

moult the digestive organs are less active, and the food should mainly consist of ground corn or meal, with an ample supply of vegetables. I am aware that animal food is condemned by some authorities as harmful to moulting birds, but I always give at such times fresh bones crushed with a Norcombe smasher, and believe they are highly beneficial. A little iron should always be given in the water, as not only is it useful as a tonic, but the fowls in their feverish state are apt to drink to excess, and are prevented doing so by the fluid not being altogether to their taste. I doubt whether the iron tonic can be administered in a better manner than by placing in the drinking vessel the old-fashioned rusty nail or other piece of old iron. Cocks thus treated usually assume their new winter suits quickly, almost imperceptibly, so that by the middle of November they are quite fit for breeding purposes, and in condition to beget January chickens; later in the season, I have seldom found over-yearred birds reliable, and when the north-easters are blowing only early-hatched cockerels are to be depended upon. As regards hens, I have found the chief difficulty with the non sitting and extra good laying breeds. A strain of black Hamburgs I had some years ago were in the habit of practically laying themselves to death in the late autumn, continuing to produce eggs in plenty until they were as bare of feathers as a six weeks' Cochin chicken, often never recovering the double drain upon their systems; my Hamburgs were kept solely for laying purposes. But were I again so situated with valuable birds I should not hesitate to administer mild doses of calomel, with the view to stop the production of eggs. With sitting breeds a safe and easy method of procedure readily suggests itself. As the summer wanes such birds lay fewer eggs in each batch before becoming desirous to sit; in July

it is well to gratify their instincts so far as to give them some half-a dozen chalk eggs. I allow my own Malays to occupy their nests for six or more weeks, or until they tire of the task. Each morning they come off to feed, and each afternoon they are taken off and shut off until roosting time, they thus obtain enough exercise to prevent cramp, and are a second time fed liberally. If this plan is followed the reader must be careful to see that his nests are of such a size as to obviate the possibility of injury to the new feathers of his stock, their tails being especially liable to chafing; personally, I use roomy packing cases. I have left till the last, perhaps, the very point upon which your readers will be most anxious for information, namely, the treatment of bad or difficult moulting. Alas! I can boast of no success in such cases. My own home-bred stock, I am thankful to say, have provided me with no experience of the kind, but I have several times purchased or had given me fowls which had admittedly been carelessly treated by their late owners, but which were well worth the trouble of moulting out, if it could be accomplished successfully. Last summer, for instance, a friend sent me a grand pair of Malays just going into moult and generally seedy. The cock was in poor condition; I gave him cod-liver oil, and whenever he went off his feed a few of Jenkinson's revivers. Sometimes for a few weeks he would chip up, and once he reached very fair condition as regards flesh, but made hardly any progress with his new feathers until December, then they suddenly started, and by the first of March he was clean moulted and in fine feather, but as his feathers grew his general health declined, and although he ate regularly and ravenously he wasted to a mere bag of bones, and shortly went over to the majority. The hen moulted her wing and tail feathers capitally, also a portion of her body

feathers, but the larger portion of the latter refused to leave the quills, and although her general health up to April was uniformly good, at that period she suddenly died. So I fear, Mr. Editor, the verdict upon this composition will take the form of a well known query, as to the blind leader of the blind.

## Bantam Department

### PEKIN BANTAMS.

THIS month we give our readers one of Lees nicest engravings and one of the best Bantam cuts we have ever seen. Too much cannot be said in favor of this popular variety of Bantam, which, since its introduction into Europe and America has steadily grown in popular favor.

Our engraving depicts "Old Gold" and mates and are owned by Mr. E. K. Austin, Flatbush, N.Y., and won highest honors at the last New York show. "Old Gold" has won 15 firsts and has never been beaten.

### THE GOLDEN SEBRIGHT BANTAM.

BY H. S. BARCOCK, PROVIDENCE, R. I.

AT this day it is nearly or quite impossible to say anything new about the Golden Sebright Bantam. Its history has been so often recorded, its figure and marking described, and its beauty and excellence lauded, that to write about it seems like threshing over old straw which has been so often threshed that only chaff and broken stems remains. And yet this Bantam continues a delight to the fancier, a marvel to the beginner and a triumph to the original.