

Our Letter Box.

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HAMBURGH'S COMBS FREEZING. (*Mr. H. Woodward, Worcester, Mass.*) writes: "In the last number of your paper, in speaking of the fowls recently imported by Mr. Howard, you say 'all fanciers know how susceptible to injury by frost is the comb of the Hamburgh.' This, I know, is the commonly-received opinion; I desire, therefore, to state, for the benefit of your readers, an instance of perfect hardness of the Hamburgh fowl, and what is more remarkable, the fact that although submitted to the coldest weather of the present winter, their combs have not, to all appearance, been injured. A friend of mine, who bred them, informs me that they have had the range of his farm from the time they were hatched; that they have never been housed, but have roosted among the branches of a group of pines during the fall and winter; and although the mercury has been as low as 7 or 8 degrees below zero, they have been perfectly healthy and lively, without showing the least appearance of having suffered in body or comb in consequence of their exposure."

CURE FOR SEVERE COLD.—(*Helena Fanny M.*—of Toronto,) writes: "Dear Mr. Editor, I am a little girl of nine years old, and very fond of chickens. I have some very nice pullets. They are called Silver Pencilled Hamburgs. One of them is an especial favorite, and always comes to me to get fed. Recently she caught a severe cold, and mamma told me she was afraid it was roup—the discharge from her nostrils was very offensive, and about her eyes, one of them in particular, was quite swollen. I bathed her eyes and nostrils frequently with warm water, and rubbed them afterwards with camphorated goose grease. I kept her in a nice coop I constructed for her in the corner of the kitchen. She is now quite well, and more than that, she laid an egg for me to-day. (13th February)—her first. I write this for the benefit of the other little girls whose pet hens may catch cold, and hope they may be as successful as I have been in curing them."

CROP-BOUND FOWLS.—(*H. H., Memphis, Tennessee.*) asks for a cure for Hard Crop in fowls. On page 110 of this volume, a correspondent suggests a remedy. We would suggest the following treatment: Discontinue dry food; feed with soft food, that is, bread and milk or bread and ale. If the crop still continues hard, give a dessert spoonful of sweet oil. If still obstinate, ten grains of jalap. If the case still continues, and the crop still hard, it must

be opened, which may be done as follows: Place the bird on its back between the knees, its head toward you; let the feet and head be held firmly by a second person; then with a sharp penknife make an incision through the skin and upper part of the crop, into which insert a blunt-pointed instrument and loosen the hardened mass, which may be removed through the opening. The slit in the crop may then be sewed up; afterwards feed on soft nourishing food until well. We have performed this operation ourselves, and it is by no means as painful as one would suppose. The bird did not appear to be in the least conscious of pain during the operation.

DIARRHŒA IN FOWLS.—(*W. H. G., Quebec.*) Your fowls are suffering from Diarrhœa, caused, no doubt, by a long continuance of one kind of food. You must change it at once, and substitute a variety of grain—barley, buckwheat, wheat screenings, &c.; give chalk mixed with soft food, say boiled rice, the latter, of course, only in small quantities; or alum dissolved in water is a powerful astringent, and may be given successfully. Another excellent astringent is one drachm of the crystals of Carbolic Acid to a quart of water, administered in small quantities.

HEN ASSUMING THE COCK'S PLUMAGE.—(*Curiosity.*)—Writes us: "I have in my possession a Light Brahma hen, which I consider a curiosity. She is marked and feathered in all respects like a cock, and up to a recent date I looked upon her as such, but I am now convinced she is a hen; she does not crow, however. Is this a rare occurrence?" [It is by no means an unprecedented case for a hen to assume the cock's plumage; there are numerous instances of such on record, but such hens are usually barren.—ED.]

AYLESBURY AND ROUEN DUCKS.—(*Constatant Reader, Toronto.*) asks, "What is the difference between the Aylesbury and Rouen Ducks as regards the number of eggs laid by each, and their relative value as table birds?" For the benefit of our correspondent we give a few extracts from the best authorities we know on the relative merits of these two breeds of ducks. Mr. Hewitt, quoted in the Poultry Book, says, "I am confident that the Rouens are the most profitable of the duck tribe. They are more lethargic, and consequently more speedily fed than any others; they lay great numbers of large eggs, the average weight of which should be three and a half ounces, always above three ounces."—"The flesh is of the highest possible flavour, and in first rate specimens is abundant in quality."—Mr. J. K. Fowler, of England, says, "The Aylesbury duck is