

would I select my stock. It might be thought that the American climate is the cause of the difference, but if so the Darks also would be superior, whereas our Yankee friends' Dark birds cannot as yet compare with Light ones. We had even in England far larger Light birds a few years since than now, and they can be bred again to equal, and even surpass their Dark rivals.

I lay stress on these things, because the *ad misericordiam* style of argument always injures a breed. A good fowl, as the Light Brahma is, if bred good enough, will command success; and the bare idea that petting or artificial "encouragement" is needed, is likely to stop all real effort in the right direction. Let our exhibiting friends leave off this and "get to work," and they will earn their just reward. The reference to prizes given "by supporters" is not just. If birds are not good enough to win on equal terms, which Light Brahmas lately have certainly not been, any extra "support" must, of course and rightly, come from private admirers; but the little real good, or rather the real harm, done by such artificial treatment, is seen by the small results produced by the special prizes thus given at Southampton and other places. They bring larger entries, but they do not bring pens to surpass, rarely indeed to equal, the Darks. Perseverance in fair and honest competition can alone do this. I may here mention that, by the liberality of a member of the Committee, the Lights will at Bristol have four cups (one to every class) against only two for the Darks. There surely is a fair chance for our friends: let us see what the result will be. I for one shall truly rejoice if my real favorites come fairly to the front in size and quality, but mere number of entries I care little for.

I would give some practical help where possible, and hence I remark on the general want of leg-feathers in Light birds. Their breeders have not used equal judgment with the Dark fanciers in employing vulture hocks to restore it, which is very easily done with little bad result. There are various kinds of hocked cocks. There may be a moderate hock with very heavy leg-feather, and heavy hocks with only moderate feather. The latter class of bird has often been used by Light breeders, but is useless. But further: there may be heavy leg-feather, but it may spring

perpendicularly, and hence not "tell" as it ought to do; such a bird also will work little improvement in a badly-feathered strain. Select a few fine long-backed, barely-feathered hens, and mate them with a cock very short and broad in the back, very high and broad in saddle, and with a good strong vulture hock, but with leg-feather under, which stands well out in a horizontal direction. Cut his hocks neatly round with a pair of shears (not plucking them, as the feathers would soon grow again), and you will have at least three-fourths beautifully-feathered birds, with just the hocks a good judge wishes to see. I say "cut off the hocks" advisedly, having found it make a marked difference to the progeny; but I mean, of course, for breeding solely. Indeed, a cut hock is instantly detected by the most inexperienced judge, but I do not wish to be misunderstood as to the object of the proceeding.

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