

vary considerably in character; for instance, Mr. Ballance states<sup>37</sup> that his Malay "pullets of last year laid eggs equal in size to those of any duck, and other Malay hens, two or three years old, laid eggs very little larger than a good sized Bantam's egg. Some were as white as a Spanish hen's egg, and others varied from a light cream-colour to a deep rich buff, or even to a brown." The shape also varies, the two ends being much more equally rounded in Cochins than in Games or Polish. Spanish fowls lay smoother eggs than Cochins, of which the eggs are generally granulated. The shell in this latter breed, and more especially in Malays is apt to be thicker than in Games or Spanish; but the Minorcas, a sub-breed of Spanish, are said to lay harder eggs than true Spanish.<sup>38</sup> The colour differs considerably,—the Cochins laying buff-coloured eggs; the Malays a paler variable buff; and Games a still paler buff. It would appear that darker-coloured eggs characterise the breeds which have lately come from the East, or are still closely allied to those now living there. The colour of the yolk, according to Ferguson, as well as of the shell, differs slightly in the sub-breeds of the Game. I am also informed by Mr. Brent that dark partridge-coloured Cochin hens lay darker coloured eggs than the other Cochin sub-breeds. The flavour and richness of the egg certainly differ in different breeds. The productiveness of the several breeds is very different. Spanish, Polish, and Hamburgh hens have lost the incubating instinct.

*Chickens.*—As the young of almost all gallinaceous birds, even of the black curassow and black grouse, whilst covered with down, are longitudinally striped on the back,—of which character, when adult, neither sex retains a trace,—it might have been expected that the chickens of all our domestic fowls would have been similarly striped.<sup>39</sup> This could, however, hardly have been expected, when the adult plumage in both sexes has undergone so great a change as to be wholly white or black. In white fowls of various breeds the chickens are uniformly yellowish white, passing in the black-boned Silk fowl into bright canary-yellow. This is also generally the case with the chickens of white Cochins, but I hear from Mr. Zurhost that they are sometimes of a buff or oak colour, and that all those of this latter colour, which were watched, turned out males. The chickens of buff Cochins are of a golden-yellow, easily distinguishable from the paler tint of the white Cochins, and are often longitudinally

<sup>37</sup> See 'Poultry Book,' by Mr. Tegetmeier, 1866, pp. 81 and 78.

<sup>38</sup> 'The Cottage Gardener,' Oct. 1855, p. 13. On the thinness of the eggs of Game-fowls, see Mowbray on Poultry, 7th edit., p. 13.

<sup>39</sup> My information, which is very far from perfect, on chickens in the down, is derived chiefly from Mr.

Dixon's 'Ornamental and Domestic Poultry.' Mr. B. P. Brent has also communicated to me many facts by letter, as has Mr. Tegetmeier. I will in each case mark my authority by the name within brackets. For the chickens of white Silk-fowls, see Tegetmeier's 'Poultry Book,' 1866, p. 221.