

give place to calm philosophic contentment and peace combined with plenty. For a short time after the loss of their former playmates and companions the cockerels seem to mope, and apparently make no progress; but providing they really keep growing and are healthy, that is exactly what we want, if our expectations are to be realized of ultimately turning them into young giants.

The masculine characteristics of a youthful bird can be rapidly developed by placing him on a walk or penning him with three or four hens. Fed on a strong flesh diet, and strung up by a mild tonic in his water, he will soon assume the manners and feathers befitting his appearance in the show-pen. But how about his size and stamina? He will never make a real big one, and as a father the inherited weakness of his progeny may cause him many family cares. To produce those large, well-developed, sound-constituted cockerels, birds alike meet for the breeding-pen or the autumn and winter shows, we should keep them in the awkward hoyden state as long as we can, providing they are growing; we want all their growth directed to their hidden corporeal frame, so that when the time arrives for their final development we shall have something substantial to work on.

The cockerels, then, as soon as they have really found their feet should be drafted according to age into large roomy pens, or so much the better if they now can have unrestricted liberty on a suitable run. A batch of cockerels all about the same age will grow up together in perfect harmony if none of the other sex appear on the scene, at the same time one should be on the look-out for any bullying, and if one bird becomes particularly masterful the offender should be removed for a time; an adult cock may run with the party, when he will check the youthful spirits and take care no rioting occurs. If it be necessary to supplement the number of cockerels on a run by the addition of a younger lot, the old occupants should be penned up or removed for a week or ten days until the newcomers are established. When the two parties are amalgamated there may be a little fighting until things settle down, but certainly not so much bullying as there would have been if the younger had been turned down to make their way amongst their elder brethren. I should perhaps caution the inexperienced against picking one or two birds out of a lot of crowing cockerels and keeping them apart for a week or so, and then turning them down on their old run with their old companions; there will be a free fight, and probably the separated birds will be killed or disfigured for life. If it be absolutely necessary to temporarily remove one or two birds for a brief period, the run of the whole party should be entirely changed at the time they are replaced; even then very rarely can a bird be

safely returned again to his mates, although his absence may have been merely for a few days.

Pullets may be similarly dealt with; but in selecting their runs or pens one must bear in mind that, while the cockerels may remain on the same run or pen until maturity, it may be very desirable frequently to change the pullets' quarters.

Rearing the sexes together encourages the same precocity amongst the pullets as the cockerels, and early female maturity, early laying, arrests the growth or complete development. We also know that pullets permitted to remain on the same run lay or develop quicker than if they are subjected to frequent changes; or, in other words, if we desire to postpone the laying of our pullets and so promoting their growth, we should try to give them various changes of runs. The runs should be largely dissimilar; for instance, if a square area be divided into two runs precisely alike—save that in one, the house is on the north side, and on the south in the other—sufficient novelty is not obtained to effect our purpose. We should try to change the chickens to fresh surroundings, a house of different pattern, to unaccustomed pasturage.

The fancier often desires to keep back his pullets so that he may have them on the point of laying at the date of some particular show. Rarely, however, does he seek to check the cockerels, providing he has not begun to push them at too early an age. A pullet looks her very best just before she lays, or when she has laid an egg or two, and for a big one endeavors to put her in the show-pen just in that condition. There is such a difference between the appearance of a pullet a few days before she lays and after she has laid half a dozen eggs that I am tempted to put in a plea for our judges, yet with all due respect to the learned bench; for at the chicken shows complaints are often heard about in-and-out judging, and one is asked to reconcile the dicta of the same fowl being, so to speak, first last week, second to day, and nowhere next week, when as often as not she has come on to lay during the interval and lost her early bloom, while her competitors have arrived at the state of maturity she formerly occupied; the gain in condition, the bright, active appearance, the glossy bloom of the one now give her the position the other has lost by her more lethargic and duller appearance. When two or three birds pretty much of an equality meet, appearance and condition very properly merit grave consideration.

Writing for a "fancy" paper, I pen with trepidation the suggestion that if a nice clump of trees adjoins the meadow where the chickens run, and if the chickens should take a fancy to roost in those trees, to let them have their own way. I fear me this is so unorthodox as to be scarcely acceptable