

That these birds can be produced, however, with as good and permanent red-faces as those of any other Hamburg needs no further proof than that of the slashing bird which Mr. Fox, the president of the Hamburg Club, exhibited at the recent Wharfedale show, which, though over three years old, has still the most perfect red face, with a large and pure white lobe.

THE COMB.

Another unsightly fault, to my mind, is the inordinate length of comb to be seen on many of the best birds in the show-pen, and for which there has been a strange craze of late years—a thing that is quite opposite to true Hamburg character—the length to which I refer being what is known as the spike or leader, and to such an extent has this craze for an excessively long leader been carried, that when the birds are at repose at home in the store-pens, resort has been had to artificial means of keeping it in position, and this is done by side stays, placed along the comb from front to back, and the whole bound up and swaddled in broad tape, and often these supports are left on the combs until within a short time of the birds being judged, when they are removed, with the result that, though they hold in position for some time, yet they are often seen dangling down the neck of the bird. The only reason for reference to this kind of practice is to draw the attention of breeders of Hamburgs to the fact, and to try also to induce both breeders and judges to go in for a more natural comb—small, neat, close to the head, and full of fine work on the surface, with a proportionate leader as a finishing touch, to be in perfect harmony with the Hamburg character, for nothing has done more to stem the rise of the Hamburg in public estimation than such excesses as I refer to in

both lobe and comb, for whenever such excesses are indulged in both scissors and knife have to play their part in the preparation of the bird for show purposes, a thing that will never be followed by the true fancier; and the amateur, as is often the case, seeing the culls of his yard sold for market purposes after "going through the mill," running over the heads of his more honestly shown birds, gets disheartened, and quietly retires from the Fancy.

That the true Hamburg of this colour can be produced with a perfect neatness of comb is a point beyond contention, as instanced in the case of specimens that are from time to time shown.

SHAPE.

The shape of the bird is one peculiar to the Hamburg only, and is of a most pleasing style. The head is neat, short, and broad, and prominent working down to a deep, well-furnished keel, legs of medium length, which are black in the first year and blue afterwards, the wings neatly, but not too tightly tucked up, the back broad, full, dipping from the bulge of the neck to the rise of the tail, with no sign of squirrel or jerkiness of carriage.

Feather full, broad and flowing, the neck sides of the tail and tail hackles well furnished, soft and flowing, with very broad first and second sickles, the former of which project with a graceful curve beyond the end of the broad feathers of the tail.

CARRIAGE.

The carriage is jaunty, and the step rather delicate, and when in form the birds lose nothing of their style in the show pen.

VALUES.

Touching the practical value of the bird as an egg-producer especially, it is

about unsurpassed, for though some objections is taken to the eggs being small, yet this idea is more chimerical than real, and I have no hesitation in saying that, taking weight of food consumed against weight of eggs produced, there is no variety of pure-bred poultry that can produce a greater weight of as good quality than this variety of Hamburg can do.



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