

measure below the knee. The reason for this appears to be, that with such a conformation these tendons not being able to work in a straight line between the fetlock, and their insertion into their respective muscles will be liable to sprain. Horses for fast work should have the pasterns of the fore legs moderately long, and fairly sloped, in order to obviate the risk of sprain to the suspensory ligaments, and of concussion of the bones of the fetlock joint. We think that the harder the ground, and the faster the pace the more imperative is the necessity for sloping pasterns, which, however, are disadvantageous when strength is a desideratum, as the chief office of the fore limb is to act as a weight bearer, while that of the hind extremity is to serve as a propeller. We find that in the true shaped horse the hind quarters are more upright than the fore. Long sloping shoulders are to be desired in all classes, except in the heavy cart horse, which requires a more upright and massive conformation to work well against the collar. The cross-country horse (1) above all others requires oblique shoulders, for the more sloping they are the less weight will there be in the front of the fore legs when the animal lands over a fence, and, consequently, the less liable will he be to come down. The saddle horse, as the old saying expresses it, "should be short above and long below" i. e. his back should be comparatively long. (2) while his sloping shoulders and long pelvis should enable him to cover a considerable distance of ground.

The light saddle horse and lady's horse may have more length of back. The points of conformation in which the heavy cart horse differs from the light saddle-horse are that his shoulders should be more upright and massive, chest broader, pasterns shorter, and straighter, while the muscles of locomotion should be distinguished by their thickness rather than by their length, and consequently the bones of his limbs will be thicker and shorter.

C. McEACHRAN.

POULTRY-DEPARTMENT.

Crosses for Table Fowls.

Results of English Experience.

EDS. COUNTRY GENTLEMAN—Considerable attention has been paid in this country, of late years, to the question of table poultry, and as is usually the case we have learned a great deal. Whether it is true or not that Englishmen have insular prejudice very strongly developed, I, as a patriotic citizen of Britain, prefer not to say, but we have been fain to confess of late years that we have very much to learn in the matter of table fowls. This may be due to the fact that chickens and fowls (save geese and turkeys, which no one can beat us in) have not been a general article of diet. They have not been thought substantial enough—only fit for invalids and children, while strong men needed a fuller diet. But this is passing away. Chickens are now coming more into favour as a part of every-day food, and would still more do so were it not for the price at which they are sold. During the season, spring chickens sell at \$2 to \$5 per pair, and even at ordinary seasons it is difficult to get any chickens under a dollar, and it will be only a poor thing at that. The show of dead poultry in all

our leading markets and poulterers' shops is no credit to producers or consumers—to producers, because they might make so much more of their produce; and to consumers, because they are content with such a poor sort of thing. It is true there is some improvement of late years. The example set by French poultry keepers, and the demand of those who have seen in other lands such fowls as are there produced, have compelled some attention to be paid to this question. But this has been more in the way of dressing than anything else, and we have yet much to learn ere we can compete with our French neighbors. There is much wanted yet to be done, both in the way of producing suitable fowls and preparing them for the table. The best preparation will be of little avail if the breed kept is not a right one, and the best breed will not have justice done to it, if simply picked up out of the poultry yard and killed without some previous fattening. On the question of fattening I hope to have something to say later on, but now my object is to show what we have learned as to the breeds for table purposes.

In the first place it may be acknowledged that, as a rule, cross-bred birds are more profitable than pure-bred ones, for the ordinary poultry producer, who is not a fancier, I mean. Cross-bred fowls are hardier, grow faster and feed quicker than pure-bred ones. For this reason, during the last two or three years some of our English shows have given classes for cross-bred fowls suitable for table purposes, and much has been learned from these. During the coming autumn and early winter at two shows—the Dairy and Birmingham—table fowl classes are to be liberally provided, and I hope to send a full description of them for your columns. There will be pure-bred birds shown also, a very wise arrangement, as then both these and the crosses can be seen and compared.

The breeds that we recognize as our best for table purposes, are 1st Dorking, 2nd Game, and 3rd French, and, as a rule, these are made the basis of all crossing, which is carried out with a real desire to arrive at the best results. Other breeds can be employed with these, or they can be intermixed one with another. But, as a rule, it is found that these do best of all as the foundation. The Dorking we give the first place, in spite of its inability to withstand damp places and clay soils. On suitable places these birds are first-rate, and we find that they cannot be beaten then. They have the decided advantage of being large, deep in the breast, with little meat on the thighs, and rich in flavour of flesh, and, what is regarded most of all by poulterers and old-fashioned cooks, they have white legs and feet. The prejudice against dark colored legs is still strong. There are many who think that white flesh and dark legs do not go together—a fallacy long since exploded, in spite of their unbelief. Here is a capital basis on which to work. The best cross is found to be the colored Dorking with Game, say Brown Reds, and the produce is simply splendid. Somewhat smaller than the Dorking alone, but richer and firmer in flesh, very light in bone and offal, and in every sense a first rate table fowl. If any of the readers of the **COUNTRY GENTLEMAN** wish to produce for their own table or for market really fine table birds, this is a cross that can be recommended with the greatest confidence. Another good cross is with the Houdan, or the La Flèche, either of which produce birds, if the parents are well selected, which, both for size of body distribution and quality of flesh are A 1. Birds from the Dorking Houdan cross have light colored legs, but with the La Flèche cross they are darker. The Brahma Dorking cross is a favorite one with farmers, and those who specially desire size in the birds. For really first rate quality, it is not equal to the others previously named, and the distribution of flesh is not so good also. The same may be said with all crosses in which Asiatics take part.

Game fowls, pure-bred, are remarkable for richness of flesh,

(1) For the benefit of our non sporting readers I may as well say that the writer means by "cross country work," hunting or steeple-chasing.

A R J F.

(2) Short I think the writer means

A R J F