



# THE CANADIAN Poultry Chronicle.

Vol. 1.

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1871.

No. 7.

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### MATING FOWLS FOR BREEDING.

It is a fact recognized and admitted by all poultry breeders, that in selecting fowls for breeding it is desirable the ages of the cock and hen should vary. It is generally admitted that the strongest and best chickens are produced from a cockerel and two years old hens; but unfortunately, however, the chickens of such parentage have frequently a large proportion of cocks, and therefore it is that some breeders prefer a two-year-old cock bird to put with pullets that are full grown. This rule, however, must not be looked upon as imperative as to either case; there are exceptions to both, and good chickens may also be

produced from cocks and hens all of the same age. One thing, however, ought always be borne in mind, that in mating young fowls less than a year old, their chickens will always be backward in fledging; neither do we care to breed from fowls after they have passed the third year.

The male bird has the most influence upon the colour of the progeny, and upon what are usually known as the "fancy points," whilst the form, size and useful qualities are principally derived from the hen. Many otherwise fine cock birds may have some objectionable feature about them; they may have some faulty feathers, they may not be as perfect in shape and size as desirable, or they may be somewhat leggy, all or any of which may cause the fancier to hesitate about breeding from them. It ought, however, to be borne in mind that there are but few birds really perfect, and such cocks ought not to be hastily condemned, if the fault be not too glaring. In all such cases, the careful breeder will, if possible, select hens having the opposite qualities.

If the comb of the cock be defective, then the hens selected should have theirs perfect; if the cock's legs or back be somewhat long, then the hen's legs and back should be proportionally short. And so, too, of the markings. Where there is any defect in the cock, the hens chosen should, in this particular, be

ample; the one great object to be kept in view by the breeder is to endeavour to counteract the bad qualities in the one by the good ones in the other. Let it, however, be borne in mind, that however excellent in other points, no bad-coloured or really faulty-combed cock or ill-shaped hen should be retained as breeding stock, as they will invariably produce chickens of a very indifferent order.

Then again, as to the crossing of a breed, the cockerels in the progeny will more or less resemble the father, whilst the pullets follow the mother, and a knowledge of this fact is of much importance to those who wish to breed back to the original strain. In the larger breeds it is frequently desirable to increase the size, or to render more prominent some portion of the body; in such cases a cross with a hen of a foreign breed should be employed. If, on the contrary, it is the plumage which is sought to be modified, then it is the male bird which should be thrown in. The same rule should also be adopted in breeding the cross out again or in retaining any new characteristic.

The number of hens to be mated with a cock ought, in our opinion, to vary with circumstances. If the fowls are kept in a confined space, from four to six are deemed sufficient, but our experience tells us that with a good run a dozen hens with a strong healthy cock are not too many. Last season we had even more, and scarcely a rotten egg out of the many dozens we hatched. These remarks apply, of course, to the larger breeds. In the smaller breeds, such as Hamburgs, one cock is sufficient for a much larger proportion of hens than in the breeds of Cochins or Brahmans.

To secure eggs for winter use—keep your fowls in a comfortable house—facing the south, and carefully attend to their wants.

## A CHAT ABOUT EGGS.

For eggs there is always a good demand. No article brought into market by the farmer finds a readier sale than does his basket of fresh-laid eggs; nor is there any article of farm produce which yields him greater profit for his outlay. The cost of producing eggs is, to a farmer, very insignificant; few, if any, feed grain to poultry; they are allowed the free run of the barn-yard, and that is thought sufficient, and in many instances so it is; they pick up what would otherwise go to waste, consequently all the eggs laid are to their owner just so much profit, to say nothing of the chickens that are reared. To keep only such fowls, therefore, as lay a large number of eggs, and require only a moderate share of care and attention, ought to be, in poultry-keeping, a principal consideration with the farmer.

The average price of eggs in the Toronto market during the year, may be set down as 20 cents per dozen, and the average price of good beefsteak at 12½ cents per pound, and as six Brahma eggs will weigh 16 oz., and six Cochin eggs the same, it is very clear that one gets twice the weight of eggs for the same money that he would of steak. It is no wonder then that for fresh-laid eggs there is always a ready sale. Would it not be well then for farmers to pay a little more attention to egg-raising than they usually do?

In England and on the Continent, much attention is being paid to the improvement in the breeds of fowls, and especially to the means of increasing the number of eggs which each hen lays in the year. The houses are warmed by artificial heat, (which we object to in Canada) the most egg-producing and egg-suggesting food is given, and it is expected that the time is at hand when the yield from a single fowl, which by the old methods of feeding and care rarely reached to more than a hundred eggs in the year, will be double that number.

There is no question that raising eggs is a paying business. The few fowls that the farmer keeps in his barn-yard, and on which he expends but little, pay best of all his live stock; but when attention is specially paid to fowls, when they are housed and fed and properly attended, after deducting the cost of keeping, care, interest, &c., from the amount for which their eggs sell, there is always a large, and in nine cases out of ten, a larger balance on the credit side of the ledger than is found in connection with any single department of farm industry.

### HAMBURGHS.

The name of Hamburg, as now applied and understood by fowl fanciers, includes five separate varieties of fowls, all possessing the same general characteristics of rather small size, brilliant rose combs, ending in a spike behind, projecting upwards, blue legs, and beautifully pencilled or spangled plumage, and black. The nomenclature of these birds has given rise to considerable discussion, as well as their origin. Some writers trace their origin to the East; others do not travel quite so far, and with much truth assert that some of the varieties have been imported into England from Holland, under the name of pencilled Dutch and Dutch every-day layers, and that the spangled birds are exclusively an English fowl, and are, from the others, essentially distinct varieties. Be this as it may, we shall not now follow up the discussion, but shall proceed to give a short description of the

#### PENCILLED HAMBURGHS,

the general characteristics of which may be stated thus: "They are birds small of size, compact and neat in form, sprightly and cheerful in carriage. In the plumage on the body of the hens, each feather (with the exception of those of the neck-hackle, which should be perfectly free from dark marks,) is pen-

cilled with several transverse bars of black on a clear ground, which is white in the silver, and a rich bay in the golden. These pencillings have given rise to the name of the variety. In the cocks, however, there is a general absence of these markings, the birds being either white or bay. In both sexes the legs are blue, with fine bone. The comb is a rose, square in front, and well peaked behind; the ear-lobe a well-defined white; the face scarlet." Mr. Brent, quoted in the Poultry Book, says the

#### SILVER PENCILLED HAMBURGHS

are, in weight and size, considerably below the general standard. The carriage of the cock is very erect; the tail is well borne up, and the head occasionally thrown back so far that the neck often touches the tail; the general form is exceedingly neat and elegant. In the hen, the carriage is sprightly and active, but not so impudent as that of the cock. Both sexes are alike noisy and restless in their habits, and neat and pretty in their form. The neck-hackle in both sexes should be pure white, pencilling with black—a very frequent fault in the hackle of the hens—being very objectionable. The saddle of the cock must be pure mealy white. The cock's tail is black, the sickle and side-sickle feathers being glossed with green, and having a narrow white edging. In the hens, the tail must be distinctly barred or pencilled with black.

The breast and thighs of the cock are white, as are the upper wing-coverts or shoulder; but the lower wing-coverts are marked with black on the inner web, showing a line of dots across the wing, forming a bar. The secondary quills, or those flight-feathers which are alone visible when the wing is closed, are white on the outer web and have a rich green glossed black spot at the end of each feather. In the hens, the entire plumage of the body, namely, that of

the breast, back, wings and thigh should have each feather distinctly pencilled or marked across with transverse bars of black. The more defined these are, the better, as there should be a perfect freedom from a mossy appearance, which is caused by the two colours running into one another. The legs and feet in both sexes should be of a clear leaden slaty blue. The comb in the cock is evenly set on the head, square in front, well sprigged above with small, even points, not hollowed on the upper surface, and terminating in a single flattened pike behind, which inclines slightly upwards. In the hen, the comb is the same in form, but very much smaller. The earlobes in both sexes must be a dead opaque white, free from red on the edge.

#### GOLDEN PENCILLED HAMBURGHES.

The same description applies generally to the characters of the golden-pencilled birds, substituting the rich, deep, reddish bay, as the ground colour, for the clear, white, silvery ground that characterizes the Silver birds. As, however, there is a slight difference in the marking of the sickle feathers and tail coverts, we quote the following from the standard of excellence. "The sickle feathers of the cock should be of a rich black down the middle of the feather, the entire length edged with bronze, each bronze edge as near one-fourth the width of the feather as possible. The more distinct the two colours, and free from running into each other, the better; and the entire plumage of the Golden-pencilled hens, with the exception of the neck-hackle, which is pure golden bay, must have a deep golden bay ground, free from either lacing or mousing, the pencilling not to follow the outline of the feather; but to go straight across on each side of the shaft; the two colours distinct, well defined, and not shading or running into each other. The chestnut patch too frequently seen on the wing of the silver-pencilled cock should

be by all means avoided. There should be a sufficient depth of colour in the markings of the wings, and in the gray down at the roots of the feathers, or he will not breed deeply marked hens; for, although the sickle feathers of a Golden cock may be bronzed all over without fear of spoiling him as a breeding bird, such an amount of silver on a cock's tail would, in the majority of cases, cause him to throw lightness. The Tail of a Silver-pencilled pullet should be neatly barred in her first full sized plumage; but they generally become waved or frizzled after the second or third moult."

Again: says Mr. Brent, "As a golden Cock will breed good hens with much less depth of under-colour than the Silvers, the argument in favour of their having bars on the wings and black inner webs to the quill feathers is not so imperative, and the sickle feathers of the Golden Cock may be bronzed all over without so much lessening his value as a stock bird."

#### THE BIRMINGHAM POULTRY SHOW.

Among English fanciers and breeders, the Birmingham Poultry and Pigeon Show is always looked forward to with great interest. To obtain a cup or a first at this exhibition is one of the highest objects of the fancier's ambition, and even a highly commended is much sought after, and prized when obtained. The exhibition of 1870 was held in the last week in November. The number of entries were greater than at any previous one. There were in the poultry class 2125, and in the pigeon class 453. In point of attendance and sales, says the *Journal of Horticulture*, the meeting was very successful, but greatly inferior in quality to the average of Birmingham exhibitions, although there were very many grand exceptions. From the large number of entries, the competition must

have been very keen. In order that our readers may form some idea of the kind of fowls exhibited, we quote the weight of some of the prize birds as given in the *Journal of Horticulture*.

"Aylesbury Ducks were large and fine, the weight of the four prizes respectively being 18 lbs. 9 oz., 18 lbs. 10 oz., 17 lbs. 10 oz., and 18 lbs. 4 oz. Rouens were again heavier, weighing 19 lbs. 4 oz., 18 lbs. 6 oz., 18 lbs. 2 oz., 17 lbs. 11 oz., 17 lbs. 4 oz., and 17 lbs. 5 oz., respectively. The first prize pen of the latter breed was magnificent.

"The White Geese weighed 58 lbs. 12 oz., and 56 lbs. 5 oz.; the young ones 49 lbs 4 oz., and 49 lbs.; Grey, 62 lbs. 6 oz. and 54 lbs. 6 oz.; young ones, 53 lbs. 6 oz. and 49 lbs. 1 oz. The first prize Greys were really enormous, as the weight will show.

"The first prize for old Turkey Cocks was won by a splendid bird sent over by Mr. Simpson, of Westchester Farms, New York State. Notwithstanding the voyage, he was in the best order of any of the class, and weighed 36 lbs. 4 oz., being said to have gained several pounds on the passage. The same gentleman was very highly commended for a crested bird. The second prize, 35 lbs. 2 oz. The Young Cocks were 24 lbs. 6 oz., and 23 lbs. 12 oz. Old hens weighed 35 lbs and 34 lbs. Young ones, 31 lbs. 4 oz., and 29 lbs. 1 oz."

We congratulate Mr. Simpson on his success, being, so far as we know, the first American who has successfully competed for prizes at England's greatest poultry and pigeon show. Mr. Simpson also obtained honors in other classes than turkeys. This, we trust, will be an incentive to other breeders on this side the Atlantic to become competitors at future Birmingham Exhibitions.

Since writing the above we have received the following from our esteemed correspondent:—

Poultry to the amount of £895 13s. 6d. stg. were sold during the first three days of this exhibition. The birds (exclusive of pigeons) occupied 2123 pens, and were divided into 97 classes. From the gigantic Cochin to the wee Game Bantam all were in splendid condition and fine feathering. The number of Brahma hens exceeded that of any previous year, and from the constant crowd of enthusiastic admirers round them, it is plain that this variety is becoming gradually first favourite with the public. Among the holders of first prizes for Cochins were—Mrs. White, Sheffield; Mr. Taylor, Manchester; Mr. Chase, Mr. Stretch, and others. For Dark Brahas—Mrs. Hurt, Derby; Lady Gwydyr, Ipswich; Hon. Mrs. Baillie, Hamilton. Light Brahas—Mr. F. Crook, Forest Hill, London; Mr. Rodbard, Bristol, and others. Mr. Simpson, of New York, got two third prizes in this class. Mr. Beldon, of Bingley, for Golden Spangled and Silver Pencilled Hamburgs.

I wish I had the pen of Tegetmeier to write you a description of this show, and of the principal points in the prize birds. You have the *points* at your fingers' ends in Canada, but you haven't got the birds, by a long way.

CHANTICLEER.

COL. F. C. HASSARD, R.E.

Many of our fanciers will be glad to learn that Col. Hassard has again resumed his favourite amusement of poultry raising. Ordered from Canada to England last spring, where he remained for a short time, he was subsequently removed to Curragh Camp, Newbridge, Ireland, where he now is. Once settled, he immediately set about procuring his favorite bipeds of the feathered tribe—Cochins—and was successful in obtaining the whole of Mr. F. W. Zurhorst's magnificent stock of white Cochins. These birds are, we understand, some of the very finest specimens of their variety, and are of the same stock of which Mr. Tegetmeier so admirably speaks in his Poultry Book, in mentioning "F. W. Zurhorst, Esq., of Donnybrook, as one of the most successful breeders and exhibitors of these birds."

We are glad to see by his advertisement in another column that he offers eggs of these birds for sale, and that an opportunity will thus be afforded such of our fanciers on this side the Atlantic as may wish to supply themselves with chickens of this breed, by obtaining eggs from first-class stock.

He also offers for sale a trio of these birds, (a cock and two hens,) the father of one of which, (the cock,) we understand, took a first prize at the Crystal Palace, Birmingham, exhibition last year.

We see he has also purchased some of Steel's strain of the Black Red Game Bantams, a variety of fowls somewhat scarce in this country, but of the Bantam class, no more beautiful in appearance or aristocratic in bearing are to be met with—Eggs from which he also offers for sale.

### Literary Notices.

**THE CANADA FARMER.**—A monthly journal devoted to Agriculture, Horticulture, Live Stock, &c. Subscription, \$1.00 per annum. Toronto, Canada.

Although not the pioneer of Canadian agricultural journals, yet it may be said to be the only one which has overcome the difficulties which invariably attend such publications in new and sparsely populated countries. From the first issue of the *Canada Farmer* to the present, a period of seven years, no trouble or expense has been spared to make it what it undoubtedly is, the first of American agricultural papers. Edited and contributed to, not by mere theorists, but writers practically acquainted with the subjects on which they treat, it cannot but recommend itself to the farming community, for which it is really intended.

Its pages are frequently embellished with well-executed wood-cuts. It is a marvel of cheapness, and ought to be in the hands of all farmers.

**THE ONTARIO FARMER.**—A journal devoted to Agriculture, Horticulture, Live Stock, &c. Edited by W. F. Clarke; published monthly by T. & R. White, Hamilton, Ontario. Subscription, \$1 per annum.

Devoted to the same objects and published for the same purpose as the *Canada Farmer*, although of more recent inception, this journal bears on its pages unmistakable evidence of being well and ably edited by Mr. Clarke, who is supplemented by several well-known Canadian contributors. Published, as the proprietor stated in his first issue, not in antagonism to the agricultural journal then in existence, but to still further aid in developing the agricultural interests of our common country, he has thus far faithfully discharged his self-imposed task, and rendered good service to the cause of agriculture. It is pleasing to observe that our country can now sustain two journals devoted to agricultural interests, when only a few years since one could not subsist, and is one of the mile stones which mark the rapid progress Canada is yearly making in this and kindred subjects.

The *Ontario Farmer* contains a large amount of reading matter and is also beautifully illustrated.

**MR. GOODING'S NEW POULTRY GUIDE**—In our advertising columns will be found an announcement of a new Poultry Guide, about to be issued by Mr. Gooding, of Colchester, Essex, England. The contents, as summarized, are of an attractive and interesting nature; poultry and pigeon fanciers may, therefore, look forward to the publication of a work which will contain much real practical information on the subjects of which it treats, Mr. Gooding being himself a breeder of all the different varieties of fowls and rabbits to which allusion will be made, besides being previously the author of a work on a

somewhat similar subject, which found a ready sale among fanciers.

The paper on the Rise and Progress of Poultry in Canada, cannot fail to be of interest not only to Canadians but to all poultry fanciers, written, as it is announced to be, by a gentleman who has taken a leading part in its development in this country.

Breeders and fanciers on this side the Atlantic desirous of extending their operations, and cultivating an acquaintance with their English brethren will find this to be an excellent medium, a limited space being allotted to advertisements. Such, therefore, as are desirous of profiting by this means would do well to communicate at once with Mr. Gooding, as his Guide is sure to be largely circulated.

#### IMPORTING HATCHING EGGS.

A well-known breeder, for some years a resident in Canada, now of Scotland, and one who takes a deep interest in the development of the fancy in this country, whom for the present we shall call "Chanticleer," has recently written us a letter on the subject of importing eggs for hatching purposes, from which we make the following extracts:—

"I strongly object to the wholesale importation of eggs which you have been telling of lately; sending over orders to England of several dozens of eggs of different sorts is puzzling to any fancier. He must send to many places to collect them himself; for it is a well-known fact that while there are a few amateurs who cultivate many varieties, yet it is equally certain that the tip-top Birmingham exhibitors are celebrated for success in the one variety to which they are wedded. \* \* \* Better risk one pound sterling to a well-known breeder of good birds for a dozen eggs, than get them at a cheaper rate and have second rate fowls. Good Dark and Light Brahmas or Cochins in England cannot be got less than £3 a pair at the very least, but more commonly at £4. You can get weedings from first-class yards, of course, for much less."

## Correspondence.

### GAME FOWLS.

SIR,—Having a few spare moments, I thought they could not be better occupied than by contributing something toward THE POULTRY CHRONICLE.

Game fowl, as a rule, are not generally favourites with the amateur breeder or with the public, perhaps from the erroneous opinion that is generally entertained by the latter that if a person keeps game fowls he must keep them for fighting, or, to use a more common expression, he is a cock fighter. This is a wrong view. It is true that the birds are of a pugnacious disposition; still, a person keeping them should not be judged as belonging to the class as designated "cock fighters." What can add so much to a poultry yard as a fine lot of game fowls? What can be finer than the plumage of a fine black-breasted red or duck-wing cock? There is something stately in the walk of these birds—the proud, defiant manner in which they survey all around must at once make them popular and render them favourites, even with those who may have entertained a prejudice against them. Another reason why they should be favourites is that it is generally admitted the flesh of the game fowl is much richer than that of any other breed, and that the eggs contain far more nourishment than those of other breeds. These are facts that are worthy of consideration, especially by those who raise poultry for the market. Some will say that game fowls do not lay as well as some of the other breeds. I will admit they do not lay all the year round; but if well cared for and attended to they will lay as early as most fowl; a great deal depends on the feeding of all kinds. Fowls, to lay well, should not be too fat; this injures them. My hens generally commence to lay about Christmas—some of



them before that time; this I consider early enough: a hen wants rest; that is if you do not want to destroy her for breeding purposes.

What is the origin of the game fowl? This is a point that I should like to see something definite on. Some authors say it is from the wild cock of India; others say from the pheasant. I myself saw a game cock that was at least half pheasant. The party that had the cock raised it from a chicken, and certainly it resembled a pheasant in many points: it had a small tassel at the back of the comb; it was very wild and would fly very high. This bird was the gainer of some eleven battles; and one day it escaped and got in a hedge and there blinded itself. This bird was brought from Ireland, and was a brown red. Another point is, what has given rise to so many breeds of game? There is the Derby, Tartar, Duckwing, Heathwood, Clippers, Camerons, Dominicks, Vergennis Blue, and a host of others. Now, each of the above-mentioned breeds have their distinctive marks: The pure Derby have white legs. The Tartars are black-breasted and brown reds with greyish eyes and very strong heads, very broad at the back of the comb; they are fine stallion birds. The Camerons, as they are called in this country (but the original stock was imported from Ireland), have a small tassel at the back of the comb; they are of very lofty stature, and small, round, compact bodies; still they are large birds; they are a dark red, and will not breed any other colour but brown and black reds. The Duckwing needs no description. The Heathwood are generally a bright red with yellow legs. The Dominicks are of two strains—the Delaware and the Pittsburg. The Delaware are much lighter in plumage than the Pittsburg, and the legs are of a much darker yellow, eyes a bright red; this breed, except to those well versed, would be taken for Dunghills; certainly

they are deceptive so far as color. Then the Vergennis Blues; these, like the Camerons, are said to be from Irish stock, and have also a small tassel like the Camerons; they are very fast birds, and the legs are of a greenish cast. Now, if the Game Fowl are not bred from the Pheasant, how is it that so many have this tassel? And while on the distinctive marks of the various breeds, I will note an error that many breeders make in calling Black-breasted Reds *Black Reds*. They are quite distinct in color; the former is more of a bright or orange red, with white downy feathers at the root of the tail; the latter is a very dark red—in fact, hackle and saddle feathers are of a brown red, the breast a deep black, and no downy feathers at the root of the tail, as in the Black-breasted Red.

In the Sept. number of the *Poultry Bulletin*, there is a communication signed "R. H.," written from East Bloomfield, U. S., and headed "*Breeding Game Fowl*," and in it the writer says:—

"I have brought home winners of two and three battles to breed from, the produce being as big cowards as ever crowed, and that too from as good hens as could be had. Thus has the sporting fraternity been led to lug the idea that no bird could be justly called a Game bird until he had been "*fought out*." My experience proves to me that the saying has no foundation except in the ignorance of all those who have faith in it."

I should have liked the author to have stated if he had previously tried any of the stock from these hens, for then he could have positively stated that the *hens were good*; having omitted this, he cannot say where the bad blood is; it must have been on one or the other side. A *true Game cock* will not run, nor will his stock (that is, provided the hen is good), unless the bird is in bad condition, or moulting or sick.

I have seen a bird, the winner of three

or four battles, run; he was nearly pure; the party owning it stated when he fought his first battle that he was not pure, and wanted to try it. The mother was a good hen, but the cock from which he was bred was not pure; he was about three parts game. I think this must have been the case with the birds purchased by R. H., and that he has been rather hasty in condemning the fowls, as one would infer from the latter portion of his letter, which reads as follows:—

“Without going into the origin of the Game Fowls, and committing plagiarisms upon such authors as Tegetmeier, Bement, Dickens, Dixon, etc., etc., I will give my own experience, begging the criticism of any who may read these letters, and feel their ability to correct me. I will take four different colored birds, and call them legitimate strains, from which all sub-varieties are produced by crossing among themselves or by the introduction of different colored birds from the Dunghill varieties. These are the following: *Black Reds, Greys, Blacks, Whites*. I will give you my reasons and proofs at another time.”

That he could take Dunghill birds, and from them produce good Game fowl, or Game birds of the various colors and strains—this would certainly be a novel way of raising good stock. It might do for poultry exhibitions, for these crosses often produce handsome birds—and birds that will take a very clever judge to detect the impurity, if he can. I think it would be well in all poultry exhibitions, especially in the Game fowl class, to have a certificate sent with the fowl when exhibiting, that either the birds themselves have been proved or some of the stock; this would, in a great measure, have a good effect, and prevent impure blood being recognized. And would it not be well if a like certificate, or say a guarantee, should be sent with all Game birds when imported from

England or foreign parts? I know one instance of a bird that was imported from England and was said to be game, and when tested with his own spurs showed his tail; yet this was imported as true Game. Some of the other importations may have done the same. I, with the fowls imported by me from the United States, have a guarantee from the man (and he has a very extensive demand for his fowls) that they are true; if any of them should run when in good health he will refund the amount. I have seen several tried on more than one occasion, and they have sustained the reputation given to them.

If I am wrong in any of the arguments herein contained, or the description of the birds or origin, I hope to be corrected.

Yours truly,

Ottawa, 7th Dec., 1870. B.

#### EUROPEAN BIRDS.

SPARROWS, STARLINGS, BLACKBIRDS,  
THRUSHES.

SIR,—I think it will be as well to chronicle, now we are approaching the end of the year, what has been done in the importation of European birds.

Of Sparrows, during the past twenty years, I have made three importations; about fifteen years ago, I turned loose three pairs at Portland in Maine, the same year about ten birds were let loose on my farm; on another occasion I sent adrift a few birds; these Sparrows were, however, a good deal injured by the effects of the voyage. They therefore disappeared. The Colony being too weak in numbers, easily became a prey to a Sparrow-Hawk on one occasion and a diminutive Owl on another. The last importation of sparrows was made three years ago. About fifty birds were imported in the spring, and allowed their freedom. On this occasion they were turned loose in the city of Quebec. The birds were not a strong lot; about forty of them were cocks, and of the hens only

two or three were lively birds. However, there were several broods the same season—at least two. About Christmas we counted about twenty birds.

This colony of sparrows has now wintered two seasons in Quebec; this year is the third winter. There are probably about three hundred sparrows. These birds are of course well acclimatized; they are acquainted not only with the town, but they have made satisfactory relations with the citizens, who take a pleasure and pride in providing them with food, as well as in protecting them from injury. I hope this colony will supply the neighbouring orchards with a supply of birds to meet the ravages of the various insects that have made a complete wreck and ruin of our fruit trees.

I do occasionally hear it mentioned that sparrows are injurious to wheat crops. These crops are, however, grown at a remote distance from buildings, and as the grain is only exposed in its ripe state to the ravage of birds for a short period, and that at a season of the year when there is an abundance of every kind of food, I imagine the scandal may be called a prejudice; at any rate, suppose a sparrow can get at wheat for two weeks of the year, he certainly cannot for fifty weeks, when he is probably doing good to mankind. I can answer for it, if a grasshopper appears on a Quebec wharf he is soon connected with sparrow meat.

In the month of May I gave freedom to twenty starlings, eight blackbirds and four thrushes.

The starlings are useful birds in cattle pastures, actually feeding on the backs of cattle, on the wurmalls, thus removing a grub which causes both irritation and sores to the animal. As a starling breeds in towns, I thought it likely to be a useful bird in Canada. These birds, being strong on the wing, flew up in the air and gradually disappeared. They have not been seen since.

The blackbirds and thrushes remained about the house for a few weeks, singing before daybreak in the morning and at sunset at night. As the blackbirds had three hens in their lot, I have no doubt they have bred, but for some time past we have seen nothing of them. The same may be said of the thrushes.

The whole of these birds, including the sparrows, were wild birds in England. They cost, at Quebec, about \$1.50 a head; these experiments, therefore, if not entirely successful, have not been very expensive.

I have gone into the above details because I am constantly applied to for this information from persons who are fond of birds, and from others who believe that the great increase of noxious insects may fairly be attributed to the exterminating war which has wantonly been waged upon our insect-eating birds; and expect the evil to increase unless these little friends of the farmer are protected or left undisturbed to multiply, and follow their natural habits. I want to meet the increase of European insects with birds who adapt themselves to the circumstances that surround them, and who rather benefit by the industry of man than otherwise.

Sparrows and Blackbirds ought to remain with us all the year round. Starlings and thrushes will migrate. The whole subject is, however, very interesting. In time we shall probably have our societies like they have in Switzerland for the protection of birds beneficial to agriculture; we shall have our poles with artificial birds' nests. This fashion is already very general; so far as swallows are concerned; but when the subject is once well understood I hope many varieties of birds may find their homes in Canada, and that we may meet the vast increase of insects by a similar increase of both domestic as well as wild birds.

The protection of little birds is a popular subject in this part of Canada.

SILLERY.

Quebec, 10th December, 1870.

## Practical Hints.

**FOOD FOR FOWLS.**—A change of food, summer and winter, is just as essential in the management of fowls as any farm stock. Oat meal and middlings contain a high per cent of flesh-forming material, gluten, &c. Indian Corn possesses the greatest amount per cent. of oil-making or warmth-giving qualities of any of the grains. Oat-meal, one of the best summer foods, in winter should not be fed alone. A change of food frequently is desirable, and we prefer for the morning meal during the winter season alternate messes of mixed oat and corn meal and mashed potatoes. Middlings may be used with equal profit in place of the oat meal.

**MIXING SOFT FOODS.**—In mixing soft foods for fowls they should not be made very wet, but kneaded up as dry as possible, for forcing an excess of water into the crop is very liable to cause diarrhœa.

**DRINKING WATER FOR POULTRY.**—Fowls should never be left without water, but we would advise letting them take it in such quantities and at such times as their nature demands. Give fresh, clean water, and see that there is no snow in it in winter time. Experience has taught that fowls not supplied with water, but permitted to pick snow to satisfy their thirst, will greatly reduce in flesh, and be retarded in their spring laying. They should always be supplied with fresh, clean water for drinking.

**STATISTICS OF THE EGG TRADE.**—The yearly importation of eggs into England reached in 1861, 203½ millions; in 1864, 335½ millions; in 1866, 430,878,880; in 1868, about 600,000,000, and it is presumed that in 1870 the sum total will reach nearly three-quarters of a billion.

**EGG SEASON IN FRANCE.**—France is a large egg-producing country. The laying season commences in January; April, May and June produce the larger number. In July the quantity begins to lessen, improves a little in August and September, falls off again in October and November, while in

the last month of the year the supply is alone kept up by drawing from stores preserved from the surplus of June.

**LAYING HENS.**—A hen that lays, needs her regular food and fresh drink as much as a man who labours. They require a change—buckwheat, oats, meal, and in season sour milk, are all very good. Potatoes boiled and mashed with a little salt, sufficient to make palatable, and some gravy mixed, is excellent, and of which they are very fond. When confined they require often animal food, without which they become dormant, sluggish, and inactive.

**STIMULATING FOOD.**—It should be remembered that fowls can be injured by giving them too much stimulating food. In winter, in the cold weather, a little, if given properly in their food, is an excellent means of making them produce eggs, but if over stimulated to make them lay, will in a short time destroy all their egg-producing qualities.

**PROFITABLE POULTRY KEEPING.**—To keep poultry profitable one must become thoroughly acquainted with all their ways and habits. By one-half the larger proportion of farmers who keep fowls, and turkeys in particular, neglect them, and in consequence, lose a handsome net profit. He must therefore enter into it with spirit and determination, and the result will surely be success. There is no branch of business carried on in the husbandman's line that pays better, considering the outlay, than hens. Farmers too frequently forget the smaller stock in grasping for the larger, and it is often the small things that pay. Be mindful of the pennies, and the dollars will take care of themselves. An Iowa farmer says: "In 1868 I kept forty hens, which produced 6,568 eggs. The lowest cash price was twenty-three cents and the highest forty-six per dozen. The average number of eggs to a hen was one hundred and sixty-four, that were sold; of course I kept no account of what was used for the table. I averaged the price at thirty cents per dozen, which give the handsome sum of \$164.10." Since then, he adds, "he has done even better." •

## Dogs.

### ENGLISH FOX HOUND.

The modern English Fox Hound is really one of the most wonderful animals in creation, owing probably to the great care which has been given to his breeding for the last three centuries. Some Fox Hound establishments have cost their owners £8000 to £10,000 per year, and the money and talent which has been expended for this purpose has resulted in wonderful success. The Fox Hound, like all other dogs, must be selected for the country he is to range in. The middle size is the most approved, for the reason that, like all other animals, they are found to be stronger and better able to endure fatigue. Height and colour is a matter of taste. A good dog cannot be of bad color—that is to say, we do not think colour has much to do with the specific character of the animal, but in shape all must agree. We should not prefer a large hound to one of medium size, since in a thick woven country, or in a thorny brake, he, as the poet says, "Painfully tugs, and, torn and embarrassed, bleeds."

One of the most important features is that the pack be all of a size and look of the same family. There are certain points in a hound, as in a horse, which should be always looked after. If not of perfect symmetry, he will not show speed, nor get through much work. His legs should be perfectly straight; his feet round and not too large; his shoulders well back; breast rather wide; chest deep; back broad; head small; neck thin; tail thick and bushy, and carried well.

A small head indicates high breeding and looks more beautiful. We do not say large headed dogs are in any wise inferior.

The prevailing colours of the present day are black and white, with tan. The blended colours are known as "Pies"—red pie, blue pie, yellow pie, gray pie, lemon pie, and badger pie. The last two are very handsome. Tan, black, white, red, blue, are more or less mixed with white.

The fox hound is always to be looked upon as part of a pack, just as a soldier is a part of a regiment; so that it is no use to breed him exceptionally high, or

small, or otherwise, if you make him run different from his companions. His nervous and physical organism makes him peculiar for dash.—*Moore's Rural.*

### HEN FEATHERED GAME FOWLS.

Mr. Tegetmeier, in the *Field* newspaper, gives the following extract from the letter of a correspondent respecting the breed of hen-feathered game fowls. "Speaking of the hennies formerly used in the Cockpit he writes:—

"I have bred and admired these birds from my childhood, and speak within bounds when I say that thousands have passed through my hands within the last thirty years, and that although you have been the first to call attention to the change of plumage, nothing is more sure than for half, three parts, or more bred hentails to put on the full hentail plumage at two years old, the time when a cock becomes perfect in all his parts, in the opinion of cockers. Full or eight parts bred hennies of course hatch and always remain hen-feathered, and never breed or moult into long or shine feathered cocks, but six parts, four parts, or the least strain of hennie introduced into any breed will surely return in after generations. And this is a great point with those old fanciers who contend that the hennies are a perfectly original, distinct and pure breed. But not only do they change their long bright feathers, but their colour also turns to the original hentail colour. Here is a case out of hundreds; indeed, I will produce fifty cock chickens now with long bright plumage, and at their two-year-old moult forty or more shall be perfectly hen-feathered. I was asked to show a pair of hennies at the last Menhentiot show. I took up a pair near home, sent them, and took first prize. I was offered money for them, and, on declining to sell, was asked to send the same pair to the Crystal Palace. I sent them. The cock and hen were there seen as perfect grey hennies. But such was not the case, as the cock was only six-eighths in hennie blood, and four months before he was shown at Menhentiot, he was one of the most gaudy, full-feathered, freakle-breasted, marigold duckwings ever seen. Full, or all eight parts hen-cocks vary in size, from 4 lbs. to 7 lbs. weight, are of all colours, but spangle, grey, black and brown predominate. Formerly, what were called fig-puddings

were plentiful, viz.:—a buff ground, patched over with single black feathers, especially in the breast. Legs, white, yellow or carp, and with the exception of the chickens I exhibited at the recent Liskeard show, I have never seen a willow-legged hennie. They are generally full and round in body, and real good table fowls, but being short in leg and neck, are not in cocking parlance topping cocks; consequently are found fighting too much under in a long battle, where their acknowledged desperate heels often stand them in good, but, although the most desperate and fastest leg fighters known at set-to, they die off in a long battle. A cock bred six-eighths hennie blood is the cock known as the long-feathered hennie, which will fight right through a fast, long battle, and come clean out of a terrific struggle for the finish, and such cock is best if one side or the other that he was bred from is pure hennie. One who has written much on game fowls states hennies to be most common in the north (of England). Such is not the case, I think. I have been a good deal in Yorkshire and seen a great many mains fought there, but never a hen cock, and Baily, the greatest cocker in England, told me before his death he had not seen one at the Newcastle pits for years, but had seen them at Chester fifty years before.

There is a breed of Game fowls in Devon known as tassels, but yet scarcer than hennies. The late Mr. Leech told me he recollected them being first brought from Ireland. The pure-bred ones have a sort of double skull, similar to a super on a bee-hive; when crossed with other fowls this curious conformation of skull disappears, although the tuft or topknot of feathers may remain.

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## Our Letter Box.

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### OUR LETTER BOX.

**FROTH IN HEN'S THROAT.**—(*I McK, Toronto*).—We have frequently had hens affected in a similar way; we have adopted a process similar to the following. Take the tail feather of a hen, strip it half way down, pass it down the windpipe, turn it round quickly three or four times, and then withdraw it sharply. After this you may insert feathers dipped in turpentine four or five times per day. This will we

believe remove the froth; and two pills of camphor the size of a garden pea each, given for a few days at intervals of twelve hours, will cure. The two pills form one dose. If improvement justify it, diminish the dose half, and if the bird appear well, let well alone, and discontinue all treatment.

**CROP BOUND FOWLS.**—(*Amateur*).—There is a stoppage between the crop and the gizzard, and your fowls are suffering from it. There is no cure till it is removed by opening the passage, then give small quantities of water as hot as can be drunk by the birds without injury. Follow up with doses of castor oil until the functions of the body are fully discharged. You must then feed on soft food, as sopped bread for three days.

**BRAHMA'S EYE SWOLLEN.**—(*J. K.*).—In any other breed than the Brahma or Cochin the inflation of the skin of the face or lower beak would be a very serious symptom. If neglected it would end in a roup; it is however, of little import with Brahmas. The bird has probably caught cold, and will soon be well. Wash the face morning and evening with cold water and vinegar; give a little stimulant twice per day, such as bread and strong beer, and until convalescence give two pills daily of camphor, each the size of a garden pea.

**FEATHER EATING FOWLS.**—(*Quebec*).—There is really no cure we know of to prevent hens eating feathers if once the habit is firmly contracted. You do not say if the fowls were kept in a confined space, or had a large range. We judge, however, from the diet given, meat, vegetables, lime, &c., all excellent in their way, that they were kept in a small enclosure—if so, a wider range may effect a cure. If at liberty you are convinced by seeing one pick and eat the feather of another, remove the offender; it is a habit, once taken to, that is never given up. We do not think that feeding on Indian corn would cause it. It is a fat-forming food, and much more likely to cause apoplexy. Wheat is a much more warmth-giving food than Indian corn.

**ROUEN DUCKS.**—(*Subscriber*).—All Rouen Ducks should be the colour of wild ducks, and they are always dark. We consider light plumage a defect, and any white is inadmissible, save the ring round the drake's neck; this should be small, and not joined behind.

**FOOD FOR DOVES.**—(*D. A. D.*).—Coloured Turtle Doves, commonly called Ring Doves, are best fed on wheat, canary seed, and rarely hemp seed. In cooing, the cock's note is deep and mellow, and he swells his throat, then, rising and taking a step forward or after his mate, he repeats the same gesture and voice.

**COLOUR OF DARK BRAHMA HEN.**—(*Fancier*).—The brown or salmon colour is a defect in a Brahma hen. If we had others as good, lacking the colour, we should not breed from her. If she has qualities that make it desirable, we should mate her with a dark cock—that is, black and white, and, above all, one without the chestnut patch on his wing or a brown feather in any part of his plumage.

**SILVER PENCILLED HAMBURGS.**—(*Albany*).—Assuming that all your cockerels are of the same age, we should certainly give the preference to the perfect earlobes. If they are all of the same strain, and he of the white ear be older than the others, we should not hurry to make our selection, because age will often transfer the faulty into a perfect earlobe, just as it does the face of a Spanish pullet.

**CROP BOUND FOWLS.**—(*W. H. D., Toronto*), writes "I was just reading 'The Henwife' by the Hon. Mrs. Arbuthnot, and in the chapter on diseases of fowls she advises the use of the knife in cases of crop-bound. Why not do away entirely with that barbarous custom? I have found only one writer who recommends any other plan, Mr. John Bailey, of London, Eng., who says in his work entitled 'Fowls': 'pour plenty of water down the throat and loosen the food until it is soft, then give a tablespoonful of castor-oil, or as much jalap as will lie on a sixpence, make a pill and slide it into the crop; the fowl will be well in the morning.' Who will say that this is not the most humane treatment? When I have a fowl so situated I generally use warm ale with a few grains of sulphate of iron dissolved in it, and think it preferable to water."

**YOUNG ROUEN DUCKS.**—(*E. D. Duncan, Memphis, Tenn.*).—Asks, "Where can I get a trio of Rouen Ducks such as described in December number of THE CHRONICLE, page 85? You say young drakes only nine or ten weeks old, when killed, weigh 12 lbs. the pair. I would very much like to get a trio that would at six months old weigh so much." Our correspondent evidently appears sceptical as to what we stated in our last issue respecting weights; such is the case, however, and we refer him to a short article in the present number on the Birmingham (England) show, in which he will see the weights mentioned of ducks, geese and turkeys, which no doubt will somewhat surprise him. For obvious reasons we cannot single out the name of any one breeder of Rouen Ducks for him to apply to. Our advertising columns give the names of several who, no doubt, if applied to, will be able to supply him with the birds he asks for. Rouen Ducks, however, are not bred very freely in Canada yet, but

we trust soon will. Our correspondent will be more likely to find among our English advertisers what he requires. As to the cost of carriage, he had better apply at the express office for information.

**GAME FOWLS—THE COCK'S INFLUENCE.**—(*Fancier*).—"I would like to have the opinion of some of the readers of your—to us fanciers—valuable paper on the following points. I have been breeding Hamburgs, Brahmans and Game. My practice is about the beginning of the year to put all the cock birds by themselves and the hens by themselves; I cannot, however, keep two Game cocks together under any circumstances. When I wish to save eggs, say the end of February, I select my birds for breeding and put them together. I find the results are perfectly satisfactory in all outward characteristics. Now, the question I would like to have solved is this—Is the disposition of the Game affected by running with other fowls through the summer? I know that Game breeders are very much opposed to letting any but Game birds run together, and as anything that is likely to deteriorate the Game qualities is important to know, the question is, therefore, one on which I would like to have the opinion of some of the Game breeders, as I consider it can only be satisfactorily answered by those who have given it a trial."

## Advertisements.

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