



A. MINORCA TYPE. B.

THE MINORCA IDEAL.

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AS I am fortunate enough to be one of your readers, it is my privilege, with your consent, to reply to some of the queries addressed to us by Mr. Wagner, upon the above subject in your last issue.

This gentleman omitted to give his authority for the English breeders' idea which he purports to exemplify in the following words: "they want the comb to be of such a shape that it could be reversed on the bird's head and still look right." This, according to Mr. Wagner's illustration, attributes to the English breeder a desire for a comb having spikes which radiate from the centre, in other words, the centre spike to be perpendicular, those in front of it to point forward, and those in rear to point backward.

The opinion of the English breeders, judging by their own illustrations, differs altogether from the idea conveyed in Mr. Wagner's article. I will not multiply instances as I think two will suffice.

In your issue of December 1892, you reproduce from *Feathered World* a black Minorca cock, "Black Prince," winner of 12 firsts, 5 cups and specials in England. The comb, although by no means perfect, illustrates clearly the English idea upon this question. Spikes such as Mr. Wagner suggests would seem to be the only ones possible to grow upon it, as the tendency of the whole comb is forward, and we would naturally look for spikes having the same inclination on the front portion of the comb. Far from this, however, each spike, as if fearing to court the breeders' displeasure takes a decided curve to the rear. This bird is depicted in figure A.

Three years later *Farm Poultry* of February 15th, 1895

reproduces "The English Ideal," from the same noted publication. A glance at this should satisfy anybody as to the English breeders' idea. Figure B. illustrates the Minorca referred to. The tendency of each spike is backward, which is sufficient, I believe, to establish as the English ideal, a comb, the spikes of which have no inclination to point forward but wholly toward the rear.

As to lobes, the Hamburg's lobes would ill accord with the pendant wattles of the Minorca. The above sketches are examples of lobes generally accepted and endorsed by breeders.

Referring to the tail, Mr. Wagner's sketch illustrates, I think the proper carriage of the tail. A tail carried upright suggests the Leghorn, and a bird with such an one should not be seen in a Minorca pen. This carriage of the tail is a question I have long been wishing to see discussed, and I am glad to find my views agree, in this particular, with those of a gentleman having Mr. Wagner's experience.

It is unfortunate that the bird, used as an example by Mr. Wagner, should be described in your REVIEW as an "Ideal Minorca." This leaves us who are mere students of the breed, to infer that we may safely breed for that style of Minorca. "Mr. Wagner's Ideal," would have been a better title, conveying no misunderstanding.

Only by discussion can an ideal be produced, and, with your permission, I take the liberty of placing my ideal Minorca before your readers.

A good sized comb is in unison with the majestic bearing of the bird, but in this country the spikes must not be too long on account of the danger arising from frost. Minorca combs as a rule are not sufficiently distinguishable from the Leghorns'. They should, I think, follow the neck more than they usually do. If they possess large solid back projections they are less liable to frost bites, while the additional length better enables them to carry spikes having a thick wide base. This additional length in rear necessitates a prominent front to give it the appearance of being well balanced. Long pendant wattles add to the appearance, but a happy medium is also necessary here. A good sized lobe, of regular shape, (close fitting of course) and clearly defined, is to be desired. These ideas I have endeavored to embody in Figure C.

Mr. Wagner is moving in the right direction when criticising the manner of judging. The fault, I think, lies not with the score card, but with the absence of an ideal. In judging Mr. Wagner's bird, the judge, I presume, had his own opinion as to the color of the legs, and scored accordingly. This question of opinion should be decided before the next show season, and I think I shall not be