

age, the full and gaily carried tail, the sprightly demeanor. But the size is somewhat larger than that of the Leghorn, while the comb is a very distinctive property. It is not a rose, a leaf, a pea or a single comb, but is more nearly allied to the rose than to any of the others. It is in fact a round red crown, the outer sides provided with spikes, and the centre hollowed out like a cup, from which fact it takes its name of "cup comb." This is a very peculiar and yet attractive style of comb, and is, so far as I know, found on no other breed than the Sicilian.

But, though the Sicilian is an attractive fowl, this is not its only or greatest claim to public favor. It is one of the best laying breeds in existence. A strong statement that, but one based upon the testimony of many who have kept it. One gentleman writes me that it is the best layer summer and winter, he ever kept, and he has kept many breeds including among them Leghorns, Minorcas, Plymouth Rocks, Cochins and Brahmas. Another has said to me that he found the Sicilian a remarkable layer, fully equal to the Leghorn. And others have borne testimony to the same effect. If this were a new breed, some new invention of man, these words of commendation might need to be carefully weighed, but it is an old breed, known in this country long previous to the advent of the rose-combed Leghorns, and by some, supposed to have assisted that fowl in procuring its comb. With age behind it, with a beautiful shape, peculiar comb, attractive plumage and great utilitarian qualities, it would not be remarkable if the Sicilian became a very popular fowl.

But one is met by this question, "if it is an old breed and has not gained great popularity, why should it be expected that it will now gain popu-

larity?" The answer to this question is not difficult. When it first appeared there was not the proper appreciation for the color it possesses that there is now; that at that time the Leghorn was coming into favor and its merits were trumpeted abroad through poultry books and periodicals to such a degree as to obscure the great merits of the Sicilian; that then it lacked men capable or willing enough to press it to the front and show what its merits really were; and that now there is a complete change in the situation, buff being a deservedly popular color, the growth of the poultry interest having made room for such a breed as this, and there being breeders who are quietly working to let the public know just what the Sicilian is. But it would not be true to assume that the fowl never had any popularity. It has been popular with every person who has kept it and who desired a great egg producing breed. Its merits have been known among a quiet, practical folk who made no noise about it, but who continued to breed the fowl because it paid to do so. When fanciers once realize that there is such a breed as the Sicilian, and that it is both handsome and useful in a very high degree, they will not be slow to take it up and help to extend its usefulness. Fanciers do more for the public than the public gives them credit for, because they search out the useful and beautiful among breeds old and new, and by breeding them to a high standard, exhibiting them at public exhibitions, and making their merits known through the poultry press, they teach the public where can be procured the best breeds of fowl for its use. Their work is none the less practical philanthropy because some degree of self-interest may be its mainspring. If they make some profit out of it, the public makes more, and poultry breeding gains equally as much benefit as if they were members of a

regularly organized institution, instead of being a body of men who like their fowls and desire other men to do the same. And when fanciers take hold of the Sicilian, as a few are just beginning to, we have a right to expect that this old breed will take a position that its merits deserve, among the list of fowls prized especially for productivity. People, who care first for eggs, will make no mistake in having a pen of Sicilians.

FALL HATCHED CHICKENS.

BY A REGULAR CORRESPONDENT.

THERE are a great many persons who annually raise a brood on two of Fall chickens which in most instances are intended to be the central figure in sundry savoury stews and pot pies, many of these people like the writer, doubtless keep nothing but thoroughbred fowls, and as these fowls have in nearly every instance been laying steadily since last Winter, with the single intermission of hatching and rearing a brood of Spring or Summer chicks, they are consequently much run down and their vitality is greatly impaired, so much so that these late chicks are rarely worth raising, as they grow slower, are much less vigorous and in every way inferior to the Spring chicks hatched from the same stock. The writer believes in keeping fowls for useful purposes as well as for fancy, and has a decided weakness for "roast chicken" but would go with out for ever rather than eat the poor dejected consumptive looking Fall chicks that it has frequently been my misfortune to see. To see what effect an infusion of foreign blood would have on Fall chicks, Plymouth Rock hens were mated with a black Minorca cock and thirteen eggs were placed under the first that became broody, result thirteen vigorous chicks,