

## Ladies' Chitchat

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I am rather disappointed that no lady reader of B.C. FANCIER has written me so far. But I am ready to continue the offer of the book "Five Hundred Questions and Answers" for the most interesting letter sent in by a lady reader of the paper on the management of young chicks before the 20th of June. The little chicks are about us now with the Easter gladness and bright spring days and the opening flowers and buds. One has scarcely time to realize how beautiful and fair everything is in its spring newness, in the work our little pets give us, but it is pleasant work, full of interest at the time and of promise for the future. I was reading yesterday of a Sidney pigeon fancier who was so delighted with the promising appearance of a young squeaker in the loft, that he had a diamond inserted by his jeweller in the legband that was the distinguishing mark of the pigeons value. Now we can't afford this rich fancier's fad, but we cannot help prizing the most promising chicks, and would be almost willing to grow older ourselves more quickly if we could see the promise fulfilled a little more quickly. But we cannot hasten nature, she takes her time and does her work wisely and well. The best way is to help not hasten. Some of the so called tonic powders and compounds for poultry are really injurious as well as expensive. Sound healthy food for fowls, green food, grit, shell and a little meat occasionally are all

one needs to secure the best results. I have about 80 chicks so far, and am expecting more daily—we had a fearful thunder storm a week ago that injured many of the eggs but I do not think with nests on the ground the effect is bad, I have always been able to secure better hatches and stronger chicks from nests hollowed in the ground. A sprinkling of lime on the sides and bottom of the nest, then a lining of hay all round. I have a coop with no bottom, this I place over the nest with a chicken run in front of coop. Place 3 eggs you don't care about in the nest, put your broody hen in and then place the run in front of coop so she cannot get out. A saucer for water and a little grain, renewed every two days; it is best not to change the grain during the 3 weeks, but a boiled potato every now and then is greatly appreciated. When the hen sits steadily, put the eggs you want to incubate in; if she does not sit steadily don't try to set her, it will probably give you a lot of trouble and no result—get another and try again. If the coop is darkened by a few sacks being thrown over, the hen generally sits more steadily. I prefer to set the nests and coops under a shed in the early part of the year; after the weather is dry they do better outside in the open air I think. A few boards placed one over the other over the coop are a sufficient protection in case of a storm. Weight them down if it is windy. When eggs come some distance by rail, they should be unpacked at once, and put in a cool but not cold place to rest for 24 hours before setting them. This is the reason: When the egg has been shaken up perhaps some portion of the germ has become separated from

the parts that ought to join it. An egg like a young animal has a strong tendency to join up again if allowed to rest. We all know how elastic and soft are young creatures limbs, how they stand contortions and jars that would irrecoverably ruin an older frame. It is so with the egg, it has a strong tendency to reform itself correctly, but if you set it directly it comes off a journey, it has no time to reform, it either commences to live, or to rot at once, owing to the heat. Next month I hope to tell you how I raise my chickens, and all about it, and I hope some lady fancier will give me her method, so that we may compare notes for the benefit of readers of the journal. Of course I can write the department full every month as there is always something fresh to say about our pets but it would not be nearly as interesting, either to me or anyone else.

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### "Just Like a Man."

Josh Billings says: "Roosters are the pugilists among birds, and having no suitable shoulders to strike from, they strike from the heel. When a rooster gets whipped all the hens march off with the other rooster if he ain't half so big or so handsome. It is pluck that wins a hen. Roosters as a class won't do any household work; you cannot get a rooster to pay any attention to a young one. They spend most of their time in crowing and strutting and once in a while they find a worm, which they make a great fuss over calling their wives up from a distance apparently to treat them but just as soon as the hens get there, this elegant cuss bends over and gobbles up the worm. Just like a man for all the world."—*Southern Cultivator*.

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The reason given why birds do not fall off their perch is because they cannot open the foot when the leg is bent. Look at a hen walking and you will see it close its toes as it raises the foot and open it as it touches the ground.