

chicks arriving with double or single combs, yellow or white legs, or any other glaring defects, as is too often the case with some breeds now before the public. Still, even in Polands every egg does not produce a champion, yet those which are hardly good enough to exhibit will possess some redeeming feature that will render them of good service in the breeding pen. Above all the crest is the most important feature, and unless this is of fairly good dimensions, the bird is practically useless, except for the table, where it will be found to be equal of many breeds, the flesh being very white and juicy.

When selecting the breeding pens, first of all when handling the bird, grasp the crest in the hand and thus judge of the size and substance contained therein. The additional skull, with which all crested fowls are gifted, should feel large and firm and the feathers should stand an inch or two clear of the width of the hand, making allowance of course for the difference in sex. If the crest looks large when the bird is on the ground, but when handling it feels flabby and loose, and the skull small, dispense with it at once, as although, if it should deceive some judges when exhibited, its defects would be soon perceived by a Polish breeder, and would eventually bring discredit on the exhibitor. It is only to be expected that unless there is a good foundation the crest cannot develop to any great size. Thus can the probable dimensions be gauged that the crest of a newly-hatched chick may eventually assume, as when hatched and dry the crest should be as large and round as an ordinary marble, if, however, it is small or dome-shaped, it is only natural to presume that the possessor cannot make a good one.

Having thoroughly tested the crests, the usual routine of comparing the body markings should be gone into, taking care that they are not too dark, as the chickens do not moult much lighter, rather the reverse. It is often noticeable that if a gold or silver cockerel has a dark breast, it seldom moults lighter, but more often darker. Naturally those with dark breast are hardly ever so clear in tail as those with light breast. Seldom are they bred too light in color, although in striving to get light lacing, and clear tails, a white crest (in golds and silvers), of course, is not at all desirable, and such would result if not carefully mated. Lacing is much preferable to spangling.

The gold and silver chickens when first hatched much resemble the same variety of Hamburgs, with, of course, the additional prominence on the head, and they are really very pretty, their beaks standing straight out, not curved at an angle, whilst their eyes are large and round, reminding one of the head of a Robin. The silver variety seems to be the favorite, being the easiest to breed. The rich ground color of golds is not so easy to obtain along with other good points, although in this respect the fact that they have been bred for so many years accounts for this variety producing a better percentage of good-colored chicks than some other breeds of less standing.

Hatching operations should not begin until about the latter part of March or beginning of April, that is, if strong healthy chickens are to be expected, and which will mature into good stock or exhibition birds.

Polands require to pass their second moult before being much use in the exhibition pen, as a fairly moderate adult can generally account for a good young one. However, if one wishes to have any chance at the early chicken shows, a much earlier start must certainly be made, but these early birds seldom moult into really good adults. Not only this—the birds hatched between March and June, when the weather is most congenial for growing, seem to attain a greater length of feather than the early hatched ones.

One large Poland breeder has often remarked to me that he never hatches a chick before May. Anyhow, said gentleman's name is much in evidence in the prize lists at the chicken shows. One experienced breeder makes a specialty of early hatched ones, and supplies most of the winners at the summer shows in the North. He has an exceptionally well-adapted place, and manages to get his pullets in laying order when others are only thinking of mating up their pens. Having hatched the chicks, the directions for feeding recommended in these columns, and which need not be repeated by me, should be followed, the only trouble being when the crest is growing. At this stage usually when about five or six weeks old, extra stimulants should be given to assist the feathering, and on sunny days sulphur may be added with good results.

The hen should be allowed to minister to their wants and to protect them from cats and hawks until