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MATING FOWLS FOR BREEDING.

It is a fact recognized and admitted by all poultry breeders, that in selecting fowls for breeding it is desirable the ages of the cock and hen should vary. It is generally admitted that the strongest and best chickens are produced from a cockerel and two years old hens; but unfortunately, however, the chickens of such parentage have frequently a large proportion of cocks, and therefore it is that some breeders prefer a two-year-old cock bird to put with pullets that are full grown. This rule, however, must not be looked upon as imperative as to either case; there are exceptions to both, and good chickens may also be

produced from cocks and hens all of the same age. One thing, however, ought always be borne in mind, that in mating young fowls less than a year old, their chickens will always be backward in fledging; neither do we care to breed from fowls after they have passed the third year.

The male bird has the most influence upon the colour of the progeny, and upon what are usually known as the "fancy points," whilst the form, size and useful qualities are principally derived from the hen. Many otherwise fine cock birds may have some objectionable feature about them; they may have some faulty feathers, they may not be as perfect in shape and size as desirable, or they may be somewhat leggy, all or any of which may cause the fancier to hesitate about breeding from them. It ought, however, to be borne in mind that there are but few birds really perfect, and such cocks ought not to be hastily condemned, if the fault be not too glaring. In all such cases, the careful breeder will, if possible, select hens having the opposite qualities.

If the comb of the cock be defective, then the hens selected should have theirs perfect; if the cock's legs or back be somewhat long, then the hen's legs and back should be proportionally short. And so, too, of the markings. Where there is any defect in the cock, the hens chosen should, in this particular, be