

out by himself, so that he does not disfigure his mates. Of course it is not necessary to say that the droppings must be removed each morning, and fresh, clean sand, or dry earth put in, as cleanliness must be strictly observed in the preparation for the show pen.

As to condition: The bird must not be fat, neither must they be lean, for either a fat or lean chicken is not in its best and healthiest condition any more than a fat or lean horse is. Therefore to put a fowl in its best possible shape it must be in the best and most vigorous health, and this the breeder can always judge for himself by strict attention to feeding.

Another point which is nearly always neglected by exhibitors, and which does them great harm, is the wild condition in which they put their birds into the show pen. I have often seen a fine pair of Leghorns, Hamburgs, or in fact almost every variety of fowls, standing crouched up in the darkest corner of the show coop, trying to hide themselves from the gaze of every one who comes near them, and if the judge wants to examine them he cannot get them out of their corner long enough to get their symmetry, nor can he get his hands on them without breaking or ruffling feathers, and starting up as much squacking as a hawk would. And ten chances to one he either passes them in disgust, or puts down one or the other as "wry tailed." Or even if he does attempt to "figure" them he will cut them for symmetry, condition, &c., till he puts them clean out of the race. I have known this to be the case and therefore caution all against getting beaten in this way. Per contra: Look at that fine pair of Light Brahmas as you approach the coop, they step up to the front to see what you want, and show themselves off to the best advantage; and if you want to get a better view and put them down on the floor outside of the coop, they strut around you and wonder what it all means. You can wager your last "nickle" their owner knows his business and has had them on "dress parade" for weeks before, and has put them through their facings so often that when you pull out a wing to examine it they will stand up and pull it back without jumping back and hiding in a corner. And this pair the judge can examine as he likes, and the chances will be that they come in for a ticket, as the man who put them in such shape knew what he was doing. So before you go to the show, if you have not an exhibition coop, take a common goods box, and put some laths in front of it, and into this put your bird every day for a few hours to tame him down. And every time you or any of the family go near him, have a bit of meat, bread or something he is not used to, and something he is fond of, and you will soon see how quickly he will step up to the front

of the cage. Then as he picks the morsel from your hand, touch and stroke him with the other hand, and he will soon get used to being handled. As he becomes used to being handled pat him under the bill and make him *stand up* after the manner of a horse jockey showing off a horse to a purchaser. In this way you get him used to standing in his best position, and this is just the way the judge will stand him up to get his symmetry, and you would not believe—till you saw it—how much difference there is in the symmetry of a bird before and after he has learned his lesson. All this is a part of the tricks of the trade, and it all tells in the show room and if you would see *tickets* on your coops you must learn it and practise it also.

So much for the putting into condition and taming or handling process. But in what I have said of condition I have not touched an important part of the condition, and that is the care of white or colored fowls, except black ones. If white or parti-colored fowls are kept near smoke, or in a city, their plumage must be cleansed, and the quickest and most effective way of cleaning is washing them about two days before they go to the show. But as this can only be done by those who know how, it should never be attempted until after it has been seen done by an expert, therefore I will leave this part of the subject, at least for the present.

Now, about the manner of showing birds. I am opposed to showing in any way but singly, and if compelled to show in pairs, a partition of cloth or pasteboard should always be put into the coop to save the plumage of the female. To show a fine Light Brahma pullet with a large, vigorous cockerel—and if he is in the proper health and condition to show to advantage he necessarily is vigorous—is sure to unfit her for any further show purposes that season. And the same is true of almost all classes. A good, vigorous cockerel will bulldoze the life out of a pullet, and put her entirely out of condition in a day. Therefore, if you must show in pairs, put in a pasteboard partition if you would attend more than one show with the same pullet.

In the choice of hampers for shipping birds to the show, use *round, cloth-lined* ones if possible, as in a round hamper there are no corners for a cock bird to get his fine tail foul in and break his feathers. The best hamper is the round willow hamper with lid on top, and lined with cloth. This, with a little cut straw or clean chaff, will weigh about eight pounds, ready to put the birds into. Thus by its use you save express charges as well as the fowl's plumage.

Food is seldom necessary to be put into a hamper, unless for a long journey. And I would never put water into one, as you are sure to soil the plumage if you do. For this reason an attendant