

A good sized flight cage is very necessary to put your young birds into. It is far better than putting them into small cages two or three together. Give as much room for exercise as possible to develop vigour and growth. A small cage or two will come in very useful for spare birds. It is best to keep one or two cages apart as far from the stock as possible as hospital cages, and these should be used for nothing else, and should be frequently washed with carbolic or Jeyes' fluid.

PREPARING BREEDING CAGES.—Always be particular in preparing your breeding cages. You will find it time well spent. This is how to do it: About the beginning of March take your cage into the back yard, and with hot water and soda or washing powder give it a thorough good wash both in, side and out; then make a solution of carbolic acid or Jeyes' purifier—a tablespoonful to the pint of hot water—and with a sash tool paint the cage all over both inside and outside. Be very particular to work well into all the cracks and joints; allow it to dry; then colour the inside with whiting, to which has been added a little blue and flour paste or glue; varnish the outside, and when dry and free from smell it is ready for use. I should like to draw particular attention to the perches. Most people make them far too small. Give a good flat, substantial piece of wood—say, about $\frac{5}{8}$ in. broad and $\frac{3}{8}$ in. thick—the flat side uppermost; round off the edges with sandpaper. The water vessels must be of glass; never zinc or metal. Drawers are best for seed, not open ones, for the birds waste too much but with holes to put their heads through; and mind you make the holes large enough. For crested birds they ought to be not less than the size of a penny piece; for plainheads they need not be quite so large.

FOOD.

The staple food of canaries should be plain white canary-seed, with which the drawer should be filled, and not with

mixed seed, for in order to obtain the sort they like the best the birds will very soon scatter the contents of the seed vessel, and in five minutes waste as much food as ought to serve them a day. Where a number of birds are concerned the food question is a matter of serious consideration. A very good mixture of seeds is made as follows:—Take of ingo seed two parts, small linseed one part, small hemp seed half part; mix and keep in a tin for use; a tablespoonful of this mixture may be given to every three or four birds, twice or thrice a week—during the breeding season it may be given every day; put into a separate vessel, or throw it on the bottom of the cage.

Egg food is prepared as follows:—Boil a fresh egg ten minutes; when cold, remove the shell, and either chop up the egg (yolk and white) or press it through a cholander, or similar article; mix with three tablespoonfuls of powdered biscuit or stale bread crumbs. This food should be made fresh at least once a day. During the hottest weather it is better to make it twice a day, for nothing tends more to disarrange birds than sour food.

Green food may consist of any of the following:—Groundsel, chickweed, dandelion leaves, lettuce, inner cabbage leaves. Whatever the sort of green meat selected it must always be fresh, young, and free from frost. During the early breeding season it is necessary to be very careful in this matter, and a good plan to follow is to always soak your green stuff in warm water for five or ten minutes, and allow it to stand until quite day, before giving it to your stock. As the season advances this precaution will not be necessary. Moulting food for colour is simply egg food mixed with certain colouring matter, such as cayenne, cold pepper, turmeric. The proportion is usually one part of colouring to two parts egg food.

PAIRING.

The general rule in breeding is to pair a yellow and a buff, but this rule is

occasionally broken for some special object, particularly is this the case in crest-breeding, when two buffs are generally put together—one a crested bird and the other a plainhead (crest-bred). Two yellows breed high-coloured, thin-feathered birds; two buffs breed flat-coloured, thick-feathered birds. Bear this fact in mind when putting your birds together.

(to be continued)

PHEASANTS No. 2.

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FOOD.

After a Pheasant has attained a size two-thirds of its full growth it will thrive among the common kinds of grain and seeds. An occasional handful of bread crumbs, green apples, tomatoes, fresh clover, lettuce, onions, or cabbage will make a fine relish. No one would think of their flourishing without free access to grits and gravel. They enjoy scratching in fresh earth, I usually spade-up once a week, a portion of their runs during the summer so as to provide them with fresh, clean earth.

In this connection we will speak of food for the little ones. There are certain patent foods manufactured claimed to be of great merit. Several of these the writer has tried, hoping that some of them would prove to be just the thing, but it did not turn out so satisfactory as had been anticipated. Our main reliance for food for the chicks is maggots, crackers, eggs, milk, bread and earth worms.

Maggots may be easily secured by suspending a liver or other refuse from the butcher's over a barrel or box, in a few days the meat will swarm with big fat worms that will roll out and fall in the box below. The floor of the box should be covered with sand, bran, or meal; in this the maggots will clean