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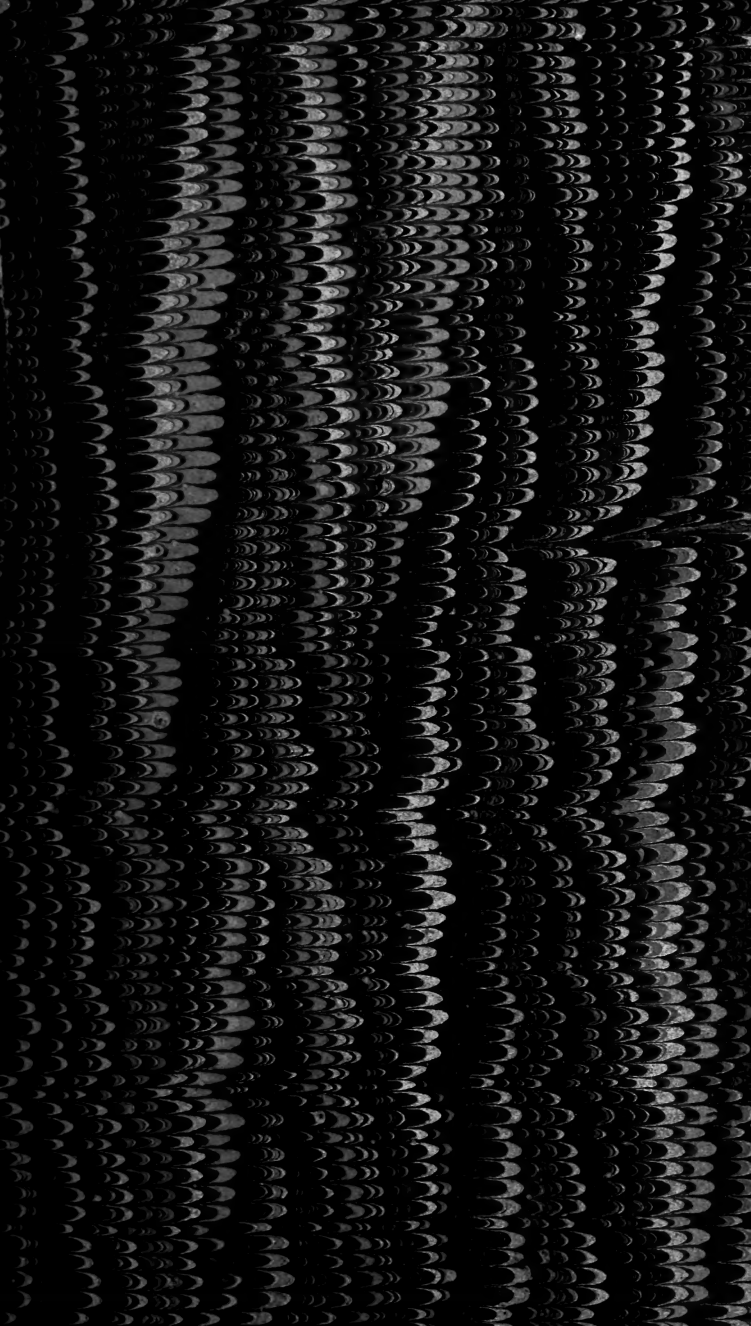
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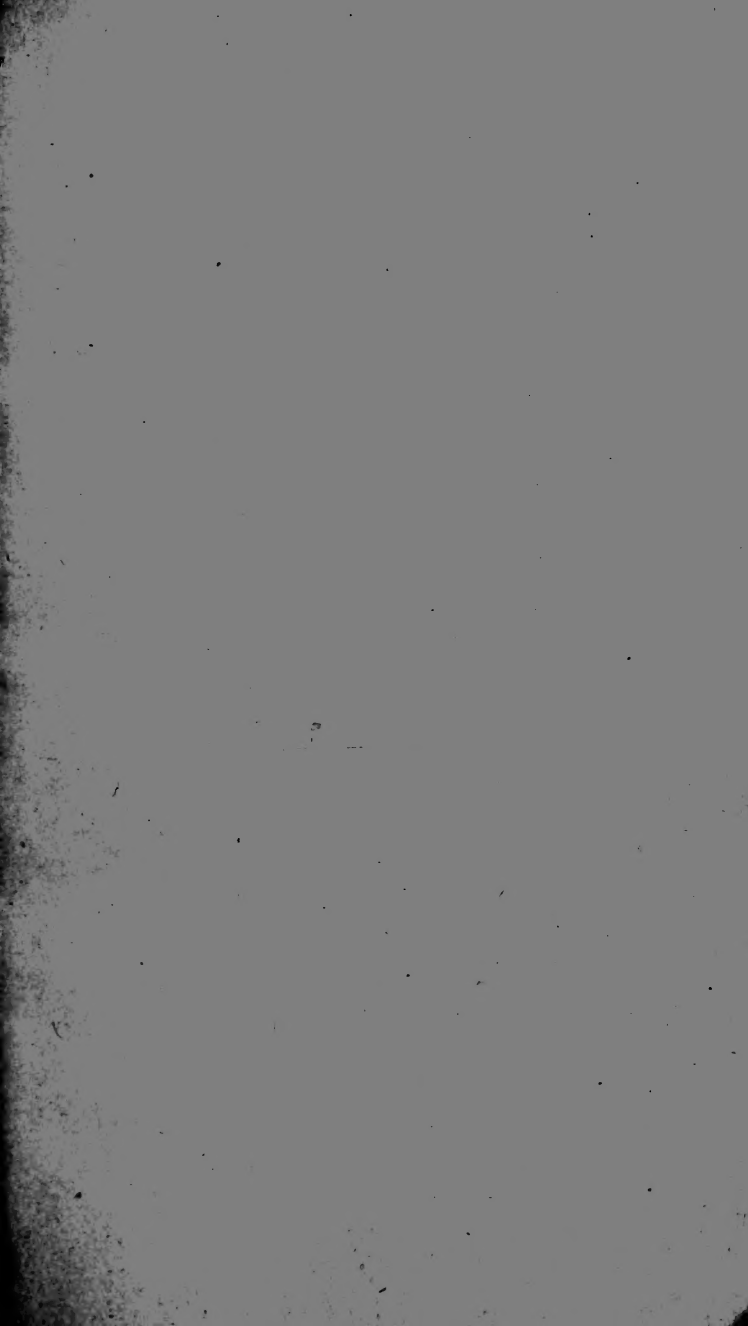
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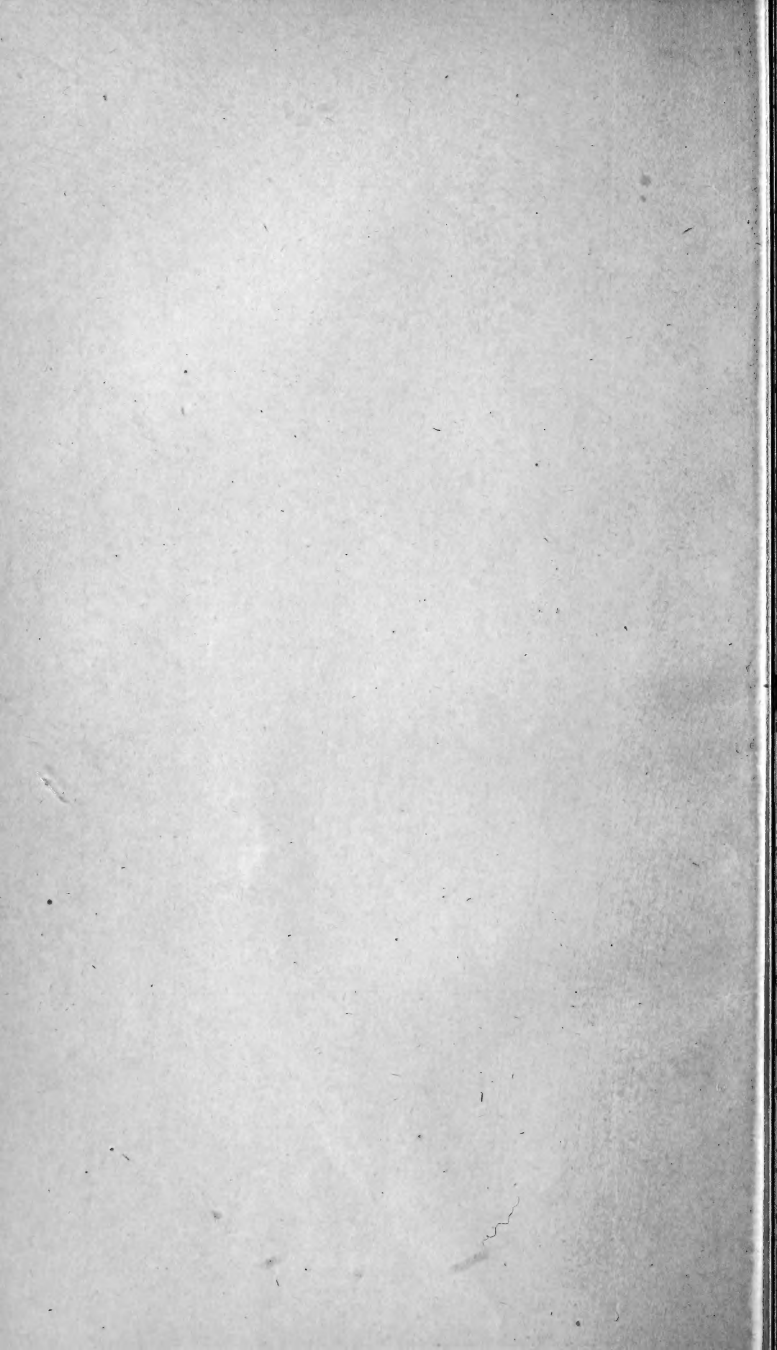


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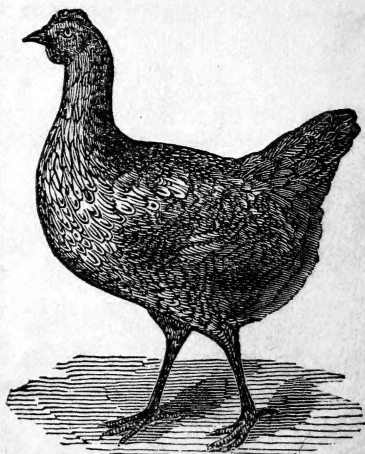
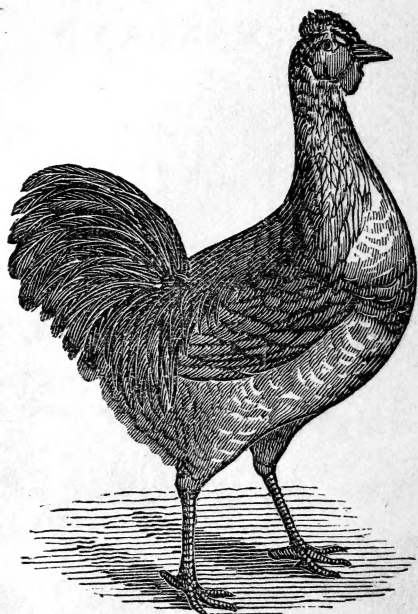
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W. J. COOK & SONS, JAMES JAY



ROYAL COCHIN CHINA FOWLS.

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THE

NEW ENGLAND

POULTRY BREEDER:

BEING A BRIEF HISTORY OF

DOMESTIC FOWLS;

AND CONTAINING FULL DIRECTIONS FOR THEIR

REARING AND MANAGEMENT.

ILLUSTRATED WITH

TWENTY-FIVE CORRECT ENGRAVINGS.

BY A PRACTICAL POULTERER.

BOSTON:

R. B. FITTS & CO., 22 SCHOOL STREET,
OFFICE OF THE "AMERICAN UNION."

1850.

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BOSTON.

51, 27, 27, 15.
P.S. 1849

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THE
NEW ENGLAND
POULTRY BREEDER.

INTRODUCTORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE very extraordinary interest which is evinced among the farmers and poultry fanciers in New England at the present time, and the anxiety shown by gentlemen throughout the interior, especially, for correct and reliable information upon this very pleasing, and, if well managed, profitable pursuit, has prompted the author of this treatise on the management of fowls to put forth the present work — which he has prepared with great care, from the best known authorities — with a view to meet the wants of those who are searching for such information as may be of *utility*, and which may be appreciated and comprehended by breeders of domestic fowls *in the climate of America*.

A great deal has been written, and a variety of opinions have been promulgated, by those who breed birds *abroad*. In the pages which follow, the reader will find copious directions, compiled from the most authentic sources, in reference to breeding, rearing, fattening, caaponizing, etc.; and it has been the intention of the author, in preparing this volume, to furnish such material as will comport with reason and common sense, in its applicability to raising poultry *on this side of the Atlantic*.

The fowls treated of, together with the engravings in

this work, will be found truthful and correct drawings of birds, as we find them in this country, generally. Several of them are *actual portraits*, drawn from life, by competent artists, and which will be recognized, at once, as true and excellent likenesses. We are indebted to G. P. Burnham, Esq., of Roxbury, Massachusetts, (who has some of the finest fowls in America in his yards,) for several of the original engravings in this treatise.

Mr. Richardson, (of Dublin,) in his excellent work, remarks that, "the breeding and rearing of poultry have, of late years, greatly progressed in the estimation of the public, and have, in short, begun to assume a position, with reference to other departments of country life, much more appropriate, and more nearly approximating to that actually demanded by the importance of the subject, than they formerly did. Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, has set the example to her subjects, and many of her proudest nobles have imitated her; while, among all classes, ardent poultry fanciers are to be met with.

"Some may not be fully aware of the *profitable* character of this interesting pursuit, and may deem that it can be followed only for the innocent recreation it affords. We shall, however, if possible, convince them to the contrary. Poultry may be converted into money either while living or when dead; or they may be bred, partly for the market, and partly with a view to the disposal of their eggs.

"First, as to the profit arising from the disposal of superfluous stock. This depends, of course, in a great measure, upon the quality and character of the birds we keep; and hence, if the reader be advised, he will confine his fancy to the more valuable varieties. The expense of feeding and rearing a *valuable* fowl will not be found to exceed that required for a comparatively *worthless* one; at least, if at all, only as regards comfort and warmth, which, if properly procured, are not very costly.

"In England the profits accruing from the breeding and fattening of poultry have been longer understood than in Ireland; and so far back as 1837, the London dealers often paid away upwards of £150 in a single day. At

Wokingham, in Berkshire, in 1827, young fowl, even of the common dunghill sort, sold for 18s. a couple; from 4s. to 8s. for young and fat fowls, is still considered a moderate price. In London, there is always a great demand for poultry, especially during the fashionable season, when twenty dozen or more are often required for a single festival; and if they were scarcer, and the price, consequently, higher, they would, doubtless, become in still greater request. Lord Althorpe, (Earl Spencer,) who always signalized himself by his patronage of every description of rural and domestic economy, instituted a poultry show at Chapel Brompton, in Northamptonshire. The best turkey weighed, on this occasion, (1829,) 20 lbs. 4 oz.; capon, 7 lbs. 14½ oz.; pullet, 6 lbs. 3½ oz.; goose, 18 lbs. 2½ oz.; ducks, (per couple,) 15 lbs. 10 oz. These, be it remembered, were fattened expressly for market. Since 1829, poultry shows have been established all over the kingdom, with a view to encourage the attention of the people to this branch of rural affairs.

“ A large proportion of the eggs which supply the London market is brought from France, and chiefly from the department of Calais, opposite the coast of Kent and Sussex; and hence the price of eggs in that part of France is greatly enhanced, compared with what it is in other parts, more remote from so good a market. A writer in a newspaper, published some years ago, at Arras, after grumbling greatly at this dearness of an article which, I suppose, was a favorite with him, enters into the following calculations as to the value of this branch of trade: ‘ Out of 72,000,000 eggs annually imported into England from France, Germany, the Netherlands, and other countries, France contributes 55,000,000. Calculating the first cost at 4½d. per dozen, England pays annually to France, for eggs, about £77,000.’ A writer in the *Penny Magazine*, in the year 1837, calculates the importations of eggs from all sources at 69,000,000, for the year ending January 5, 1837; and the duty, at 1d. per dozen, amounted to £24,048. In 1820, the quantity imported was 31,000,000, the duty yielding a revenue

of £11,077. In 1827, the importations of eggs were nearly the same. 'These 69,800,000 of eggs required (continues the writer quoted) about 575,000 fowls, each producing 120 eggs on an average, all beyond this being required for domestic consumption. Assuming the grounds of this calculation to be correct, the 55,000,000 eggs supplied by France are the production of 450,333 fowls, each of which furnishes ten dozen eggs, imported at a duty of 10d., being a tax to that amount on each fowl. Allowing twelve fowls to each family engaged in supplying the demand for eggs, the number of families thus interested will be 39,861, representing a population of 198,000. In the Pas de Calais, there can scarcely be a larger proportion than two families out of every five who are connected with the egg trade; and, if this be ascertained to be the real proportion, the population not directly engaged would be 457,000, which, with the 198,000 mentioned before, would furnish a total of 655,000, which is the population of the department.' The usual mode in which these eggs arrive at the market is through the intervention of an intermediate class of dealers, who go from house to house, visit cabin after cabin, collecting from each the accumulated store, and, in their turn, bring the produce of their tour to the egg *merchant*, who regularly ships them for their destination. A practice very similar to this prevails in Ireland. Mr. Weld, in his 'Statistical Survey' of Roscommon, thus writes — 'The trade in eggs, the value of which for export, according to Mr. Williams, in 1832, amounted to £500 a day, paid by England to Ireland, is carried on with considerable vivacity at Lanesborough, and also at Tarmonbarry. The eggs are collected from the cottages for several miles around by runners — commonly boys, from nine years old and upwards, each of whom has a regular beat, which he goes over daily, bearing back the produce of his toil carefully stowed in a small hand-basket. The prices vary at different periods of the year; but they are never changed without previous notice to the runners. In the height of the season, the prices at Lanesborough were from 2s. 6d. to 4s. per 120; but

towards the winter they rose to 5s. The eggs were packed in layers, with straw, in such crates as are commonly used for the conveyance of earthenware. Each crate will hold about eighty-four hundred, of six score — that is, 10,080 eggs, the first cost being from £10 10s. to £16 6s. per crate. These are sent forward, on speculation, to Dublin, or, occasionally, at once to the English market, and a profit of £4 or £5 a crate is considered a fair remuneration. Sometimes it is more, and sometimes it is less; and there is risk in the trade.'

"The following statements, by M. Legrand, a member of the French Statistical Society, on the production and consumption of eggs in France, may not prove uninteresting, as they tend considerably to aid me in my endeavors to prove that, however insignificantly in themselves individually eggs may appear, in the aggregate they are of no small importance: — 'In 1813, the number of eggs exported from France was 1,754,140. Between 1816 and 1822, the number exported rose rapidly from 8,733,000 to 55,717,500; and in 1834, the number had increased to 90,441,600. In 1835, 76,190,120 were exported for England; 60,800 for Belgium; 49,696 for the United States; 49,260 for Switzerland; 34,800 for Spain; and 306,304 to other parts of the world. The total amount of the exportations for that year was 3,828,284 francs. The consumption in Paris is calculated at 115½ eggs per head, or 101,012,400. The consumption in other parts of France may be reckoned at double this rate, as, in many parts of the country, dishes composed of eggs and milk are the principal items in all the meals. The consumption of eggs for the whole kingdom, including the capital, is estimated at 7,231,160,000; add to this number those exported, and those necessary for reproduction, and it will result that 7,380,925,000 eggs were laid in France during the year 1835.'

From the Report of the Committee of Supervision, at the late Fowl Show in Boston, (November, 1849,) published in the *Cultivator*, we gather the following statistics, which will give the reader some idea of the extent and importance of the "egg traffic" in this country —

and which was made up, undoubtedly, from reliable authority. The committee state that—

“The article of poultry is readily converted into money, and is probably quite as readily prepared for market as any other article of stock produced on the farm. The expense of feeding the best stock is no more than would be the expense of feeding and rearing the poorest dung-hill fowl, while the return shows a heavy balance in favor of the heavy-bodied and fine-meated fowl, with little offal.

“The amount of sales of poultry at the Quincy Market, Boston, for the year 1848, was six hundred and seventy-four thousand four hundred and twenty-three dollars. The average sales of one dealer alone amounted to twelve hundred dollars per week, for the whole year. The amount of sales for the whole city of Boston, for the same year, (so far as obtained,) was over one million of dollars.

“The amount of sales of eggs in and around the Quincy Market, for 1848, was one million one hundred and twenty-nine thousand seven hundred and thirty-five dozen, which, at eighteen cents per dozen, (the lowest price paid, eleven and a half cents, and the highest thirty cents per dozen, as proved by the average purchases of one of the largest dealer's books,) makes the amount paid for eggs to be two hundred and three thousand three hundred and fifty-two dollars and thirty cents. And from information already obtained from other egg merchants, in the same city, the whole amount of sales will not fall much, if any, short of a million of dollars, for 1848.

“The average consumption of eggs at three of the hotels was more than two hundred dozen each day, for the year 1848.

“The value of eggs brought from the Penobscot and Kennebec rivers, during the running season of the steam-boats plying between Boston and those two rivers, was more than three hundred and fifty thousand dollars for that season.

“In one day, from Cincinnati, Ohio, it is stated in one of the public journals, there were shipped five hundred

barrels, containing forty-seven thousand dozen of eggs. One dealer, in the egg trade, at Philadelphia, sends to the New York market daily nearly one hundred barrels of eggs. It is estimated, from satisfactory returns, that the city of New York alone expends nearly a million and a half of dollars in the purchase of eggs.

“By reference to the agricultural statistics of the United States, published in 1840, it will be seen that the value of poultry in the state of New York was two million three hundred and seventy-three thousand and twenty-nine dollars, which was more than the value of its sheep, the entire value of its neat cattle, and nearly five times the value of its horses and mules.”

The same report makes up the valuation of poultry in the United States, in round numbers, as follows; namely:—

<i>States.</i>	<i>Value in dollars.</i>	<i>States.</i>	<i>Value in dollars.</i>
Maine,	123,171	Ohio,	734,931
New Hampshire,	97,862	Kentucky,	536,439
Vermont,	176,437	Tennessee,	581,531
Massachusetts,	540,295	Louisiana,	273,314
Rhode Island,	61,492	Mississippi,	369,481
Connecticut,	176,659	Alabama,	829,220
New York,	2,373,029	Missouri,	230,283
New Jersey,	412,487	Indiana,	393,228
Pennsylvania,	1,033,172	Illinois,	330,968
Delaware,	47,465	Michigan,	82,730
Maryland,	219,159	Arkansas,	93,549
Virginia,	752,467	Florida,	61,007
North Carolina,	544,125	Wisconsin,	16,167
South Carolina,	590,594	Iowa,	17,101
Georgia,	473,158	District of Columbia,	3,092
Total,			\$12,176,170.

“It is probable that, since 1840, the value of poultry has doubled.

“In Bixio’s Journal of Practical Agriculture and Gardening for April, 1848, it is estimated that the whole valuation of eggs consumed and exported in France will amount to fifty-seven millions of dollars. The value of eggs shipped from Dublin to Liverpool and London was more than five millions of dollars, for the year 1848. France, in 1835, had seventy-three millions of dollars invested in poultry. England, in 1840, had fifty millions

of dollars invested in poultry. Since that time, the numbers have, of course, increased."

Thus it will be seen that the matter of poultry-raising is no inconsiderable one in this country; and we doubt if the farmers of New England have hitherto realized how great a source of trade and profit it may be made, with the right sort of attention and care.

At the exhibition of poultry which took place in Boston last Fall, a great number of fine birds (and many very indifferent specimens) were shown. The contributors to that show, however, did nobly; and it was a matter of surprise to all who attended the Public Garden, in November, that such an immense variety, and such beautiful samples of the feathered tribe, had been bred in New England.

The prices obtained for good specimens of fowls at that time, and since the exhibition, have been extraordinary. The "fowl fever" has attacked all classes, from the highest to the humblest; and everybody is now aiming to excel his neighbor, for the *next* annual exhibition. This competition is laudable, and meantime (if they never have before) the fowls in New England will find themselves — at least for a time — well cared for.

CHAPTER II.

WE shall devote as brief a space as may be to the dry details of the *origin* of the domestic fowl. Little is actually known on this point that can be set down as matter of *fact*; although most authors who write on this subject, indulge in speculations regarding the exact time when "roosters first began to crow." We deem this particular point of slight consequence; but the annexed extracts, which we take from the report of the committee already quoted, were prepared by a gentleman who has devoted much time to researches upon the subject, and they contain some interest.

"The order from which the most valuable poultry is derived is that known to naturalists as *Gallina*, or gal-

linaceous birds. The genus of these first in order is that known as Penelope, or Guan, of which there is not much to be said as regards their fitness for the poultry-yard, as I know of but one instance in which one has been brought to this country. I brought a female specimen of crested Guan with me, on my return from Yucatan, which did not live a year after its arrival. This bird is the size of a small turkey, weighing, when full grown, seven or eight pounds; the meat is very good. They live principally on the leaves of trees, and such like food, greedily eating grass, clover, &c.; in short, almost any green herbage, and also fruits of various kinds. They are not difficult to domesticate in their native countries, but, I think, could hardly be made to survive our cold winters.

“The next genus would be that of *Crax* or *Curassow*, known here as the Mexican pheasant. There are a number of species of this genus, of which several are frequently domesticated in their native country. I brought with me three different species to this country, viz., one *Crax rubra*, one *Crax alector*, and one *Crax globicera*. The *Crax alector* was killed by a dog, a few days after we arrived; the other two lived until winter, when, in order to save myself the trouble of keeping, I lent them to a travelling menagerie, and they soon died, — owing, probably, to neglect. These birds are larger and more hardy than those of the previously mentioned genus. Their meat is very good, and they feed on much the same food as the Guans. They might, perhaps, with care, be kept in this country, but of this I do not feel very sanguine.

“The next genus which affords anything likely to be of value in the poultry-yard is that of *Pavo* or peacock. There are three known species belonging to this genus, of which the *P. cristatus* is the one generally known. This bird used to be highly valued for the table, and I see no reason why it should not be again.

“The next genus likely to afford valuable poultry is one closely allied to the preceding, viz., that of *Polyplectron*. All the species of this genus, though much smaller than the peacock, quite rival them in brilliancy

of plumage. Some species, particularly *P. bicalcaratum* and *P. thibetanum*, are frequently domesticated in their native country, (India,) and I think that they might be easily introduced here, as they are found mostly in mountainous countries, where the climate is quite cold at some seasons of the year. They have two, and sometimes three spurs on each leg, whence their name. Next comes the genus *Phasianus*, or pheasants. These birds are more valuable in a wild state in parks and preserves, on account of their beauty, and the sport afforded in shooting them, than as mere poultry. Our winters, however, are too cold for them.

“Next to this comes the most valuable genus to the poulterer of any yet mentioned, that of *Gallus*, or cock. Our present domestic varieties are derived principally from the *G. bankiva*; but some of the larger varieties probably come from *G. giganteus*, and *G. æneus*, and perhaps from some of the other large species. The native country of this genus is India and its islands. In the same country is also found another genus, some species of which are frequently domesticated by the natives. It is that of *Gallophasis*, *cock-pheasants*, which could undoubtedly be introduced here. The most common species are *G. ignitus*, or *fire-backed pheasant*, and *G. erythroptalmus*, or red-eyed pheasant.

“The next genus in value, as well as order, is that of *Meleagris*, or turkeys. There are but two species, however, belonging to this genus, one of which is found in the north, and the other in Central America. *M. gallopavo* is the common North American species, which has been spread all over the world. The other species, *M. ocillata*, was almost unknown, until within a few years. It is much more beautiful than the common turkey, and also much more delicate and difficult to rear; so that I doubt whether they can be successfully domesticated in this country, though they are not uncommon in a domestic state in Yucatan. I started from the port of Sisal with three living specimens, which were unfortunately lost overboard in the Gulf of Mexico.

“I understand that the Earl of Derby had some at

Knowsley Park, but I doubt whether they are still living.

“Next in order is the genus *Numida*, or Guinea fowl, of which there are five known species, all natives of Africa; only one species is domesticated, viz., *Numidia meleagris*, or common Guinea fowl.

“From the order Columbæ are derived some species of considerable importance to the poulterer. All the principal varieties of pigeons come from the genus *Columba*, species *livia*, or rock-pigeon of Europe, which, in the wild state, breed in the sides of rocky islands, as the Faroe Islands, and the rock of Gibraltar. This habit of building in caves fits them particularly for our dove-cots. Many other wild species of this order might doubtless be domesticated.

“The second genus is that of *Anser*, or goose. There are eight known species belonging to this genus, of which two, the snow and the white-fronted goose, are common to Europe and America, and five are common to Europe and Asia.

“The third genus of this order is that of *Bernicla*, or Barnacle goose. The most important species of this genus is *Bernicla canadensis*, or our common wild or Canada goose. Nearly all the species of this genus might be domesticated. Our common Brant, *B. brenta*, is frequently found in a domestic state along the sea-coast of Massachusetts.

“The fourth genus likely to afford poultry is that of *Aix*. There are but two species belonging to this genus, namely, *A. sponsa*, our summer or wood duck, and *A. galericulata*, the Mandarin duck of China, both of which are occasionally domesticated, and are chiefly valuable as ornaments to pleasure-grounds, on account of their brilliant plumage.

“The fifth, and most important genus of this order, is that of *Anas*, or ducks proper. The common tame duck is derived from *A. boschas*, or Mallard, a species common to Europe and North America, which is occasionally crossed with *A. obscura*, our common black or dusky duck, and with *A. moschata*, the Muscovy duck.

This last belongs more properly to a different genus, that of *Cairina*, and is of considerable value in the poultry-yard."

Richardson says:—"The domestic cock appears to have been known to man from the very earliest period. Of his real origin little appears to be known, and the period or manner of his first introduction into Greece, or southern Europe, is involved in the greatest obscurity. The cock has certainly ever held a prominent position among birds; he occupied a conspicuous place at the shows of the Greeks and Romans, in the days of old; his effigy was engraved, and is still to be seen, upon many of their medals and coins; and he has been expressly dedicated to several of their favorite deities—as Apollo, Mercury, Mars, and *Æsculapius*. The wisest heathen that ever lived—the profoundest philosopher that ever flourished, unaided by the light of Christianity—the great *SOCRATES*—forgot himself in his last moments, and suffered the mire of superstition to tarnish the glorious wreath that wisdom had hung upon his brow, by directing a *cock* to be sacrificed to *Æsculapius*.

"At a Roman banquet, this bird formed a principal dish, and poultry were even then carefully reared and fattened, as well as *crammed*. Nor was the pugnacious disposition of the cock even then unknown, or lost sight of, as a means of amusing man; for cock-fighting was seriously entertained and encouraged as at once a religious and a political ceremony. The isles of Rhodes and Delos are said to have furnished the fattest birds for the table, as well as the most enduring and unflinching champions of the ancient cock-pit.

"It has been very generally supposed, and most commonly asserted, that the domestic cock owes his origin to the Jungle fowl of India. I hold that he does not—that he, in fact, differs as much from that bird as one fowl can well differ from another. Read, however, the following description of the Jungle fowl, and find, if you can, its counterpart among our domestic stock:—

"It is about one third less than our common dunghill cock, being—the comb not included in the measure-

ment — about twelve or fourteen inches in height. The comb is indented, and the wattles certainly bear some slight resemblance to those of our common cock; but the naked parts of the head and throat are much more considerable. The feathers of the head and neck are longest on the lowest parts, and differ both in structure and aspect from those of other cocks, whether wild or tame. The Jungle hen is smaller than the cock, has neither comb nor wattles, and the throat is *entirely covered with feathers*—a very remarkable distinction from our domestic hens. The space round the eyes is naked, and of a reddish color; the under parrs are furnished with plumage, similar to that of the same parts of the cock; but, in addition to these peculiarities, the Jungle cock possesses still another, which, however, the hen does not share with him — namely, the mid-rib and stem of a portion of the feathers is considerably expanded, forming a white stripe along the whole feather, as far as the tip, where it expands, becomes broader, and forms a gristly plate of a rounded form, whitish, thin, and highly polished; this gristly substance is still more remarkable on the wing-feathers than on any other part, the tip, indeed, of the wing-feathers, forming a less brilliant plate, solid as horn, and as firm and unyielding to the touch. These plates are of a deep red color, and by their union form a plate of red maroon, which looks as if it were varnished. There are, however, two wild cocks in which we find sufficient points of resemblance to our domestic varieties to answer the purpose of terminating our somewhat unsatisfactory search.

“I allude to the gigantic bird of St. Jago and Sumatra, and to the diminutive denizen of the wilds of Java. The reasons for supposing these two birds to be the veritable originals of our domestic poultry may be summed up briefly thus:—

“I. — The close resemblance subsisting between their females and our domestic hens.

“II. — The size of our domestic cock being intermediate between the two, and alternating in degree, some-

times inclining towards the one, and sometimes towards the other.

“ III. — We are led to this conclusion by our observations relative to the nature of their feathers, and their general aspect, the form and mode of distribution of their barbs being the same as in our domestic fowls.

“ IV. — In these two birds do we alone find the females provided with a crest and small wattles, characteristics not to be met with in any other known wild species. You will meet with these characteristics in the highly-bred Spanish fowl.

“ Notwithstanding these analogies, however, domestication has so changed the form of the body, and of its fleshy appendages, that we might now find it rather a difficult task to refer each modern individual variety to its primitive stock; we must, in order to understand fully the causes that produce this difficulty, recollect the constant and frequently careless crossing one bird with another, and the very frequently *promiscuous* intercourse that takes place in a state of domesticity, taking, likewise, into consideration, changes of climate, variety of treatment, and numerous other causes.

“ To the more diminutive Bankiva cock we are indebted for the smaller varieties, improperly designated Bantams, and the so-called Turkish fowl. By crossing, peculiarities of climate, management, &c., have been produced from these —

“ I. — The cock with small crest and wattles; furnished, also, with a tuft of feathers, which some writers have supposed to be produced by the juices that ordinarily go to furnish nourishment for the comb taking another form, and developing themselves in the production of the tuft. These approximate most nearly to the original Sumatra stock, and we may recognise their domestic representative in the Hamburgh and Polish breeds.

“ II. — The ordinary village cock, provided with comb and wattles, has no crest or tuft of feathers; this seems the intermediate variety.

“ III. — Diminutive cocks, ordinarily known as Ban-

tans, with, in some varieties, the tarsi and toes covered with feathers; but this is not invariably the case."

Thus much for the opinions of those who are well read upon the *origin* of the domestic fowl. Whether the birds which are bred so generally and so generously around us at this day, have any affinity or kin to the *original* Bankiva, the St. Jago, the Chittagong, the Great Malay, or other noted Eastern fowls, it matters very little to our breeders. That they were first known in Asia and Persia, is pretty well established; but the blood of the originals, by this time, (we opine,) circulates but sparingly in our American fowls! With these remarks, we turn more particularly to a description of the specimens which surround us.

CHAPTER III.

SPECIES OF DOMESTIC FOWLS.

WE would again state, in this place, that several of the beautiful portraits which follow, are original — drawn from life — and depict the birds which we shall now describe, just as they may be seen at the poultry-houses of the proprietors. The first, in size and consideration, with us, is the

CHITTAGONG FOWL.

This magnificent bird is a native of the east, and is described by Richardson as standing high upon the leg, is long-necked, serpent-headed, and is in color usually a dark brown, streaked with yellow, sometimes, however, white; his form and appearance are grand and striking in the extreme, and he is no small embellishment to the poultry-yard. A species of this fowl is also frequently called the "Great Malay."

"The Malay fowl," adds Mr. R., "which were originally brought into England, were not such birds as I could recommend to the notice of the breeder, their size possessing too much offal, as neck, legs and thighs.

Another variety has been since introduced, which is well worthy of our attention. As a cross, this fowl has, indeed, proved a most valuable addition to our poultry-yard, the cross-breed possessing all the hardiness of our native domestic fowl, with the gigantic size of the foreign stock. Since the introduction of this variety, the export trade in poultry, both living and dead, has considerably increased; indeed, without introduction of fresh blood, as with all breeding stock that are bred *in and in*, fowl will become puny and degenerate."

The fowl thus alluded to has been imported, within the last two or three years, into Pennsylvania, and ranks at the head of the list, in that region, for all the good qualities desirable in a domestic bird. The color is a streaked *grey*, rather than otherwise, and the portraits which we here present are fine samples of this great stock. They are designated as the

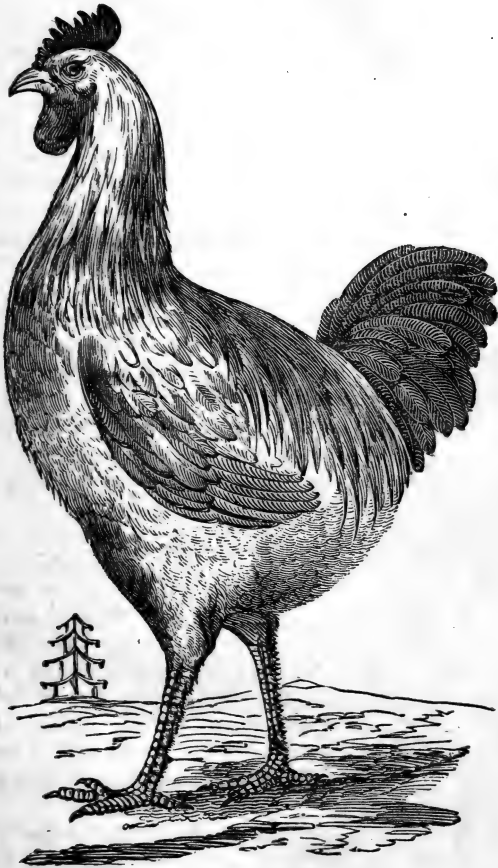
GREY CHITTAGONG FOWL.

Our engravings are likenesses of a crower and hen (pullet) in possession of Geo. P. Burnham, Esq., of Roxbury, Mass. These fine fowls are thus described, in a late number of the *Massachusetts Ploughman*.

"*Editor of Mass. Ploughman*, — Sir: I send you, this week, a likeness of two fowls — a cockerel and pullet — of the famous *Chittagong* breed. I will explain the character of those *I* have, and from which the above picture was designed, premising that the drawing is faithful to life.

"These Chittagongs are from the imported stock of Asa Rugg, Esq., of Pennsylvania, who, in his letters to me, makes the following statements in relation to the specimens above portrayed, and upon this admirable breed of domestic fowls generally. He says:—

"The samples of Chittagongs I send you have the largest blood in them of any variety of fowl with which I am acquainted.' The above pair 'were hatched on the 4th of June last, and are the *best* specimens I ever saw, here or elsewhere, for their age. I had determined under no circumstances to part with them, but will do



GREY CHITTAGONG COCK.

so, if you like my price. They are not yet six months old. The rooster weighs, this day, (Nov. 26,) *eight and a half pounds*, strong; the pullet, *seven and three quarter pounds*. They are of a greyish color, both marked in every respect alike, with the single exception, that while the pullet is rather heavily feathered on the legs, the cockerel shows but few feathers below the thigh.

“The color of the leg is a reddish white; and these being a Southern fowl, are, of course, allied to the “Cochin China” variety, or breed. The pullets will grow much larger, and are now about ready to lay, I judge. These fowls are considerably larger than any Cochin Chinas I have ever seen. This variety of Chittagong comes to maturity earlier than any of the large species, and our breeders prefer them, generally, for both laying and other practical qualities. This pair of fowls, when fully grown, will weigh you, at the least, *twenty-two pounds*.

“I have a cockerel fifteen months old, of this variety, and a hen about the same age, (or a trifle older,) which, if alive next March, and cared for properly, meantime, I am certain will weigh twenty-two pounds. . . . I have a rooster of this species, also, seventeen months old, and a hen about three years of age, which, at the commencement of the laying season, next spring, I am sure will weigh *twenty-five pounds*! This is somewhat above the average, however. . . . The skin and meat of these fowls is delicately *white*; which is different, you observe, from the yellow-legged and light yellow-plumed *Great Malay* fowls, in the vicinity of New York; and which weigh, so far as I can judge from observation, about sixteen to eighteen pounds per pair, at full maturity.’

“Such is the description furnished me by the importer of my specimens of Chittagongs, who is one of the best fowl-breeders in America.

‘The Chittagong is a very superior bird, showy in plumage, courageous, and exceedingly hardy. The color of mine is grey, generally, interspersed with lightish yellow and white feathers, upon the pullets. The

rooster is grey body, the wings, hackles, back and rump feathers a silvery yellow, tinted with stray light brown and white; the tail and breast are nearly black.

“The legs of this fowl are of a reddish flesh-color, the meat is delicately white, the combs large and single, wattles very full, wings good size. The legs are more or less feathered, the model is graceful, carriage proud and easy, action prompt and determined. The parents of the above birds weigh, when in good condition, nearly *twenty-five pounds the pair*. The owner of them, I learn, has refused twenty dollars for the mother, which, at this time, weighs nearly twelve pounds, alone! They do not reach maturity till full two years old; and, as they command a very high price in the market, (and always have,) being the *very* best fowl known for capons, they are warranted, when sold by an honorable breeder, to weigh, at maturity, twenty pounds per pair. Prime specimens are now worth ten dollars the pair. They have been sold, this season, for fifteen to twenty dollars the pair. I know of no one, however, who has this breed for sale, at this time.

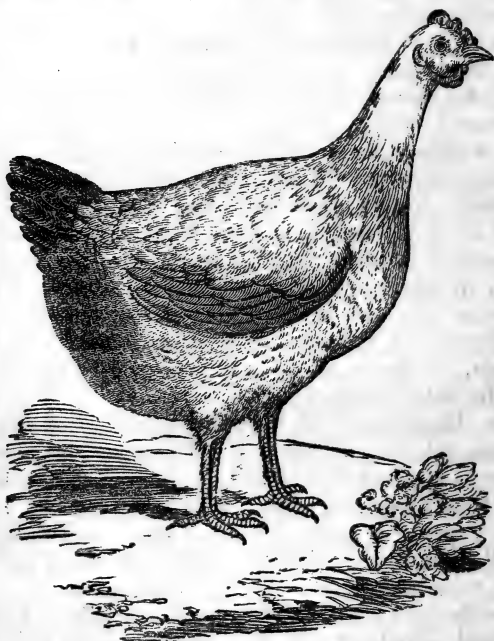
“Dr. Bennett, of Plymouth, has a few of them for breeding, which are very fine. For their age, however, the above specimens of Chittagongs are the largest and finest I ever yet met with. I have known the ‘Great Malay’ species a good while, and have seen them near New York and around Philadelphia, where, at twelve to fifteen months old, they would draw fourteen to sixteen pounds the pair; but I never yet saw a pair of fowls, of *any* breed, which, at less than seven months old, would weigh nineteen pounds—save those which are delineated in the above engraving.

“If any of your many readers have such specimens, (or better,) I shall be glad to ride a hundred miles, any week, to look at them. The two fowls above shown were hatched on the fourth day of June, 1849, and are consequently seven months old, this present week. These are specimens of my breeding stock, and I weighed them, on Saturday last, in presence of a member of the Committee of the late fowl show. The rooster draws

ten and a half pounds, the pullet weighs eight and a half pounds, strong. This being over *nineteen pounds* for a pair of last summer's chickens, I think I may safely ask, 'Can it be beat?'

"Yours, truly,
"Roxbury, Mass., Jan. 7, 1850."

G. P. B.



GREY CHITTAGONG HEN.

The pullet above portrayed commenced laying on the 13th day of January, and, in twenty-three days, laid seventeen eggs. These eggs were very large, and two broods of chickens are already in Mr. Burnham's yards, hatched from them. They are an exceedingly hardy fowl, and as their immense weight shows, come very early to maturity.

For a cross, (upon the common barn-yard fowl,) the

Chittagong is, without question, one of the best ever imported into this country. They are a beautiful ornament to the poultry-yard, and may be set down as *the largest* breed known in America at this day.

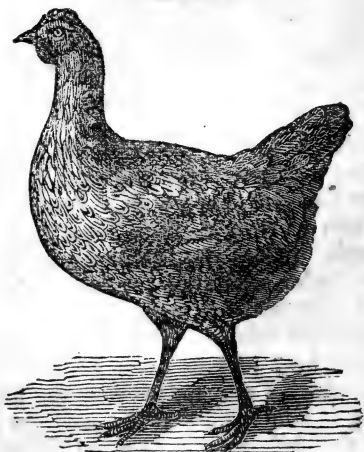
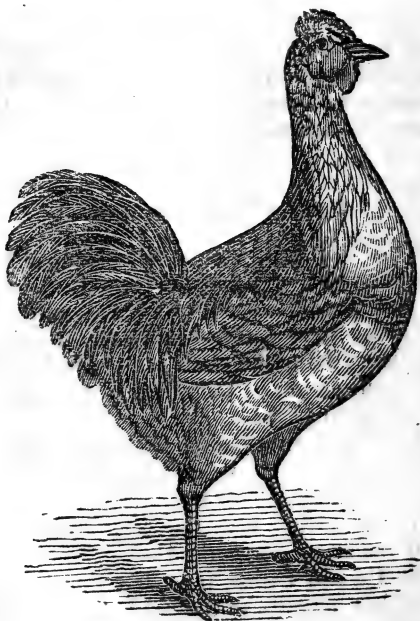
THE COCHIN CHINA FOWL.

The bird which next claims attention, is the famed *Cochin China* fowl. Numerous specimens were contributed to the late exhibition, which were called "Cochin Chinas," but we have doubted, hitherto, whether any of this magnificent breed, in their purity, had ever crossed the water to our shores. Very little seems to be known, actually, in regard to them.

Richardson says, in relation to this species, that they are "a gigantic bird, only recently introduced into Great Britain, and it is to that royal patroness of poultry fanciers, the nature-loving Victoria, that we owe its addition to our stock of domestic fowls. Two fine specimens of the Cochin China fowl, but rather aged, were sent over by her Majesty to the cattle show of the Royal Dublin Society, April, 1846, and were subsequently presented to the then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Heytesbury. The breed have since become comparatively well known, and are now kept by several private persons and breeders.

"This variety of fowl so far surpasses, both in size and power, all that we have ever yet seen in the shape of poultry, as to have led many persons not conversant with zoology, on first viewing them, to refer them to the family of Bustards. They are, however, genuine poultry. Their general color is rich, glossy brown, deep bay; the comb is of a medium size, serrated, but not deeply so, and the wattles are double. Besides their gigantic size, however, these fowl possess other distinctive characteristics, among which I may mention, as the most striking, that the wing is jointed so that the posterior half can, at pleasure, be doubled up, and brought forward between the anterior half and the body. The birds can do this

THE POULTRY BREEDER.



ROYAL COCHIN CHINA FOWLS.

at pleasure, and the appearance the manœuvre imparts to their form has procured for them the title of 'ostrich fowl.' The flesh is white and delicate. The eggs laid by the hen of this variety are large, of a chocolate color, and possess a very delicate flavor. They are very prolific, frequently laying two, and occasionally three eggs on the same day, and within a few moments of each other. An anonymous writer in the *Gardeners' Chronicle* calls this statement of Mr. Richardson in question. He refers, as his authorities, to the Right Honorable Mr. Shaw, the Recorder of Dublin, to her Majesty's poultry-keeper, Mr. Walters, and to Mr. Nolan, of Dublin. One of the hens, 'Bessy,' exhibited by her Majesty, laid 94 eggs in 103 days."

On the preceding page, we present portraits of a pair of "*Royal Cochinchina Fowls*," imported by Geo. P. Burnham, Esq., of Roxbury, Mass., in January, 1850. This drawing was prepared expressly for our work, and is a fine delineation. The importation of Mr. Burnham consists of six fowls — two cocks and four pullets — and they are really splendid birds. Two of the pullets commenced laying in eighteen days after their arrival here, and the whole now promise very finely.

The color and general characteristics of Mr. B.'s specimens compare with those of the best *Shanghaes* to be seen in this vicinity. The roosters are finely plumed, erect, noble fellows, and we should think would make very large birds. They are all young, being last fall chickens.

The pullets are a yellowish brown, the ends of the feathers being tipped with black. They are deep-chested, full-bodied, high on the leg, proud birds, and show evident signs of having been well bred. In the *American Union* of Feb. 2d, 1850, we find the following description, given by the editor, who imported these fowls: —

"By the steamer 'Niagara,' which arrived at this port last Saturday, we received from J. Joseph Nolan, Esq., of Dublin, a few pairs of real *Cochinchina fowls*. These specimens are young birds, comparatively, but

they possess all the points desirable in the choicest domestic fowls.

“ They have suffered very badly from the confinement on the passage across the Atlantic, but have already improved since their arrival. The color of the pullets is yellowish brown; the roosters, red and brown. They stand high upon the leg, their frames are very large, the model is handsome, and they attain to a great weight at maturity. The weight of the pullets is now very satisfactory, and the crowsers promise to reach an enormous size when fully grown.

“ It is stated that pairs of these fowls have reached twenty-two to twenty-four pounds, in England. This is very heavy, and, we should judge, above the average. They are an unexceptionable fowl, however, and now rank among the favorites, for size, laying qualities, and easy keeping. We have never seen any of this variety, in New England, exactly like this importation — except in *color* — although the best specimens around us are very similar, as regards the general characteristics.

“ Those we have imported, when in condition, will weigh seventeen to eighteen pounds per pair, at their present age. They were hatched in July and August last. Their bodies are full, the forms symmetrical, the head and neck are handsomely modeled, and they bear a resemblance to the best “Shanghaes” we have here, with the exception of the tail, which is much longer than the others. The pullets are *not* feathered upon the legs; the roosters very slightly. These birds have been much admired, and we have no doubt they will prove fine.

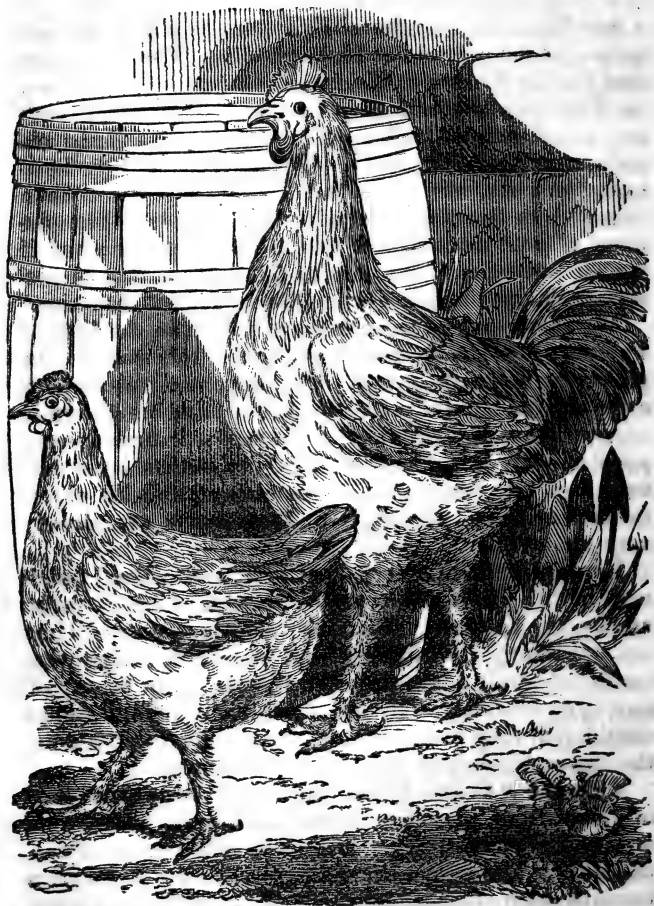
“ How the Cochin Chinas are bred in England, we do not know. We should say, from observation, however — and from the apparent character and habits of those we have procured — that there is a strong tincture of genuine Eastern blood in them. They are very active, proud, and prompt, and, if we do not mistake, *our* importation have brought over with them all the points incident to good and careful breeding. They are even-tempered (among our strange fowls) as one might wish.

"They were bred by J. Joseph Nolan, Esq., and are said to be among the best ever sent from England. At a late English Agricultural Fair, this stock took the premium, at the side of her Majesty, Queen Victoria's *original* Cochin Chinas. We weighed a pair of our pullets on Thursday last, and found them to draw six pounds and a half each; this weight, even for six months old pullets, is very handsome. They should weigh, however, (and *did*, the day before they started upon their voyage,) an average of nearly eight pounds. The plumage of both roosters and pullets is very pretty; and if we do not mistake our calculation, we are now in possession of the choicest Cochin China stock in America."

We saw a pair of these fowls weighed, on the 14th of February; the cock drew eight and a half pounds, the pullet seven pounds, strong. The progeny of this importation will undoubtedly prove very fine, and we entertain no doubt that *this* Cochin China stock will become very popular. Mr B. informs us that the pullets have laid very regularly, since the commencement, and his orders for both eggs and chicks, from these fowls, are already very numerous.

For laying qualities, excellent flesh, and general quietness of disposition, the *true* "Cochin China" ranks among the foremost, according to all accounts. They are apparently a hardy bird, and we should judge were excellently well adapted to our climate. For beauty of model, at maturity, they are proverbial; and, all things considered, they rank, perhaps, deservedly high among the choicest breeds of fowls ever yet known.

That the "*Cochin China*" and the "*Shanghae*" fowl originate from the same country and stock, we have no question. They are very like each other, generally — and all the best specimens we have yet seen in America resemble each other strongly. The Cochin Chinas are *not* feathered upon the leg; the Shanghaes are *heavily* feathered, uniformly. Some rare specimens of both these varieties will grace the next Fowl Exhibition in Boston.



SHANGHAE FOWLS,
OF THE MARSH, FORBES, OR JELLETT VARIETIES; DRAWN FROM LIFE.
Originals in possession of Geo. P. Burnham, Roxbury, Mass.

THE SHANGHAE FOWL.

WE now come to a breed (or variety) which has got to be pretty well known throughout New England, and which is deservedly esteemed as a superior bird in every particular — whether we speak of size, color, prolific properties, the character of flesh, or any other attribute belonging to, or required by, the title of a really *good* domestic fowl.

Among the very choicest specimens we have ever seen of the "*Shanghae*" fowl, (or *Shanghai*, as some pronounce it,) the Marsh and Parsons stock carries away the palm. The Forbes stock is uneven, comparatively, and the Jellett importation are not sufficiently known, yet, to decide upon; the latter are a very beautiful bird, however, and we should say (from seeing a few of them) that they will prove very superior, in time.

Dr. Bennett, and Mr. Drew, of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Messrs. Alden and Marsh, of Dedham, and West Roxbury, and Mr. Burnham, of Roxbury, have some beautiful samples of this breed. From the latter gentleman, we obtained our portraits, which were thus described in the *Ploughman* in January, 1850. This pair were on exhibition at the fowl show, in November. The writer says: —

"The variety of domestic fowl which the above engraving represents, is, in my estimation, one of the *very best* known in America at the present time, all things considered. The rooster and pullet above delineated show a pair selected from the breeding stock of G. P. Burnham, Roxbury, Massachusetts, and the artist has produced a life-like representation of them. The above pair are from a brood hatched in early May last; the crower will now weigh over $8\frac{1}{2}$ lbs., the pullet $6\frac{1}{2}$. They are out of the famous Forbes importation of Shanghae fowls.

"I am confident that these fowls are confounded with the '*Cochin Chinas*;' and I think that several persons who have this same stock now call it by *that* name. We have not had this variety in America long enough,

nor is the distinction sufficiently well known, I imagine, generally, to determine between the real Shanghae and the Cochin Chinas we have here, and more commonly known by this last name. I make the distinction on the ground that *all* my imported Shanghaes (and I have three different varieties, from different sources) are *heavily feathered upon the legs*.

“My ‘Cochin China’ fowls — which I consider possess all the good points that any specimens, classed under that name, do — have *no* feathers on the legs. The Shanghaes come from the mountains in the extreme *north* of China, fifteen hundred miles up the coast. The Cochin China fowl originates in the province of that name, lying in the extreme *south* of China. Now it seems to me that Nature may have provided the Shanghae fowl with feathers upon the legs and feet, as a protection, comparatively; for the country they inhabit is much colder than the other, and *vice versa*.

“I may be in error, but such is my opinion, based upon the fact that wherever I have found fowls imported directly from either the north or the south, the above-named distinction actually exists — though many farmers and poulterers declare, spite of ‘feathers or no feathers,’ that their fowls are ‘Cochin Chinas’ or ‘Shanghaes’ — just as they please. In some instances, I find that a decision on this point depends entirely upon which particular kind *you want to buy!*

“One thing, however, is pretty well established, — the longer these fowls are bred as they have been in this climate, the less feathers will appear upon the legs, from time to time. That is to say, — the more we breed them in America, the less *uniformity* in this respect is apparent. A brood of chickens will be hatched, for instance, during the second or third season, from the original importation, and one half will come heavily feathered, one fourth moderately, and the rest but slightly feathered; and, that this distinctive mark may or may not eventually disappear here entirely, I do not pretend to decide. If, however, the breeding is *kept up*, by means of an occasional fresh importation — say once in three or four

years — I imagine that the feature alluded to will *always* appear upon the Shanghaes; and I also believe that where it shows itself upon the Cochin Chinas, there is an evident *cross* between the two — for the best specimens of the latter known (the Queen's variety, for instance) are entirely destitute of feathers on the legs. I am thus explicit, because I really think we have confounded the two varieties, in our New England breeding. As I have already remarked, however, I may be wrong.

“I have also the Yellow Shanghaes, out of the Baylies importation, and the Brown Shanghaes, out of the Jellett importation. The annexed drawing gives a correct idea of the model, plumage, comparative size, and general carriage, of all these birds — than which, as I have already remarked, I think there are none better in America, for goodness of disposition, for laying properties, for table use, or for early maturity. The roosters, when fully grown, will stand upright, as shown in the engraving — the head about on a line with the height of a flour barrel.

“The Shanghaes usually lay the first year. I have now two broods of Shanghae chickens from eggs laid by pullets hatched last spring; and very fine ones they are, even at this cold season. They are a very quiet fowl, and easily kept. They grow to a large size; the parents of the above pair, at maturity, weighing over 18 lbs. As will be observed in the engraving, this variety is heavily feathered upon the legs.

“The plumage varies from a light rich yellow to a reddish brown. The tail is short, comparatively; the body is well formed; the wings small, and high up on the side; the gait proud and showy; the legs, when young, rather lengthy for beauty; the head full sized; comb single, straight and serrated, and the feathers rather fine and *downy*, than otherwise. There is very little disposition among them to quarrel; the hens are excellent nurses, the roosters good ‘protectors,’ and I have thus far found them hardy and healthy, generally.

“There are but very few, if any, *bona fide* Shanghae fowls now for sale, in this region. Scores and hundreds

of Shanghaes (so called) are offered every week; but this breed is altogether too rare, and the real 'Simon pure' will readily bring too high a price, at private sale, for these birds to be very common, at this time. The coming year, there will be more of them; and, to the farmer, the poulterer, the fancier, or the breeder, I consider this fowl (in its purity) to be one of the most economical and most profitable of all the known *large* breeds.

"I have had repeated and urgent applications for them this fall, but have no more to part with, at present. In the spring, I shall have some chickens to spare. They are an unexceptionable bird in all respects, and must become a great favorite, I think, hereafter, among our poulterers. G. P. B.

"*Roxbury, Mass.*"

One of the earliest importations of *Shanghaes* was that of the Rev. Mr. Marsh, of West Roxbury, Mass.; and which consisted of a cock, a hen, and two or three pullets. The color of the crower is a rich golden brown, (or yellow,) the color of the hens varying from a light to a greyish brown; one of the latter is a very dark, or blackish brown. The chickens from this stock are very large, uniform in character, and are easily recognized anywhere, by those acquainted with the parent stock, which has now been in this country some three years, we learn.

The *Forbes* stock is of a lighter plumage, generally, and more feathery; though the birds *appear* as large as any of this class, to the eye, (from the thickness and length of their coats,) they will not compare favorably in *weight*, at the same age, either with the Parsons or the Marsh "*Shanghaes*." The latter, at maturity, will draw eight pounds each, (hens,) and eleven to twelve pounds each, (roosters,) on the average, if well cared for.

The laying qualities of the *Shanghaes* are second to none, and fully equal, we imagine, even the lauded Cochin Chinas. We have known pullets of the Marsh and Parsons stock to lay 33 eggs in 36 days; and have

seen these pullets, which have been watched on the nest twenty-four or twenty-five days, leaving an egg behind them regularly, during this period, day after day. They are good nurses, good feeders, and merit all the good name which (in their *purity*) they now enjoy in this vicinity.

THE PLYMOUTH ROCK FOWL.

THIS bird is a cross of some two or three kinds of fowls, and the few specimens we have seen show them to be a very beautiful bird. Whether they will answer the expectations of their friends, we cannot say; but we incline to the opinion that they are only a *variety*, made up from stock which will again produce the same (or a similar) progeny, but which progeny will scarcely produce its like, for continued generations. They were bred by Dr. J. C. Bennett, originally, of Plymouth, and were thus described in the *Boston Cultivator* in August, 1849:—

“I have given this name to a very extra breed of fowls, which I produced by crossing a cockerel of Baylies’ importation of Cochin China, with a hen, a cross between the Fawn-colored Dorking, the Great Malay, and the Wild Indian. Her weight is six pounds and seven ounces. The *Plymouth Rock fowl*, then, is, in reality, one half Cochin China, one fourth Fawn-colored Dorking, one eighth Great Malay, and one eighth Wild Indian; having five primitive bloods, Shanghae, Malay, Game, Turkish, and Indian, traceable by referring to the history of those breeds and their crosses respectively. There are several of this breed (the Plymouth Rock) in Plymouth, from my original stock, belonging to Messrs. Perkins, Drew, Harlow, and myself, that are now a little over one year old; the cockerels measure from 32 to 35 inches high, and weigh about ten pounds, and the pullets from six and a half to seven pounds each,—forming, in my opinion, the best cross that has ever been produced.

“The pullets commenced laying when five months old, proving themselves very superior layers. Their eggs are of a medium size, rich, and reddish-yellow in color.

PLYMOUTH ROCK FOWLS.



Their plumage is rich and variegated; the cockerels, usually red or speckled, and the pullets darkish-brown. They are very fine fleshed, and easily fit for the table. Their legs are very large, and usually blue or green, but occasionally yellow or white, generally having five toes upon each foot. Some have their legs feathered, but this is not usual. They have large and single combs and wattles, large dewlaps, rather short tails, and small wings in proportion to their bodies. They are domestic, and not so destructive to gardens as smaller fowls. There is the same uniformity in size and general appearance, at the same age of the chickens, as in those of the pure bloods, or primary races.

“The demand for this breed has exceeded all others during this season, and they have been sent into most of the New England States and Western New York. And all who may hereafter purchase from persons who have been supplied by myself, or either of the gentlemen above-named, may rely on the fowls being genuine, and of pure blood. I never sell to the same individual a cockerel and pullet of the same parentage, so they need not fear that the breed will be deteriorated by ‘close’ breeding; nor do I sell at any price, *for breeders*, any but those of the very first quality. This is the only way in which breeds can be retained in their purity and excellence.”

Another writer, who had some choice specimens, (from which our drawings were made,) communicates the following to the *Massachusetts Ploughman*. These birds were also exhibited at the late fair, by G. P. Burnham, of Roxbury, Mass. The writer says:—

“Herewith I send you a faithful representation of three of my *Plymouth Rock* chickens, drawn from life by F. A. Durivage, and engraved by D. C. Hitchcock, of this city. The annexed picture represents a trio of a brood hatched the middle of April last. The rooster weighs $9\frac{1}{4}$ lbs., the two pullets over 13 lbs., at the writing of this communication.

The stock came from Dr. Bennett, and I am daily more and more pleased with this fine species. I have

the "Plymouth Rocks" at all ages, now, from a few days up to eight months old; and my specimens embrace five or six different broods. The *color* of *all* of them is peculiarly uniform, and I am satisfied that the variety (or breed) is now being well established. The body plumage on the pullets is a rich deep brown, speckled with golden-tipt feathers; the under down is black, (or a deep blue-black,) and the tail is brown, black and gold.

"The legs of the pullets are very dark-colored, and one half of them, or more, are five-toed; but some of them do not come so. The comb is single, and the wattles thin and small. The head and neck are well formed, the legs are shorter than the average of fowls, and the hens are not only deep and broad-chested, but the bodies are proportionally very long, as you will observe in the drawing.

"The roosters are noble birds — among the finest I have ever met with. I have two well-grown crows, very similar in their appearance, carriage, color, size and general points; the annexed is a true and life-like drawing of the male birds, which, for their age, will compare favorably — so far as my experience goes — with *any* known breed of domestic fowl.

"I am satisfied that the Plymouth Rock fowl, carefully bred, will become a most valuable one to the poulterer or the agriculturist; and I believe that a pair of the specimens shown in the accompanying engraving will weigh, at laying-time next spring, full eighteen pounds — perhaps more. I deem this ample, for *size*; and with the other good qualities of these fowls, which I have already tested — for laying, quietness, easy keeping, and general hardiness — I think these must cause them to rank among the very best in our country, eventually.

"The plumage of the roosters is dark red hackles, on neck and rump; the legs are bright yellow, slightly feathered; the body dark red and green, relieved with stray feathers of a golden tint; and the under portion of the body and breast is a rich, deep, glossy blue-black — partaking of the plumage of the Wild Indian fowl, the

original cross. The tail-plumes on the above crower are not grown out, as yet, of course, nor does he yet show any spur; but he is pictured exactly as he is at this time, after his first moult. When in full plumage, the tail-feathers are heavy, and give the male bird not only a much larger proportionate appearance, but very greatly improve his form."

Thus much for the "Plymouth Rock" fowl, — a bird which, with careful management, may eventually prove a very valuable one.

THE DORKING FOWL.

This bird is now well known in America, and is highly esteemed wherever it has been bred *in its purity*. There are so many spurious fowls palmed off upon a credulous and confiding public, however, for "Dorkings," that this fowl has not the best character in the world, in some regions.

Mr. Giles, of Providence, and Dr. Wight, of Dedham, have done much to keep up the reputation and purity of this very fine stock; and if it be carefully bred, there are but few fowls better to be found in this country. It is not a heavy fowl, at best; but they are excellent layers, the best of mothers, their meat is delicate and inviting, they mature early, and are very hardy. The average weight of the Dorking is about six and a half to seven pounds for the cocks, and five to six pounds for the hens, well grown.

The *Dorking* owes its name to its having been chiefly bred in a town of Surrey, Eng., of the same appellation. That the peculiarity of *five* toes, or, in other words, of two hind toes instead of one, is to be regarded as a distinctive character of the breed, is by some writers questioned, and by others wholly denied. For my part, I should say, that whenever this characteristic is absent, a *cross* has been at work.

A writer on "Poultry," in *Rees' Encyclopedia*, is most positive in asserting the possession of five toes by the

Dorking fowl as "all a mistake;" but this person, says Richardson, whoever he may have been, does not appear to have had even a correct idea of the fowl about which he wrote. For instance, he says that the Dorking fowl has a *long* body!—on the contrary, the body of the Dorking fowl is *round, plump* and *short*.

I did not, however, mean to assert that this possession of two hind toes, instead of one, has *never* occurred in any other family of fowls except those bred at Dorking, in Surrey; for Aristotle has mentioned the existence of a similar peculiarity among certain fowl in Greece, and both Collumella and Pliny assert the existence of such, in their time, in Italy; so also does Aldrovand; and these authors lived hundreds of years ago; and, oddly enough, these breeds were remarkable, as are our own Dorking, for being good layers and good sitters.

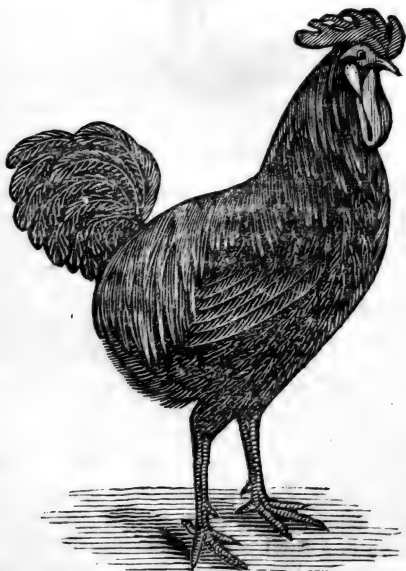
The color of the Dorking is generally pure white, spotted or spangled with black; these colors will sometimes merge into a gray or grizzle. These birds have been long prized, and it is now many years since their superiority over our ordinary domestic varieties was originally discovered and appreciated; they were first noticed, and the variety adopted, by the Cumberland breeders, whence they were soon carried into Lancashire and Westmoreland, and gradually spread over all England. They have not, as yet, become generally known in Ireland, but they are, nevertheless, to be found in many parts of that country. Whether, however, from injudicious treatment, or imperfect feeding, or change of climate, or from whatever cause, it is certain that, when met with far from their native place, they appear greatly to have degenerated from their original superiority of character.

In size, Mowbray says, they rank in the *third* degree in the list of the largest of domesticated fowls. They are well shaped, having a capacious body, and shortish legs, and should have five claws on each foot. The absence of a fifth claw is, however, not considered a proof of spurious breeding. They make an excellent stock for the farm or market. They fat well, lay well, and rear well;

are handsome alive, and show delicately white when prepared for cooking. General opinion has accorded to this breed the highest character for laying, and also for arriving at early maturity.

SPANISH FOWLS.

The Black Spanish (or Italian) fowls are a favorite bird among many poulterers; and there are "fanciers" who have paid a round price for them (in this ilk) during the last season. They are a large, showy, fine-looking bird, and, it is said, though they are clad in the "blackest of plumage," they possess the reverse of black flesh.



SPANISH COCK.

"I regard these birds," says Richardson, "as the result of the highest *artificial* culture, and adduce, in sup-

port of my opinion, their unusually large comb and wattles, characteristics not commonly to be met with among the primitive varieties.



SPANISH HEN.

“The Spanish fowl is, perhaps, a little inferior in *size* to the old ‘Shakebag,’ but in every other quality, where-in excellence and value are to be looked for, it is more than that bird’s equal. The color of the Spanish fowl is black, and the feathers of the legs, thighs, and belly, are particularly decided in their hue, and of a *velvety* aspect. It is a stately bird, and of a grave and majestic deportment, and is, in either utility or beauty, to be surpassed by none of its congeners. One of the most striking characteristics of this fowl is a *white cheek*, and the comb and wattles are singularly large, simple, and of a very high color; the feet and legs are of a leaden color, except the soles of the feet, which are of a dirty fleshy hue. This is a fowl well deserving the attention of the breeder. They have long been naturalized in these islands, and are consequently well ‘*climatized*,’ and present no peculiarities of constitution that would suggest difficulties in either hatching or rearing. As table birds they hold a place in the very first rank, their flesh being

particularly white, tender, and juicy, and the *skin* possessing that beautifully clear white hue, so essential a requisite for birds designed for the consumption of the gourmand. The hens are likewise layers of the first order.

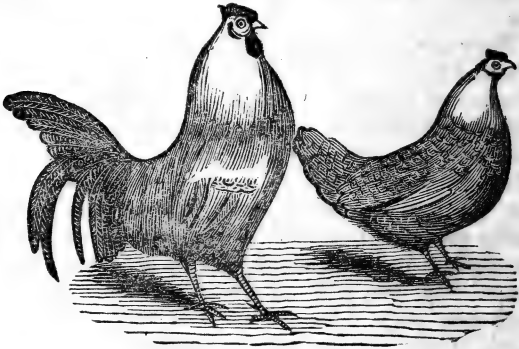
“They are, besides, prolific, extremely easily fed, and, in short, I know of no fowl I would rather recommend to the notice of the breeder; but let me here observe, that *spurious* specimens of this fowl are often in the market, which will occasion, perhaps, an equal outlay to their original purchase — will decidedly cost as much to feed — be, perhaps, *harder* to rear, but will most unquestionably *not* bring in an equal *return* in the way of profit. By applying, in the first instance, to a breeder of known respectability, you will avoid much disappointment; and though you may conceive the price demanded of you to be high, it may not, perhaps, at the same time, be higher than what you might have foolishly paid for a bad article; and even should you have to lay out a few shillings extra, do so willingly, and, recollecting the old proverb, avoid being ‘penny wise and pound foolish.’”

THE “BOLTON GREY,” OR CREOLE FOWL.

This diminutive fowl has latterly attracted considerable attention among our farmers; and in the region of Portsmouth, N. H., and Newburyport, Mass., there are, at this time, some very fine broods of “Bolton Greys” to be seen. The laying qualities of these birds are good, and, like the Polanders, they are not much inclined to sit. They are quite small, however, being, in size, next in the scale above the Bantam, as a general thing.

“This variety,” says Mowbray, “apparently the crack breed of their vicinity, but entirely unknown in the metropolis, (London,) is described by the Rev. Mr. Ashworth, near Bolton, Lancashire, as follows: ‘Small-sized, short in the leg, and plump in the make. The color of the genuine kind invariably pure white in the whole cappel of the neck; the body white, thickly spotted with bright black, sometimes running into a

grizzle, with one or more black bars at the extremity of the tail; they are chiefly esteemed as very constant layers, though their color would mark them for good table food.' ”



BOLTON GREYS.

In a letter from Thomas P. Hunt, Esq., to the editor of the *New England Farmer*, he says, “I have not been able to ascertain the ‘*habitat*’ of the Creole. They are white, with black spots all over, except the neck, which is perfectly white. Their tails are more fan-like, or displayed, during laying time, and their rumps present a fuller or more elevated appearance than other fowls. The ends of the tail-feathers are generally blackish. They are capital layers — poor sitters.”

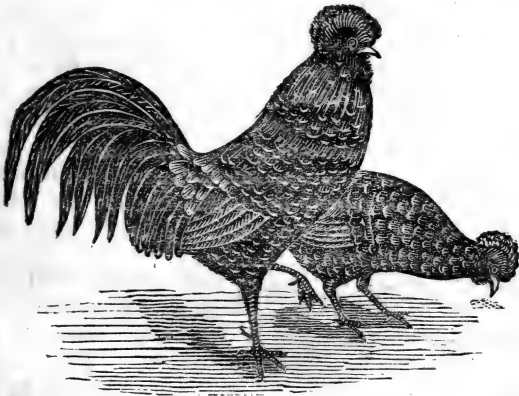
POLAND OR POLISH “TOP-KNOT” FOWL.

This beautiful bird has now become pretty generally established in the American farm-yard; and in New England, especially, the *Poland* “*Top-knot*” is extensively known. They are a small fowl, in comparison with many others, however. Their laying qualities are rated among the best, and as they do not usually incline to sit much, they are esteemed by many as a first-rate fowl for the ordinary purposes of a family. They have been called “everlasting layers,” by some persons, for the reason that they are pretty constant in their yield of eggs.

Mowbray says, "The *Polanders* are not only kept as ornamental, but they are of the most useful varieties, particularly on account of the abundance of the eggs they lay, being least inclined to sit of any other breed, whence they are sometimes called *everlasting layers*, and it is usual to sit their eggs under other hens. They fatten as quickly as any other breed, and in quality similar to the Dorking; their flesh, perhaps, more juicy, and of a richer flavor."

"Besides the *Polanders*, there is a small variety imported from Holland, called *every day hens*, which are everlasting layers. Their eggs, generally, are not so large as those of the common hens, nor equally substantial and nutritious."

"The whole breed of *crested fowls*," says Boswell, "is much esteemed by the curious, and reared with care."



BLACK POLAND FOWLS.

"The Poland," says L. F. Allen, in the *American Agriculturist*, "is a shining black in color, with a beautiful white tuft on its head, a medium size, a good layer, seldom sitting to hatch, rather tender to rear while a chicken, and more thinly feathered, and not so hardy in colds and storms, as the common hen. In a great part

of the United States it will thrive successfully, and lay as many eggs as any other fowl.

"Its flesh is good;—on the whole, a handsome and profitable fowl. There is a *white* variety, without a feather of any other color. These are very beautiful, but not quite so hardy as the black. There is also a splendid gold and black, or pheasant-colored variety. These are scarce in the United States. I have seen several beautiful specimens imported from England; but was never able to obtain any for breeding. These colors are more propagated by the poultry-fanciers than others, and are seldom to be had of them."

The above-mentioned variety of Polish fowl is described by Mowbray correctly, but Mr. Richardson thinks that writer errs in supposing its original country to have been Holland. "These birds," says Mr. R., "were brought from St. Jago by the Spaniards, to whom they owe their first introduction into Europe. Their color is a shining black, and both cock and hen have the white top-knot. The head is flat, surmounted by a fleshy protuberance, out of which spring the crown-feathers constituting the tuft. These are remarkably good layers, and will, if kept warm, lay nearly throughout the year; and it is this cause, probably, that has induced Mowbray and other writers to confound them with the Dutch breed, which, from a similar circumstance, have been styled '*every day layers*.'

"Another variety of Polish fowl is the most pure and unmixed of all; it is, indeed, the uncontaminated descendant of the great fowl of St. Jago. Its color is a brilliant white, *with a jet-black top-knot*. This variety was described by Aldrovand, and more recently by Dr. Bechstein. I have never myself seen a specimen of the breed, and have every reason to suppose it to be extinct, or very nearly so. Applications have been made to several persons in both Germany and Poland, connected with the poultry fancy, for the purpose of procuring specimens of these birds, *at any cost*; but the answers returned were, without one exception, that they were no longer to be had."

THE GAME FOWL.

This variety has long been known upon our continent, and at the south it is bred for its pugnacity much more than by our cooler-blooded New Englanders. In Cuba—especially in the vicinity of Havana—the game cock is a great favorite; and thousands of doubloons are lost and won, every year, by those who are afflicted with the “cock-fighting fancy,” and who are not troubled with a better business than pitting these brave fellows against each other!

The game fowl is one of the most gracefully-formed and most beautifully-colored of our domestic breeds of poultry; and in its form, aspect, and that extraordinary courage which characterizes its natural disposition, exhibits all that either the naturalist or the sportsman would at once recognize as the *beau ideal* of *high blood*—embodying, in short, all the most indubitable characteristics of gallinaceous aristocracy.



ENGLISH GAME COCK.

“We do not possess any very satisfactory record of the original country of the game fowl, but I am disposed,” says Richardson, “to cede that honor to India, the natives of which country have always been remarkable

for their love of cock-fighting; and we also know that there still exists in India an original variety of game cock, very similar to our own, but inferior in point of size. As to the date or occasion of their first introduction into the British islands, we know nothing certain; but I think it probable that we owe it to the invasion of Julius Cæsar, the Romans having been very fond of the sport of cock-fighting.

“The earliest record of cock-fighting in England is in the time of Fitzstephen, who wrote the life of Thomas à Becket, in the reign of Henry II., about A. D. 1100.

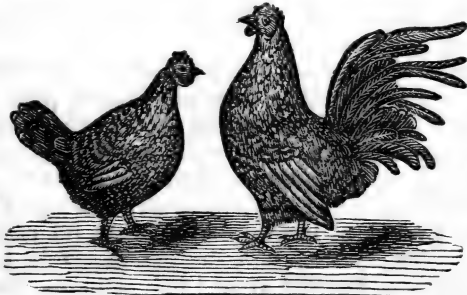
“The game fowl is somewhat inferior in size to other breeds, and in his shape he approximates more closely to the elegance and lightness of form usually characteristic of a pure and uncontaminated race. Amongst poultry he is what the Arabian is amongst horses, the high-bred short-horn amongst cattle, and the fleet greyhound amongst the canine race.

“The flesh of the game fowl is beautifully white, as well as tender and delicate. The hens are excellent layers; and although the eggs are somewhat under the average size, they are not to be surpassed for richness of flavor. Our engraving is taken from a spirited English illustration, and the variety of fowl portrayed is a larger bird than the average of *Spanish* game fowl. The natural disposition of the game fowl to quarrel, however, precludes the possibility, almost, of raising the birds, in this vicinity, to any advantage; and though their flesh is very delicate and rich, and they are good layers, we cannot recommend them as being of any utility in the farm-yard.”

It is next to impossible to raise a brood of pure “bloods,” without the nicest care; a cross of a larger fowl with the game cock is thought by some to produce a profitable progeny. But we are decidedly opposed to *any* mixture of blood, except for mere experiment’s sake. There are plenty of fine varieties (in their *purity*) around us, good enough for any and all useful purposes.

THE BANTAM FOWL.

The beautiful little domestic bird known as the *Bantam* is originally from a province of that name, in Java. In this country we have every kind of color and comparative size of "Bantam;" but, in their *purity*, the "Sir John Seabright," the "Java," or the "African" varieties, are rare birds. Our portraits are from a pair of the first-named, which we consider decidedly the finest variety — being the *smallest*, and most elegantly formed, (of this species,) that we have ever seen. These birds are a pair out of imported stock, now in possession of G. P. Burnham, Esq., of Roxbury, Mass. The likeness is very correct of these



SIR JOHN SEABRIGHT BANTAMS.

"This bird," says Richardson, "has its legs perfectly naked to the toes, and approaches in form more nearly to the game breed. The high-bred cock of this breed should have a *rose comb*, full hackles, a well-feathered and well-carried tail, a stately, courageous demeanor, and should not be quite a pound weight. The favorite color is a golden yellow, the feathers edged with black, the wings barred with purple, tail-feathers and breast black. The Bantam possesses high courage, and will fight with great resolution."

Aldrovand describes the cock with the neck and the back of a chesnut color; the wings at first black, with whitish spots, afterwards black; the quill-feathers being

white on the outer and black on the inner sides; the throat, breast, belly, thighs and legs, black, with whitish spots; the feet yellow; the wattles large; comb double, and not very large; the beak yellow; the tail-feathers partly white and partly black. The hen is of a yellowish color. The males are wonderful crowsers, and exceedingly pugnacious. They arrive at maturity early, and are well worthy of propagation.

The *American Agriculturist* says: "The Bantam is a beautiful little bird, usually white in color, with short legs, feathered oftentimes to the extremity of its toes. It is often of variegated colors, inclined to red, brown, and white, prettily mixed. Occasionally a variety is met with that are smooth-legged. They are very domestic, often making their nests in the kitchen and cupboards of the dwelling, when permitted. They are excellent layers, and good nurses."

The following instance of the attachment of a Bantam cock to his mate is related in a late English publication. Speaking of the cock, the author says: "He is capable of such attachment to his mate, that we remember a Bantam cock and hen which were kept for some years as favorites, without any others, in the stable-yard of our father, and when, at length, the hen died, the cock, seeing her lifeless, but naturally unconscious of its being a final separation, hovered around her, calling to her, and pecking at her gently, as if to awake her. Though corn was offered to him, he refused to eat, or to roost at night, but moped round the yard, vainly searching for his old companion, when not finding her, he flew away, and was never after heard of."

THE COMMON MALAY FOWL.

This is a large, heavy-boned, massive-framed bird; they are not considered among the best, either for laying, sitting, or for their flesh; the latter being coarse and "stringy," comparatively.

Mowbray says, "They are good layers, and being well

fed, produce the largest of hen's eggs, and of the most substantial nutriment. Being too long legged, they are not generally steady sitters. They are large birds, coarse meat, and not worth breeding from."



MALAY HEN.

"The Malay," says a writer in the *American Agriculturist*, "is an awkward, bony, leggy, cowardly race; wandering about for the first six months of its life with scarcely a feather to cover its nakedness, and almost forever in coming to maturity; a wretched layer, and worse sitter, usually breaking half its eggs in the operation; an indifferent nurse, and never yielding, in either its eggs, flesh, or appearance, half enough to compensate for the anxious and vexatious labor of its rearing. When half grown, or in moulting time, it looks more like a sand-hill crane than a domestic fowl; and although it sometimes gains a weight of seven, or even ten pounds, its flesh is coarse, and lacks the delicacy and richness of the well-bred chicken. Its color runs through all shades, from a light yellow to a brownish black, with little variation on the same lines. They are, withal, great eaters; and although at the south they may both thrive and

lay better than at the north, they are not to be recommended as a valuable kind of fowl. Their eggs are large, of a buff or light brownish color, sometimes almost speckled, like the turkey's. They seldom lay more than ten or twelve at a litter."

Dr. Kittridge says: "The Malay is a large, noble fowl, weighing from eight to twelve pounds. They are good layers, eggs large, and hatch well. They are hardy—I have never lost a chicken; come early to maturity, and their meat is excellent. I should think them superior to any other breed for market."

BANKIVA FOWL.

Dickson describes the *Bankiva* fowl (which some suppose to be the original stock of our domestic varieties) as follows:—



BANKIVA COCK.

"The cock has a thin, indented, or scolloped comb, and wattles under the mouth; the tail a little elevated

above the level of the rump, and the feathers somewhat disposed in the form of tiles. The feathers of the neck are long, falling down, and rounded at the tips, and are of the finest gold color. The head and neck are fawn-colored; the wing-coverts are dusky brownish and black; the tail and belly are black. The hen is of a dusky ash-grey and yellowish color, and has her comb and beard much smaller than the cock, with no feathers on the neck besides the long hackles."

"The specimens of these fowls, male and female, were brought from the island of Java by M. Leschenaust, and deposited in the Museum of Paris. They inhabit the forests and borders of woods, and are exceedingly wild. On examining this species, it will be found to exhibit many points of resemblance with our common barn-door fowls of the smaller or middling size. The form and color are the same, the comb and wattles are similar, and the hen so much resembles the common hen, that it is difficult to distinguish it, except by the less erect slant of the tail.

"This rise of the tail is much more apparent in the male; but it may be observed, that in all the wild species known, the tail does not rise so high above the level of the rump, nor is it so abundantly provided with covering feathers, as in the common birds. Probably the superabundance of nourishment, and the assiduous care of man, have contributed to the greater development of all their organs. Different tame breeds, indeed, such as the tufted fowl, the Hamburgh, double-combed varieties, and others, show that domestication, probably on account of superabundant feeding, produces infinite varieties.

"The reasons for believing that the *Bankiva* fowl is the wild stock from which our tame varieties derive at least their main origin are, the close resemblance of their females to our tame hens, the nature of the feathers, and the forms and distribution of the barbs, which are absolutely the same in our tame cocks; and because it is in this species alone that the females are provided with a comb and small wattles, characters not found in any other of the wild species which are known."

THE RUMKIN OR TAIL-LESS FOWL.

This bird is distinguished by the total absence of the caudal extremity. Some suppose it to be a distinct species, descended from the wild breed of Ceylon. Among the wild birds the comb is not indented; it is so with the tame; and is, in the latter case, frequently double. Buffon supposed this fowl to be a native of America, but Dickson declares him to have been in error, having been misled by the circumstance of these birds being domesticated very commonly in Virginia. Others have supposed this fowl to be a native of Persia, and Latham even names it the "Persian Cock." It is, however, of very little practical importance whence the Rumkin originally came, the bird possessing neither good flesh nor affording good eggs.

THE BARN-DOOR FOWL.

I describe these fowl separately; for, although the designation of "Barn-door fowl" may be applicable also to the Dunghill, I regard the former appellation as possessing a far more extended signification.

The Barn-door fowl embrace, of course, several sub-varieties. Few of our high-priced breeds, except in some places the Dorking and the Polish, have, as yet, become so common as to be included in the list; but crosses of the common Dunghill breed with the Malay, Dorking, Polish or Spanish, are very frequently to be met with.

Doctor Bechstein enumerates eight distinct varieties of barn-door fowl, viz:—

1. The fowl with the small comb.
2. The crowned fowl.
3. The silver-colored fowl.
4. The slate-blue fowl.
5. The chamois-colored fowl.
6. The ermine-like fowl.
7. The widow; with tear-like spots on a dark ground.
8. The fire and stone colored fowls.

THE DUNGHILL FOWL.

The *Dunghill* fowl occupies in the poultry-yard precisely the position of the cur dog in the kennel, being, in fact, the produce of a miscellaneous intermixture of most of the ordinary domestic varieties, and constantly differing in its appearance with the accidents which may have influenced its parentage.



DUNGHILL COCK.

The poultry-yards of many of our country friends abound with *this* kind of fowl, and we have seen some very fair specimens of the "good old-fashioned" Dunghills, which farmers admire more or less. There are so many finer breeds around us now, however, that we believe the character of this species (which is varied, but indescribable!) will be improved, in time. There is ample room for such improvement; and this hint may serve to stimulate, in some measure, our good country friends to avail of the opportunity to better themselves.

SPANGLED HAMBURGH FOWL.

This really pretty bird may be set down as one of the most beautiful in plumage, and graceful in carriage, of all the varieties upon our shores. The engravings which we give of these fowls are copied from an English work,

and the feathery covering which appears upon the crown and neck of the crower is a good deal more *hood-like* than that which appears upon the roosters grown in America; the latter being heavily *tufted*, only. They have been generally called here the



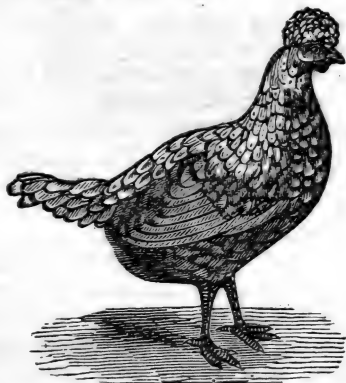
“GOLDEN PHEASANT,” OR “GOLDEN TOP-KNOT” FOWL.

Beautiful specimens of this bird have been bred by Col. Jaques, of “Ten Hills Farm,” by Dr. Bennett, of Plymouth, and others in Massachusetts; and we find them described by Richardson, as follows:—

“The Spangled Hamburg fowl are divided into two varieties, the distinctive characteristics being slight, and nearly altogether dependent upon color; these varieties are termed the Golden and Silver Spangled. The former will suffice for me to describe, as the points of form, &c., excepting only *color*, are identical.

“This fowl is one of great beauty. It is well and neatly made, has a good body, and very little offal. On the crest, immediately above the beak, are two small fleshy horns, resembling, to some extent, an abortive

comb. Above this crest, and occupying the position of a comb, is a large brown or yellowish tuft, the feathers composing it darkening towards the extremities. Under the insertion of the lower mandible (or that portion of the neck corresponding to the chin in man) is a full, dark-colored tuft, somewhat resembling a beard. These fowl gained the first prize at a national exhibition in Ireland, in 1847. The wattles are very small. In the *golden* variety, the hackles on the neck are of a brilliant orange, or golden yellow; and the general ground-color of the body is of the same hue, but somewhat darker. The thighs are of a dark brown or blackish shade, and the legs and feet are of a bluish grey.



“GOLDEN PHEASANT,” OR TOP-KNOT HEN.

“In the *Silver Spangled* variety, the only perceptible difference is, that the ground-color is a silvery white. The extremity, and a portion of the extreme margin of each feather, are black, presenting, when in a state of rest, the appearance of regular semi-circular marks or *spangles*—and hence the name of ‘Spangled Ham-burgh,’ the varieties being termed *gold* or *silver*, according to the prevailing color being bright yellow, or silvery white. In mere excellence of flesh and as layers, they are inferior to the Dorking or Spanish varieties.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE TURKEY.

VARIOUS opinions have been promulgated relative to the original country of the turkey, but it is now ascertained, beyond a doubt, to have been America; and it is in this country alone that the true original of the domestic turkey is yet to be met with in all its primitive wildness, clothed in its natural plumage, genuinely wild in all its habits, the unreclaimed denizen of the wilderness. As to the medium through which this bird was first introduced into Europe, much doubt still exists, and we have, indeed, no authentic proof as to either the period of time, or by what agency, that event took place. In 1530, the turkey was introduced into England.

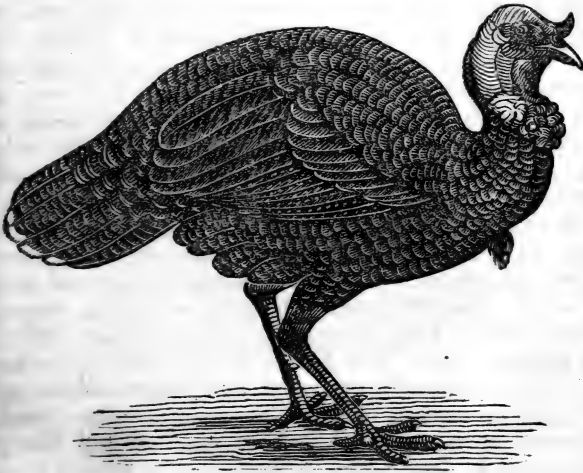
"No one," says Mr. Richardson, "who has seen only the domesticated inhabitant of the poultry-yard, can form any idea of its wild original. The cock measures about three feet and a half, or nearly four feet, in length, and almost six in expanse of the wings. The skin of the head is of a bluish color, as is also the upper part of the neck, and is marked with numerous reddish, warty elevations, with a few black hairs scattered here and there.

"The hen is less in size than the cock; her legs are destitute of spurs; her neck and head are less naked, being furnished with short, dirty grey feathers; the feathers on the back of the neck have brownish tips, producing, on that part, a brown, longitudinal band. She also frequently, but not invariably, wants the tuft of feathers on the breast. Her prevailing color is a dusky grey, each feather having a metallic band, less brilliant than that of the cock; then a blackish band, and a greyish fringe.

"The hen is a very close sitter, and will, when she has chosen a spot, seldom leave it on account of its being discovered by a human intruder. Should she find one of her eggs, however, sucked by a snake, or other enemy, she abandons the nest forever. When the eggs are near

hatching, the hen will not forsake her nest while life remains.

“The young are very sensible to the effects of damp; hence, after a rainy season, wild turkeys are always scarce. The flesh of the wild turkey is very superior to that of the domestic bird; yet that of such of the latter as have been suffered to roam at large in the woods and plains is, in no respect, improved by this partially wild mode of life.”



THE DOMESTIC TURKEY.

In the case of the *turkey*, domestication has, as in that of most reclaimed animals, produced a diversity of color, which, by cultivation, whether owing to fancy or some supposed inherent excellence residing in the various tints, has now furnished us with several so-called varieties or breeds, differing in their plumage; thus we have the black, the white, the copper-color, the brown, the bronze, the dusky-grey, &c.; they are, however, of course, all the descendants of their great American original.

As to the relative value of the ordinary varieties, it would be almost difficult to offer an opinion; but those who suppose the *white* turkey to be "the most robust and most easily fattened," are decidedly mistaken, both in theory, as far as analogy may guide us, and in practice, where the certain test of experience has shown to the contrary. The bronze and copper-colored varieties are generally *undersized*, and are amongst the most difficult of all to rear; but their flesh is certainly very delicate, and, perhaps, more so than that of other kinds.

The brown and ashy-grey are not particularly remarkable, but the black are decidedly superior, (insists Mr. Richardson,) in every respect, not only as regards greater hardiness, and a consequent greater facility of rearing, but as acquiring flesh more readily, and that being of the very best and primest quality. Those of this color appear to be less far removed from the original wild stock.

With respect to the best mode of keeping turkeys, let them have a large, roomy, open shed, sufficiently protected, of course, from the weather, and, above all, from *moisture*. Let the perches be *high*, and here, observe, you will do well not to omit the use of the *hen ladder*; for although these birds can usually fly well, still, when *fat*, they become too heavy for their wings, and are apt to injure themselves in their descent from a lofty perch, especially when in confinement; when at full liberty, they can take better care of themselves. During warm weather they may be permitted to select their own roosting-places on the trees about a farm; but should be well watched, lest they stray away; and this indulgence should on no account be granted them if *frost* be anticipated, as their toes are tender, and apt to become *frost-bitten*. Indeed, summer is the only time of the year when this out-roosting may, with safety, be permitted.

The turkey is a most profitable bird, for it can almost wholly provide for itself about the roads and fields; snails, slugs, and worms, are among the number of its dainties, and the nearest stream serves to slake its thirst. To the farmer, however, it is often a perfect nuisance,

from its love of grain, and should, therefore, be kept in the yard until all corn is too strong in the root to present any temptations.

Notwithstanding the separation which, with the exception of certain seasons, subsists in a *wild state* between the cock and hen turkey, they have been brought to feed and live amicably together in a state of domesticity. The former, however, retains sufficient of his hereditary propensities to give an occasional sly blow to a chick, or forward poult, but that very seldom of a seriously malicious character.

Mascall, in describing a turkey cock, (such as the breeder should select,) says, that he should be "a bird large, stout, proud, and majestic; for when he walketh dejected, he is never good."

M. Parmentier says, that both cock and hen should have short legs, full shapes, and general vivacity and energy in all their movements; likewise, that they should be both well-shaped, and in healthy condition.

Mascall says, that the cock should not be "passing a yere or two yeres old; three yeres is the most, and too much," &c.

For my own part, I hold a turkey cock, at the age of three years, to be only in his prime, and to continue, in every respect, suitable for your purpose, until five. The hen is at her prime younger, and, probably, at the second year is as good as ever she will be afterwards.

It has been stated by some, and yet as positively denied by others, that one fecundation will render all the eggs of that laying fertile; still, however, were it my own case, I should prefer making "assurance doubly sure," by allowing one cock to every dozen or fourteen hens. Even this, however, will render it unnecessary for every poor man who may desire to breed turkeys to have a cock, as one cock will thus prove amply sufficient for the hens of a whole townland. This fact should encourage landlords to keep a good turkey cock of a valuable breed, and so afford their humbler tenantry an opportunity of improving upon the commoner varieties they may possess.

The approach of the laying season is easily known by the increased liveliness and proud strut of the hen; and she, likewise, further expresses her feelings by a peculiar self-satisfied cry, that soon becomes familiar to the observer. This usually takes place in the month of March, (nearly a month earlier than the wild bird.) When the breeder perceives these symptoms, he should provide a nest, and put an egg, or a bit of chalk formed like one, into it, to induce the hen to commence laying there. Partaking of the retiring propensities of the wild hen, (although she has not equal reason to dread the destructive passions of the cock,) the turkey is a secret layer, and does her best to elude the vigilance of her keeper, and steal away to some secluded spot. The peculiar note of which I have spoken betrays, however, the fact; and whoever has the care of the fowl should trace her to her retirement, and bring her back to the nest prepared for her.

The time when the hen turkey lays is usually morning. Some lay daily; others only every second day. The number of eggs laid is commonly from fifteen to twenty; but this varies with the age of the bird, a hen of mature age laying more and larger eggs than one of a year old. When the turkeys are to be let out in the morning, you may examine the hens, and keep in such as are about to lay. This precaution will, of course, prevent the loss of a single egg. While the hen is laying, the cock should be kept from her, as he would ill-treat her and break the eggs. The eggs should be taken away as soon as laid, lest they might be broken, through the awkwardness of the hen, or sucked by vermin. They will keep till the hens are done laying, if put in a basket, and hung up in a dry place. It is unnecessary to keep the eggs belonging to each hen in a separate place. The turkey is not troubled with any very exclusive feelings, or, rather, her disposition overflows with an excess of maternal love; for she will rear a clutch belonging to another quite as carefully as if they were her own, and will, also, if required, hatch the eggs of ducks, geese, or common fowl. In the second laying, the eggs are fewer in num-

ber, seldom exceeding from ten to thirteen; and, on this occasion, extra care is requisite.

The turkey hen is a most persevering sitter; and when her eggs are taken away, she would sit upon stones, if she could not procure the eggs of another bird, and would perish before quitting the nest. Eggs should, therefore, be left with her, not only to tranquillize her, but because sitting upon eggs fatigues her less than sitting upon an empty nest; but these eggs must be marked, in order to distinguish them from those the poor bird continues to lay; for any eggs that seem to her to be slow of hatching will be abandoned, as she will quit the nest as soon as she perceives the chick; consequently, as soon as the eggs you have placed under her are hatched, she will leave the nest, and the eggs of her own laying will be sacrificed. Remove, therefore, the former. Keep the nest clean while the turkey hen is sitting, as dirt will injure the eggs. No one should go near a hen when sitting, except her keeper; and no one should turn the eggs, or meddle with them further than I have already indicated. The bird will turn her eggs with more judgment than you can.

On the thirty-first day of sitting, the chicks leave the eggs; but as some quit their prison before others, they must be placed in a basket filled with feathers, and if the weather be cold, placed in some warm spot. When all are out, they may be given to the hen. Sometimes the chick will require assistance in leaving the egg; and if so, the same caution must be observed that I have insisted upon in the case of the common fowl. Be very sparing of your aid, or you may do far more harm than good.

Many writers recommend a vast deal of quackery in the treatment of the young chicks. Some go the length of ordering them *wine*, pepper, bathing in *cold water*! &c. It is far better to let them alone. For a few hours after hatching, the chicks require no food at all; and then, instead of *cramming* them—a process in which you are extremely likely to break the tender beak of the little chick—chop up a few hard eggs with boiled net-

bles, parsley, and a little bread or curd ; make this into a paste, and present it to the birds in the palm of your hand, or place it before them on a stone, taking care that the hen does not rob them. In supplying them with water, be careful to put it in such very shallow vessels that they cannot wet themselves ; for the least moisture appears fatal to them. As the turkey chick does not seek its food immediately on leaving the egg, as the hen seems incapable of instructing her little offspring how to do so, it is a practice with some to put a few common hen's eggs among the turkey's, (which must be done about nine or ten days after sitting,) that these, coming out with the little turkeys, may, by force of example, teach them to provide for themselves.

Unless in very warm weather, the hen and chicks should be housed for a month. If they appear drooping, put powdered caraway seed, and a little Cayenne pepper, into the food. If you mix the food with milk, let it be previously boiled. Unboiled milk will purge the chicks ; but, for my own part, I prefer pure water.

At the age of about two months occurs the most critical period in the life of a turkey, called "*shooting the red* ;" or the time when the head and neck acquire the reddish color of the adult. This crisis once past, the birds may be regarded as past danger, and exchange the name of *chicks* for that of *turkey poults*. The only treatment necessary, when the bird is shooting the red, is *nutritive food*, and the addition of a small pinch of Cayenne pepper. Bruised hemp-seed is also found serviceable.

No birds are more calculated to be profitable to the breeder than turkeys. They will almost wholly provide themselves with food ; and it is only the young chicks that require nourishment at our hands ; and how inexpensive, also, is this nourishment ! With care, you may rear two clutches, or broods, in a year, and have from eight to fifteen survivors in each. Take the average at *ten*, and, supposing you have three hens, you may bring up thirty chicks. These, adds Richardson, will certainly not cost you quite a halfpenny per week each, for

the first two months ; but allow one shilling (which is over the mark) per week for the lot, — that, in the two months, will amount to eight shillings ; and at this age you may, if you desire to part with them, obtain at least from one shilling to one shilling and sixpence each for them. Call it the former, and you have thirty shillings in two months, in return for a gradual outlay of eight shillings. This will take place twice in the year. Your hens will cost you nothing for keep ; and you must admit that your profit is handsome. This is, however, far below the mark. There is nothing to prevent an individual having *more hens*, rearing larger broods, and disposing of them at nearly double this price.

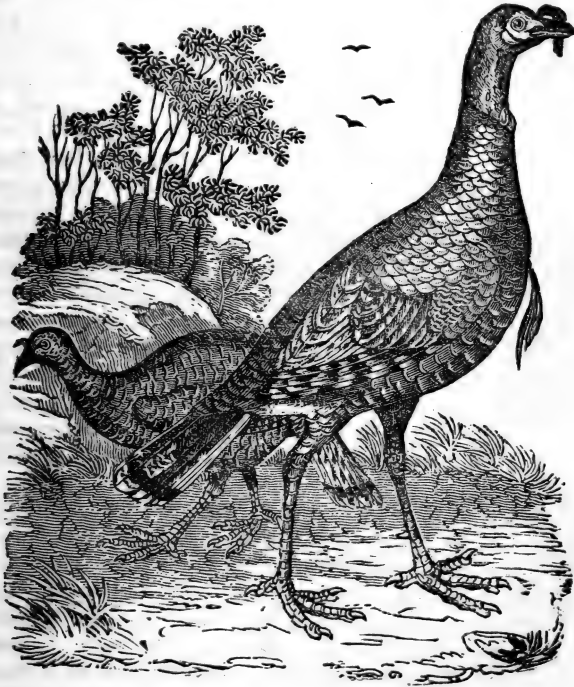
The well-known William Cobbett, who was a shrewd and accurate observer, thus writes : — “ To raise turkeys in this chilly climate is a matter of much greater difficulty than in the climates that give great warmth ; and so true is this, that, in America, where there is always a ‘ wet spell ’ in April, the farmers’ wives take care never to have a brood come until that spell is passed. In England, where the wet spells come hap-hazard, the first thing is to take care that young turkeys never go out, on any account, (except in dry weather,) until the dew be quite off the ground ; and this should be adhered to till they get to be the size of an old partridge, and have their backs well covered with feathers ; and, in wet weather, they should be kept under cover all day long. As to the feeding of them when young, many nice things are recommended — hard eggs, chopped fine, with crumbs of bread, and a great many other things ; but that which I have seen used, and always with success, and for all sorts of young poultry, is milk turned into curds. This is the food for young poultry of all sorts. Some should be made fresh every day ; and if this be done, and the turkeys be kept warm, not one out of a score will die. When they get to be strong, they may have meal and grain ; but still, they always love the curds. When they get their head-feathers, they are hardy enough ; and what they then want is room to prowl about. It is best to breed them under a common

hen, because she does not ramble like a hen turkey ; and it is a very curious thing that the turkeys bred up by a hen of the common fowl do not themselves ramble much when they get old ; and for this reason, when they buy turkeys for stock in America, (where there are such large woods, and where the distant rambling of turkeys is inconvenient,) they always buy such as have been bred under the hens of the common fowl—than which, a more complete proof of the great powers of habit is, perhaps, not to be found. And ought not this be a lesson to fathers and mothers of families? Ought not they to consider that the habits which they give their children are to stick by those children during their whole lives?

“The hen should be fed exceedingly well, too, while she is sitting, and after she has hatched ; for though she does not give milk, she gives heat ; and let it be observed that, as no man ever yet saw healthy pigs with a poor sow, so no man ever saw healthy chickens with a poor hen. This is a matter much too little thought of in the rearing of poultry ; but it is a matter of the greatest consequence. Never let a poor hen sit ; feed the hen while she is sitting, and feed her most abundantly when she has young ones, for then her labor is very great. She is making exertions of some sort or other during the whole twenty-four hours ; she has no rest ; is constantly doing something in order to provide food or safety for her young ones. As to fattening turkeys, the best way is never to let them be poor. Cramming is a nasty thing, and quite unnecessary. Barley-meal mixed with skim-milk, given to them fresh and fresh, will make them fat in a short time, either in a coop, in a house, or running about. Boiled carrots and Swedish turnips will help, and it is a change of sweet food. In France they sometimes pick turkeys alive, to make them tender ; of which I shall only say, that the man that can do this, or order it to be done, ought to be skinned alive himself.”

As observed already, once the turkey chicks *shoot the red*, (which takes place at or about eight weeks old,) they may be considered out of danger ; hence, many persons con-

ceive it more profitable to buy lean, young poults, after they have got the red, and then fatten them for market, to breeding them. If the mortality among the chicks were greater, and were not so easily to be avoided by a very little care, this might be the preferable mode of going about the matter; but as it is, there can be no doubt of the greater advantage to be derived from rearing our own chicks.



THE WILD TURKEY.

In feeding the poults, after the second month, it will suffice to give them such boiled common plants and herbs as are of a nutritive character — nettles, wild succory, milfoil, turnip-tops, cabbage-sprouts, or the outside

leaves of greens well boiled down. With these, potato skins, and an odd potato or two itself, may be given. The meal of buckwheat, barley, beans, oats, — according to whichever is most plenty with you, — will, when incorporated as I have described with potatoes, fatten the poults with great rapidity. You may also use the meal of Indian corn with advantage; but recollect that it requires treble the boiling of oatmeal, and is more salutary when mixed with an equal bulk of the latter. If you desire to meet the market hastily, and with profit, you will be compelled to resort to more expensive feeding than otherwise, but you will be repaid by the result. When the poults are about five months old, or earlier, if it be late in the season and cold weather seems at hand, give them boiled potatoes mashed with meal, and then *chopped* small, as I have described. Let this be given *fresh and fresh*, and the vessel in which they are fed well washed daily, as otherwise it will speedily contract a sour smell, and become repulsive to the birds, for turkeys are both cleanly and *nice* in their appetite. After having persevered in this feeding, morning and evening, for about a month, during which time the exercise of the poults should be greatly curtailed, and they should likewise be kept much of their time (especially after meals) in the *dark*, they will be found fit for use, and, if of a good kind, at least upwards of eighteen pounds' weight.

As damp or cold is fatal to turkey poults, so is intense sunshine; and hence they should not be led to pasture under a scorching sun, unless, indeed, care be taken that the walk is shaded. Should rain come, let them be at once housed. Poults should also not be suffered to stray too far, for, independently of the risk they incur, in case of a sudden shower, it must be remembered that they are as yet incapable of encountering any great fatigue, and that their condition will be anything but benefited thereby. Every district seems to have its own peculiar mode of fattening turkeys. Mr. Dickson recommends a mode of diet that I have never seen tried, and wonder much if it be as efficacious as he seems to imagine —

"No food makes their flesh whiter and more delicate than kitchen stuff, or the dregs of melted tallow, more or less of which must be boiled, according to the number that is to be fed; and, being diluted in a boiling kettle, plants (and especially nettles, chopped up) and pot-herbs are mixed with it. The whole being well boiled, barley-meal or maize is added, (the latter can now be had very cheap,) to form a kind of paste, which may be given twice a day, at least, — in the morning and at one o'clock, — when it is wished to render them fat. But as the dregs of melted tallow are not everywhere to be procured, the dregs or refuse of the oil of nuts, linseed, or sweet almonds, may be substituted, the greatest care being taken not to fatten them wholly with such oily substances, for their flesh would partake of the flavor, and be injured."

From what we know of the value of oil-cake in the fattening of our cattle, we have no doubt of its efficacy with turkeys. It will always be recollected, in reckoning the advantages with the expense attendant on the rearing of these birds, that, until you want to *fatten* them for sale or your own consumption, you need be at no pains relative to their food, as they are quite able to provide for themselves, being in this respect superior to any other of our domestic fowl. In thus readily providing for themselves, they are also greatly assisted by the easy character of their appetite — grass, herbs, corn, berries, fruit, insects, and reptiles; in short, hardly anything coming amiss to them.

Audubon says that, in their native forests, "they cannot be said to confine themselves to any particular kind of food, although they seem to prefer the peccan nut and winter grape to any other; and, where these foods abound, are found in the greatest numbers. They eat grass and herbs of various kinds — corn, berries, and fruits of all descriptions. I have even found beetles, tadpoles, and small lizards, in their crops." — *Ornith. Biog.*, l. ii. A favorite repast of this bird, in its native forests, is said also to be in the seed of a kind of nettle, and, at another season, a small, red acorn, on which lat-

ter food they soon become so fat that they cannot fly, and are easily run down by dogs.

A writer in the *Sporting Magazine*, whom I have already quoted, while endeavoring to prove that the domestic turkey does not inherit the clever foraging powers of its wild original, effectually clears its character of the imputation of devouring the farmer's crops — "They are dull and stupid at getting the corn out of the ear, unless very ripe, and will walk through a field of peas or beans without opening a single shell, even if they are ripe."

The following curious method of rearing turkeys is translated from a Swedish book entitled 'Rural Economy:—

"Many of our housewives have long despaired of success in rearing turkeys, and complained that the profit rarely indemnifies them for their trouble and loss of time; whereas, little more is to be done than to plunge the chick into *cold water* the very hour, if possible — but, at least, the very day — it is hatched, forcing it to swallow one whole pepper-corn, after which let it be returned to its mother. From that time it will become hardy, and fear the cold no more than the hen's chick; but it must be remembered that this useful species of fowl are also subject to one particular disorder while they are young, which often carries them off in a few days. When they begin to droop, examine carefully the feathers on their posterior extremity, and you will find two or three whose quill part is filled with blood; upon drawing these, the chick recovers, and after that requires no other care than what is commonly bestowed on other poultry that range the court-yard. The truth of these assertions is too well known to be denied; and, as a convincing proof of the success of this mode of treatment, it will be sufficient to mention that three parishes in Sweden have for many years used this method, and gained several hundred pounds by rearing and selling turkeys reared in this manner.

"The Norfolk turkeys are of this breed, and do not arrive at their full perfection till their seventh year; but

are sent to market at two and at four years old, when they fetch from two to three and four guineas a pair, for the table. They are fed, for the last two years, chiefly on *sunflower* seed, which makes them attain an enormous size."

Enough is said as to the delicacy of the young turkey chick to prevent any person from following the advice of this Swede, as far as the cold bath is concerned. The medical treatment for the *roup* seems just enough; and, were the sunflower to be extensively cultivated, there is, perhaps, no crop which would be found to pay better. Swine and cattle will greedily devour the leaves; the stalks, when dried and stacked, will serve for winter fuel.

The weight of turkeys has been much exaggerated by careless, ignorant, or perhaps credulous writers; and 60 lbs. is, by some, mentioned as a common weight. On the contrary, 20 lbs. is a fair weight for any fat yearling bird, (and a very great weight for a bird of six months old;) 30 lbs. is a fine turkey of any age; and few, save the Norfolk, ever exceed 40 lbs. The greatest weight that these have been known to attain, recorded by such authority as we can rely upon, is 56 lbs. I have never seen a turkey of 60 lbs. weight; nor do I know any one that has. The hen takes fat more readily than the cock, and is, in proportion to her size, a tenderer and a better dish. The Norfolk turkey, property of Mr. J. J. Nolan, which obtained the prize at the show of the Royal Dublin Society of 1846, did not weigh quite 35 lbs.

THE GUINEA HEN, OR PINTADO.

The original country of the *Guinea* fowl is, as its name implies, Africa; but it is likewise common in America, where it is supposed to be indigenous, as well as the turkey.

Although long familiarized, the Guinea fowl has never been fully domesticated, still retaining much of the restlessness and shyness of its primitive feral habits. It is

very courageous, and will not only frequently attack the turkey, but even prove victorious in the encounter.

The cock and hen are so nearly alike, that it is not easy to distinguish them; there is sometimes a difference of hue in certain parts; but this difference only occurs occasionally, and, indeed, it is on gait, voice, and demeanor, that we must chiefly depend.

As a source of profit we cannot recommend these fowl: the eggs are very small, three of them being scarcely equal to an ordinary hen's egg, and the flesh not being likely to please every palate; still, however, as the Guinea fowl require but little trouble or attention, and their eggs, though of small size, are well-flavored and numerous, they are generally kept wherever there is accommodation for them. The chief objection to them is their *cry*, or scream; and even this, again, has its advantages, invariably predicting a change of weather. They can hardly, however, be kept with other poultry, on account of their pugnacity.

The Guinea fowl dislikes confinement, and will not thrive unless it has free liberty; where such, therefore, cannot be afforded, it is useless to attempt keeping it.

These fowl are prolific; the hen commences to lay in May, and lays throughout the entire summer; for the table, they are in season from February to June. The period of incubation is twenty-eight days; but it is more advisable to keep the Guinea hen entirely for laying, and if you desire to hatch any of the eggs, to do so under the hen of the common gallinaceous fowl. You must keep the male bird away, or he will, like the pheasant, destroy the eggs.

CHAPTER V.

THE GOOSE.

THERE are several kind or varieties of the *wild* goose, but we have no space for particulars relating to them. The *domestic* or common goose is bred very generously

in this country, and many persons, who have the space and proper location for the indulgence of the habits and propensities of this fowl, contrive to make a profit from rearing them.

“In the species of the *goose*,” says Boswell, “*properly so called*, nature knows but one race. The industry of man has created another, larger, whose shape, color, as well as nature, have undergone those modifications which are to be observed in all animals that have for a long time been domesticated.”

Dickson says there is only *one* sort of the common goose, though there are *several* varieties of the tame goose. The wild goose is of a brownish-ash color, the individual feathers being lighter on the edge; the belly is snow-white. The tame varieties are of various colors.

“Of all the stock brought up on farms, the goose lives to the greatest age; there are records of some attaining to a century. In 1824 there was a goose living in the possession of a Mr. Hewison (England) which was then upwards of one hundred years old; it had been, throughout all time, in the constant possession of Mr. H.’s forefathers and himself; and on quitting his farm, he would not suffer it to be sold with the rest of the stock, but made a present of it to the incoming tenant, that the venerable fowl might terminate its career on the spot where its useful and long life had been thus far spent.”

“The whole anserine or goose tribe,” says Mowbray, “of which there is a great variety, are held to afford a food highly stimulant, of a viscous quality, and of a putrescent tendency. The flesh of the tame goose is more tender than that of the wild, but generally it is a diet best adapted to good stomachs and powerful digestion, and should be sparingly used by the sedentary and weak, or by persons subject to cutaneous diseases.”

Dickson observes that “when well fed, geese will lay thrice a year, from five to twelve eggs each time, and some more, that is, when they are left to their own way; but if the eggs be carefully removed as soon as laid, a goose may be made, by abundant feeding, to lay from

twenty to fifty eggs without intermitting. They begin to lay early in spring, usually in March."

Mowbray observes, "The earliness and warmth of spring are the general cause of the early laying of geese; which, of consequence, since there may be time for two broods within the season,—not, however, a common occurrence,—and which happening successively for two or three seasons, has occasioned some persons, formerly, to set a high price on their stock, as if of a peculiar and more valuable breed than the common. The method, however, to attain this advantage, is to feed breeding geese high throughout the winter, with solid corn, and on the commencement of the breeding season, to allow them boiled barley, malt, fresh grains, and fine pollard, mixed up with ale or other stimulants. Instances are said to have occurred of a goose laying upwards of one hundred eggs within the year."

REARING AND BREEDING GEESE.

It is stated in the *Farmer's Gazette* that geese can be raised, in a proper situation, at a profit greater than almost any other fowls.

"But let us make an estimate of the profit of ten old geese, in the manner they are generally kept by most farmers. We will suppose that the goose-keepers (for there are those who are not farmers) commence operations by purchasing ten geese in the spring, before they begin to lay, at one dollar each, which is a quarter more than they can be frequently obtained for. Eight of the ten geese (for two should be ganders) will have, on an average, ten goslings each; but allowing one half for paper calculation, and probably less through the season, it will leave us with a flock of fifty, old and young, worth, when dressed for the market, not a dollar,—the original cost,—but half this sum, and you have twenty-five dollars. In addition to this, every old goose will yield one pound of feathers, and every young one three-fourths of a pound, making in all forty pounds, which, added to the twenty-five, gives us forty dollars. We say net

profit, for there is not one goose-keeper in ten that feeds his geese, either old or young, after the grass has started in the spring, until fattening time in the fall; and then the large quills will more than pay for their extra food."

A writer in the *Maine Farmer* says, "I once knew a couple of industrious sisters, who lived near a never-failing brook or stream, in Massachusetts, who kept generally, through the winter, thirty geese, male and female. They had erected some suitable, but not costly sheds, in which they had apartments for them to lay, sit, and hatch. Their food in the winter was meal of various kinds, to some extent, but principally apples and roots. In the summer they had a pasture enclosed with a stone wall or board fence, which embraced the water. They kept their wings so clipped that they could not fly over such a fence. Their owners well knew (what we all know) that live geese feathers are a cash article, at a fair price. They picked off their feathers three times in the season. Those thirty geese, wintered, would raise seventy-five goslings or young geese, and of course they had that number to dispose of every fall, or in the beginning of winter, when they are sent to market, and again picked, making four times they obtained feathers from those they wintered, and twice from the young ones that they had killed.

"I tell the story, to induce some family, sisters or brothers, fathers or mothers, situate near some never-failing brook of water, to go and do likewise. Those remote from water cannot be benefited by the history, yet their friends may; but if I can, by this account, cause one family to partake of the benefits of the business, I shall be satisfied. Many families there are, in all our towns, so situated that they may make the raising of geese a profitable business, yet, perhaps, have never thought of their privileges. It is known that we must import most of our feathers; and is it necessary to send abroad for an article so easily produced among us? Those who calculate to commence the business must prepare for it the ensuing fall, and not kill their geese. No one will object to the keeping of even more than

thirty geese, if an enclosure is made sufficient to keep them at home, and out of mischief."

These fowls, as has been ascertained by M. St. Genis, will *pair*, like pigeons; and even if the number of ganders exceed that of the geese, no noise or riot takes place, and mutual choice is evidently the ruling principle. Amongst other experiments, M. St. Genis left, besides the patriarch of the flock, two of the young ganders, unprovided with mates; but still those couples that had paired kept constantly together, and the three single ganders never attempted to approach any of the females during the temporary absence of their lords.

Some writers recommend a gander to be mated with from four to six geese. If he desire eggs, and *eggs alone*, one gander is plenty for six or even eight geese. He may, indeed, abandon the *unnecessary* trouble of keeping a gander at all, but just only occasionally send his geese to his next door neighbor's!

The goose deposits from ten to twenty eggs at one laying; but, if you do not desire her to sit, you may, by removing the eggs as fast as they are laid, and, at the same time, feeding her highly, induce her to lay on to the number of even forty-five or fifty. This is, however, unusual, and, I may add, that it is unprofitable. When tolerably well cared, geese may be made to lay, and even hatch, three times in the year. This care consists merely in high feeding and good housing, early in the spring, so as to have the first brood early in March; but I would rather have two good clutches reared than three bad ones, and am, therefore, more disposed to recommend patience and moderation.

We can always detect the inclination of the goose to *set* or *hatch*. This is known by the bird keeping in the nest, after the laying of each egg, longer than usual. The hatching nest should be formed of straw, with a little hay as a lining; and so formed that the goose will not fling the eggs over the side when in the act of turning them. Do not meddle with the eggs during incubation; and do not meddle with the goose; but, as she is somewhat heavier than the hen of the domestic cock, you may

leave her food and drink rather nearer her than is necessary with common poultry, as, if she chanced to absent herself from her eggs sufficiently long to permit them to cool, she might become disheartened, and desert her task altogether.

The goose will sit on her eggs for nearly two months; but the necessary period of incubation being but one, the early-hatched goslings must be removed, lest the more tardy might be deserted. The best plan is to have the eggs set of as nearly as possible equal freshness, that they may be hatched at the one time.

Their food may then be bread, soaked in milk, porridge, curds, boiled greens, or even bran, mixed with boiled potatoes, taking care not to give the food in too hot a state, while you equally avoid giving it cold. Avoid rain or cold breezes; and see, therefore, that the walk into which you turn the young goslings be sheltered from both wind and weather. The goslings should also be kept from water for at least a couple of days after hatching. If suffered too early to have free access to water, they are very liable to *cramp*—a disease which generally produces permanent lameness and deformity, and but too frequently proves fatal.

Grass is as necessary to the well-being of geese as water; and the rankest, coarsest grasses—such as are rejected by cattle—constitute the goose's delicacy. Such grasses as they prefer will be found on damp, swampy lands, of which, perhaps, no more profitable use could be made.

FATTENING GEESE.

“It is the same with the goose,” says Main, “as with every other bird that is fattened up; that moment must be laid hold of, when, come to a complete plumpness, they would soon get lean and die, if they were not killed.”

“The French method of fattening,” says M. Parmentier, “consists in plucking the feathers from under the belly; in giving them abundance of food and drink, and in cooping them up more closely than is practised with

common fowls; cleanliness and quiet being above all indispensable. The best time is in the month of November, or when the cold weather begins to set in. When there are but a few geese to fatten, they are put in a cask, in which holes have been bored, and through which they thrust their head to get their food; but as this bird is voracious, and as with it hunger is stronger than love of liberty, it is easily fattened, provided they are abundantly supplied with wherewithal to swallow."

"Various measures," says Richardson, "have been adopted for fattening geese. Goslings produced in June or July will fatten without other food than what they will have afforded them on the stubble-fields, as soon as they are ready to consume it; but if you are in haste, give potatoes, turnips, or other roots, bruised with meal, at least once daily. The goose is very voracious, and only requires to get plenty to eat in order to accumulate fat. Geese, fed chiefly on grass and corn, as I have described, do not, perhaps, attain the same bulk with such as are crammed; but their fat is less rank, and they are altogether much more desirable for the table."

CHAPTER VI.

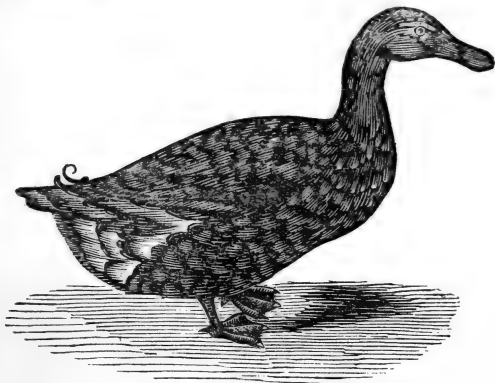
DUCKS.

ALMOST any family in the country may have their flock of ducks near the house, if they have the taste for this bird. They are easily bred, and readily managed, with a little proper care at the proper time of the year. They are a hardy fowl, give you a good egg—and regularly, too, if watched a little—and will "keep themselves" upon the offal and refuse of your table.

THE MALLARD, OR WILD DUCK.

The full plumage of the male resembles that of many of our most esteemed domestic drakes. The female has a greenish-black beak, with a black nail; general color brown, the feathers being edged with black. The male

is about two feet long; the female somewhat less. At the close of the breeding season, the male loses his gay plumage, and assumes very nearly the garb of the female, only somewhat darker.



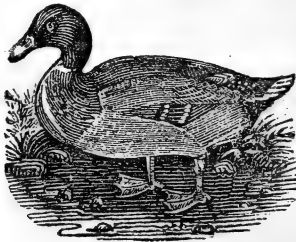
THE DOMESTIC DRAKE.

The duck should always find a place in the poultry-yard, provided only that it can have access to water; without water it is useless to endeavor to keep these fowl, but even a very small supply will suffice. It must be remembered that the flesh of these birds will be found to partake, to a great extent, of the flavor of the food on which they have been fattened; and, as they are naturally very fowl feeders, care should be taken, for at least a week or so before killing, to confine them to select food. Boiled potatoes are very good feeding, and are still better, if a little grain be mixed through them; Indian meal will be found both economical and nutritive, but should be used sparingly at first.

THE COMMON DUCK.

The duck is very prolific. An account in an English newspaper states that a duck, belonging to a Mr. Morrell, of Belper Dally, laid an egg daily for eighty-five successive days. This was in 1823-4. The egg of the

duck is by some people very much relished, having a rich piquancy of flavor, which gives it a decided superiority



THE COMMON DUCK.

over the egg of the common fowl. The duck does not lay during the day, but generally in the night; exceptions, regulated by circumstances, will, of course, occasionally occur. While laying, the duck requires more attention than the hen, until they are accustomed to resort to a regular nest for depositing their eggs.

The duck is a bad *hatcher*; she is too fond of the water, and is, consequently, too apt to suffer her eggs to get cold; she will, also, no matter what sort of weather it be, bring the ducklings to the water the moment they break the shell—a practice always injurious, and frequently fatal; hence the very common practice of setting ducks under hens. The eggs of the duck are thirty-one days in hatching. During incubation, they require no turning, or other attention; and, when hatched, only require to be kept from water for a day or two. Their first food may be boiled eggs, and a little barley; in a few days they demand no care, being perfectly able to shift for themselves. The old duck is not so brave in the defence of her brood as the hen.

The *Aylesbury* duck, a large, handsome, white duck, is a very great favorite, and, until the introduction of the variety called Rhone, or Roan, but more properly Rouen, (as it takes its name from that town on the Seine,) was esteemed the most valuable of all; the latter bird, however, now fairly divides the honor with it, and is by some regarded as superior. The flesh of the *Aylesbury* duck

is of a most delicate flavor, being by many compared to that of the chicken.

The *Muscovy* or "Musk" duck does not, as some suppose, derive its name from having been brought from that country, but from the *flavor of its flesh*, and should more properly be termed the Musk duck, of which its other name is only a corruption; it is easily distinguished by a red membrane surrounding the eyes, and covering the cheeks. These ducks, not being in esteem, on account of their peculiar odor, and the unpleasant flavor of their flesh, are not worth breeding, unless to cross with the common variety, in which case, let it be remarked, that the Musk *drake* must be put to the common *duck*; this will produce a very large cross, but *vice versa* will produce a very inferior one.

The *Musk* duck is a distinct species from the common duck; and the hybrid race will, therefore, not breed again between themselves, although they are capable of doing so with either of the species from the commixture of which they sprung.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WEIGHT OF POULTRY.

THE comparative *weight* of domestic fowls has got to be a matter of considerable interest, and the *larger* breeds of cocks and hens are now sought for much more anxiously than formerly. It is got to be appreciated, if model *and* size can be united, and the desirable laying qualities can be retained *also*, that *such* birds are to be the stock for breeders—especially those who will hereafter breed for the market; and such will be the most generally sought after, we imagine, in our vicinity.

We find, in a late number of the *Boston Cultivator*, an article on this subject, from a breeder in Pennsylvania, which we partially transfer to our pages. The writer evidently understands himself, but there is one query

which might pertinently be put to this gentleman, we opine; and which (in his anxiety to compare the home-bred with the foreign fowl) he loses sight of, to wit:—*Where did HIS large and weighty fowls originate?* He argues that the “Cochin China” fowl is not so heavy as his *Pennsylvania* (?) birds; then he quotes the weights of the *Chittagongs*! Surely, this latter is a species of the great China breed of fowls. But we give his article, as we find it, as follows, on the

“IMPROVED BREEDS OF POULTRY.

“MR. EDITOR:—I have been interested very much, for some time past, in the light thrown upon that much neglected or badly managed branch of rural economy, the breeding and raising of poultry. * * * I am surprised that I, as well as some others, should have thought it expedient or necessary to send across the Atlantic for *large* fowls, when we have at home those which in every respect are quite as good, and in many respects even much better. I have no hesitation in saying, that, in the *large breeds* and *varieties*, we are much in advance of the English breeders. * * * And as some of your readers may, in the present stage of the ‘*chicken fever*,’ be inclined to send to England for some of their large fowls,—perhaps the Cochin China, as they seem to be the chief attraction,—I will record some of the results of my experience and correspondence, for their especial benefit.

“In the first place, the fowl denominated Cochin China, said to have been presented to the Queen, a few years since, has been described and drawn so variously and conflictingly, that it is difficult to say what it really is—especially as no one, save, perhaps, the Queen herself, or the person who presented the fowl, seems to know whence or how it came into England. * * *

“Now, I doubt whether this fowl is anything more or less than the wild Shanghae, found in the mountains of Northern China, of which I have a few beautiful specimens, imported in 1847. They agree so much in description, and also, as I shall show, in weight, with my pure wild Shanghaes, which weigh, when full grown,

from 15 to 16 lbs. per pair, that I have little or no hesitation in saying they were born and bred in Northern China, and not in Cochin China. My Chittagongs and Cochin Chinas, which come, the one from the vicinity of Calcutta, and the other from Southern China, are, as I shall show, considerably larger. From gentlemen with whom I have corresponded, I recently learned the weights of several specimens of fowls in England, which I shall now put in juxtaposition with some of my own.

POULTRY RECENTLY WEIGHED IN ENGLAND.

	lbs.	oz.
Dorking Cock, 2 years old,	7	4
Dorking Cock, age not named,	6	12
Malay Cock, young,	8	0
Cochin China Cock, 2 years old,	7	9
Cochin China Stag, 2 years old,	5	8
Cochin China Hen, moulting,	5	5
Cochin China Stag, moulting,	5	2
Malay Hen, moulting,	5	6
Malay Pullet, moulting,	4	5
Dorking Hen, full grown,	6	2
Dorking Pullet, full grown,	4	6

"I refer your readers to Mr. Dixon's treatise for a more extended list of weights, who will still further confirm the assertion, that, in point of weight, our fowls are superior.

POULTRY WEIGHED THIS DAY IN MY OWN YARD.

	lbs.	oz.
Cochin China Cock, 13 months old,	11	4
Cochin China Stag, 8 months old,	9	12
Cochin China Pullet, 7 months old,	6	10
Cochin China Pullet, 8 months old,	7	2
Chittagong Stag, 8½ months old,	10	6
Chittagong Pullet, 7 months old,	8	7
Chittagong Pullet, 8 months old,	9	2
Chittagong Pullet, 6 months old,	6	12
Chittagong Hen, 2 years old,	10	6

"I have a Chittagong hen, three years and three months old, which, last spring, weighed 13¼ lbs.; she being, however, a *rara avis*, should not be regarded as a fair sample.

"The English fowls were weighed about seven weeks since, when scarcely over the effects of moulting; this

might make a difference of a pound or a pound and a half in their favor over fowls weighed now; but even then, the balance is still heavily in our favor. And so I think every breeder or fancier who breeds judiciously, *pure* fowls, will find, at least in the question of *weight*, a balance in his favor over the best and reliable results of the English breeder. To what this superiority is owing — whether to our *drier* climate, or a better selection of stock — I pretend not to say; but, knowing the *facts*, I have thought proper to record them, with the view of encouraging at once our breeders in a proper use of their *own* material, and preventing the young and ardent fancier expending money in sending for *large* transatlantic fowls, only to be disappointed, or find that he could have procured as good, if not better, nearer home, at much less delay and expense.

“*Kensington, Phila.*”

ASA RUGG.”

We had supposed that the *Chittagong* fowl was one of the Eastern or *China* variety — and, indeed, we think so still. We consider this superior fowl at the head of its species; but it is a *foreign* fowl, surely, as well as the “*Cochin China*,” or the “*Shanghae*.”

In the *American Union* (Boston) of February 16th, 1850, we find the following article on the weight of poultry, from the pen of Mr. Burnham, its editor, who says:

“In the appendix attached to a late edition of ‘*Browne’s American Poultry-Yard*,’ a work published in New York, and containing some good information upon the subject of breeding and rearing fowls, we find several tables furnished by known breeders in this country, purporting to give the *weight* of their domestic birds. The statements therein made caused us much doubt as to their correctness — at least, comparatively — and we weighed our own stock, last week, out of curiosity, to ascertain if we could possibly be so much mistaken as these tables led us to infer. We select from the number a specimen contributed by Mr. Dixon, a well-known poulterer, who sets down the weight of some of his fowls as follows:

	<i>lbs. oz.</i>
Cochin China Cock, 16 months old, . . . . .	.6 5
Cochin China Hen, 16 months old, . . . . .	.4 6
Malay Cock, 16 months old, . . . . .	.6 14
Malay Hen, 16 months old, . . . . .	.4 8
Cochin China Cockerel, 6 months old, . . . . .	.4 14
Another Cochin China Cockerel, 6 months old, . . . . .	.4 13

“ Mr. Alfred Whittaker furnishes the following :

	<i>lbs. oz.</i>
Pheasant Malay Cocks — average 2 years old, . . . . .	.7 0
Pheasant Malay Hens — average 2 years old, . . . . .	.5 1
Pheasant Malay Pullet, 17 months old, . . . . .	.5 3
Spanish Hen, . . . . .	.5 0
Surrey Hen, 2 years old, . . . . .	.5 12
Malay and Dorking Hen, (crossed,) 4 years old, . . . . .	.5 8

“ A third list gives the following weights :

	<i>lbs. oz.</i>
Black Polish Cock, 3 years old, . . . . .	.5 3
Black Polish Hen, 3 years old, . . . . .	.3 4
Black Polish Pullet, . . . . .	.2 6
Golden Polish Cock, . . . . .	.5 0
Golden Polish Hen, . . . . .	.3 8
Malay Hen, . . . . .	.4 12

“ After giving the above accounts, the article on the weight of poultry concludes as follows:— ‘ It will appear from the foregoing, that for a cock of *any* breed to reach $7\frac{1}{2}$ pounds, *even live weight*, he must be an unusually fine bird ; (!) but this must be nearly doubled before we can rival those *Cochin China* specimens, in whose existence some persons *appear* to believe.’

“ Now, with all due deference to the opinion of Mr. Samuel Allen, (who signs this singular statement,) to Mr. Dixon, and Mr. Whittaker, we respectfully offer the following table of the actual *live weight* of a few of our own fowls, which were placed in the scales on Saturday, Feb. 9th, 1850. We will premise that our birds were by no means in the best condition ; having been confined for several days, on account of the bad weather, and three or four of them having been sick for a month. We have selected from the tables alluded to the *heaviest* birds out of the whole. We give the weights of ours, just as they stand, large and small, as follows :

	<i>lbs. oz.</i>
Grey Chittagong Cockerel, 8 months old,	10 3
Grey Chittagong Pullet, 8 months old,	8 3
Imported Cochin China Cockerel, 6½ months old,	8 2
Imported Cochin China Cockerel, 5½ months old,	7 9
One Baylies "Shanghae" Hen, 2 years old,	9 8
One imported Cochin China Pullet, 6 months old,	7 0
Three imported Cochin China Pullets — average, 5 mos.,	6 7
Imported Shanghae Cock, 1 year old,	9 4
Do. do. Cockerel, 8 months old,	8 2
Do. do. do. 7 months old,	7 14
Do. do. do. 4½ months old,	6 5
Do. do. Pullets, each 1 year old,	7 14
Do. do. Pullets, each 7 and 8 months old,	6 7
"Plymouth Rock" Cockerel, 10 months old,	8 2
Do. do. do. 9 months old,	8 0
Two Plymouth Rock Pullets, 10 months old, each,	6 8
Two Cochin China Pullets, 9 months old, each,	5 6
Two Chittagong or Great Malay Pullets, 5½ months each,	5 9

"In the tables quoted from Mr. Browne's work, the heaviest rooster of any breed is set down at 7 lbs.; the heaviest hen of any breed quoted, 5 lbs. 12 oz. The lightest *pullet* we have in our yard draws over 5½ lbs.; the heaviest rooster, 10 lbs. 3 oz.; the heaviest pullet, over 8 lbs. According to Mr. Allen, then, we may safely set it down that we have several 'unusually large and fine birds,' and none others, for, with the exception of *chickens*, we have not a single rooster that will not outweigh his *maximum*, '7½ lbs. for an unusually fine bird!' We rather reckon we could show the above-named breeders something in Massachusetts which they hav' n't seen, if these 'tables' be correct."

CHAPTER VIII.

PROFITS OF POULTRY KEEPING.

THE committee, in their report upon the doings of the late Fowl Exhibition in Boston, remark truthfully, that they deem it "a very important part of their duty to warn amateurs and others of the *impropriety of selecting their stocks from any other than the most approved*

breeds of fowls. Generally, the system of breeding poultry is conducted in the most loose and unscientific manner, and no real dependence can be placed on other than *the purest stock*. By selecting it, the articles, early maturity, large size, and liberal produce, are surely to be depended upon; whereas, by indiscriminately adopting impure stock, there is no security that these will result.

“Under the loose system of breeding referred to, it is equally impossible to *keep up*, as it is to *establish*, a distinctive breed of poultry. To conserve the purity of any variety, so that ‘like will produce like,’ in appearance and properties, is of the highest importance — is, in fact, (next to the securing of these in a distinctive shape,) the grand aim of the scientific breeder.”

After selecting the *best stock*, the breeder has but to take proper care of his fowls, afford them plenty of good food, in season, provide them with shelter from the wet and cold, and he will find that such stock will repay him in large eggs and plenty of them, as well as in good chickens. We append below the results ascertained with certain quantities of fowls, as evidence of the average of profit which may ordinarily be made upon keeping poultry.

Mr. Daniel Putnam, of North Danvers, Mass., records the following in the *Boston Cultivator*.

“For the last eighteen months, my fowls have been under the care of a daughter, who, for her own gratification, has kept a minute account of the expense of their food, and also of their products. They are kept in a cellar, under a small barn, 38 feet long, 18 wide. It is light, airy, pleasant, having several glass windows on the southern side, with an entrance on a level with the room. Connected with this is a small enclosure above ground, 14 feet by 12, which has a boarded roof, is lathed on the sides, to which they have access. In the cellar, are boxes fitted for laying, with a door in front, and an aperture on the back for the entrance of the hens. As regards their food, corn is kept constantly before them, in the self-feeding hopper. Shorts are given, mixed with pot-liquor; other than this, they have no animal

food. Small potatoes, boiled and chopped, are freely used. Through the warm season, they have a constant fresh supply of grass, clover, sorrel, chickweed, &c., occasionally the tops of such vegetables as they will eat. In the winter, oats are used with the corn. There is also kept by them bone-meal, pounded charcoal and oyster-shells, together with a large box of sifted ashes, in which they can readily roll themselves. Under the place of roosting is kept soil and meadow mud, which is exchanged twice a year. Fresh water is carried to them each day. In cold weather they are fed once, in summer three times, per day. No disease or death has occurred among them, and they have been comparatively free from vermin.

"The statement which follows comprises a year, commencing Sept. 25, 1848, ending Sept. 25, 1849.

"The number of fowls on hand Sept. 1849 was 16 hens, 2 crows, and 26 chickens two months old, and an *average* for the year, 14 hens and 1½ crower.

"The number of eggs laid during the year was 1668, or 139 dozen. Of this number, 82½ dozen were sold for \$14.66, averaging 18 cts. per dozen. The remainder, valued at the same rate, amounted to \$10.22, making the total value of eggs, \$24.88.

EXPENSE OF KEEPING.

12 bushels of corn, at 75 cents per bushel,	\$10.00
8 " of shorts, at 22 cents per bushel,	1.76
2½ " of oats, at 50 cents per bushel,	1.25
7 " of potatoes, at 30 cents per bushel,	2.10
22¼ lbs. of soap-grease, at 4 cents per pound, . . . . .	.89
Oyster-shells and bone-meal, . . . . .	.95

Total, \$15.95

Value less of stock than September, 1848 3.00

\$18.95

VALUE OF PRODUCTS.

Value of eggs,	\$24.88
Value of fowls sold,	4.43
Value of fowls killed,	3.92
Value of manure,	5.00

Total, \$38.23

Products,	\$38.23
Expenses, &c.	18.95
	<hr/>
Net profits,	\$19.28

In the report of a committee on poultry of the Wayne County (N. Y.) Agricultural Society, it is said that David Cushing keeps 25 hens, and feeds them with oats, corn-meal, broom-corn seed and refuse meat, supplied with ashes, pounded shells, &c., confined to a warm, dry room in winter. His account is:—

<i>Poultry</i>	<i>Dr.</i>
To investment of stock and fixtures,	\$50.00
Interest,	3.00
Feed, 25 bushels of oats, at 20c., (large estimate,)	5.00
Attendance,	5.00
	<hr/>
	\$63.50

<i>Poultry Establishment.</i>	<i>Cr.</i>
By 75 doz. eggs, sold early, 12 cts.	\$9.38
200 chickens, 10 cts.	20.00
Stock and fixtures on hand,	50.00
	<hr/>
	\$79.38

Leaving a net balance of \$15.88
on an investment of \$50, or an interest of more
than 27 per cent. on the capital employed.

J. J. Thomas, in the *Albany Cultivator*, states that careful experiments have led to the conclusion that "1½ bushel of oats will be an adequate yearly supply for each adult" hen, and allowing the fowls "an hour's run for exercise before retiring for the night, high health and productiveness will be secured."

Mrs. Reynolds addresses the *Albany Cultivator* on this subject, and says:— "Having previously kept only the common kind of fowls, Mr. R. procured, last year, a pair of crested Polanders, making, with those we before had, 28 fowls. We killed some occasionally, till the chickens were large enough to be eaten, when we had 20 old ones left. We raised over 100 chickens,— half and full bloods together. Our early pullets commenced laying in the fall: none of them wanted to set. Accord-

ing to our account kept, we sold, from Jan. 1, 1843, to Jan. 1, 1844, 1866 eggs, and received \$19 for them. We kept no account of food consumed, but gave a liberal supply."

George Bement, Esq., of Albany, says: — "Most of my fowls were of the fancy breeds, — the geese of the large Bremen and Chinese varieties. They have been allowed as much grain as they would eat, and a few boiled potatoes fed to them while warm, and occasionally animal food, such as boiled liver, &c., in winter, with lime, gravel, and a constant stream of water running in the yard. Their food was changed often. It consisted of oats, wheat screenings, millet and corn. We found that twelve quarts of oats were sufficient for seventy fowls per day, and other grains in proportion to their weight. The following is his account: —

<i>Poultry Establishment.</i>	<i>Dr.</i>	<i>Contra.</i>	<i>Cr.</i>
To 15 Cocks, 50c. each,	\$7.50	By 3978 Hen's eggs, 12c.	\$39.78
69 Hens, 37½c.	25.87	39 Duck's eggs, 12c. . . .	.39
3 Turkeys, 62½c.	1.87	39 Turkey's eggs, 12c. . . .	.39
7 Geese, \$1,	7.00	50 Guinea Hen's eggs, 6c. . . .	.25
1 Fancy Duck, \$1,	1.00	47 Geese eggs, 36c.	1.41
1 Guinea Fowl, 25c. . . . .	.25	41 Fowls sold,	46.31
71 bu. Screenings, 15c.	11.25	5 Geese sold,	7.00
4 bush. Millet, 50c.	2.00	30 Fowls killed,	7.06
14¼ bush. Corn, 42½c.	6.07	2 Geese killed,	2.00
30¼ bush. Oats, 24c.	7.26	2 Turkeys killed,	1.00
8 bush. Potatoes, 25c.	2.00	11 Fowls died,	
32 Fowls purchased,	15.09	1 Turkey died,	
3 Turkeys purchased,	1.13	6 Fowls presented,	
	<hr/>	32 bu. manure sold to the	
	\$88.30	Morocco Tanner,	6.00
		54 Hens on hand, 37½c. ea.	20.25
		18 Cocks, 50c.	9.00
		6 Geese, \$1,	6.00
		1 Duck, \$1,	1.00
		10 Turkeys, 50c.	5.00
		2 Guinea Fowls, 25c. . . . .	.50
			<hr/>
			\$153.34
		Expense,	88.30
			<hr/>
		Profits,	65.04

“Valuing them at the price of common poultry, — that is, 15 cents apiece for the fowls, and 50 cents for the turkeys and geese, — leaves a profit of \$30.51.”

A writer in the *Cultivator* says, “This year, (1842,) I have about 40 hens, mostly pullets, and three cocks. They commenced laying in the latter part of January, and up to the last of April — about 90 days — have given me about 120 dozen (1440) eggs.”

Another correspondent says, “that when his fowls commenced laying, he had 37 hens and three cocks, and when they ceased laying, he had 26, the average being 32. In about 300 days, between January and November, they yielded 3,298 eggs.”

“*Mr. E. Tucker*, of Milton,” says the editor of the *Massachusetts Ploughman*, “tells us that he obtained 600 dozen (7,200) eggs in one year from 83 hens; this was his highest number of fowls; he sometimes had less; that, for 562 dozen, (6,744,) he took \$100 within one cent. The whole amount of his cash expenditures was \$56.43, leaving him a balance of \$43.57.”

Mr. Westfall, of Rhinebeck, says, “From 45 hens, I have, the past year, (1840,) raised more than 150 chickens, although I had rather poor success in hatching the eggs. I have sold eggs to the amount of \$21.29; have now over 300 on hand, and the year since the receipt of the first egg last spring will not be up till the last of this month, (February,) and we are now getting from 20 to 25 eggs per day, from about 80 hens.”

CHAPTER IX.

FEEDING AND REARING POULTRY.

VERY little has as yet been written upon the subject of breeding that is satisfactory. So much *crossing*, re-crossing, breeding back, and breeding *in-and-in*, has been done in this country, that little is really known as to what course *should* be followed to breed fowls purely, and in just such a manner as the party may desire.

Some late writers decide that a cock need run with a brood of hens but *four or five days*, to effect all desirable purposes in establishing his kind; others insist that a much longer period is necessary to *perfect* a breed. One author has it that a few days will suffice; another contends that the whole litter is impregnated at the same time, and, if the particular crower is not placed with the hens *before the commencement of the formation of the litter, and continued afterwards*, the progeny will not be like the parent, or parents, uniformly.

Thus, to breed a hen under one rooster for a few weeks, and then introduce a stranger — though the chicks which follow may have *some* of the marks of the latter, (especially from the *later* eggs,) still there will appear specimens marked like the original parent, in form and plumage, in succeeding broods, from these eggs.

So far as our own opinion goes, we do not hesitate to say, that the better and *surer* way to breed fowls *pure* is, to place your pullets (before they begin to lay at all) with the crower you prefer best, (of the same breed,) and make no change during the period that the pullet's litter lasts *with which that crower commenced*. This is a safe plan, at any rate. That a strange crower *may* produce his like, however, after being with hens a week or two, we will not positively dispute; but the progeny *from* this progeny will pretty certainly come varied.

Notwithstanding the lengthy dissertations which many authors indulge in, upon the pretended *science* (!) of feeding and raising fowls, we know of no good reason for half the extended and intricate "directions" which are laid down in most poultry books, on this very simple subject.

Fowls need plenty of good food, pure water, (a running brook through the yard is best,) fresh air, ranging ground, shelter from cold and storms, and *perfect cleanliness* in their houses, to keep them in good health. With these privileges, poultry may easily be kept in a thriving condition, through the year.

Richardson says, "*Do not feed your hens too highly before they begin to lay;*" and this advice is good.

Neither should they be fed too generously while laying, or immediately after ceasing to lay, unless you wish to fatten them for table use; for as soon as a fowl begins to fatten, she stops laying. You must, therefore, separate the two classes of fowl, layers and fatteners, at all events at feeding time. Make some separate provision for your cocks; if they are only fed in company with the hens, they are apt to think too much of their mistresses, and to neglect their own appetites; and recollect that to have *strong* chickens, you must have a *strong cock*, which an ill-fed bird cannot be expected to prove.

Fowl about a farm-yard can usually pick up a portion of their subsistence, and that probably the largest portion, and, of course, in such situations poultry-keeping decidedly *pays best*. I must, however, particularly caution my readers against *depending* for the support, even of their *non-fattening* poultry, wholly upon such precarious resources; and I shall, accordingly, proceed in my advice as if no such resources existed.

The substances that may be used in poultry feeding are very numerous and various — cabbage, corn, turnips, carrots, parsnips, mangles; meal, oats, wheat, barley, rye, and other grains, substances too well known to require, and too numerous to be worth, the trouble of enumerating. It will not answer to feed fowl wholly upon *any one variety* of food; neither will it be found advisable to feed wholly upon any one *class* of food. I must speak of the latter first. Fowl require a mixture of *green* food with *hard* food, fully as much as horses or cattle do. When the birds have the advantage of an extensive range, they will find this for themselves; when they do not possess such an advantage, you must provide green food for them. Some do so by presenting the birds with cabbages or other greens, *chopped small*. This occasions waste. *Fasten* heads of cabbage, lettuce, rape, or other green herbs, to some fixture, by means of their roots, and let the fowl pick for themselves. This practice not merely prevents waste, but is, in consequence of the *amusement* it affords, decidedly conducive to health.

Wheat. — When *damaged* wheat can be bought at a low price, it may be used for the feeding of poultry with much profit and advantage; when no such thing can be procured, however, and when it is proposed to feed them upon the sound, marketable article, turn a deaf ear to the thoughtless adviser. The same may be said of *barley*, which is also objectionable as acting in a *purgative* manner — it is useful as an occasional feed, when fowl are over-fed. *Rye* is generally a cheaper description of grain than any other, and *damaged rye* may be used, to a certain extent.

I do not think that one circumstance connected with the feeding of poultry, and that a most important one, is sufficiently well known — I allude to the necessity they are under of obtaining *animal food*. Of course, when the birds possess the advantage of an extensive run, they can themselves pick up worms, snails, or slugs; and as in the case of ducks, &c., frogs and other small reptiles; but in cases where they do not possess this advantage, it is necessary that you cater for them. I have always experienced the best effects, especially as manifested in greatly increased *laying*, of giving scraps of animal food about twice or thrice a week to the fowl; I have also found the best mode of doing so to be, throwing down a bullock's liver, leaving it with them, and permitting them to pick *ad libitum*; of course, care must be taken that cats or dogs do not steal it; I further think that the liver is better given *raw* than boiled.

When a hen *pines*, or seems disposed to be *thin*, you need not hesitate in giving buckwheat with even a liberal hand; but you must so manage as not to permit to share in this department of your bounty such hens as are disposed to become *too fat*. According as hens take on fat, they usually fall off in laying, and *this should be particularly kept in mind in feeding*. When hens are disposed to flesh, you will find *hemp-seed* the best promoter of laying.

Fowl of all kinds require *sand* or *gravel* as an aid to digestion, being, in fact, necessary to promote a medium of *trituration* in the gizzard, as well as to supply calcareous matter for their *egg-shells*. You should, therefore,

always have such placed within the birds' reach. This, I must admit, applies more immediately to such fowl as are kept in a confined yard; when the range is at all extensive, the birds can usually pick up enough for themselves. Fresh water gravel is the best; if you live near the sea, and wish to use sand so easily obtainable from the beach, you should first wash it, and in two or three waters. Where no sand of *any kind* can be obtained, as in towns, you can buy *chalk*, or give them plenty of *old mortar*: you will, of course, *pound* before placing it in the yard.

"Twelve hens shall be enough for one good cock, which will cause the progeny to be more of a color; but yet our ancestors used to give only five hens to one cock, thus producing a diversity of color. To have the hens all of one color is preferable, some white, and these are considered the best layers."

M. Parmentier, a very eminent French writer, says, that one cock is *much more* than sufficient for fifteen, or even twenty hens, provided he be a young, vigorous, and healthy bird.

If you look for profit to the production of eggs alone, I should say that one cock—if a stout, young, and lively bird—may have as many as twenty hens. If, however, you want to obtain strong and thriving chickens, you must restrict him to six, or at most, eight. If your object be the improvement of a worn-out or degenerate breed, the fewer hens you allow to one cock the better, and you should not, at any rate, allow him more than three.

"When," says Bosc, "it is wished to have eggs during the cold season, even in the dead of winter, it is necessary to make the fowls roost over an oven, in a stable, or to erect a stove in the poultry-house on purpose. By such methods the farmers of Auge have chickens fit for the table in the month of April, a period when they are only beginning to be hatched on the farms around Paris, although further to the south. It would be desirable to have stoves more common in poultry-houses near cities, where luxury grudges no expense for the convenience of having fresh eggs."

A writer in the *Cultivator* says, "I never allow cocks to run with my hens, except when I want to raise chickens." He recommends giving them fresh meat chopped fine, once a day; never allowing any eggs to remain in the nest for nest eggs. "My hens," continues the writer, "always lay all winter, and from 75 to 100 eggs each, in succession. There being nothing to excite the animal passions, they never attempt to sit. I have for several years reduced my theory to practice, and proved its entire correctness."

Boswell says, "To promote fecundity and great laying in the hen, nothing more is necessary than the best corn and fair water; but malted or sprouted barley has occasionally a good effect, whilst the hens are kept on solid corn; but if continued too long, they are apt to scour." "It must be noted," says another writer, "that nothing is more necessary towards success in the particular of obtaining plenty of eggs than a good attendance of cocks, especially in the cold season; and it is also especially to be observed, that a cock whilst moulting is generally useless."

The following general rules in *raising* poultry we cut from an agricultural journal, and, in the main, we can recommend the directions thus given:

1. All young chickens, ducks, and turkeys, should be kept under cover, out of the weather, during rainy seasons.

2. Twice or thrice a week, pepper, shalot, chives, or garlic, should be mixed up with their food.

3. A small lump of asafœtida should be placed in the pan in which their water is given them to drink.

4. Whenever they manifest disease, by the drooping of their wings, or any other outward sign of ill flesh, a little asafœtida, broken into small lumps, should be mixed with their food.

5. Chickens which are kept from the dunghill while young seldom have the gapes; therefore, it should be the object of those who have the charge of them so to confine the hens as to preclude their young from the range of barn or stable yards.

6. Should any of the chickens have the gapes, mix up small portions of asafœtida, rhubarb, and pepper, in fresh butter, and give each chicken as much of the mixture as will lie upon one half the bowl of a small teaspoon.

7. For the pip, the following treatment is judicious : — Take off the indurated covering on the point of the tongue, and give twice a day, for two or three days, a piece of garlic the size of a pea. If garlic cannot be obtained, onion, shallot, or chives, will answer ; but if neither of these be convenient, two grains of black pepper, to be given in fresh butter, will answer.

8. For the snuffles, the same remedies as for the gapes will be found highly curative ; but, in addition to them, it is necessary to melt a little asafœtida in fresh butter, and rub the chicken about the nostrils, taking care to clean them out.

9. Grown up ducks are sometimes taken off rapidly by convulsions ; in such cases, four drops of rhubarb and four grains of Cayenne pepper, mixed in fresh butter, should be administered. Last year we lost several by this disease, and this year the same symptoms manifested themselves among them ; but we arrested the malady without losing a single duck, by a dose of the above medicine to such as were ill. One of the ducks was at the time paralyzed, but was thus saved.

CHAPTER X.

DISEASES OF POULTRY.

A GREAT many *kinds* of diseases are said to exist among fowls ; and these have been designated by a great variety of names. In other countries they may exist among poultry, but in New England we have never known such a diversity of character in the attacks of sickness or debility which our fowls are here subject to ; and, as a general thing, the symptoms are very similar, in most cases that have come under our observation. We conceive these diseases to be, for the most part, *Catarrh*, *Asthma*,

Pip, Fevers, Flux, and Consumption. What is generally termed the "Roup" around us is some one, or all, of the above combined; the roup is supposed by some to be an affection of the rump-gland; this is an error.

The "*Snuffles*" is a common term given to a disease very prevalent among fowls in New England. If not cared for seasonably, by washing the nostrils, eyes, and head, thoroughly, in warm water, and cleansing the mouth and eyes, in the early stages, it eventuates in confirmed *roup*, which is thus described and remedied, according to Richardson:—

"The true roup in poultry is a disease analogous to influenza in man, or even more so to the well-known distemper among dogs; and, in some forms, perhaps to the *glanders* of the horse.

"The symptoms are—difficulty of breathing; constant gaping; dimness of sight; lividity of the eyelids; and the total loss of sight; a discharge from the nostrils, that gradually becomes purulent and fetid; appetite has fled, but thirst remains to the most aggravated extent. Sometimes this disease appears to occur independently of any obvious cause; but *dirt, too hot feeding, and want of exercise*, are among the most usual.

"As to treatment—many writers have given various directions as to the treatment of roup. I shall record a case related by an intelligent Middlesex farmer:—

"A cock, of about four or five months old, apparently turned out by somebody to die, came astray, and was in the last stage of roup. The discharge from his mouth and nostrils was very considerable, and extremely pungent and fetid; while his eyes appeared to be affected with an inflammation similar to Egyptian ophthalmia. The cock was placed at the fireside, his mouth and nostrils washed with soap and warm water, his eyes washed with warm milk and water, and the head gently rubbed with a dry cloth. Internally he was given long pellets formed of

Barley-meal,	} equal parts.
Flour,	
Mustard,	} equal parts and half the above.
Grated Ginger,	

He was also given to drink, lukewarm water, sweetened with treacle.

“ ‘In three days this bird began to see, and in a week his sight was almost perfectly restored. A little mustard was still given him in his water; and then some flour of sulphur. He had also a pinch of calomel in some dough. He was generally brought out so as to inure him to the cold, and in a month was as well as ever.

“ ‘Having moulted late, the same bird caught cold at the first frost, and suffered a relapse — from which, however, he was recovered by warmth alone.’

“ My treatment would be merely a modification of the above — warmth and cleanliness, as matters of course; but, for pellets, I prefer —

Powdered Gentian,	1 part.
Powdered Ginger,	1 “
Epsom Salts,	1½ “
Flour of Sulphur,	½ “

Made up with butter, and give every morning.

“ If the discharge should become fetid, the mouth, nostrils, and eyes, may be bathed with a weak solution, composed of equal parts of chloride of lime and acetate of lead.” We have tried the *latter* recipe, with good success, the past season.

“ Turkeys and dung-hill fowls, which are kept closely confined, are often affected with a disease of the eyes and head, called “*sore head*.” It sometimes destroys the sight. Some suppose it to be contagious. We have known fowls to have it, which had their liberty in the day-time, but roosted at night in a building or room fitted purposely for them. We observe that Mr. A. P. Cummings, at a late meeting of the Farmer’s Club, New York, gives it as his opinion that the ammonia of the dung injures their eyes. He removes the dung, and scatters on the spot plaster of Paris freely.”

Moulting.—Dr. Bechstein remarks, that, in a state of nature, moulting occurs to wild birds precisely when their food is most plenty; hence, nature herself points out that the fowl should, during that period, be furnished with an extra supply of food. After the third year, the

period of moulting becomes later and later, until it will sometimes happen in January or February. Of course, when this occurs, every care as to *warmth* should be bestowed. The use of Cayenne pepper alone will generally suffice. Do not listen to the recommendation of ignorant or presuming quacks; if this simple treatment do not help them through, they will die, in spite of all you may do.

Pip. — A well-known author says that this is a disease to which young fowl are peculiarly liable, and that, too, chiefly in hot weather.

The symptoms are — a thickening of the membrane of the tongue, especially toward its tip. This speedily becomes an obstruction of sufficient magnitude to impede the breathing; this produces gasping for breath; and at this stage the beak will often be held open. The plumage becomes ruffled and neglected, especially about the head and neck. The appetite gradually goes; and the poor bird shows its distress by pining, moping, and seeking solitude and darkness.

The cause of this disease is want of clean water and feeding upon *hot food*. Dr. Bechstein considers it to be analogous to the *influenza* of human beings. In fact, theories respecting its nature are too numerous to mention, and are of very little practical importance.

CURE. — Most writers recommend the immediate removal of the thickened membrane. Rather anoint the part with fresh butter or cream. Prick the scab with a needle, if you like; and give internally a pill, about the size of a marble, composed of —

Scraped } Garlic,
 } Horse-radish, } equal parts.

As much Cayenne pepper as will outweigh a grain of wheat.

Mix with fresh butter, and give it every morning, keeping the fowl warm. Keep the bird supplied with plenty of fresh water; preserve it from molestation, by keeping it by itself, and you will generally find it get well, if you have taken the disease in time. Do not let any one, equally ignorant and cruel, persuade you to cram the mouth with

snuff, after having torn off the thickened membrane with your nail. This is equally repugnant to humanity and common sense.

Asthma is characterized by gaping, panting, and difficulty of breathing.

We need not go far to seek for a cause. Our poultry are originally natives of tropical climates; and, however well they may appear climatized, they, nevertheless, require a more equable temperature than our climate, unaided by artificial means, can afford. Hence, coughs, colds, catarrh, asthma, pulmonary consumption.

CURE. — Warmth, with small repeated doses of hippo powder and sulphur, mixed with butter and Cayenne pepper.

Fever. — Fowl are frequently subject to febrile affections.

The mode of treatment is simple. — Light food, and little of it; change of air; and, if necessary, aperient medicines — such as castor-oil, with a little burnt butter.

Costiveness. — This affection will, in general, yield to castor-oil and burned butter. The diet should be sparing. Thin porridge (or mush) will be found useful.

Flux. — This generally proceeds from an aggravated diarrhœa. Rice boiled in milk, or starch, usually effects a cure.

Consumption is incurable; but, if anything will do it good, it is change of air and warmth.

CHAPTER XI.

CAPONIZING.

THE business of making *capons* (castrated fowls) is carried on rather extensively in the region of Philadelphia, but little is known of the process of performing this operation in New England. The objects to be gained by this work are to increase the size of the fowl rapidly, and to render the flesh (when finally fitted for the table) more delicate and palatable.

By this operation, the natural fierceness of the cock is quieted; he becomes placid and peaceful; his pugnacity has deserted him; he no longer seeks the company of the hens; he grows to a far larger size than he otherwise would have done; he acquires flesh with far greater rapidity, and that flesh is peculiarly white, firm, and succulent, and even the fat is perfectly destitute of rankness. To these advantages another may, perhaps, be added: namely, the *capon* may, by a little management, be converted into an admirable nurse, and will be found particularly valuable, in this respect, to parties using the *eccalobeion*, or hatching-machine!

The process of caponizing has been made a subject of much unnecessary mystery, and, I regret to add, says Richardson, of much unnecessary *cruelty*. In point of fact, the process is an extremely simple affair, and one which the country henwives in France perform with facility and certainty. The practice of the French country women is to select the close of the spring, or the beginning of autumn, as well as fine weather, for the performance of their work. The parts necessary to be removed being fixed in the abdomen, and attached to the spine at the region of the loins, it is absolutely necessary to *open the abdominal cavity* for the purpose of their extraction.

The bird should be healthy, fasting, and about three months old. He is then to be secured by an assistant, upon his back, his belly upwards, and his head down, that the intestines, &c., may fall up towards the breast; the tail is to be towards the operator. The right leg is then carried along the body, and the left brought backwards, and held in this position, so as to leave the left flank perfectly bare, for it is there that the incision is to be made. The said incision is to be directed from before backwards, transversely to the length of the body, at the middle of the flank, and slightly to the side between the ends of the breast-bone and the vent. Having plucked away the feathers from the space where it is intended to make the incision, you take a bistoury or a razor, and cut through the skin, abdominal muscles, and perito-

neum; it is better to do this at two or more cuts, in order to avoid the possibility of wounding the intestines — a casualty that would, in most cases, be attended with fatal results. The intestines present themselves at the orifice, but you must not suffer them to come out; on the contrary, you press them gently aside, so as to have room for action. The incision should have been sufficiently large to admit of the forefinger, previously well oiled, being passed into the abdomen, and carried carefully towards the lumbar region of the spine: you will there find what you are in search of. You first reach the *left* substance, which you detach with your nail, or with your finger bent hook-fashion; you then arrive at the right, which you treat similarly; bring both substances forth. You finally return the intestines, sew up the wound with a silk thread — a very few stitches will suffice — and smear the place with a little fresh butter.

The process having been performed as above described, the bird is placed in a warm house, *where there are no perches*, as, if such appliances were present, the newly-made capon might very probably injure himself in his attempts to perch; and, perhaps, even tear open the sutures; and, possibly, occasion the operation, usually simple and free from danger, to terminate fatally. For about a week, the food of the bird should be soft oat-meal porridge, and that in small quantities, alternated with bread steeped in milk; he may be given as much pure water as he will drink, but I recommend that it be *tepid*, or at least that the *chill* be taken off it. At the end of a week, or, at the furthest, ten days, the bird, if he has been previously of a sound, vigorous constitution, will be all right, and may be turned out into the walk common to all your fowl.

The principal objects proposed to be attained by the operation of caponizing are, a remarkable facility of fattening, and, consequently, enhanced profits to the feeders or breeders, and, under some circumstances, the acquisition of a greater degree of docility, so that the capon may even be taught to tend a brood of chickens.

The caponizing of *pullets* is performed in much the

same manner as in the case of cocks. The oviduct is found towards the loins, and is extracted in the same manner as already described in the former case. Some French writers, however, and Schreger amongst the first, state, that in the case of pullets or hens the operation is unnecessary, it being only required to make a small incision just above the vent, on a little eminence that will be perceived in that place; then, by repeated pressure, you cause the protrusion of the uterus — a little whitish body; this is cut away, the wound heals of itself, and nothing further is required.

The capon is so very much disposed of itself to take on flesh, that it will, in general, attain to sufficient condition in the yard, or about the barn-door. Sometimes, however, it is deemed advisable to *cram* him, a practice but little used in this country.

A little dish of fine gravel or coarse sand, left in the feeding-trough, will be relished by the birds, will promote digestion, and will, of course, thus aid in conducting to their rapid fattening.

In concluding this chapter, I would just beg to be permitted to observe, that no defence is offered of the practice of either caponizing or cramming; neither do we conceive it necessary, however, to volunteer as the assailant of either one or the other.

A correspondent of the *Philadelphia Ledger* gives the following very simple mode of castrating fowls:

“The bird was kept from food for two days, in order that the distended entrails should not conceal the organs from the view of the operator.

“Strapping its wings to a table, through an auger-hole, an inch incision was made in the side, between the hip and the last rib, and two inches from the spine; the feathers having been first plucked out at that spot.

“By a simple spring-grapple, the sides of the wound are kept apart. The organ to be removed is readily recognized; it is a small reddish-yellow cylinder, tied to the spine; and by means of a horse-hair, looped and passed through a little tube, it is removed in an instant. The bird was turned on the other side, another incision

made, and the corresponding organ excised — the whole process occupying about two minutes. The loose feathers were pressed on the wounds as a styptic, and the poor bird did not appear to suffer at all.”

CONCLUSION.

With the foregoing directions we close our present volume. We have culled, from the best sources, such information as we have deemed strictly applicable to the wants of our home community, and we have arranged it in such a shape that we flatter ourself it will be found acceptable in a *practical* view.

We have presented in this volume several accurate likenesses of some of the best known and highest valued fowls in America; from which stock new generations of superior domestic birds may be looked for, hereafter. At a future day, we may issue another edition of the “NEW ENGLAND POULTRY BREEDER,” if the demand will warrant it; and if so, we shall make such practical additions, revisions, and improvements upon our first edition, as the circumstances and our facilities may afford.

Meantime, we present these pages for the perusal and (we trust) the approval of the community at large, who are interested in the pleasing and laudable undertaking of improving the breed and character of American Poultry.

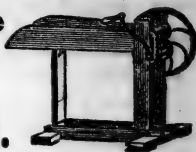
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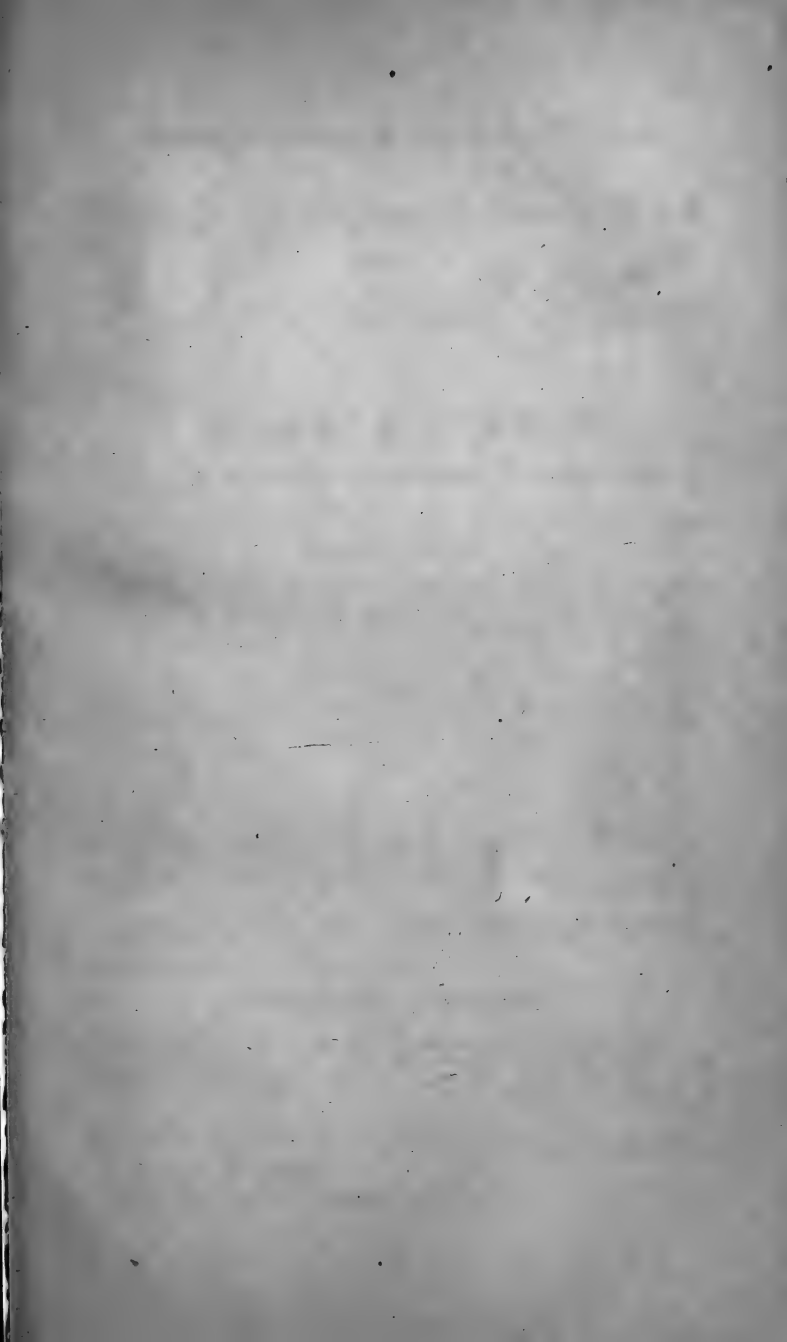
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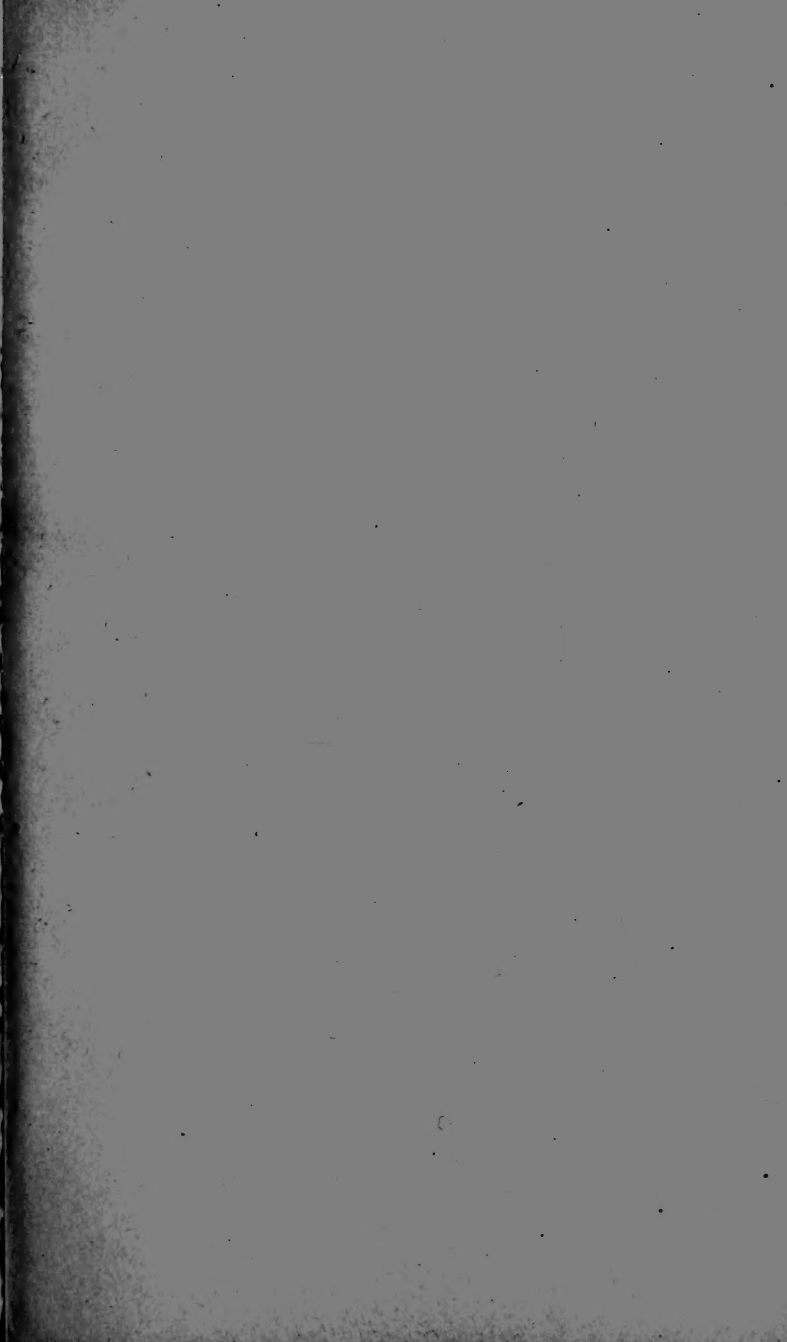
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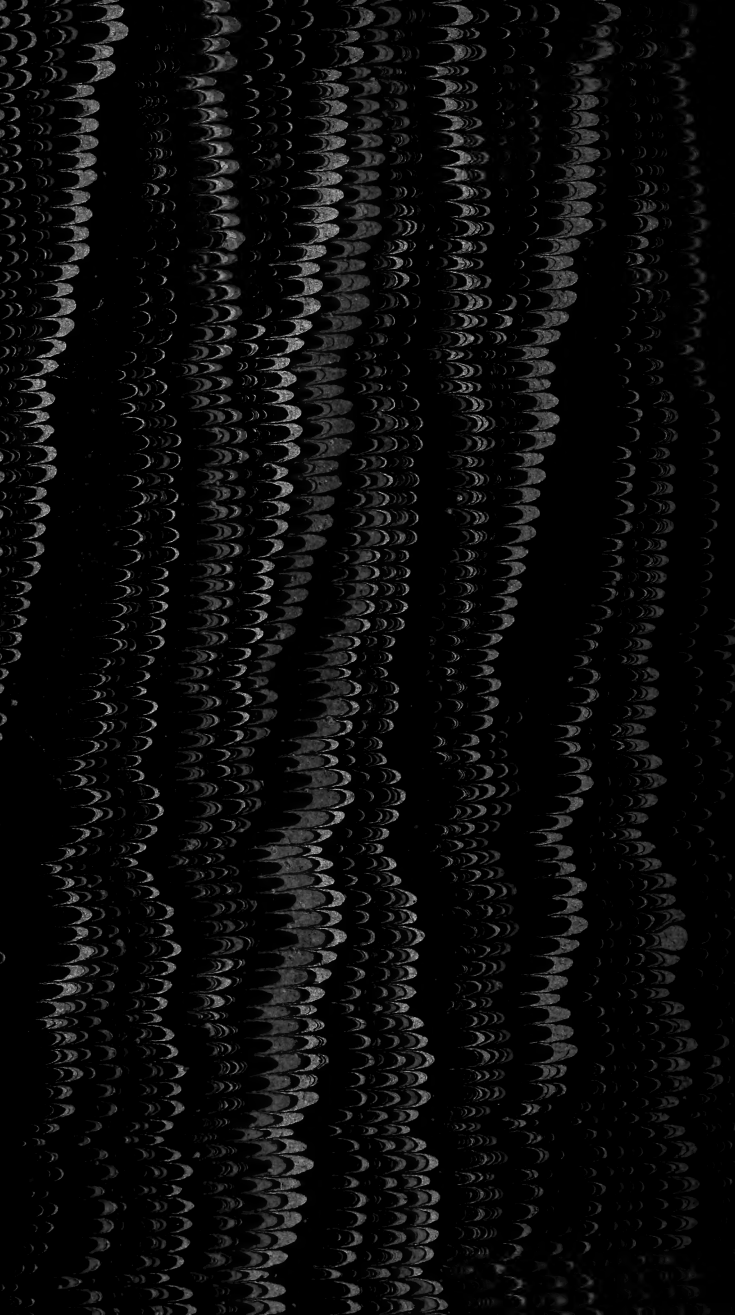
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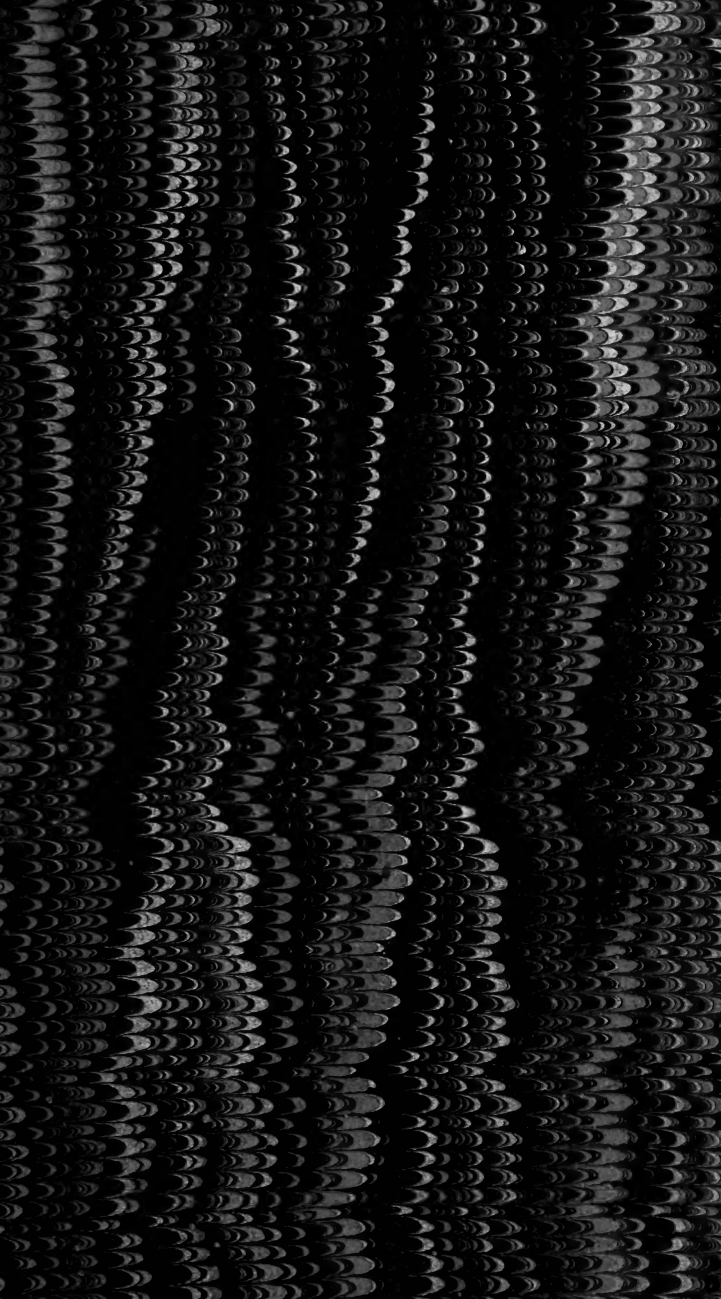
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