

TURKEY RAISING IN MANITOBA.

[A paper read before the Manitoba Poultry Association, by H. S. Maw, Winnipeg.]

Bronze turkeys are descended from the wild turkeys of Canada and parts of the United States, and are naturally adapted to a cold climate, and thrive and grow to large size in Manitoba. The gobbler should be an early hatched bird to get his size for the Christmas market; but if kept for breeding purposes, will continue to grow for three years, after which age it is better to dispose of them, as his extreme weight often damages the hens. The hens for breeding purposes should be one and two years old (young pullets seldom producing strong, healthy chicks). A good average weight for hens is fifteen pounds, but choice, well-developed hens go twenty pounds and over, and if healthy, are valuable for breeding purposes, as like begets like. In-breeding is fatal, and is the cause of many failures. The great demand and high prices paid for large-sized birds for the holiday trade cause many to dispose of their largest birds, thinking the smaller ones, if allowed time, will be as good for stock. This Christmas, the market in Winnipeg has opened the eyes of many of our farmers to the necessity of improving their stock or going out of the business. Carloads of imported birds sold readily at 11½ and 12½ cents per pound wholesale, and retailing at 15 cents, while the majority of our Manitoba birds found slow sale at eight and nine cents per pound retail. No wholesale merchant would handle them at any price. The reason was plain to those who had the opportunity to compare the two articles. The imported birds were large and uniform in size, packed in cases containing about two dozen in two layers, those on the bottom with the breast upwards, the top layer with breast down. The birds averaged 12 to 15 pounds, mostly this seasons growth, well fattened and a beautiful white color, entrails drawn, every feather, including wings, taken off. In some shipments the head and feet were left on; and I prefer them that way, as the purchaser is better able to judge the age and sex. The Manitoba birds, as a rule, were small and dark in color, owing to their not having been fattened, and the pin-feathers were a prominent part of the breast. Several notable exceptions were made by breeders who have used Bronze Gobblers to mate with the common stock,

and they proved conclusively that there is no necessity to annually send thousands of dollars out of our Province for turkeys, when, by a small outlay, we can raise as good birds and market them easier than those imported. I will quote one instance: Mr. W. W. Watson, of Kildonan, purchased a young Bronze tom of me last spring to mate with a few common hens. This fall he had a band of 97 grand, large birds, all showing strongly the beautiful bronze markings, and having gained at least five pounds each in weight as a result of this cross. Mr. Watson had no trouble to raise this flock,—they had health and constitution to start with,—and he netted quite a snug sum from those he sold. Turkeys, to be healthy, want to be kept during the winter in a large, cold building without draughts, and to be allowed their liberty to come out when they wish. Every evening it is best to see they are all in, as they sometimes prefer to sleep on the roof. In the early spring see that you have no small gobblers in your flock, and if you keep two gobblers, only allow one at a time to run with your hens. The first eggs may be set under a hen, and the turkey, if shut up for two or three days, will soon lay another lot of eggs.

For the first few weeks the young turkeys will want careful attention, avoiding dampness. Lice will kill quickly, but a little lard or insect powder will kill the lice. When about six to eight weeks old they shoot the red on their head and neck, and at this time they are delicate and want a little extra care and nourishing feed. After this, they will roam all day and find their own feed, but it is advisable to give them a good feed every evening, to teach them to come home. About three weeks is sufficient to fatten for market, and the breeder who has attended to his birds will be well repaid for his trouble. Commence by getting a well-developed young gobbler (Bronze) from a reliable breeder. Don't ask, when you write, for an extra heavy bird, as a fattened bird is often useless for breeding; but insist on size and bone development, and do not grudge \$4.00 or \$5.00 for a good bird, as you are laying the foundation for extra size and a sure market for your coming flock. The Manitoba Poultry Association is doing a good work for the Province in encouraging poultry culture and development in all its branches, and is ably assisted by the Provincial Government; and if all the managers of local exhibitions would join in and foster and encourage the raising

and improving of poultry in their districts, Manitoba would have carloads to export instead of importing, and hard times would not be felt to the extent they are at present.

[There is more than one lesson in this article for British Columbia ranchers.—Ed.]

THE FUTURE OF THE COCHIN FOWL IN AMERICA.

The large and comprehensive exhibit of Cochin fowl at the recent Poultry Show in New York City, has demonstrated beyond peradventure the importance and utility of the Cochin Club to breeders of all varieties of Cochins. At its last meeting the Club decided that the time had fully arrived when a definite and standard shape should be determined upon and recognized for all phases of the Cochin species. A "Committee on Shape" for all varieties was duly appointed, consisting of T. F. McGrew, John C. Sharp, Jr., Geo. W. Mitchell and Philander Williams.

As this initial step intimately concerns all who are in any way interested in the breeding, etc. of this species of the genus *gallus*, we subjoin a few of the more important topics discussed at the meeting, viz:—

- I. Whether large, irregular heads and combs, or fine, symmetrically formed heads and combs, should constitute the standard.
- II. Shall we decide on the full, round shaped back, extending towards the tail, and the full round breast, or, shall the broad, flat back and breast, have pre-eminence?
- III. Shall we tolerate the characteristic Brahma outline to amalgamate with the essential Cochin contour, or, will ALL unite in one master-effort to establish proportions that will distinguish a perfect Cochin fowl,

We request every breeder of Cochin fowl in the United States, Canada, and elsewhere who may be interested to express their views and opinions, relative to the above, in writing, and mail same to the undersigned.

From a consensus of views of representative breeders of this magnitude, it is confidently believed the Committee will be enabled to define a permanent standard that will be subject to the minimum of criticism.

To secure this end we must have your prompt and able co-operation.

Please state your views briefly, yet explicitly, and if possible supplement same by an outline sketch of the characteristic points, writing only on one side of the paper.

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