

The Poultry Yard.

Sultans.

These pretty fowls were introduced into England by Miss Watts. She says of them:—"This is the last Polish fowl introduced among us; they partake of the character of Polands in their chief characteristics, in compactness of form and good laying qualities. They were sent to us by a friend living at Constantinople, in January 1854. A year before, we had sent some Cochins China fowls, with which he was very much pleased; and when his son soon after came to England, he said he could send from Turkey some fowls with which we should be pleased. Scraps of information about muffs, and divers beauties and decorations, arrived before the fowls, and led to expectations of something much prettier than the Ptarmigan, in which we had always noticed a certain uncertainty in tuft and comb. In January they arrived in a steamer chiefly manned by Turks. The voyage had been long and rough; and the poor fowls so rolled over and glued into one mass with filth were never seen. * * * We at once saw enough to make us very unwilling to be utterly dependent for the breed on the one sad looking gentleman with his tuft heavy with dirt, dirt for a mantle, and his long clogged tail hanging round on one side, and we wrote directly for another importation, especially for a cock, and to ask the name they had at home.

"In answer to the first request, we found that good fowls of the kind are difficult to get there; our friend has ever since been trying to get two or three more, but cannot succeed either in Constantinople or other parts of Turkey; the first he can meet with will be sent. With regard to the name, he told us they are called Serai Taook. Serai, as is known by every reader of Eastern lore, is the name of the Sultan's palace, Taook is Turkish for fowl; the simplest translation of this is 'Sultan's fowls,' or 'fowls of the Sultan'; a name which has the double advantage of being the nearest to be found to that by which they have been known in their own country, and of designating the country from which they came.

Time very soon restored the fowls to perfect health and partial cleanliness; but it was not until after the moulting season that they showed themselves as the '*bellissimi galli bianchi*' described by our Constantinople friend. They rather resemble our White Polands, but with more abundant furnishing, and shorter legs, which are culture hocked and feathered to the toes. In general habits they are brisk and happy tempered; but not kept in as easily as Cochins Chinas. They are very good layers; their eggs are large and white; they are non-sitters and small eaters. A grass run with them will remain green long after the crop would have been cleared by either Brahmas or Cochins; and with scattered food they soon become satisfied and walk away. They are the size of our English Poland fowls. Their plumage is white and flowing; they have a full sized, compact Poland tuft on the head, are muffed, have a good flowing tail, short and well feathered legs, and five toes upon each foot. The comb is merely two little points, and the wattles very small. We have never seen fowls more fully decorated—full tail, abundant furnishing, in hackel almost touching the ground, boots, culture hocks, beards, whiskers, and full round Poland crests. Their color is pure white; and they are so very beautiful that it is to be hoped amateurs will procure fresh importations before they disappear from among existing kinds."

Many efforts were made to procure a fresh stock of these fowls, but with the exception of one hen procured by a fancier in England none others could be obtained. From the original stock, however, several English amateurs have been supplied, and we presume there is no danger of the breed becoming extinct, although as yet comparatively scarce. Some breeders say they are rather a delicate breed, but most other breeders only attribute this delicacy to chicken-hood, and that when matured they are tolerably hardy. Experience has proved that they are good layers, small eaters and exceedingly beautiful in their appearance. Brisk, yet tame in their disposition, with much of the ways and habits of Bantams, they are a very desirable fowl to have.

The chief point to be observed in breeding Sultans is to

breed full crests, which in this breed is particularly round and close. The minor points such as the fifth toe, hocked and feathered legs, and the muffling, should also be looked after, several of those now exhibited at shows in England being destitute of one or more of these points. The average weight in the cock is about four to five pounds, and the hens about three and a half pounds. One peculiarity about the cock bird, worth mentioning is, that when he gets old, his spurs are peculiarly liable to grow long, and so much curved that the points enter the legs and cause much pain. This should be watched, and if necessary, the spur shortened sufficiently to prevent such consequences.

Ducks Without Water.

Has it occurred to many of our readers that ducks can be raised, advantageously, upon premises where there is neither pond or stream, for their amusement?

The common idea is, that such a convenience is absolutely necessary to their thrift. But we have the assurance of a breeder in Massachusetts who has tried the experiment for three successive years, that this notion is altogether erroneous.

Our domesticated ducks, like the wild ones, prefer a brook or lakelet to pass their leisure in, and a swampy piece of ground, through which a river-branch sluggishly flows, affords a good deal of animal food for this race, which helps to keep them during the summer.

But the party spoken of above has no open water on his farm, and he has raised several scores of common ducks in the past three seasons, among his flocks of barn-yard fowls, which have turned out as profitable, so far as he can calculate, as the chickens he has marketed in the fall and winter.

These web-footed birds have been fed with the other poultry, and all his ducklings are hatched and reared by hens. He makes no distinction in feeding, as to variety or kind of food. All his poultry are "in common," and all have the same chance at the grain, the grass, and the scraps from the house; but he has never provided his ducks with any water, except what his fowls have at hand for drink; and he says he knows no difference in their thrift, from the shell upward to killing time.

If the common mongrel duck will thus do well without water to wash and swim in, why may not the Pekin, the Aylesbury, the Rouen duck, be bred to similar advantage? This kind of poultry is fully as profitable as are hens; and if it can be raised without pond or stream on the premises, why is not this experiment worth the trial by others.—*Poultry World*.

PROTECTING PIGEONS FROM BIRDS OF PREY.—The Chinese take a curious method to prevent their pigeons from being attacked by birds of prey while circling over the cities or moving from place to place. This consists in the employment of small, short cylinders of reed pipe, in groups of three or four, or more. These are attached to the back of the bird, and so adjusted that as it flies through the air, a very sharp sound is produced. Varying lengths of the bamboo give variety of tones to this instrument; and when large numbers of birds are flying together in a flock, as is frequently the case, the sound produced by them is distinctly audible for a great distance. It is said that rapacious birds are effectively repelled by this precaution, so that the pigeons make their flights with perfect safety from one point to another. Varnish is used for coating these bamboo whistles to protect them from moisture. This practice is said to have been in vogue among the Chinese for a great many years.

BRONZE TURKEYS.—Last spring I procured thirteen eggs, put them under two hens (not hen-turkeys), and only six eggs hatched. Seven eggs had never been impregnated. Those turkeys are now about half grown. They are all gobblers but one. The prospect now is that they will make large and heavy roasters by Christmas. I will never attempt to rear any turkeys besides the bronze breed. The real bronze turkeys are almost identical with the American wild turkey in plumage—a dark grey bronze. When full grown they are twice the weight of a common, or the largest of common turkeys. The improved New-England bronze turkey never weighs less than 45 pounds the pair—that is, the lowest weight allowable when bred in-and-in. Some have been known to weigh 80 pounds the pair, extra fat. They are like the "Rouen" duck—size is the main criterion they are judged by. Of course they must be next thing to black, every feather showing a bright, shiny bronze. They are the least difficult to raise, as they are hardy, prolific, large, fine, and the meat is sweet. A beginner can raise a dozen where one is raised of the white sorts. Some have an idea that they are some

strange-looking turkey. There is no difference between them and many common turkeys, only great size. They are marked similar to the original stock, only some darker; in fact, the wild stock has been extensively used in bringing about this noted bird. They are to common stock what Rouen ducks and Toulouse geese are to their respective common ancestors. Now is the best time of all the year to select gobblers for breeders.—*New-York Herald*.

GRAVEL FOR FOWLS.—Carnivorous fowls need the assistance of hard substances, such as stones, gravel, etc., to digest the food upon which they live. This they are able to obtain for themselves, in most localities, at all seasons except in winter, or when confined in limited quarters. At such times they must be supplied with a liberal quantity of clean, sharp gravel, or coarse sand. Young fowls of all kinds should have fine gravel or coarse sand constantly within their reach, of a size adapted to the capacity of their throats.

The Apiary.

Wintering Bees in Cellars.

EDITOR CANADA FARMER.—Would you give the best way of wintering bees (in cellar,) in hive (Thomas' Double Boarded)?

Mr. Thomas directs that the entrance be covered with wire cloth; how can dead bees be removed (by the bees)?

And would not the dead bees, in that case, stop the bottom ventilation? Is bottom ventilation requisite at all? Mr. T. directs the honey-board to be replaced by a frame, covered with wire-cloth. Would not that cause excessive ventilation at top. One of my stocks weighs, exclusive of hive, 39½ lbs. Deducting 12 lbs. for bees and board, this leaves (according to Mr. Thomas) 27½ lbs. of honey. Is that enough to winter the stock till end of March next, or later? Should bees be put in cellar, when thermometer goes below freezing point?

R. T. R.

MONTREAL.

The apian authorities do not agree about bottom ventilation. If there be no upward ventilation, the interior of the hive will become damp and mouldy from the breath of the bees; and, if the draught be too strong, too much animal heat will be removed. Therefore, if there be a lower opening, it should be as small as possible. We incline to the opinion that, if there is no danger of mice getting in, it will be better to leave the bottom open. If there are mice about, the best way is to close the bottom with wire cloth, and examine about every six weeks, when dead bees can be removed. The replacing of the honey board with a frame covered with wire cloth would only be advisable in a cellar where the temperature was very equable. The bees should go into the cellar on the first really cold day, probably about the 1st of November.

The quantity of honey wanted during the winter depends upon the degree of heat or cold that the bees will have to endure. An extreme of either will cause activity among them, and a consumption of food. A small colony will want more honey in proportion than a large one, to keep up the heat. Twenty-five pounds is sufficient for a good average colony in the open air, and would be enough for a strong colony in the cellar.

Upright Ventilation.

Bees have done better this year than they have for several years past. Two-thirds of them died in this country, last winter, on account of not giving them upright ventilation. The frost accumulated in the hive until the bees were frozen in a solid mass. The first warm day they would thaw out and fall down dead, and leave plenty of honey. Some old fogies came to me to know what was the matter with their bees. They died with plenty of honey. I replied nothing but laziness. Had you done as I told you, you would have had all your bees now! "Oh," said they, "they died with some disease. I know they did, for they had plenty of honey left. Did not your's die?" "No, not one. I fixed them, as I told you to do. Take off all the honey; then pack the top of the hive with corn cobs, just high enough so your cap will cover them; put 2 one-inch holes in your hive, one on each side, cover well, and your bees will be all right next spring, on their summer stands."—*American Bee Journal*.

THE HONEY CROP is a failure in England this year. Very few hives will be able to get through the winter without feeding.