

skilled and careful breeders as in Game, and in no class at any good show can such a good number of almost faultless birds be found giving rise to endless disputes over the correctness of the judging. After all that has been said regarding the change of style, or the difference between the old fighting and the modern exhibition birds, the breeders, the public, and the judges have given unmistakable preference to the high-red, graceful, fine-boned modern style, and the real question seems to me to be, "Do any of us really want to bring back again the old cock fighting days?" If we do not, if our Game fowls are now to be preserved as exhibition and not as actually fighting birds, it is utterly impossible but that some amount of change should slowly and almost imperceptibly take place, for the simple reason that the handsomest bird will naturally be preferred. I have seen both kinds, and for myself I prefer the modern bird; those who wish to revive cocking may think otherwise. On the whole I should be disposed to say that Black Red and Duckwings have shown the best during the past season. Why no Silver-Duckwings are shown is a mystery to me, having only lately learned that there are birds of this beautiful variety still in existence; surely they would secure their fair share of honors in the cock classes at least, even if the dull color of the really true bred hen disabled them in pairs.

Amongst the Hamburgs I think I have seen better Silver-pencilled than for some time, several hens having been exhibited with a rich lustrous black marking that left little to desire. The other marked varieties have been much as usual, but Blacks have to my fancy shown rather more of the Spanish than formerly in contour. The faces have been free from the taint, but the light and graceful outline of the true-bred Hamburg has been wanting in many prize birds. In Polish fowls, both Gold and Silver Spangles have advanced in richness and accuracy of marking, and on the whole I think in popularity. But the poor white crested Blacks seem dying out; scarcely any have been shown, in fact, only one or two really good pens have appeared. Delicate as they are, the loss of this breed would be regretted by all. Chamois have almost disappeared, but about them perhaps few would care much. Moreover, they can always be "made to order" if wanted.

Two, at least of the French breeds are becoming more and more kept. Houdans retain their place, and increase in size and weight. I may note here a curious fact. When first imported the fifth toe was very uncertain, and many people thought it would be well to "breed it out." I myself hazarded the prediction that if this toe was finally "fixed" in the breed we should have bumble foot; having long made up my mind that the affection in Dorkings was owing to this cause, and could not possibly be accounted for by the accidental ones usually alleged. Having had the curiosity to watch the result, I hear on almost all hands that bumble foot is now appearing in the Houdan race, though unknown at first, when the abnormal toe was less general, and hence we see the connection between the weakness of function and the excess of growth, a connection so frequent as to be well known to physiologists. Creve-Coeurs have gained ground immensely, have improved in freedom from foul feathers, and according to information kindly furnished me by various breeders, also in hardness; in fact they seem at last to be becoming acclimated, which at one time appeared very doubtful indeed. La Fleche appears a hopeless case.

Glancing briefly at the less popular breeds, Malays seem to have established a marked advance. More of them have been shown, and at least one hen has appeared on the scene which honestly deserves to be called large. We may see the old Malay again yet! and if we do, it will be much more popular than the little weedy things which have lately passed by that name. Sultans and Silkies have both shown a tendency to come into fashion. The white American Leghorn has firmly established its footing, and deserves it as one of the best if not the very best of layers known. It lays well as the Hamburg, but a much larger egg, and is harder and more adapted to moderate confinement. I notice a tendency to breed it with pale and short legs; this should be guarded against, spoiling the beauty of the fowl completely. Plymouth Rocks have also made their appearance on one or two occasions, and seem rather likely to be popular, I hardly know why, being inferior in my opinion, to the Dominique, which is in less favor; indeed, in what the Rocks differ from tall smooth legged Cuckoo Cochins it would be hard to say. They are, however, hardy and generally useful birds, and if they obtain a recognized place no one will grudge it to them.

Game Bantams still advance, being more like Game, and less like other Bantams in shape every year, indeed, a bird genuine Game in character

would now stand a hopeless chance. I think the young birds, in fact, can hardly perhaps be bred better; but even the best in most cases get "stumpy" the second season and lose the gamy look which is so fascinating. In this direction there is much to be done, and it is being done; for more old kinds were shown with the required points than I can even remember. I once thought it hopeless, but I now expect to see them so improved that the old birds shall keep their shape and carriage like the real Game of which they are the miniatures. In other Bantams we have now a new Dark Japanese variety, said to be very hardy and a good breeder. Cochins seem dying out, which is a pity as the queer little creatures were always popular. Why don't the few who have them cross into something else and back again, and so restore the prolificacy and vigor of the strain? Blacks have made giant strides, I have seen some thirty entries in a class, and winning has become difficult indeed. Whites have increased too, and often claim a class to themselves; but the Rev. F. Tearle, still like a veritable Comte de Chambord holds his "white flag" aloft with proud defiance. But I sigh for a breed I used to love and keep in days gone by, though never then an exhibitor—the exquisite White-Booted Bantam. I saw it once and only once last year. Let every man have his fancy, the world is wide. But to my eye the White-Booted Bantam, with his quaint little ways, is the nicest little pet of the lot. He will stand and cock his head at you like a canary, and he is almost the only bird you can trust in a garden. As to the Sebrights, the Golds have been getting so large, that while the laying is all that could be, if care be not taken they will soon not be Bantams at all. Silvers, real Silvers, it has often been said have disappeared. This season the average color has been worse than ever, and on one occasion I saw two pens side by side, one called Silver the other Gold with not a shade between them. It may have been a mistake, but it was at worst not a very exaggerated statement of the case. On the other hand, some half dozen times there have been shown pens of Silvers really startling in their clear white ground, and also with more blue in the ear-lobe than I can remember seeing for a long time. Let us only hope they may increase and multiply!!

Prize List—Provincial Exhibition, 1873.

POULTRY.—We notice in this class that fowls are to be shown in pairs instead of trios, a decided step in advance of the course adopted for several years past, and in accordance with the views of the best breeders and fanciers in the Province. Exhibitors find it difficult even to match pairs for the show pen, much more so trios, and will therefore hail this change with pleasure. Other alterations might also be made with advantage; we cannot see why the Association should continue to offer a prize for "the best collection of poultry owned and exhibited by one person, &c.," except it be for the special benefit of those whose private means enable them to purchase largely from other breeders, and then exhibit in this class. If it were made a condition that the fowls thus exhibited, should also have been bred by the exhibitor, it might afford grounds for the advocacy of the continuance of this prize; but no such condition is appended. We regret also that the names of the judges do not appear; nothing gives greater confidence to the exhibitor than to know who are to be the judges of his birds. In connection with this we may mention a very remarkable case of partiality in judging, which occurred at the last Exhibition. A gentleman fancier was requested to act as one of the judges, but declined; he however, suggested the name of his son—a mere lad, to act in his stead, the suggestion was adopted and his son appointed. Previously the son had become possessed of a number of fowls of different breeds, given to him by his father, thereupon he sold these fowls to a third party, who, aware of the appointment, entered them in their respective classes for exhibition, thus enabling him to adjudicate upon his own fowls. Need we say he was biassed in his judgment. Happily, however, the associate judges out-ruled "the lad," and but few prizes were awarded to the nominal exhibitor. Had the names of the judges appeared in the prize list, this would not have occurred.

The Apiary.

Samson's Lion.

Our friend R. M. Argo, of Low II, Ky., has written us a brief dissertation on the above subject, with a view of correcting the erroneous ideas many readers of the Bible have, as to a swarm of bees being found in the carcass of a dead lion. Some, he says, take the language in its literal meaning, and believe that there were really bees and honey in the dead carcass before the flesh had been destroyed by dogs and birds of prey, which were numerous in that country. Mr. Argo states his own view as follows: "These bees, according to Kitto's Bible History, must have been identical with the Egyptian of the present day; and, as they were very numerous in Canaan at that time, and hollow wood was scarce, they were apt to take up their abode in any hollow cavity they could find, and as only a few days would suffice for flesh of the lion to become devoured by dogs and birds of prey, and the bones to become dry, it is natural and reasonable to suppose the swarm of bees established themselves in the cavity of the lion's skull, which is amply large enough for a swarm of bees." He adds, "If there is a better explanation, please give it."

While there are some credulous people who are quite willing to believe that these bees, contrary to their usual instincts, actually took up their abode in the decaying and putrid flesh of the defunct lion, there are others, who, knowing that bees will not even alight on a dead carcass, find a difficulty in reconciling the Scripture narrative with the well-known facts of natural history in regard to the habits of bees. Mr. Argo has no doubt indicated the right way of removing this difficulty, though we think he is wrong in supposing that the bees "established themselves in the cavity of the lion's skull." That would be too small a hive for an average swarm of bees, as even Mr. Argo must admit if he reflects carefully on the point. There is no reason to think the lion was one of unusual size. It is described as a "young lion," but this does not imply that the creature was immature or half-grown, as the original rather conveys the idea of a lion in his youthful prime and vigor. It was then, an average adult lion. Now how much of a cavity would there be in the skull of such a lion? We have looked up this question in some natural-history books, in the hope of meeting with actual measurements that might help us out, but have not succeeded in finding them. From an engraving of a lion's skeleton, contained in one of these books, we are convinced that the skull-cavity is quite limited in capacity. The head bones are very massive, to give that strength of jaw for which the lion is remarkable, while the brain is small, and stretched out broad and shallow, as in all creatures of the cat tribe. The cavity in question might hold one of Mr. Hosmer's quart stocks, but certainly would not accommodate a good, natural swarm.

There is, we think, "a better explanation." It is that the bees took up their abode in the body of the dead lion. Insects are very abundant in the east, and they fill, in a very short space of time, completely clear out all the soft parts of any carcass, leaving the skeleton entire, covered by the skin. It is not necessary to suppose that "dogs and birds of prey" ravaged the lion's remains. In a place far enough from towns and villages for a "young lion" to be prowling about, it is not likely that dogs, at any rate, would be numerous. We have only to suppose the skin left comparatively whole, and the flesh eaten and picked out by insects—especially ants, which are very numerous in Oriental countries—and, the softer parts being removed, the bones and skin deprived of their moisture by the heat of the sun; and we have a hive which few swarms of bees would refuse to occupy. The skeleton would be covered with a sort of dry parchment, and, the interior clean, sweet, roomy and convenient, would be a likely place for a swarm of bees to enter and take possession of, especially in a secluded spot, among the grape-vines.

This is the view taken by Kitto, who says, "In the East, bees establish themselves in situations little thought of by us; many wild swarms being left to find homes for themselves, fix in any hollow which seems to them suited to their wants. Often in the clefts of the rock, whence the mention of 'honey out of the rock,' (Deut. 32:13); often in trees, whence the mention of the dropping of the honey-comb,—a singular instance of which we have in the case of Jonathan, who found honey dropping from the trees to the ground, on his way through a forest." (1 Sam. 14:25, 26.)

Whether the bees were "identical with the Egyptian of the present day" or not, is a point it is not