



And a royal purple dyes
Yonder heather-hill, that lies
Fitting footstool for the skies.

And the gorse is all ablaze,
Lighting up the moorland ways,
And the days are golden days.

E'en the myriad mooded sea
(Earth-bound, yet than earth more free)
Wears a look of *constancy*.

And your love, that in the spring
Was a shy, uncertain thing,
Like a bud just blossoming,

With the summer's growth has grown,
Till our two lives, lived as one,
Make a summer of their own.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

PHEASANTS.

By BARONNE H. DE BOERIO.

I WONDER if any of "Our Girls" keep pheasants. Of course numbers go in for poultry. Indeed, I can hardly imagine any girl who lives in the country and has plenty of room not doing so. What a source of amusement and interest, but also what a source of anxiety in the spring-time, when hens that ought to sit won't sit, or calmly desert their nests after a week or so, and utterly ruin a valuable *couvée*.

"Theo" has written some very interesting and useful chapters on poultry-keeping during the last few months, chapters which I have read with a great deal of interest as a poultry-keeper, and from which I have taken some valuable hints.

Now I propose to tell "Our Girls" all I know about pheasants, and as I have kept them some years, with very good results, I daresay my experience will be of use to some one or other.

There are thirty-one different sorts of pheasants, all handsome, gay-plumaged birds, each more splendid than his neighbour, so that it is difficult to say which is the most beautiful.

Those most known are the common wood pheasant, the Silver, the Gold, Lady Amherst, Swinhoé, Cabot, Elliot, Venéré. Most people imagine that to keep pheasants successfully one must have a large parquet with plenty of grass, low-lying bushes, etc. This is quite an erroneous idea, though I do not deny that if possible it is preferable, as more approaching to their natural state. All created things must be happier and healthier under the conditions of their natural state, from man downwards, *ça va sans dire*; but it is within our power, by order and great cleanliness, to render the captives' life on the whole happy enough. Those born in captivity know not what they have lost, so make the best of what they have, and, as far as my experience goes, thrive well.

I have not a very large garden, so my pheasants have less space than I should like to give them.

My aviary is 48 ft. long, 6 ft. wide, and 6 ft. high. It is divided into four compartments; each compartment has a little wooden house for shelter, just large enough for a cock and two hens. Of these shelters, however, they take no advantage, remaining outside in all weathers.

Gravel and sand are laid down thickly, and well raked every morning. Sometimes I plant

old pear trees in the centre to serve as perches; but they are not very necessary, as pheasants do not seem to care about perching themselves, at least, mine do not, and if the birds are at all wild, the pear trees break the tail feathers as they fly up suddenly.

I feed mine morning and evening on buckwheat. In the spring and summer I give them green food of all sorts—cabbage leaves, grass, salad, groundsel, etc., at middle day. This is very necessary. Also worms and snails, as I happen to find them in the garden, and occasionally a little sopped bread for a treat.

On this fare my pheasants thrive splendidly, their plumage is glossy and healthy, and they themselves always appear cheerful and contented. During seven years not one has died from disease; though last year a friend's ferret got to the birds and killed twelve in one night. My feelings towards that friend and his ferret were not of the warmest, or rather, I should say, they were too warm for some time after. Four were replaced at once, but the rest, though promised, came not, and old *Father Time* will be a year older next month since the accident. I also lost a cock golden pheasant last year. He was rather wild, and someone coming round the corner upon him suddenly, he flew upwards swiftly, struck his head in a vulnerable part against the woodwork of the aviary, and fell down dead. I mourned him sincerely, but as there was nothing else to be done I ate him, and very tender and delicious he was too.

I do not know how much buckwheat costs in England, but here in Brittany it is 12 francs the 100 kilos, or about 10s. the 200 pounds. This quantity ought to last fifteen pheasants from three months to three months and a half. I give my birds only just enough buckwheat for their breakfast and dinner, as whatever is left over is eaten by the sparrows, who hop in through the wire netting by dozens, and eat as much, if not more, than the pheasants. Of course this is easily avoided by using the very smallest netting; but mine is unfortunately just large enough to admit these little thieves, and they fly in and out so nimbly it is impossible to catch them. And now I will tell you about the management of the young pheasants. To anyone used to bringing up chickens it is quite the easiest thing in the

world, and not at all the delicate operation some people make it out.

In the first place you must put hens to sit on your pheasant eggs. Very few pheasants are good sitters or mothers; they are quite the exception. Though the common pheasant seems to get on well in her native state, in captivity it is far safer to put the eggs under a hen, a smallish hen with small feet, and quiet in her movements, as most of the pheasants' eggs are smaller and more breakable than fowls', and the little ones are half the size of chickens when born, and easily killed by an awkward and large-footed mother. The tamer and quieter the mother, the more likely are you to bring up your brood without any accidents of this kind. Bantams and Silkies are the best fowls for bringing up pheasants.

The eggs take about twenty-one days to hatch. They should be put under the hen as fresh as possible, though I have known eggs a month old before the hen began to sit hatch out all right. One of my golden pheasants laid thirty-five eggs straight off on end, so that had she been left to sit herself her first eggs would have been over the month.

Every day I look to my nests and take away the eggs; this is most necessary with the silver pheasant, as both cocks and hens are often inveterate egg-eaters; this is the bane of the race; with some it is so confirmed a vice that unless you are present when the egg is laid, it is almost impossible to get an unbroken egg at all, and you are obliged to give up all hopes of breeding.

The young pheasants require much the same treatment as chickens; they require no food for the first twenty-four hours; after that time you must give them ants' eggs, picking out the eggs, placing them on a board, and pointing them out to the young pheasants with the point of a small stick; this is, of course, the mother's work, and sometimes she does it so well there is no need to occupy yourself with the matter, but it is most necessary that the young should eat plenty during these first days. The water, place as for chickens.

After fifteen days mix a little millet-seed with the ants' eggs, gradually increasing the seed and reducing the quantity of eggs. After a month you may give them buckwheat, and if it is more convenient, leave off the ants' eggs.

Young pheasants require otherwise precisely the same treatment as chickens. A nice dry

run, with plenty of grit and grass to scratch in, well exposed to the morning sun, if hatched as late as June, as the midday sun burns too much. I forgot to say, when talking of their first food, that lettuce and a little onion chopped very, very small must be given regularly after the second day, and continued for a fortnight or so.

Damp or wet is fatal to young pheasants as to chickens, and very great care must be taken in this respect.

I have now only four sorts of pheasants: Swinhoé, the golden and silver pheasant, and the *faisan des bois à collier*. I have not the slightest idea of the English name, so I give the French. It is in every respect like the common pheasant, save for a white collar and green horns lying back horizontally. Each cock has two hens, so I am not so badly off after all, despite my friend and the ferret. Another smaller aviary is waiting to be filled; in it I shall put Lady Amhersts and Venérés, two magnificent kinds of pheasants.

And now about the price. Here, in France, I buy my birds through the *Journal de l'Acclimatation*, a very useful paper in much the same style as the *Exchange and Mart*. The birds being offered by ladies and gentlemen who, like myself, go in for breeding for pleasure, are very much cheaper than those offered by professionals.

Swinhoés are generally 35f. to 40f. a couple, Venérés ditto, at one year old. Golden and silver *faisans des bois à collier* 15f., 20f., and 25f. a couple, according to their age, though I have bought bargains which turned out very well 10f. the couple. Lady Amherst, de Cabot, and Elliot are from 25f. to 35f. Of course the cheapest way to get up your stock of pheasants is to buy eggs in March and April, and put them under a hen. The eggs vary from 8f. to 22f. the dozen, according to the sort. In order to be sure of selling mine, when I have any over, I sell them a few francs under the usual price, and they are sure to be snapped up at once. I can assure "Our Girls" that though pheasants demand a little outlay at first, they will, if properly cared for, fully repay the trouble, not only paying their own expenses, but bringing in a nice little sum to their owner. This with systematic care—mind, not much care one day and oblivion the next; but this, we hope, is not the likely sort of thing any of "Our Girls" would do.

A YOUNG OXFORD MAID.

(IN THE DAYS OF THE KING AND THE PARLIAMENT.)

By SARAH TYTLER, Author of "Papers for Thoughtful Girls," etc.

CHAPTER XIV.



WHEN the great lady came, Kitty found to her surprise that she was comparatively a young woman, not older than the Queen, only a few years over thirty. But in these anxious times, when boys and girls shot up into men and women,

because of the exigencies of the situation, their seniors soon passed from the noon of life into the lengthening shadows which herald the decline of day. The air and habit of command likewise tended to lend a majestic, mature air to persons hardly past the flower of their age.

Charlotte de la Tremoille or Stanley was not very tall, though she carried her figure so well that none missed the absent inches which would have given her the advantage of statelier height; she had a striking, rather than a beautiful face, a strong nose, a straight, firm, but not thin lipped mouth, a chin already with a slight tendency to double itself, and notably arched black brows. She had the bright dark eyes of her father's

country, while there was a trace of her mother's Dutch descent in the lingering red and white of a complexion which in its bloom Rubens might have painted. She was dressed in a plain, dark cloth travelling hood and mantle. As Lady Ottery would have said, she was beyond dress: it could neither add to nor take from her dignity, though on occasions, to grace a family event or a public ceremonial, she wore the costly stuffs and jewels of a princess, which simply became her.

She entered the lodging in the High Street with as much quietness and grace as if she had never dwelt in palaces. She spoke in the same unaffected, unobtrusive manner, calling Lady Ottery, with evident sincerity, her friend—her old friend