

shape of the bird distinctly. In the cock the neck hackles should be short and hard, not meeting in front of the breast nor covering the shoulders. The tail should be furnished with fine, long, narrow sickle feathers. The following, though highly objectionable, are very common faults, and should be carefully guarded against: Short thick heads and necks, large crooked combs, white ear-lobes, short thick legs, long bodies, narrow chests, broad rumps, fanned tails, long drooping wings, long broad feathers, duck feet."

Now is the time to hatch these little beauties, and those who wish to enliven their places with them will find in our advertising pages just where to get good stock, not only in game bantams, but in all other varieties, many of them, in the opinion of some people, even more beautiful than the Games.

Management of Poultry Manure.

A subscriber to your paper writes me a private note asking what I consider the best method of preserving and preparing poultry manure for use. This is a matter of general interest, and I beg space enough to reply to this question in this way:

Poultry manure is the most valuable of our home-made fertilizers; but, like all other manures, it is not because it is made by the fowls that it is so valuable, but because of the peculiarly rich feeding of the fowls. This should not be forgotten in regard to all kinds of manure, because we can make them rich or poor as we feed the animals well or ill. Poultry manure of the ordinary kind is more or less valuable, according to the condition, as is shown here: The are in 1,000 pounds of hen manure 560 pounds of water, 16.3 of nitrogen, 8.5 of potash, 15.4 of phosphoric acid. In 1,000 pounds of guano there are 118 pounds of water, 130 of nitrogen, 23 of potash, and 130 of phosphoric acid.

But if we get rid of the excess of water in the poultry manure, we nearly double its proportionate value, and bring it so much nearer in quality to guano. Again, guano is reduced by decomposition to a very soluble condition, and its actual value is increased because of the immediate availability of its elements. If we can, then, so prepare hen manure as to make its potential value available at once, we further add to its actual value, and bring it still nearer in comparison to the value of the standard fertilizer, guano. Now this we can do, as suggested by my correspondent, by preparation. But this preparation must be such as will not waste any volatile element, which may be set loose in the decomposition, and that yet will produce the required decomposition. I have studied and experimented over this matter, and I think I have got this manure in its most available condi-

tion because I have increased its solubility four times above that of its fresh condition. Farther, I have added to its fertilizing value by adding to the feed of my fowls bran and crushed fresh raw bones, which they consume with avidity, and with the best results as regards their health, production of eggs, and the certainty of hatching and producing strong chicks. But these are mentioned only by the way. In testing poultry manure with corn and melons, compared with stable manure and guano, I find a large handful of the former to be equal in every way to a large handful of the best stable manure, and a small handful (about one-fourth as much) of guano. The manure is prepared in the following manner: Every week the droppings are scraped up from the floor, which is of earth, and put into barrels kept ready. The floor is then well dusted all over with earth dug from the yard outside and thrown in very easily through the window; air slacked lime is then thrown over it until it is quite white. The droppings fall upon the lime, and when they are gathered they are scraped up with the lime and earth and put into the barrels. The barrels are kept out of doors, but covered to prevent exposure to rain. In three months the contents of the barrels become a soft brown powder, having but little appearance of the manure left, and as I have said is four times as soluble as the fresh manure when it is taken out of the house—lime and earth mixed with it. Of the fresh manure but two to three parts are soluble after drying it, while ten to twelve parts of the compost, after three or four months are soluble. I think manure made and prepared this way is worth \$20 a ton, or seven times the value, here, of the best stable manure, and one-fourth the value of Peruvian guano. A flock of twenty hens, kept in one house, has made since November last up to last week, five barrels, or about 1,000 pounds of the mixed compost, of which at least one-third is clear droppings. This quantity I am sure is worth \$10. I choose air-slacked lime in preference to plaster, because of its useful effect in decomposing the manure, and the abundant organic matter—decaying sod—in the earth. The earth absorbs any ammonia which may be formed in the compost—is, in fact, one of those nitre beds which were once used to produce nitre acid by the nitrification of organic matter by the help of lime. The mixture is packed solidly in the barrels, and is kept moist enough by absorption from the air to effect the nitrification. No doubt longer keeping would add still more to the solubility of the manure, by more completely disorganizing the organic matter, and more thoroughly effecting the nitrification. Plaster will simply keep the elements of the manure inert, and would be like putting the talent in the napkin or bury-