

satisfactory—19 chicks, among which are some culls, certainly, but also some fine birds.

Yet I do not mean to lay it down as an infallible rule that the value of the products of eggs bought will always be in exact ratio to the price of the eggs. Indeed I am informed of some actual exceptions to the rule. Well, all I have to say about this is, that a man who advertises eggs from his prize birds, and after he has the price demanded for them in his pocket, and in the absence of the second party, deals him out an inferior article, must be a consummate scoundrel, and will be found out and exposed before he die. A man who picks your pocket is a gentleman in comparison, for he makes no pretensions to honesty.

But I do take the ground taken by Mr. Thomas, that in order to succeed in the business, a man must follow the golden rule. For which reason I do not think beginners should be in too great a hurry advertising first-class birds; better learn to know a first-class bird first.

In closing permit me to offer thanks to friend Thomas for this one timely hint, "Do not start with too many kinds." Hoping also to hear from Waterloo again soon through medium of REVIEW.

Yours, &c,

Simcoe, Dec. 17th 1878.

GALLINÆ.

For the Review.

Notes from Waterloo.

No. 4.

As the *Standard of Excellence*, issued by the American Poultry Association, is the recognized authority on poultry matters in Canada as well as in the United States, every breeder who wishes to be successful must not only be thoroughly posted in all the points and qualifications of his favorite varieties, but also, ought carefully to consider, and be prepared to express an intelligent opinion, on every proposed change.

The subject of under-color in Light Brahmas is at present engaging the attention of breeders of that variety, and as they largely outnumber the breeders of any other variety, or perhaps those of all other varieties, games alone excepted, the matter will no doubt receive careful consideration before any change is effected.

"Under-color other than white or bluish-white" is the disqualification according to the *Standard* at present. The changes proposed at last meeting of the Association, and which are to be discussed at their next meeting, in Buffalo in February next, are to have these words struck out altogether, or to have substituted instead, "red, brown, or black appearing in plumage of back."

Now, is any change desirable; and if so, what will be its effect? If the present clause be struck out it will leave it entirely optional with the

judges, and therefore a matter of uncertainty, as they differ in opinion on this point, although there is a growing desire in favor of pure white under-color; for at most of the leading exhibitions, both in the United States and Canada, during the past two years, a bird with dark under-color had no chance to compete against its lighter colored opponent, other points being nearly equal. Now the *Standard* gives no preference either to white or bluish-white, so if preference is to be given to white it were better to have it incorporated in the *Standard*, and then exhibitors would know what to expect.

Everyone will agree that it is right to "aim high," to set up a high standard as a model, but it is also wise to see that undue prominence is not given to any one point to the neglect of others of more importance; for, after all, under-color can only be proved by handling the bird, while defects of symmetry, comb, hackle, tail, or leg feathering, are seen at a glance. True, there are other defects, such as faulty wings, crooked breast-bones, &c., which also can only be detected, when taken in the hand; but the faults which are most easily seen should bear the greatest weight in judging.

In my opinion the subject resolves itself into this: Can Light Brahmas be bred uniformly, or at least a reasonable proportion of them, with clear, distinct dark hackle, black tail and wings, and pure white under-color; or will the result of our best and most carefully studied matings only produce an occasional bird with these desired qualities? If the former, then no matter how difficult, it will be valuable, and should be tried; but if the latter, the result will be loss and not gain, for an occasional or chance bird, that might be termed a sport, is of no value as a breeder, and will never produce its like. There can be no permanent improvement of the race or variety unless the best birds, the prize-winners at the exhibitions, are selected and mated for breeding.

This is the plan adopted with horses, cattle, pigs, in fact with all other live stock, and why not with poultry? If we have to breed two distinct classes, one for breeding, the other for exhibition, there is something wrong in the *Standard* or somewhere else, and the variety is just as good now as it can be ten or twenty years hence. A really first-class pair of birds, from a straight line of pure and first-class ancestors, should produce a majority of first-class chicks, that with proper care and attention, should develop into birds as good or better than their parents. But if that pair had pure white under-color a large proportion of their progeny would have faded hackles, wings and tail; consequently the parents were not first-class, our opinions or tastes to the contrary notwithstanding.