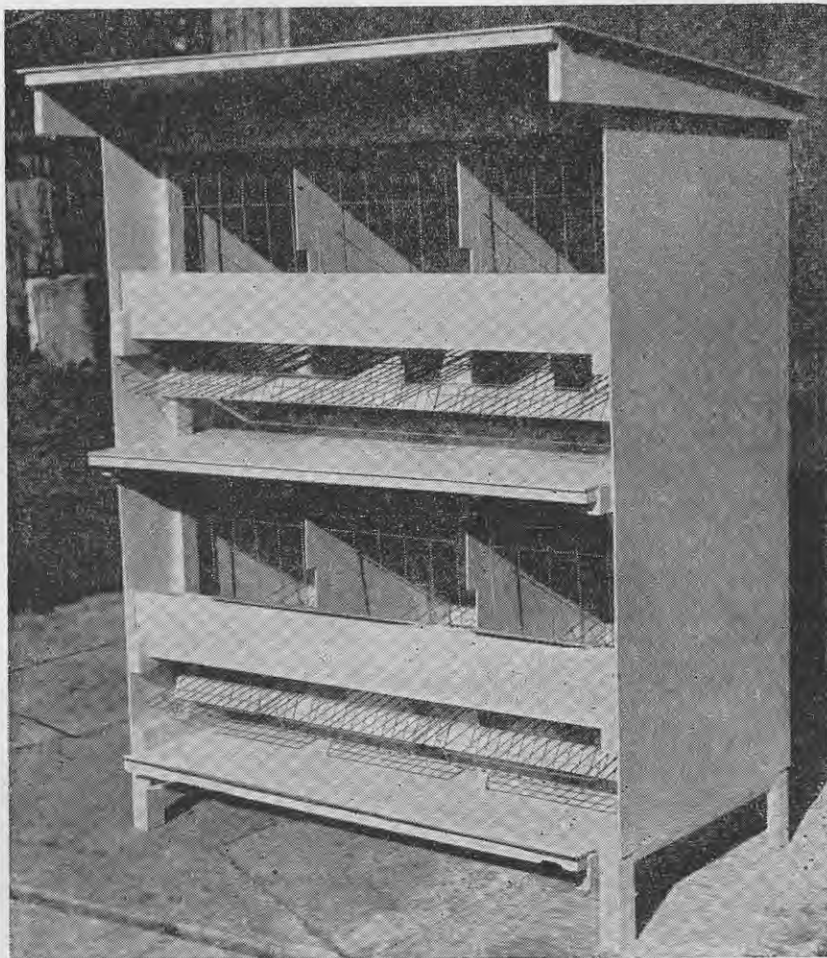


Outdoor Cages for Household Laying Birds

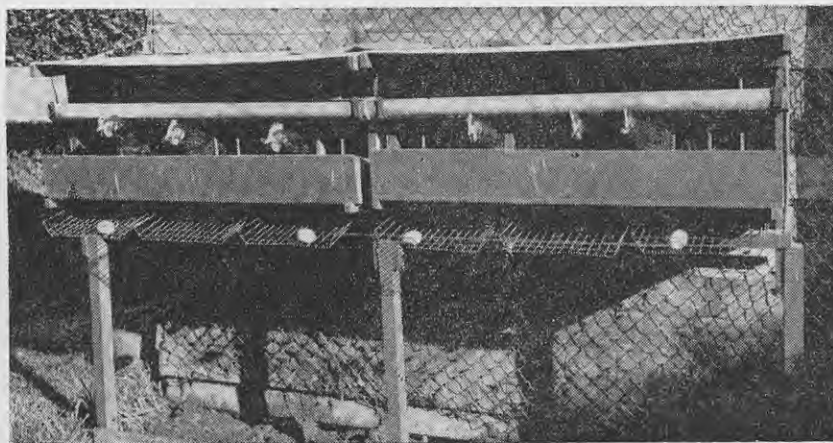
THE practice of keeping animals confined to cages is not new. Rabbits, birds, and chickens for fattening have been handled in this way for hundreds of years. A great number of children's pets are still kept in this way. Confining of laying pullets to cages was started over 30 years ago and in recent years interest in this system of keeping poultry has spread to New Zealand. Efficient farmers, particularly those specialising in egg production, have become cage conscious because it is realised that cages present a most efficient method of producing eggs through the opportunity for close supervision. In this month's article P. Josland, Poultry Instructor, Department of Agriculture, Wellington, discusses the use of the cage system for the household poultry keeper.

FOR many household poultry keepers the use of the cage system would go far in maintaining the health of the birds by avoiding overcrowding and dirty conditions. The rat menace is greatly reduced. Increased production can be expected in that each bird is able to obtain its full share of food, as bullying can no longer occur and all the birds have an equal chance to give of their best. Often in a flock of pullets, regardless of the number housed together, there are timid and bullied birds. Such birds rarely obtain sufficient food for necessary body growth, maintenance, and production, and they develop slowly and produce poorly. It is surprising just how well this type of bird develops and pro-



An excellently constructed laying cage unit for six birds. The overhead hood protects against rain and the solid sides protect against draughts. The droppings trays may be pulled out for cleaning.

▼ An outdoor laying cage unit for six birds, utilising the side of a shed for shelter. There is no droppings tray. The droppings are allowed to fall on the ground and are disposed of in the garden or compost heap when necessary.



duces when it is in a cage and unharassed by the other birds.

Also with the cage system it is easy for the householder to note which birds are laying and with little extra effort to record the individual production. Thus the non-producer or poor layer can be detected easily and culled, food being thereby saved. Cull birds, if healthy and in good condition, make excellent table birds. Furthermore, the cage system would require less attention at the weekends, when the householder may wish to be away for at least part of the time.

An Outdoor Battery

The big advantage of an outdoor battery is the economy on housing, equipment, and space required. The position in which the cage unit is placed is important. A sheltered spot should be chosen and a wall or back