

APPENDIX B

The following "GENERAL RULES AND ORDERS FOR COCKING" are given in the 1808 edition of Hoyle's *Games*. It is not possible to say when the Rules received this, their final, shape, but the references to the "setters-to" indicate the latter part of the eighteenth century. It will be remarked that these Rules define with far greater precision and minuteness the manner in which cocks were to be fought and handled than the Code of Rules published in the *Racing Calendar* of 1751. It will also be observed that there are no provisions concerning the seating and conduct of spectators, that the old Rules about wagering are condensed and simplified into a single law, and that there is no mention of the "basket" as a punishment for defaulters. All these things point to the extreme likelihood that this Code of Rules and Orders is referable to 1780-1800, or thereabout. At the same time it will be observed they include provisions which were in force during Charles II's reign, as has been shown by the extracts from Pepys's Diary on pages 36-7 :—

On the weighing morning, that person whose chance is to weigh last, is to set his cocks and number his pens both main and byes, and leave the key of the pens on the weighing table (or, the other party may put a lock on the door) before any cock is put into the scale; and after the first pack of cocks is weighed, a person appointed by him that weighed first shall go into the other pen to see that no other cocks are weighed but what are so set and numbered, provided they are within the articles of weight that the match

specifies; if not to take the following cock or cocks until the whole number of main and bye cocks are weighed through

After they are all weighed, proceed as soon as possible to match them, beginning at the least weight first and so on; and equal weights or nearest weights to be separated provided by that separation a greater number of battles can be made; all blanks, that is choice of cocks, are to be filled up on the weighing day, and the battles divided and struck off for each day's play, as agreed on, and the cocks that weigh the least are to fight the first day, and so upwards

At the time agreed on by both parties, the cocks that are to fight the first battle are brought upon the pit by the feeders or their keepers; and after being examined to see whether they answer the marks and colours specified in the match-bill, they are given to the setters-to who, after chopping them in hand, give them to the gentlemen who are called masters of the match (who always sit opposite to each other), when they turn them down on the mat; and the setters-to are not to touch them unless they either hang in the mats, in each other, or get close to the edge of the pit, until they have left off fighting, while a person can tell forty

When both cocks leave off fighting, until one of the setters-to or a person appointed for telling the law can tell forty gradually; then the setters-to are to make the nearest way to their cocks, and, as soon as they have taken them up, to carry them to the middle of the pit and immediately deliver them on their legs beak to beak and not touch them any more until they have refused fighting, so long as the teller of the law can tell ten, without they are on their backs or hung in each other, or on the mat; then they are to set-to again in the same manner as before, and continue it till one cock refuses fighting ten several times, one

after another,* when it is that cock's battle that fought within the law

But it sometimes happens that both cocks refuse fighting while the law is telling; when this happens, a fresh cock is to be hovelled, and brought upon the mat as soon as possible, and the setters-to are to toss up which cock is to be set-to first, and he that gets the chance is to choose. Then the cock who is to be set-to last must be taken up, but not carried off the pit; next setting the hovelled cock down to the other, five separate times, telling ten between each setting-to, and then the same to that which had been taken up; and if one fights and the other refuses, it is a battle to the fighting cock; but if both fight or both refuse it is a drawn battle. The reason of setting-to five times to each cock is, that the times setting-to being the long law or on their both refusing, the law is to be equally divided between them as they are both entitled to it alike

Another way of deciding a battle is, if any person offers to lay £10 to a crown and no person takes it until the law teller tells forty and calls out three separate times "will any one take it?" and if no one does, it is the cock's battle the odds are laid on, and the setters-to are not to touch the cocks during the time the forty is telling, without either cock is hung in the mat, or on his back, or hung together†

If a cock should die before the long law is told out, although he fought in the law and the other did not, he loses his battle; for there cannot be a better rule for a cock winning his battle than killing his adversary in the limited time he is entitled to by cock laws

There are frequently disputes in setting-to in the long law, for often both cocks refuse fighting until four or

* This was called the "long law"

† This was called the "short law"

five, or more or less times, are told; then they sometimes begin telling from that cock's fighting, and counting but once refused, but they should continue their number on, until one cock has refused ten times; for when the law is begun to be told, it is for both cocks; and if one cock fights within the long law and the other not, it is a battle to the cock that fought, counting from the first setting-to

All disputes about bets, or the battle being won or lost, ought to be decided by the spectators, for if the bets are not paid nor the battles settled according to the judgment then given, it will be a good evidence in law if an action is brought for the recovery of such bets

The crowing and mantling of a cock, or fighting at the setter-to's hand before he is put to the other cock, or breaking from his antagonist is allowed as no fight