

sovereign to pay for bare railway carriage there and back, besides incidental expenses. Now, I think that if a club or society were formed which would open a negotiation with all the railway companies to try to induce them to carry show poultry, and at greatly reduced prices, great advantage would be gained by all the societies by a considerable increase of entries; and it may be reasonably expected that, on the penny-post principle, railway companies would be rather gainers than losers by agreeing to a very liberal scale of reduction. The simplest mode of doing it would be to induce all companies to carry exhibition poultry, &c., free on the return, if unsold. This is already done in many cases, and prevents unfair and dishonest advantage being taken of a reduced rate both ways by sending poultry as if for exhibition, which may not *bonâ fide* be so.—W. H. BEADON, *Cheddon, near Taunton.*

THE BLACK BANTAMS WITH COLOURED LEGS AT THE DARLINGTON SHOW.

HAVING noticed in the last Number of your valuable Journal a letter from "JUSTITIA," in which he insinuates that the pens of Black Bantams which I exhibited at the last Crystal Palace Summer Show, and which were claimed, were not shown in their natural state, but with coloured legs, I feel it my duty, in justice to myself and the arbitrators of that Exhibition, to state publicly, which I now do without the least hesitation, that not the least particle of colouring matter, or any kind of stain whatever, was laid on, or came in contact with the legs of the birds referred to by either myself or any other person previous to their being dispatched to that Show. As to the position the highly-commended pen held being an inducement to their present owner to purchase them, they were in the catalogue at £3, while my first-prize pen was only in at £2; and the gentleman referred to being present and claiming them himself, and he a well-known judge of poultry, attending most if not all of our principal exhibitions, you will agree with me that he could not have been expected to purchase birds of any description, without first consulting his own judgment in the matter.

If a maturer development of the birds have produced the change in the colour of the legs, surely there is no reason to blame me in the matter, for they were naturally a good dark colour, and fit to "pass muster" at any exhibition before the most exact and scrutinising judge, at the time that I sent them to that Show.

Your correspondent "WILTSHIRE RECTOR," says, in his "Plea for Bantams," that he has had Black Bantams laying at the age of twenty weeks and three days. Allow me to state in support of his assertion, that two out of the four pullets sent to the Crystal Palace Show were laying when a few days short of seventeen weeks, and at the end of nineteen weeks I had a sitting of eggs from them under a hen. When hatched the chickens were weaklings and did not live many days.

In conclusion, I cannot refrain from saying, that if parties writing to your Journal were compelled to give their proper names instead of being allowed to shield themselves behind fictitious appellations, it would be much more easy for your readers to discern the true lover of justice from those who write only from personal animosity.—E. HUTTON, *Pudsey.*

[We have the real name and address of "JUSTITIA." If he intended any reflection on Mr. Hutton, he was not justified in so doing; but we do not think he did. The owner of the Bantams when exhibited at Darlington has not denied that he knew their legs were coloured, and until he does so there is but one conclusion, and no one else ought to be suspected.—EDS.]

PENGUIN DUCKS.

IF any of your readers have kept Penguin Ducks, and will have the kindness to observe one little point, and communicate the result, I should be greatly obliged. On examining the skeleton, I find that certain bones of the leg are longer than in the other breeds. I formerly kept these birds alive, and as far as I dare trust my memory, they could run considerably faster than other Ducks. Is this the case? It would, perhaps, be a good way to test their running powers to call the two kinds, when hungry, from a distance to their food, and see which arrived first.—CHARLES DARWIN, *Down, Bromley, Kent.*

HYBRID BETWEEN THE COMMON PHEASANT AND THE SILVER PHEASANT.

CAN you inform me what sort of birds a cross with a common cock Pheasant and a Silver Pheasant hen would produce? Would they produce what are called Spangled Pheasants?—J. B.

[We believe we are correct in saying there has never been a cross between the common and Silver Pheasants. Such a bird is desirable, and would be highly prized; but we do not think it possible.]

SALT DOES NOT INJURE PIGS.

I DO not pretend to have much knowledge about "grunters," but it appears from some statements which have appeared in your widely circulated Journal, that salt is a most dangerous thing to give them in their food. I am living in a pig locality where salt is generally mixed with their food, and I have not heard of a single case of injury to the animal arising from it. The prevalent opinion is, that the animal relishes its food far more with a little salt in it than without it. I was extremely doubtful about giving it to them until my neighbours persuaded me, and I must confess that the pair I am owner of are no worse for the saline ingredient.—J. E., *Co. Fermanagh.*

BEEES AND BEE-HIVES

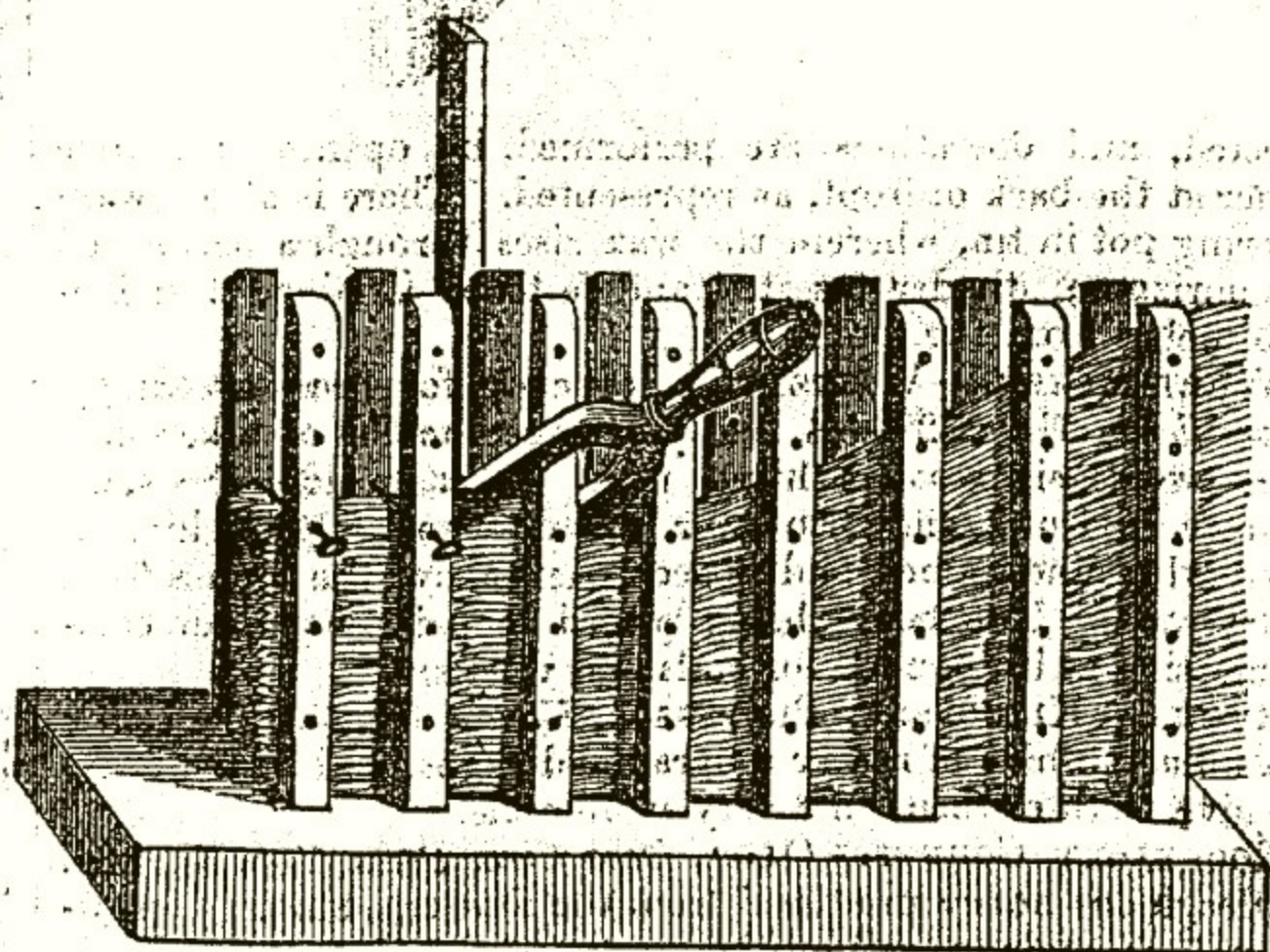
IN THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

(Continued from page 688.)

FRANCE.—In this department we found some very well-made common straw hives, and some straw storifiers, which do not appear one step in advance of those used by the Comte de la Bourdonnaye in the last century, and described by Willmann as nearly identical with his own. M. Hauser exhibits a so-called observatory-hive, which is however very inferior to those of English make.

We cannot find any reference to French hives in the official catalogues; but on quitting the court we accidentally discovered an octagon storifier by M. Vignon; a frame-hive by M. Debeauvoys; and a square storifier by M. Gaillard. We saw nothing to remark in the two former, but may refer to the latter at some future opportunity.

AUSTRIA.—KOLLE, J. E., *Maria Theresendorf, Lower Austria*, No. 599, circular hives made of straw and of rushes, and of both combined; also, square straw-lager-hives of various descriptions. There are two machines, one for making round hives, and the other for making the sides, doors, &c., of square hives. The principle of each being the same, we engrave the latter, as being most readily understood. It will be perceived



that the straw is subjected to pressure by means of a lever, and confined by means of iron pins passing through holes in the uprights. The binding or stitching is applied before these pins are removed, and the result is a straw fabric of great firmness and solidity. The extreme cold of German winters is provided against by these straw hives being 2 inches thick.

MELICHER, DR. L., *Vienna*, No. 601.—A moveable-comb-hive of wood covered with traced straw, affording, we should think, a