

and because something new attracted the attention of breeders in later days, leaving the good old Dominiques in the background. If there had been as much done for him as for his mongrel offspring—the Plymouth Rock—he would stand to-day on equal footing. I have no desire to cast any reflections on the latter, for, among our best breeds, Plymouth Rocks justly stand in the front ranks. Fifteen years ago, when the writer first commenced breeding them, they were behind the Dominiques in points of excellence, but now they are far ahead. Time and skill have wrought this change, and the same efforts bestowed on Dominiques would produce a like result, notwithstanding the advantage of foreign blood that entered into the composition of their rivals.

My first experience in Dominiques was in 1870. I purchased two fine pairs that had won honors, and began my career. I was sadly disappointed in the progeny, for I found many faults. I bred them several years and succeeded in making a good record. In the last decade there has been very little improvement in them. I find none, even at our largest shows, superior to those shown ten years since.

In color they should be nearly the same as Plymouth Rocks, except that the feathers should be smaller, with finer bars or pencilings. The shape is entirely different from any other variety. The carriage is bold and upright, tail large and flowing, as represented in the cut. Red, white or brassy feathers in plumage; feathers with bars not well defined, showing a cloudy appearance; legs blotched with black, and ill-shaped combs, are faults to be guarded against.

In selecting breeding stock, vigorous birds, with well defined markings, clear yellow legs and well-shaped combs should be chosen.

They are good, reliable fowls when viewed from an economical standpoint, and, if bred by a thorough breeder, would soon secure a good share of popularity among the fraternity.

J. Y. B.

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Capons and Poulardes.

Nearly all the birds shown at the recent Paris show, in the dead poultry classes, were capons or poulardes. And there is no doubt that the system of caponising is one that deserves considerably more attention than it has ever received, either in America or England. If for no other cause, it would have been reasonably expected that pecuniary motives would have led farmers and large poultry keepers to adopt this system, for cockerels caponized, and pullets made into poulardes, grow to a very much larger size than those not so treat-

ed, and in addition to this the quality of meat is much improved. Not only so, but male birds which could not be kept together without great danger of constant conflicts, will live in peace and amity. The latter reason would of itself be sufficient to warrant the adoption of caponising, for the pain suffered by the bird is infinitesimal as compared with the result of a single fight. The benefit, therefore, outweighs any objections on the score of cruelty. But where there is the additional inducement of obtaining very much greater size in the fowls, with very little outlay, it is surprising that the plan has not been very largely adopted. In France, capons and poulardes are very numerous indeed, even in the ordinary markets, and it is found that birds so treated thrive much better, fatten to a greater extent, and as they are not so restless in temperament, lay on a finer quality of flesh. We have much to learn from the French in the way of poultry management, and though I do not advocate the adoption of French methods, yet when any plan is found successful there, I should give more than a favorable consideration to it.

First, then, the question of profit, which in all commercial matters must have pre-eminent weight. Upon this score, fowls intended for the table should be caponised, because the chickens so treated can thus be made the most of, and will realise for the breeder more than they otherwise would. Many persons object to the giving of unnecessary pain, and so do I. But there are certain things that may be done, in which the pain is small compared with the benefit, and caponising we regard as one. Causing pain from mere wantonness or pleasure is at all times to be strongly condemned, but, as in this case, where the infliction of a very slight pain saves greater suffering, and is attended by so many benefits, there can be no legitimate objection to it. But it is most important that any who undertake the work should be able to perform it without bungling, or very much unnecessary pain will be caused.

It is essential that proper instruments be used for the purpose, and of these, the best I have seen are the invention of, I think, Farmer Miles, an American, who was over in this country some six years ago. I suppose they can be purchased in the United States, as they can here. The French method is to have two operators, one holding the bird and the other doing the surgical work, but I find that the plan named by your countryman named above, is the better, namely, to have two good thick pieces of soft cord, each three feet long, and a weight or piece of brick attached to each. One of these pieces of cord is fastened to the chicken's legs, and the other around the bird's wings,