

Also, answer "What breed of horses is best adapted for agricultural purposes in Canada?" We have various breeds, as Clydes, Bloods, &c., all possessing different qualities. Would you recommend crossing the breeds, or keeping every kind distinct by themselves?

#### AN OLD CARTER.

Ringbone and other diseases of the osseous system, in many instances, can be traced to some hereditary predisposition. Diseased and worthless animals, when unfit for ordinary work, are frequently kept for breeding purposes, and the progeny commonly inherit those diseases which may have existed either in the sire or dam. We are of opinion that if greater care were bestowed in the selection of good, sound and vigorous animals for breeding, there would be fewer ringboned and spavined animals to be seen.

To prevent interfering in a horse who is turned out in the front feet, the shoe should be applied to fit closely on the inside, and the nails applied around the toe and to the outside. In some instances a small piece of leather placed betwixt the sole and the shoe, and allowed to project outwards, has a very good effect in preventing interfering.

The last question is open to considerable discussion amongst practical and experienced men. At present we decline offering any opinion. Let our correspondents speak for themselves.

**LOSS OF MANE AND TAIL.**—The following is very useful in cases where there is a falling out of the hair of the mane and tail, viz:—Glycerine, two ozs., sulphur, one oz., acetate of lead, two drachms, water, eight ounces. To be well mixed, and applied by means of a sponge.

**SWOLLEN ABDOMEN.**—A subscriber writes:—"I have a valuable mare now in foal to a blood horse, and about three weeks from foaling time she has become very much swollen all under her abdomen, and forward as far as her fore legs. I would not feel uneasy about her, only she had a foal three years ago, had the same swelling, and lost one teat in consequence. Can anything be done for her?"

Swelling under the abdomen is a common occurrence in mares previous to foaling, and is seldom productive of any harm. It is generally advisable, however, to give the mare gentle walking exercise daily, and every second night a teaspoonful of nitrate of potash, which may either be dissolved in water or given in a bran mash. This should be continued until four or five doses are given. She should also be sparingly fed for eight or ten days before foaling.

### Poultry Yard.

#### Characteristics of various Breeds of Poultry.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE ONTARIO POULTRY ASSOCIATION, BY THE PRESIDENT, A. MCLEAN HOWARD, ESQ.

As President of the Poultry Association, I have often been asked the question, which are the best varieties of fowls to keep? My answer has been, it depends altogether upon what you more particularly want them for, and this must always be kept in mind in making a selection.

I will now give briefly the leading characteristics of the various kinds, for the information of intending breeders, leaving them to select accordingly. My remarks will be, as nearly as possible, the result of my own experience.

I will begin with the Cochins, as they generally head the list. They certainly are the largest, if not the best. I have not found them, under all circumstances, a profitable kind to keep for general purposes. They are not the best layers, nor do they lay an egg at all in proportion to their size. They are

large feeders, poor foragers, inveterate sitters, but careless and clumsy with their eggs or chickens. They are very hardy, and when young, good for winter layers. The hens should not be kept over two years, as they then become lazy and good for nothing, and I pity the person who has to eat them at that age. In fact, I do not consider them first-rate for the table at any age, from their small proportion of breast meat. They are extremely docile, and from their kind and amiable disposition, are great favourites with some. They are very patient under confinement, and to parties having a small run or wishing to keep them out of their gardens, I consider them invaluable. I may say that I have found their chickens very easy to raise, and if hatched early attain a large size. I recollect hatching a brood of the well known buff Cochins on St. Valentine's Day, a number of years ago, and raised nearly all of them. I kept them in a vacant horse-stall in my stable. I think, as a general rule, the coloured varieties are larger than the white, though Col. Hassard had some at the fall show which I think quite equalled their buff relatives.

I shall now proceed to the Brahma Pootra, and I think if I were keeping a large fowl, I should prefer them to the Cochins, as they are better foragers, not so indolent, lay well in winter, if kept in a tolerably warm place, are quite equal in size, and the chickens are very easy to raise. They are not the best summer layers, often wanting to sit all the time, and subject to the same drawback in that respect as the Cochins. They are not quite so patient in confinement as the Cochins. The light Brahmas especially, from their extreme depth of colour, their rich creamy white, and light pencilled backle, are a particularly handsome bird.

The Dorkings next claim our attention. I cannot speak with so much positiveness in regard to them, never having had any. They are considered, *par excellence*, the English table fowl, though I believe it is questionable how far some of the French breeds have usurped their place in that respect. I think, in point of profit, the coloured Dorkings surpass their white cousins, being larger and more vigorous birds, though, to my taste, not to be compared with the white in beauty. I have always considered the distinctive features between Dorking and Barndoor fowls not sufficiently defined for them ever to become a fancy breed. I believe their chickens are rather difficult to raise. They are fair mothers, and tolerably good layers.

I will now proceed to the Spanish, a breed which, to judge from the large numbers of entries at our Poultry Shows, appear to be rather popular. There is no doubt that, as layers, they may be considered first-rate, laying large white-shelled eggs. I have found their chickens very easy to raise, the young cocks being exceedingly precocious. They are non-incubators, requiring other hens to hatch their eggs. They have, however, one very serious drawback; they are very apt to get frost-bitten, from the great size of their comb and wattles. The cold soon checks their laying. They also moult badly. Upon the whole, I think them better suited to a climate where the mercury does not get below zero. I am sure the owners of Spanish must feel the truth of my remarks, from the result of their experience, after the severe frost we had during the past winter. In fact, several have complained to me of the effect it had on their birds. There is a breed of White Spanish, having the same characteristics as the black, though I do not think they are as beautiful, as the contrast of the white face is not obtained in the white variety. It may not be out of place, as showing the length of time eggs will hatch, after the removal of the cock bird, to state that, a number of years ago, I had a very superior pair of Black Spanish; the cock bird having unfortunately died, I was desirous of saving all the eggs I could, and set eleven that were laid after the cock died. The first five hatched, the re-

mainder were bad, but none of the chickens were strong.

The Games come next on our list, and I think that, take them all in all, nothing can surpass them. They are good layers of rich eggs, very hardy, which I think is a most important advantage, and from their great variety and extreme beauty, are general favorites. They are small feeders, and are, when in good health, always fit for the table, without extra feeding. The hens cannot be surpassed as sitters and mothers. Many think that, from their extreme pugnacity, they would be difficult to rear; but with ordinary care all that may be avoided; in fact, it is astonishing what order a good Game cock will keep in his yard. All the young slugs are in dread of him, and in his presence are on their good behaviour.

I now come to the Polands. A great deal may be said in their favor; they are extremely hardy, and from the absence of comb are not so likely to be affected by the frost. They are good layers, but better in summer than winter, and are non-incubators. They are an extremely fancy bird, and like all the Spangled varieties, require great care in the breeding. I do not consider them so good for the farm as some other varieties, as they are more liable to be carried off by hawks, as well as together their top-knots dragged and spoiled in the manure heaps of the barn-yard.

The different varieties of Hamburgs are special favorites of mine, as I consider that, in point of beauty and when well bred, they cannot be excelled. As layers they cannot be surpassed by any other variety. They do not lay quite so large an egg as the Spanish or Dorking, though I think the Spangled and Black are an exception; but they are more continuous layers of most delicious eggs. They are non-incubators, and persons keeping them will not be troubled with chickens unless they get other hens to hatch their eggs. They are rather impatient of confinement, the pencilled ones particularly. But to persons having a good-sized grass run, they are invaluable, as they nearly keep themselves. They are an extremely noisy bird, either singing or cackling all the time.

I am not aware that the Malays require any very particular description. I do not consider them at all a desirable breed to have in the poultry yard, as from their cruel and vindictive disposition, with their great size and strength, they are very apt to prove fatal in their encounters with smaller birds. I should recommend them chiefly as a cross, to get size and weight, not from any merit of their own.

The different varieties of French fowls, which have come into favor lately, require some notice. The principal varieties are the La Flèche, Houdan, and Crève Cœur, specimens of which were exhibited at the last fall show. Of the three kinds, the Houdan seems to find most favor in England, though I think I would prefer the La Flèche, as I think the damp climate of the Old Country, which is so much against them there, would not affect them here. My friend, Mr. Wood, a member of the Association, imported some from Paris a year or two ago, and I believe was very much pleased with them, having found them to be most excellent layers.

There are some few rules that are applicable to all varieties of fowls, without the observance of which it would be unfair to expect any useful results. If many eggs are expected, no hens should be kept, as a rule, after the second year, as after that the fecundity of the hen diminishes considerably. Hens require a certain amount of warmth in the winter, but not stove heat, which is bad.

I have erected a glass shed or house on the south point of my fowl-house, out of some old sashes, where the hens can come out and enjoy the fresh earth without getting in the snow. They have as much buckwheat and screenings as they can eat, plenty of warm straw, green food in the shape of cabbage, an occasional liver, cool ashes to bark and dust in, with a good supply of fresh water. Attention to these particulars has insured me a plentiful supply of fresh eggs during all the past winter.