

times are partially sterile seems clear,<sup>46</sup> but this may have been caused by too close interbreeding. That they are not quite sterile, and that the whole case is widely different from that of old females assuming masculine characters, is evident from several of these hen-like sub-breeds having been long propagated. The males and females of gold and silver-laced Sebright Bantams can be barely distinguished from each other, except by their combs, wattles, and spurs, for they are coloured alike, and the males have not hackles, nor the flowing sickle-like tail-feathers. A hen-tailed sub-breed of Hamburgs was recently much esteemed. There is also a breed of Game-fowls, in which the males and females resemble each other so closely that the cocks have often mistaken their hen-feathered opponents in the cock-pit for real hens, and by the mistake have lost their lives.<sup>47</sup> The cocks, though dressed in the feathers of the hen, "are high-spirited birds, and their courage has been often proved:" an engraving even has been published of one celebrated hen-tailed victor. Mr. Tegetmeier<sup>48</sup> has recorded the remarkable case of a brown-breasted red Game cock which, after assuming its perfect masculine plumage, became hen-feathered in the autumn of the following year; but he did not lose voice, spurs, strength, nor productiveness. This bird has now retained the same character during five seasons, and has begot both hen-feathered and male-feathered offspring. Mr. Grantley F. Berkeley relates the still more singular case of a celebrated strain of "polecat Game fowls," which produced in nearly every brood a single hen-cock. "The great peculiarity in one of these birds was that he, as the seasons succeeded each other, was not always a hen-cock, and not always of the colour called the polecat, which is black. From the polecat and hen-cock feather in one season he moulted to a full male-plumaged black-breasted red, and in the following year he returned to the former feather."<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Mr. Hewitt in Tegetmeier's 'Poultry Book,' 1866, pp. 246 and 156. For hen-tailed game-cocks, see p. 131.

<sup>47</sup> 'The Field,' April 20th, 1861. The writer says he has seen half-

a-dozen cocks thus sacrificed.

<sup>48</sup> 'Proceedings of Zoolog. Soc.' March, 1861, p. 102. The engraving of the hen-tailed cock just alluded to was exhibited before the Society.

<sup>49</sup> 'The Field,' April 20th, 1861.