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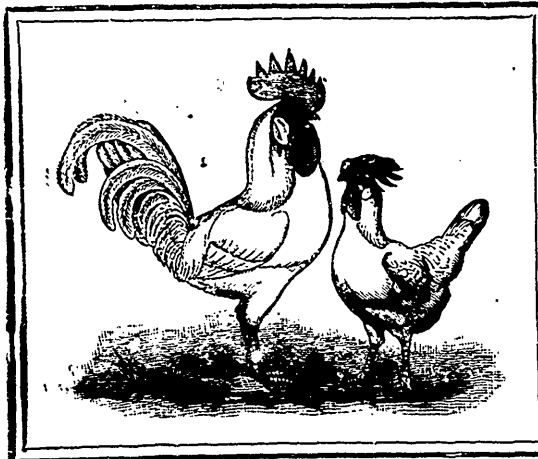
POULTRY

BLACK AND WHITE MINORCAS.

Having been asked by many American poultry fanciers, as well as English, to write them my experience of the Minorca fowl, I thought it best to answer them through your valuable paper, as I am well aware of its large circulation in the States and Canada. My experience and ideas of what a Minorca should be differ but very slightly from many breeders who have written on the above subject during the last two or three issues. I have bred black Minorcas for a number of years, but I never exhibited them until recently. I always, from my first starting with them, endeavoured to breed the same type of birds I now have. I always kept the best layers, singling out those for sale which did not average a certain quantity of eggs per year.

Black and White Minorcas are becoming more and more popular every year, both at home and in foreign countries, principally the United States and Canada. I have sent to America alone during the last six months over seventy pens of black and white Minorcas and blue Andalusians, or nearly 300 birds, many of them having been

exhibited with great success. This alone speaks of the "boom" they are having and will have across the Atlantic. I have had to refuse many orders for the white variety owing to my having bred a small quantity last season. I have kept three American varieties of owls—viz., Plymouth Rocks, Wyandottes, and Leghorns—but I find they cannot come up to the Minorca or Andalusian as layers, although the Leghorn is not far behind. I have registered 234 eggs from blacks, 227 from



IMPORTED WHITE MINORCAS.

whites, and 223 from blue Andalusians in a year. Of course, these results are from specially selected pullets of the best laying strain, having for each pen an unlimited grass run. I breed from 300 to 500 chickens annually.

My idea of a true black Minorca is that the male be large as possible, and square in body with bright lustrous plumage, well up on legs, which should be black or very dark blue, and plenty

of thigh; large, erect, evenly serrated comb, thick at base, reaching well to back of head; bright red face, with smooth, almond-shaped lobes as large as possible, with long pendulous wattles, tail carried well back. The above applies to the females, with the exception that the latter's combs fall nicely over the side of the head, not falling down the side of face so as to prevent the sight of the eye. The average weight of one year-old cocks is from 6 lb. to 8½ lb.; hens, 5 lb. to 7 lb. I noticed that one breeder, whose authority you gave, had a few hens 7 lb. to 9¼ lb. each. I do not for one moment dispute that he has Minorca hens 7 lb. each, but am sorry to say I cannot believe he has a pure Minorca hen 9¼ lb. I think as Mr. HENNAH does, that a Minorca Hen 8¼ lb. is just as ridiculous as sawdust and down is for chickens. My first and special hen, at Bridgewater 1886, is about as large a Minorca hen as I ever saw. and she is only good weight of 7 lb.—she is in fair condition, and laying regularly, my first-prize Crystal Palace

pullet being nearly 6½ lb. These weights were taken after twelve hours fast.

The above remarks on blacks apply to white, only the latter have white beaks and legs. Both varieties are very hardy and easily reared and are fair average table birds, the whites having the advantage over the blacks in this respect, as they are minus the black pin feathers so unsightly on the