

The Poultry Yard.

Scientific Principles of Mating Hamburgs, Polish and French Fowls.

To breed Hamburgs requires care and attention. No other breed of fancy fowls has, perhaps, taxed the ingenuity of the breeder to a greater degree and, even yet, all breeders do not pursue the same general course in mating their stock.

SILVER SPANGLED HAMBURGH cocks should possess good comb and earlobes, with as much spangling in back and saddle as possible, good hackles and clear tail, but not hen-feathered. Such cocks should be put to hens, the best in marking and color that can be found, avoiding all or any great faults, such as coarse comb, or smudgy markings.

GOLDEN SPANGLED HAMBURGH.—With these a somewhat different course should be pursued. The cock should be selected from a good pullet-breeding strain, and rather darker in color and coarser about the head than in good exhibition birds and mated to hens similar to the Silvers in marking, but of course of the Golden line.

IN SILVER PENCILLED VARIETIES, good breeders, says Wright, make up cockerel and pullet pens. For the cockerel pen they match a good show bird with hens much too light in the pencilling for exhibition, with markings distinct, but not heavy enough. For a pullet pen, the very best hens mated with cocks or cockerels, with perfectly black tails, and black about the body. But the objection to this mating is, that neither strain can be depended on to breed in any other way, and many of the pullets hatched, even if they do not show the approach to black spangling, are apt to present a coarse appearance from the markings being too broad and heavy, which all the best breeders have been doing all they can to banish. But "a cock from a reliable strain with properly faced sickles, slightly perceptible bars, which show good dark pencilling underneath on examination, and plenty of black in their secondary feathers, will breed pullets all that can be desired, as well as reproducing his own likeness in the cockerels." Other breeders of this variety choose a cock from a strain ascertained to be thoroughly well pencilled. Tail perfectly black, sickles also black except the clear white edging, which on no account should be grey; bars on wing perceptible but slight, and not too plainly visible, though the wing coverts which form it must be darkly pencilled, mated with hens as previously described, produce excellent chickens.

In breeding **GOLDEN PENCILLED HAMBURGH**s, the same markings and pencillings as in the silver pencilled, allowing for the difference in ground color, are to be sought exactly in the feathers, therefore the same marks as to colors in mating will apply.

BLACK HAMBURGHs, like Black Spanish, require no degree of shade in marking, except brilliancy of lustre; combs and faces are therefore the essential points to be considered. Birds with ill shaped combs, white faces, legginess, red hackles and saddles, ought not to be bred from. In this variety as in others some breeders have cockerel and pullet pens. Pens to produce cockerels only. The cocks should have perfect combs, good red faces free from white, round white earlobes free from red, hackle and saddle perfectly free from red, short legs, broad back and chest; want of color is not of so much consequence. For a pullet pen, a cock must have as many of the above qualifications as can be found united, and with very brilliant color. To breed good pullets a cock must have color, and therefore a reddish hackled cock, if good in other respects, is preferable to a dull colored one. Lustrous pullets may be bred from hens with little color, if mated with a bright cock, but never from a dull colored cock, no matter how lustrous the hens with him may be.

The science of mating colors in the pencilled and spangled Hamburgs, is to re-produce in their offspring clear and distinct colors without mousing in the feathers, the lacing and spangling to be clear and well defined, which will not be, if the parents have present in themselves the faults alluded to; hence the great necessity of selecting none but such birds as are entirely free from such objectionable points. In the black variety, we have already in a previous paper noticed, how liable black fowls are, when

mated with others of the same variety, to throw red—and this is the point to be avoided in Black Hamburgs.

GOLD AND SILVER SPANGLED POLISH.—In all crested fowls the most essential point to reproduce is crest, all other points, though important in themselves, are secondary. It is important to know that any deficiency in crests in the parent stock, is sure to be transmitted to the progeny, and however good a bird may be in lacing, if short in crest, it is useless for exhibition. The scientific course adopted in breeding the two varieties of gold and silver polish is similar. Birds for breeding should be chosen without any sign of comb, as this one desirable point is rather apt to appear where not wished. Darkly marked birds should be chosen for the stock pen, as there is always a tendency to breed lighter. The style of marking should be heavy and deep in character, but sharp and clearly cut. Birds with deformities, such as crooked beak or round or crooked backs should not be bred from. Some breeders of this variety prefer putting young cocks with hens.

WHITE CRESTED BLACK POLISH.—As in the other varieties of Polish so also in this, crests are the most important feature, and should therefore be the first point of consideration with the breeder. When possible, it is best to put together birds whose crests are ample in every respect, as this class of fowls usually breed with great regularity, when the parent birds are well chosen; but the selection of the cock is the most important feature, and therefore, if both parent birds are not perfect in crest, it is better that the hen should be the one deficient, as a cock with perfect crest, when mated with a hen with a comparatively poor crest, produces chickens with better top-knots, than can be obtained, when the hen is all that can be desired, but the brood cock comparatively inferior in crest. It is somewhat remarkable that Polish fowls are peculiarly subject to malformations, such as wry-tail, curved in the spine &c., arising no doubt from constitutional defects caused by too close breeding. At most the number of breeders of Polish fowls are limited and interchange of breeding stock seldom takes place. This fact it establishes however, the fixity of certain points which breed true in the progeny. Care should be taken that no birds with malformations such as alluded to, be bred from.

It is not many years since French breeds of poultry were introduced into Canada, and such as have engaged in breeding them, have, we believe, found them very desirable, more especially the **HOUDAN**. In all the different breeds there is one point common, and that is they are most delicious table fowl. There is little doubt but it was by a system of judicious crossing, the Polish fowl being the foundation, and subsequent selection, in the way of founding new breeds that all the French breeds, were established. The Houdan is a crested fowl like the Polish, so is the Crèvecoeur with its large crest and which in all other respects resembles the Polish, but increased in size; constitutional delicacy characterises all the varieties, with absence of the incubating instinct.

HOUDANS.—Muffs or beards and the fifth toe,—although when first introduced into England the fifth toe was very uncertain, and also occasional birds without muffs or beards would appear—are the essential points in breeding Houdans. The fifth toe having now become a fixity, it is as essential in the Houdan as in the Dorking; no bird without it would have the slightest chance of a prize in the show pen. To breed muffs and the fifth toe are therefore the essentials. Houdan hens, if light in color, should be put with a dark cock or cockerel, but some breeders prefer mating dark hens with a cock or cockerel rather lighter in color. The crest is said to come with the hen, therefore it is of greater consequence to select for breeding, large-crested hens than cocks.

CRÈVECOEURS.—A crested fowl, black all over, although white occasionally appears in crest, which should be bred out, as it is objectionable. Purity of black color, full sized and solid looking crests, fine frame and square development should always be looked for in stock birds, as these are the chief points to be sought for; both parents ought to possess them in the highest degree to secure good chickens. Two-horned combs are preferable to antlers and should therefore be sought for in the breeding stock.

LA FLECHE, somewhat resembles the Spanish in type. The fancy points to be sought for in breeding stock are pure white earlobes, absence of crest, neat and small combs and hard glossy plumage, combined with fine sturdy

frames, and as strong a constitution as possible, and breeding from none but fully matured birds; these are the essential points for a breeder to consider when choosing his breeding stock.

SCURVY LEGS.—The following is a good cure for scurvy legs among fowl:—Take sulphur, two ounces; charcoal, pulverized, one-fourth ounce; train oil, enough to form a paste. Apply with the hand, by rubbing well in. Allow it to remain for three days; then wash off in mild weather, with good soapsuds, and repeat the dressing as often as it is necessary.

TO GET RID OF LICE.—Cleanliness is the first thing, and it will generally prevent the appearance of lice. Do not have too many fowl in one building. If lice should appear, the best application is, train or other oil one pint, arsenic one drachm, well incorporated, and rubbed under the wings a little at a time; also upon the back and head. One or two applications will be sufficient to kill all lice. Then wash off the filth with warm soapsuds.

ROUF. It is said that this formidable disease has been successfully treated by the following method:—If any of the fowls breathe hard, snap their heads, or run at the nostrils, give a teaspoonful of castor oil. If their nostrils are stopped up and they make a whistling sound or open their mouths to breathe, make strong suds of castile soap and luke-warm water, and with a small sponge wash out the mouth and throat, clean out the nostrils, then give the oil.

The Apiary.

Uniting Colonies.

It seems to be inherent in the honey bee to be constantly employed, probably instinctively, in the several avocations that give employment to all the laborers in the hive. While there is honey to gather, in a pleasant, fine day for business, there will be few idlers, except the drones, found about the hive. A colony that is favorably located, and is healthy, will generally commence breeding so early in the season as to have a crowded hive by March, April, May or June, depending upon the latitude, farther north or south. In New-England, reckoning from the southern to the northern parts of the country embraced in those States, the time for the issue of the swarms, varies in their commencement from early in May at its southern parts, to some time in June at the northern parts.

Divide the colony, when the hive is filled with bees, into three equal parts, placing each part in a hive giving sufficient room for full stores for winter, for each of the three colonies, and very little surplus can be secured. Give in surplus boxes the same room that is embraced in the two additional hives, and let the colony unite in their energies, gathering in one hive, and we obtain a surplus amounting to from 75 to 200 pounds, or more, depending upon the field and the season. It is very easily apprehended that three-fold energies, put forth in one hive instead of three, give these favorable results in surplus. With such arrangements made that the force from two, or even three old colonies, may be concentrated into one colony, with surplus boxes equally convenient for storing 600 pounds of surplus in one hive, why may not that amount be taken from one hive, with the triple force of workers, just as readily as 200 pounds by one-third of the force?

To secure this result it is only necessary to unite colonies in one hive (which is suited to this object, with only room in the breeding apartment for wintering the common product of the queen in the fall season) preparatory to winter. The one or two aiding colonies would thus be reduced by the transfer to one main colony. Might not the plan work favorably? I have so much confidence in it that I think the plan worth a trial. If one colony gives 200 pounds, why may not two colonies with equal facilities give 400 pounds? or why may not three colonies, thus united, give 600 pounds? Each breeding department of each hive may go into winter quarters with its winter stores, or be fed, if there were any lack, and be ready with full force to enter upon its harvest the next season.—*Vermont Cor. Country Gentleman.*

SWARMING.—For some days before swarms issue, the bees may be seen clustering at the entrance of their hive—though we have seen some swarms that would come forth with but little or no indications of a swarm. When honey is abundant, and bees plenty, you may look for them to come forth at almost any time from the hours of ten to three in the afternoon, (first swarms) second and third from seven in the morning until four in the afternoon. Have your hives ready, and in a cool place. Be sure they are both clean and sweet. They will need no washing of herbs, or salt water, or whisky to induce them to stay. They need to be protected from the hot sun. Should the sun strike the hive, it is very apt to compel the bees to leave—they cannot stay where it is too warm to work their wax.