon very dry; it becomes abnormally hot. Between the hot, hard sod, and the hot breast and hard bone and feet of the hen, the eggs have a poor chance.

What is the advice? This: Roomy nests, easy of access. When a hen enters the nest, or desires to shift her position she should have room to turn without standing among the eggs.

Soft oat straw,—any depth you like. I know some wise one will laugh when I say that the eggs need air *from below*. The earth is not, so to speak, air tight. It is porous for a few inches. Out in nature, birds that build on the ground select a dry, hidden place, and from the air currents of the earth a constant stream of moist air is influencing the eggs. If any are incredulous I call their attention to the fact of "Insensible Respiration and Perspiration of Animal Bodies" as illustrated proof. Birds that build in trees, or elsewhere than on the ground, saving swallows, which also have most of the conditions referred to, even these have what I call under circulation of moist air. The swallow's nests are porous, though built of mud, as any one may prove with an ordinary unglazed flower pot. The straw secures this under circulation. If about two inches at bottom should be wet straw, and three or more dry and soft, you have then as near nature's conditions as possible.

But given the hens and mate in healthy condition, and a bunch of straw or heap of chaff, and your chicks will break out in fair proportion to your reasonable expectations.

My experience, stubbornly conducted for two years with sod nests, compels me to advise—don't use sod.

In conclusion, I would repeat that the hatching depends *mainly* on the condition of the parent birds, if those are overfed, stimulated too high, laying forced, or are lacking in stamina because the cock has too many dividing his attention, then, in any event, your chances are poor for many, or any good chicks.

H. W. KNOWLES.

Lachute, P. Q., Apr. 13th, 1885.

## Scoring.

Editor Review.

If silence be a virtue, then how virtuous are the opponents of the scoring system of judging. It may seem very laudable, and exhibit extraordinary confidence in the strength of their cause to thus make a virtue out of a necessity by treating the attacks of their opponents with silent contempt. But does not silence sometimes confess defeat; and is silence in this instance not a confession of defeat, and is the old system not defensible beyond the point of simple assertions.

Of course the argument has been advanced by your English correspondent that judging can't be reduced to a system of accurate measurement. That the English fanciers have not yet adopted scoring is no argument against it, or that they had tried it and failed. It is not the first improvement which it has taken time to have generally accepted there. I do not say this disparagingly of the English people, but it is a well known fact that they are extremely careful in making fundamental changes.

Now, let us together examine the argument of "can't be measured." In the first place let us see how far the two systems are parallel, and where they diverge. Take comb, for example; the judge by either system must measure it with his eye; its size and shape must be pronounced upon. Now so far, how can scoring be pronounced an attempt to accurately measure any more than the old? In either case the judge must decide how much the bird is effected by any offs. At this point the divergence occurs, and the advantage of the scoring system appears. First, in the fact that the judge *must* decide to what extent the bird is effected by any shape or size contrary to the expressions of the *Standard*. Second—his conclusions are recorded, and he has fully and completely disposed of this part and he can therefore direct his entire attention to the next point. Is not this a great advantage? Or will it be argued that a man can think better about twenty things at once than about one thing at a time? It is said of Lord Brougham that he had the power to concentrate his whole mind upon one thing at a time; a rare and valuable point which made him noted. Third—he must note each and every point in a bird,—his score card necessitating this.

I shall not point out at this time the numerous other advantages of the system, such as its value as an educative medium and its being a reasonable report of his work as a judge but I should like to assure all those who conscientiously oppose this system, and speak and act in favor of the old, that I cannot see any necessity that it should excite any personal illwill among fanciers. Friend-