

are short and stiff in Malays, and absent in Hennies. As in some orders male birds display extraordinarily-shaped feathers, such as naked shafts with discs at the end, &c., the following case may be worth giving. In the wild *Gallus bankiva* and in our domestic fowls, the barbs which arise from each side of the extremities of the hackles are naked or not clothed with barbules, so that they resemble bristles; but Mr. Brent sent me some scapular hackles from a young Birchen Duckwing Game cock, in which the naked barbs became densely re-clothed with barbules towards their tips; so that these tips, which were dark coloured with a metallic lustre, were separated from the lower parts by a symmetrically-shaped transparent zone formed of the naked portions of the barbs. Hence the coloured tips appeared like little separate metallic discs.

The sickle-feathers in the tail, of which there are three pair, and which are eminently characteristic of the male sex, differ much in the various breeds. They are scimitar-shaped in some Hamburgs, instead of being long and flowing as in the typical breeds. They are extremely short in Cochins, and are not at all developed in Hennies. They are carried, together with the whole tail, erect in Dorkings and Games; but droop much in Malays and in some Cochins. Sultans are characterised by an additional number of lateral sickle-feathers. The spurs vary much, being placed higher or lower on the shank; being extremely long and sharp in Games, and blunt and short in Cochins. These latter birds seem aware that their spurs are not efficient weapons; for though they occasionally use them, they more frequently fight, as I am informed by Mr. Tegetmeier, by seizing and shaking each other with their beaks. In some Indian Game cocks, received by Mr. Brent from Germany, there are, as he informs me, three, four, or even five spurs on each leg. Some Dorkings also have two spurs on each leg;⁵³ and in birds of this breed the spur is often placed almost on the outside of the leg. Double spurs are mentioned in an ancient Chinese Encyclopædia. Their occurrence may be considered as a case of

⁵³ 'Poultry Chronicle,' vol. i. p. 595. Mr. Brent has informed me of the same fact. With respect to the

position of the spurs in Dorkings, see 'Cottage Gardener,' Sept. 18th, 1860, p. 380.