

ing them to decide as to what their nature needs.

I cannot say that the statements published in the journals on the food question are usually sound. Mr. A. had fed barley and finds his fowls did well, and Mr. B. has fed peas and thinks his pigeons could not have flourished better; both forgetting how many other factors besides food enter into the prosperity of a bird. It has been fully *demonstrated* that the old division of foods into flesh-formers and fat-formers is *wrong*. A pig was fed on food that had been chemically analyzed and it was found that of the total fat laid up in its body only 25 per cent was contained as fat in its food.

Experience shows, indeed, that some foods are more fattening than others; but it is also true that all foods are not equally fattening to different breeds of fowls. The positive greed some breeds have for corn is not within meaning. Give, for example, Hamburgs but what exercise they need and you may feed plenty of corn even in summer; and in winter remember that, in the case of both fowls and pigeons, fat-forming food *then* acts as heat-producing.

Observe how you digest your own pork and beans in winter as compared with summer. But, if we give corn to young stock, and withhold barley, wheat and oats, we waste food and oblige the nature of the bird to do the work to get what it wants. The idea of a mixed meal, ("excelsior meal") as set forth in Mr. Felch's admirable book, is not only practically good but scientifically sound. A better way, if people would follow it, would be to mix one or two meals or kinds of grain for half the week, and then change.

I must maintain, notwithstanding the Editor's proposed enlarged dietery for pigeons, (see November number) that it is still too restricted. Why withhold wheat, one of the best foods for man or beast? Buckwheat in *moderation*, not as a grand staple, is excellent for fowls

and pigeons, especially in the moulting period. Pigeons form feeding habits. They may at first refuse even peas, if always fed on corn; but, by adding gradually and keeping them hungry, they soon learn to take a variety of kinds of grain.

The only way in which breeders can solve the feeding question is by resorting to experiment, as has been done in the case of hogs especially. A man who keeps one breed of fowls may separate them into pens, weigh the grain fed, and periodically weigh the birds, or otherwise compare the results as to health, vigor, etc., but in every case *all the other conditions must be the same*, if any scientific conclusions (*i. e.*, exact ones) are to be drawn. The experiment might, in the same way, be tried with different breeds.

But I fear this communication is getting long. However, if you care to afford me the space, Mr. Editor, I will endeavor to explain, in the next number, how every breeder may contribute his brick to the pile that makes up the scientific edifice; a good, solid, lasting one, too, and not a vague opinion he may change next week. Experience is the final court of appeal; but let us have experience, and not opinions only.

MR. PETER'S LETTER.

I felt sorry to see the notice of no show in Toronto, again; it is so easy of access to the many. Still, it is far wiser to have one extra good show than have the interest too much divided. The Ontario should be a grand success; and no doubt it will exceed all past efforts in bringing together both birds and fanciers. While speaking of shows please allow me, Mr. Editor, to make a few remarks on the growth of the poultry interest in a few of the places in our immediate neighborhood.

First on the list, after Toronto, is Stayner, a pretty village about fourteen miles north of Angus. Though small,

it is a very thriving and busy place, and one of the handsomest buildings for the annual agricultural exhibition that can be seen in this part of the country, quite different to the usual village accommodation. And it is no mere figure of speech to say that it would reflect credit on any large town. But what is more wonderful, the *enterprise did not stop here*; the management had the extraordinary good sense, generosity, and determination to do everything in their power to make it first-rate in every detail, and two years ago added one of the most complete, I may say, the *most complete and convenient* poultry-house of its size that I have seen in Ontario; it is, in every respect, the model for others to follow. Large, roomy coops, with wire fronts, allowing all birds to be seen to advantage—a pretty building, well lighted, clean and commodious; add to this a complete poultry prize list, with classes for fowls and chicks, and liberal cash prizes, promptly paid.

I think, Mr. Editor, you will agree with me that such generous interest displayed by the directors on behalf of poultry, and comfort for exhibitors in that department, (so much neglected, as a rule,) and that, too, in a village, ought to receive its meed of praise, and be thankfully acknowledged through the columns of our only Canadian poultry journal. The most courteous officials in every respect, with competent judges, and good management, makes Stayner exhibition a pleasant memory for every exhibitor. It is properly called the "North Simcoe Industrial Exhibition." I need hardly say that the exhibit of poultry there is very large, and I can add with truth, fine in quality, as friend Spillet will remember, even before there was a poultry-house built. I trust, sir, you will grant me space for two more notices, viz., Collingwood and Barrie, in your next issue. For the interest is extending, and must be productive of much good.

The answer to your query *re* oyster