

true, that white-feathered poultry has a tendency to yellowness in the flesh and fat." So experienced a poulterer (1) ought to know as to a point like this, which does not affect any question of breed, and it is certainly true that white-plumaged fowls now known, are to a large extent yellowish in flesh. The point is one worthy the attention of naturalists.

The rapid advance of Colored Dorkings, and to a lesser extent of the Silver Greys, for many years completely overshadowed the Whites, and it was not until about ten years ago that they were taken up by several ardent fanciers. Much though these have done, we can not but acknowledge that they are by no means so popular as the other two colors, and it is equally true that they do not equal them in respect to size. Perhaps careful breeding may in time overcome this deficiency. They have proved a hardy, useful fowl, and no one can question their handsomeness. The rose comb has been fixed, and while they are somewhat lighter in build than are Colored Dorkings, they have the shape which is characteristic of the breed. I should not like to advocate them as first favorites for those who breed for market, believing that the Colored and Silver Greys are both better, but where beauty as well as utility are sought for, and there are many who have both these objects in view, the White can be confidently recommended.

STEPHEN BEALE: *Cultivator*.

#### Get your Coops Ready

Before spring time arrives, the work for the poultryman is ample to keep him continually busy. It is in the spare moments that so much can be accomplished if you will but do it. Repairing and constructing needful articles for spring breeding is, or should always be, a part of the winter's work; if put off until you actually need them, other duties of importance will come in the way, and press you for time; the consequence is, you will do the work quickly, and something will suffer from the neglect.

I show in the sketches five brooder coops. None is expensive to construct; a dollar will pay for any one of them, and half this amount will build them if you are economical. Fig. 1 is about the plainest of all. Each coop should be raised from the ground about two inches, resting upon two pieces of boards, to avoid dampness, which will sometimes cause sickness among your flock. You will have a perfectly dry coop if you construct it properly, covering the top with oilcloth, tarpaper or shingles. The front board is made to work up and down on hinges, so that on rainy days the board can be raised up and fastened by means of a string.

Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be as easily constructed as No. 1, from the illustrations. Each coop is provided with a door, either on the side or at the rear, to enable you to clean out the litter, feed old hens and provide fresh water, as well as clean hay or straw. Each coop has a small ventilator at or near the top.

I think these coops very useful about a farm, and several of them should be kept for emergencies. These will answer for ducks, but for geese or turkeys I should prefer larger coops, to give both old bird and brood ample room.

J. W. CAUGHEY.

#### The Country Gentleman

(1) We bought our first lot of Colored Dorkings from Mr. Bailey, of Mount St. Grosvenor Square, London, in 1850. The cock cost us, we are almost ashamed to say, \$25.00.

#### TURKEYS.

Amongst domesticated poultry, turkeys are acknowledged to hold a premier position as table birds. A Christmas feast without its turkey looks poor. There are several varieties of these birds in our islands. We have got lately the magnificent North American wild breed, which has now become thoroughly domesticated in the Western States, and nothing can exceed their beauty. Their plumage is magnificent, their bearing graceful whilst their hardiness is all that can be wished. We have got the noble Bronze variety also recently from America. The wild blood has been poured into the Bronze birds without stint. The Bronze are similar to the Wild in colour, except that the white brown-edging of the tail feathers and wing pencilling of the Bronze are of a chestnut hue in the Wild variety. In size the Wild breed is considerably smaller than the Bronze; for whilst Wild cocks when at their best may attain 35 lb., the Bronze have attained 50 lb. In style and bearing the Wild is to the Bronze what a game chicken is to a Brahma. The wild breed are particularly hard and close in feather, and upon the scales prove to be much heavier than they looked. There can not be a hardier turkey than the wild breed. If pure, they will do well where any other turkey will thrive; and, though less in size than the Bronze and bringing lower prices, they are a most profitable and useful breed. Some first-class American breeders use wild cocks for cross-sing with large hens, and they consider this to be the best way to breed for market. Other noted American breeders assert that the Wild reduces the size of the Bronze. Our own experience has not been large, but we believe the cross to be an excellent one, infusing hardiness and improving the colour of the Bronze. Moreover, when the Wild cock is used with high-class Bronze hens, the size is almost as good as it is in the pure Bronze. However, we prefer to breed from a first-rate half-bred Wild cock, owing to his superior size and the greater certainty with which he transmits his size. If we were breeding for market only, we should consider a Wild cock, of good size, capable of producing as profitable a flock as a fairly good Bronze.

The Bronze turkey should have great size and look big. The neck, back, and breast should be black, shaded with rich bronze, which glistens like gold in the sunlight. Each feather should end in a glossy black bar which extends across the entire width. The under parts of the bird are of a dull black. The wing bar is of brilliant black, shaded with green or brown. The wing primaries are black, pencilled slightly with white. The wing coverts are rich bronze, each feather ending in a glossy black bar. The tail is black, pencilled closely with dark chestnut, ending in a greyish-brown band. American Bronze turkeys were first imported into England in 1870. Since that time several importations have been received, and at present most of our Cambridge turkeys have more or less American Bronze blood in them, which has greatly improved their colour, hardiness, and size. One of the best Bronze turkeys ever imported was Garfield, which won first prize, Birmingham, 1886, and weighed 45 lbs. He was an exceedingly good stock bird. In 1888 we bred from him the pullet which won first prize at Brussels. One of the cockerels at ten months old scaled 33 lb., and defeated a two-year-old cock which had previously been considered the

best show bird of his day. From Garfield's portrait it will be seen that he was a very stylish, upstanding bird. He had immense breadth of shoulder and great depth. We received the first prize pair of young birds from the Cincinnati Show, December, 1888, where they scored 95½ and 95 points out of a possible total of 100. The cockerel named Royal Tom is much like Garfield, but larger. He scales 48 lb., and the hen 26 lb. They were bred from a noted winner in the States, which scaled 50 lb.

Cambridge turkeys differ from American Bronze in being less lustrous in colour, less hardy, and smaller in size. The best Cambridge cocks, if purely bred, rarely attain 36 lb., but with an American cross a few have reached 40 lb. The only other variety of turkey which we have of any note is the Black Norfolk, which is now confined to a few breeders, and owes its continuance to its reputation for delicacy of flesh. It is not so large as the Cambridge, but has a splendid breast and very white flesh.

There are several varieties of turkeys in America. There are three wild breeds—1. The Honduras of Central America, which is as brilliant in colour as the peacock; 2. The Mexican, which resembles the American Bronze in plumage, and is said to be progenitor of the common English tame turkeys, and 3. The North American wild breed. Then of domesticated strains there are the Bronze, the Bourbon Butternut, the Narragansett, the White Holland, the Buff, and the Slate or Lavender.

**Breeding.**—Both cocks and hens should be as large as possible. Some breeders go in for large cocks and moderate hens, but we have always failed to breed large pullets from small hens. The sexes largely follow their parents in size. From a large cock first-rate cockerels may be expected, and from large hens large pullets will be bred, and *vice versa*. We prefer the cock to be two or three years old and the hen to be under four years old. A cockerel of his first year, will do very well if he weighs 30 lb. or over when ten months old, but he will be a better stock bird in his second and third seasons. Cocks over three years old are risky. Occasionally they have been reliable for over five years, but when they pass three years old they generally disappoint the owner. The number of hens mated with a cock should not exceed ten (the best American breeders say four hens). If we allowed the male bird full liberty, we should not allow more than six, but there is so much danger in allowing a large bird to walk with his mates that we prefer to keep him in a separate pen during the breeding season. Some recommend starving the male bird prior to the breeding season in order to reduce his weight and save the hens. But this course generally defeats its purpose. When he does not pass 15 lb. they may be allowed to sit, but if over this weight, they are likely to break the eggs. Turkeys are excellent sitters and mothers. Hens are not nearly so good nurses for young turkeys, because they leave their broods too soon.

When the young birds come out of the shell they should not be disturbed till fully twenty-four hours old. Their first feed should be hard-boiled egg and bread crumbs. (2) If the weather be fine, when two days old they may be

(1) The great breeder at Duxford, whose name I forget, Cambridge-shire, Eng., told us, in 1877, that he always had two or three cocks that weighed upwards of 40 lbs. Ed.

(1) We say, hard-boiled egg alone. No food like bread-crumbs to cause diarrhoea. Ed.

put out in a sunny sheltered spot. There is nothing more important for the broods than sun. When three days old some dandelion may be mixed with the egg and crumbs, and this may be continued till eight days old. We never give any green food, except nettles, for the first six weeks, and we have frequently observed that turkeys in the fields are very fond of eating growing nettles, which they appear greatly to prefer to dandelion. We discontinue the egg when the chicks are eight days old and feed on boiled nettles, oatmeal boiled, and a little ground bones. When the broods are six weeks old we give lettuce or cabbages for green food, and a grain supper. (1) For the first month we feed every two hours, afterwards four times a day.

Young turkeys must not be allowed out of doors during rain or when the dew is on the grass till they get the red heads, after which stage they become perfectly hardy.

The American Bronze turkeys are very easily reared—almost as easily as chickens—if they do not get much rain. Cambridge birds are also easily reared, and grow fast. The Norfolk is rather tender.

We do not like to allow young turkeys to roost till fully three months old, and when they are allowed perches they should be broad and not more than 1 ft. high. If allowed to roost too soon, the cockerels' breast bones will be deformed. Turkeys should be allowed a wide range. They will gather grasshoppers and other insects all day. There is no more profitable fowl. They will half support themselves, when they have been well started, with what insects and green food they pick up in the fields.

**Fattening.**—If turkeys be well fed from the first they will be fat enough without confinement or cramming. They thrive quite as well at liberty as when shut up. The chief point to be observed in preparing them for table is to feed early every morning on warm food of fattening quality. (2) During the day the birds may have as much grain as they will eat. They are great feeders, and never require to be crammed. F. C. SMITH.

#### Agricultural Gazette,

#### Hens and Horse-Feed.

While my neighbors have been complaining of the laziness of their hens in producing eggs this winter, our hens have been remarkably prolific. About the second week in December our boys began to give them what they called "horse feed" every morning for breakfast. The stuff is warmed and flavored with a small quantity of cayenne pepper. Table scraps are also given them, and they eat all with a good appetite.

Now for the result. We have nine laying hens, but up to the time when we began to give the "horse-feed" we got only an egg now and then. Since that time our success has been wonderful. During the last three weeks of December, by the daily record, we gathered eighty-six eggs, all of good size. The hens still continue their landable work, and yesterday one of my boys brought from the coop six eggs. Some of my friends keep from ten to twenty hens each, but they don't get a single egg and have not for a long time.—R. N. Yorker.

(1) And no onions?

Ed.

Cramming pellets. 1 lb. corn-meal, ½ lb. oatmeal, ¼ lb. sugar and a little fat. Ed.