

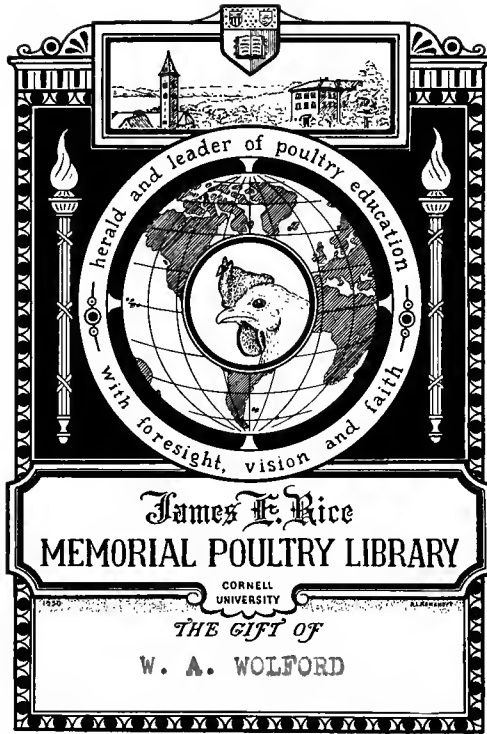
Bantams

as a

Hobby

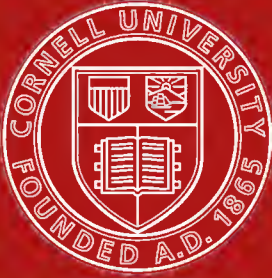
BY

P. PROUD.



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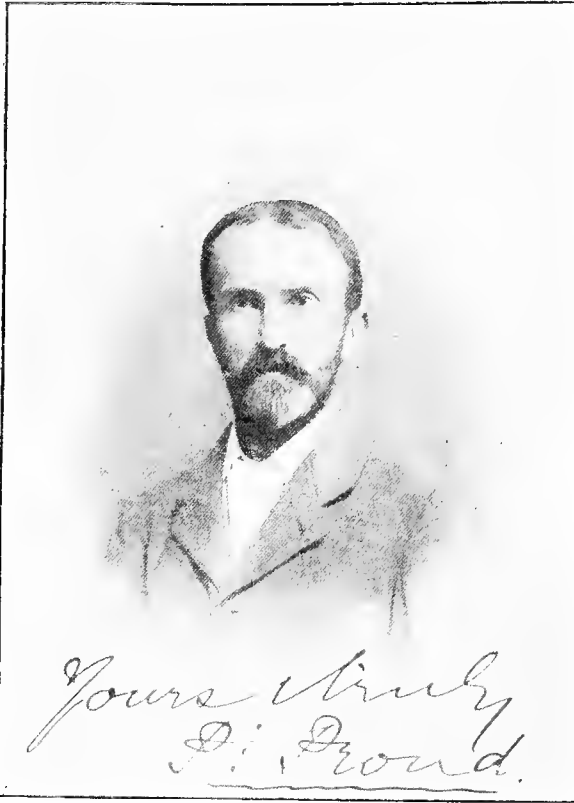
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Yours truly
D. D. Brown.

BANTAMS AS A HOBBY.

BY

P. PROUD.

WITH TWO COLOURED PLATES AND UPWARDS OF THIRTY ILLUSTRATIONS.

“THE FEATHERED WORLD,”
9, ARUNDEL STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

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PREFACE.

HAVING been frequently asked by young fanciers for information respecting the successful breeding and management of that most beautiful and profitable miniature fowl, the Bantam, I at last decided to give the readers of *The Feathered World* such practical information and advice as I trusted would enable those who had hitherto failed in their efforts, to make their hobby both a pleasurable and profitable one. Bantams, kept under proper management, and by following the advice in mating and rearing which are fully treated of in these articles, should with a little care and attention be made to not only pay the rent of a cottage and three or four acres of land, but in addition yield a handsome profit and furnish a very interesting and healthful hobby as well. My readers will scarcely credit the fact that there are in England to-day several Bantam breeders who are making an income of from £75 to £250 on Bantams alone. This is not to be wondered at when we know that prices are obtained ranging from £15 to £50 for really first-class exhibition specimens, whilst the carriage to and from shows is quite 50 per cent. less than on larger breeds, and the cost of feeding is proportionately smaller. Still, it is not all “Klondyke” with Bantam farming—far from it. The young fancier will have to experience innumerable troubles and worries ere he reaches the top rung in the ladder of Bantam fame. His watchword should be, “Attention and perseverance.”

In writing these articles, which were intended for the amateur fancier and not the professional, I endeavoured to supply the necessary information as simply as possible, so that “he who ran might read.” All the varieties were treated of in their turn, according to their popularity. Full particulars were given of their respective exhibition properties, with instructions how to mate and rear, and as to their general treatment in sickness and in health. In republishing the articles in book form I may add that they are not the outcome of literary knowledge, but of practical experience, and every detail is given that may be of assistance to those who are desirous of taking up a hobby which will give both pleasure and profit in return for a small outlay and a little careful attention daily.

P. PROUD.

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A. Lydon 1898
The Feathered World

Vincent Brooks, Day & Son, Ltd., Lith

DUCKWING.

PILE.

BLACK-BREADED RED.

BIRCHEN.

BROWN-BREADED RED.

GAME BANTAMS.

(Specially drawn to illustrate Mr. Proud's articles on Bantams)

BANTAMS AS A HOBBY.

CHAPTER I.

GAME BANTAMS.

These will naturally first receive our attention, because they are at the present day, and have been for years, the most popular; and foremost of these are the black-reds, followed by piles, duckwings, brown-reds, birchens, and whites. The reason why black-reds have always retained their popularity is, we believe, in the first place, because they are much easier to breed true to colour, and when properly mated very few "wasters" are produced, whilst they require much less trouble in preparing for exhibition than the piles, which have to be washed frequently, and it is well known that continual washing spoils the plumage and robs the feather of its lustre. Never wash a bird until you are really compelled to do so, for once you start you must continue. Full particulars on washing and drying will be given in due course.

In judging Game Bantams *shape and style* should be the most important, although a nice rich colour is very pleasing to the eye. The male bird should be tall and graceful, shoulders prominent and squarely set, back short and flat (a round back being a very serious fault), tapering off towards the stern; the thighs should be long and muscular and set well apart, shanks fine and round and as long as possible. Flat shins should be guarded against; besides counting against the bird in the show-pen, they are a sign of weakness, and care should be taken not to breed from flat-shinned stock birds, as this defect is hereditary. The toes should be long and straight, the hind toe to be carried as near as possible in a direct line with the middle toe, the point of which should just touch the ground, although in cases where birds have a large amount of style, there will be a tendency to carry the back toe too high. This is a minor fault, but where the back toe is carried sideways or inwards this is a serious defect, and amounts to disqualification in the show-pen; it is commonly called "duck-footed." In some cases this is caused by improper perches, but in others it is hereditary, and should be strictly noticed when making up the breeding-pen.

The head should be long and snaky, eyes large and prominent; in black-reds, piles, duckwings, and whites the colour of the eye should be a bright red; a light or very dark eye in these varieties counts heavily against the bird in the show-pen. In brown-reds and birchens the darker the eye the better, as near black as possible. The neck should be long and fine, the hackle feathers fitting closely together, wings short and nicely curved, and just meeting at the stern, carried close up, and fitting tightly to the body. Three or four years ago there was a tendency for Game Bantams to be long-winged, but this fault appears to have been overcome. In some cases the bird carries his wings across the back, and which is a bad fault, and is known by the name of "goose-winged."

The tail, which is a most important feature in all Game Bantams, should be small and fine, the feathers carried closely together slightly above the line of the body, but not high. The feathers of the tail proper should number fourteen, and should be narrow and fine; the sickles or long tail feathers of the male bird should be as fine as possible, reaching from two to three inches beyond the tail, and should be carried slightly curved, but not forked.

Size will next engage our attention, and it is the most important feature, not only in Game Bantams, but in every variety of Bantams, and requires very careful consideration. At the present day it is the aim and desire of most Bantam breeders and exhibitors to produce the smallest and finest-boned specimens which, although very handsome and valuable as exhibition birds, are certainly not to be relied upon as stock birds, for nine out of every dozen of these fine specimens are quite unable to pass their first egg, and die egg-bound, but if by chance they do lay, the produce from these birds are little puny mites, which it is next to impossible to rear to maturity. This is one reason why young fanciers find great difficulty in rearing Bantams. If you have one or two of these small, finely-bred exhibition birds that have been doing the rounds of shows, and you contemplate breeding from them, my advice is "Don't," and keep them from laying as long as possible. I remember a friend of mine purchased one of these small, fine-boned, and extra stylish pullets at the Palace Show two years ago, and took me to look at it and give him my opinion of her. As soon as I saw her I told him I hoped she would never lay, and he looked at me with surprise, and asked why? I replied that I am very much afraid that her first egg will be her last, and told him to keep her from laying by judicious feeding as long as possible. He did so, but in the following May he wrote me, saying that she had died in passing her first egg.

From my own experience I find that pullets in the breeding pen should not be less than 15 ounces, and from two to three ounces added to this would give better results; and cockerels 16 to 20 ounces are quite small enough for all practical purposes.

Of course proper feeding has much to do with size, and this shall receive attention in due course.

BLACK-REDS.

We now come to the next most important feature, viz., *colour*, which in the show pen should count fifteen points. In black-red cocks, the face, head, lobes and wattles should be a bright, healthy red, the neck hackle bright orange, free from striping; back and wing-bow rich crimson, whilst the saddle hackle should match the neck hackle as near as possible, wing butts black, wing bars a glossy or steel blue, whilst the bays or wing ends should be a light chestnut; legs, feet,

and beak, rich olive or willow, but not blue, which we often find in some strains where duckwing blood has been introduced, but in the breeding pen blue legs should be guarded against. The breast and thighs should be black, perfectly free from ticking or lacing, although in adult birds it is rather difficult to get a cock perfectly black in breast. The tail and sickle feathers should be black throughout, including the shaft which runs through the centre of the feather, and which in some strains is more or less red, and generally denotes a pullet breeding strain; this is, of course, objectionable in the show pen, although not to any great extent, still a black shaft is at all times preferred.

We will now go on to describe the exhibition black-red pullet to match the cockerel, and which should be identically the same in colour, eyes, face, head, comb, and lobes; white in lobe being a great drawback, although it is a very difficult matter to breed pullets absolutely free from white in lobe. This blemish is sometimes removed by the professional exhibitor with a pair of scissors, an operation demanding considerable skill, and, quite apart from any justification of the act, which is certainly a very questionable one, it may be added, it can only be performed by a very steady hand, without which the remedy being worse than the defect. Honest exhibitors will do well to leave such operations alone.

The neck hackle of the pullet should be a pale golden colour with very narrow black stripes on each side of the shaft, with a light golden edge round the black. The body and wings should be one uniform shade of brownish drab, a nice soft even colour throughout, very finely pencilled with black, this point being of great importance, as the pencilling has a tendency to be too large and coarse, a defect which is very objectionable in the show pen; although in cockerel-breeding pullets showing coarse pencilling are sometimes very useful, as such pullets generally throw cockerels with good sound bays.

The throat should be a pale salmon, breast rich deep salmon, shading lighter towards the thighs and under the body. The tail should be black, with the exception of the two outer or top feathers, which should correspond as nearly as possible with the colour of the body.

I have now described the standard colours of the black-reds and will now proceed to give the young Fancier advice as to the best way of mating up his breeding pens to produce as nearly possible the necessary requirements above mentioned.

Now, in the first place, see that your breeding stock is perfectly healthy and free from disease. Never by any means breed from unhealthy birds, as it is nothing but labour in vain. If your breeding stock is unhealthy your chicks will be 50 per cent. more so, and here let me say that the fewer birds you have in your breeding pen the stronger will be the produce. Be content to breed a few good useful birds rather than a greater number of inferior ones, and remember that one really good bird is worth forty bad ones, either in the show pen or for stock. Much has been said about the proper number of hens or pullets to be used in the breeding pen to produce the greater number of pullets and vice versa, viz., that if eight hens or pullets are mated to a two-year-old cock 75 per cent of the produce will be pullets, and that if only two or three hens or pullets are put with a cock the same per centage in cockerels will be the result. My advice is, that if you pin your faith to the above you will be greatly disappointed, as the experiment has been frequently tried, and in nearly every instance the result has been in many cases the opposite to what has been looked for. My contention is that if a hen is to produce a greater number of pullets than cockerels she will do so, whether there be three or eight hens in the breeding

pen, and the same applies in cockerel breeding. If the young Fancier has sufficient accommodation it is best to mate up two pens, one for cockerel breeding and the other for pullet breeding.

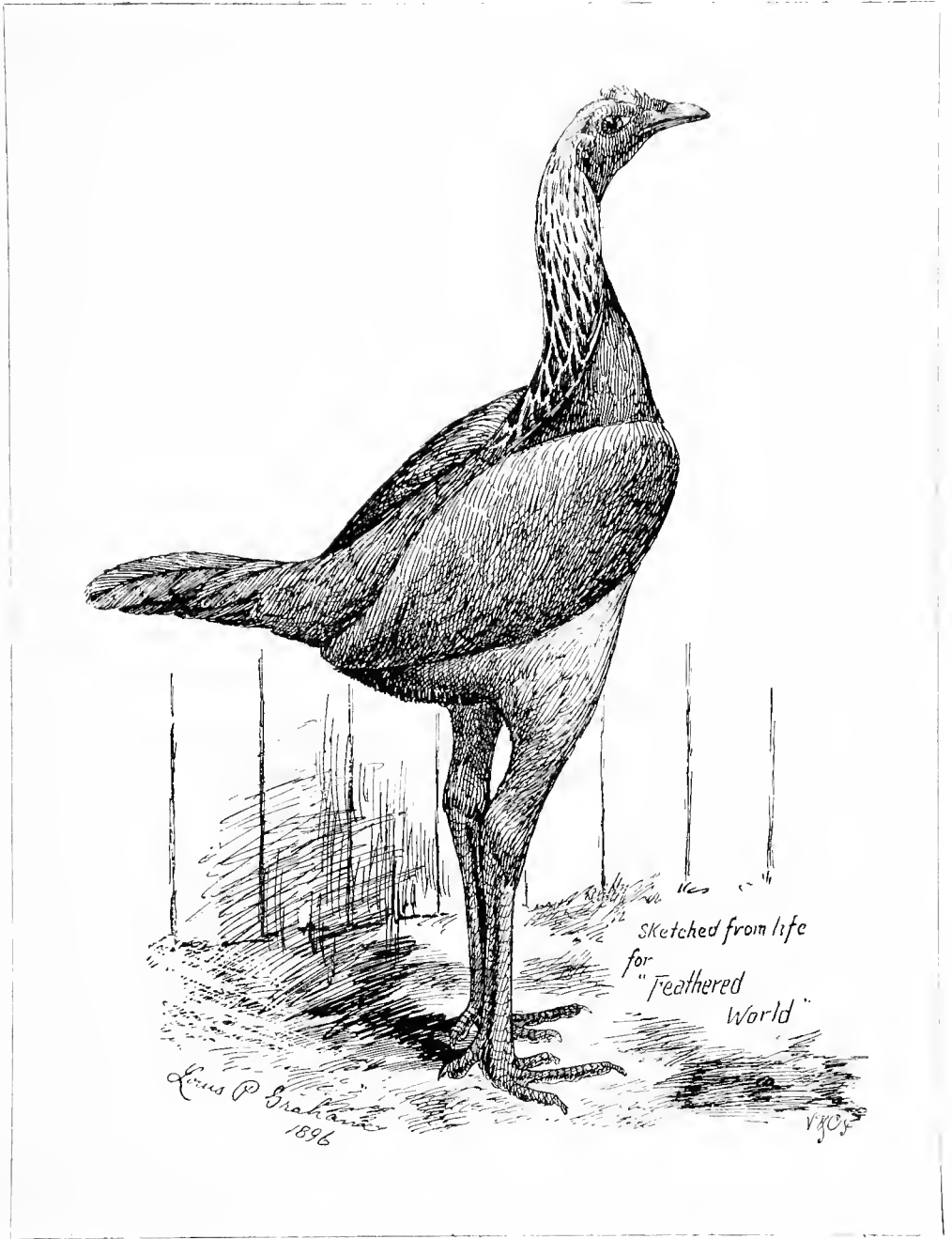
Now, in mating up the cockerel pen, I should take the tallest and brightest coloured cockerel I could find, preference being given to one that is short in back with good prominent shoulder points, and care being taken that his breast bone is straight, and that his back toe is well carried in a direct line with the middle toe. Having selected the cockerel, we should now pick out the hens or pullets, latter preferred, to mate with him, with a view of producing good bright coloured exhibition cockerels. To do this we shall require three reachy tight feathered pullets, very pale in hackle to crown of head, discarding those with dark caps and coppery hackles, which are useless for cock breeding. The hackle should be as silvery as possible, right up to the comb, the body-colour and wings be inclined to red or foxy, with a rich golden edge round each feather. Select the pullets that are shortest in body and tail, and especially those which show a lot of style and reach, and the more prominent the shoulders are the better.

Some breeders prefer to breed from a wheaten pullet to obtain the bright top colour; and although a very satisfactory cross, and one which will give good results in cockerel breeding, yet should this strain by any chance get mixed up with your pullet strain, you will know it to your sorrow; and it will take years to repair the mischief done. Therefore, if you decide to use wheaten blood in your cockerel pen, keep the produce rigorously by themselves, and have them all carefully rung; this is the only sure road to success in breeding.

For my own part I prefer to use nothing but black-red pullets in cockerel breeding, such as those stated above, for the simple reason that should one bird get astray the harm done is comparatively small, and the produce will be found in every way quite as satisfactory.

The following season I should pick out three or four of the most likely looking pullets bred from this pen, especially those with plenty of reach, the taller the better, and with these I should mate the sire of them, and put the most suitable cockerel with the hens in place of the old bird. By doing so you are building up a strain of your own, which, with care and attention, cannot fail sooner or later to reach to success, for it is a well known fact that to secure colour and the other necessary points in Bantams, you must inbreed; still, at the same time it must be borne in mind that there is a happy medium in inbreeding beyond which it is dangerous to proceed, and in this the young fancier should be guided by the health and stamina of his stock, for if inbreeding be carried too far, the produce will become weakly and difficult to rear; in that case fresh blood should be introduced, and this is best done by obtaining a male bird with a dash of the same strain in him if possible, but not closely related.

Having mated up the cockerel-breeding pen of Black-Reds, I will now give attention to the pullet pen. In the first place, the hens or pullets must be sound in colour, free from rust or coarse pencilling; this is of the greatest importance in pullet breeding. It is only a waste of time trying to produce exhibition pullets from hens which are faulty in colour; it is utterly impossible to do so. Besides being sound in colour, the hens must be of good shape, not too small, and the shorter in back the better. The male bird should be from a pullet-breeding strain, and in colour should be darker than the cockerel breeder. I always prefer a bird of a brickish top colour, and one uniform shade from his hackle to tail. His wing bar and shoulder points should be perfectly free from lacing and as black as possible. This



AN AMERICAN BLACK-RED GAME BANTAM PULLET.

refers to cocks as well as cockerels, although the adult birds will in all probability be laced on breast, and I have often found that such birds from a pullet-breeding strain are invariably weak in their bays or wing ends—that is, the bay of the wing end does not continue to the end of the feather; this is always a good sign when selecting a cock for pullet breeding. In many cases the instead of the sickle feather in such birds will be red instead of black. If you prefer to breed from an old bird, don't mate him to more than three pullets, especially early in the year, say February, or a large percentage of unfertile eggs will be the result. When breeding from a cockerel hens should be used, and if he is a healthy, vigorous bird you may safely put five or six with him with good results.

In mating up the black-reds I have taken it for granted that the young fancier has plenty of accommodation, but there are scores who have only a very limited space at their disposal, and in such cases one pen will be sufficient. Where this is so I should take a cock that answered as far as possible to my ideal of a pullet breeder, except I should prefer him to be a light shade in top colour, the paler the better, and with him I should mate two cockerel-breeding pullets and two sound coloured pullets for pullet breeding. From this pen I should expect to get both exhibition pullets and cockerels, though not the same percentage of winners as from separate pens; still, it can be done, although it has been repeatedly stated that to produce exhibition specimens of any variety of poultry two pens should be used. This statement is all right to those who know no better, but from personal experience I know that it is quite possible to breed winners of both sexes from one pen of stock birds when properly mated to give this result.

Still, where the young fancier has plenty of room at his disposal it is advisable to use two pens, and where it is necessary to build up a strain of your own, separate pens in such cases *must* be used. Let me state here that when breeding from only one pen never by any means use wheaten; these may only be used exclusively in the cockerel pens.

PILES.

The next most popular breed are *piles*, the cockerels being the most handsome of all varieties. Although quite a distinct breed in themselves, it is quite possible to produce the very best by crossing, which I will show in due course.

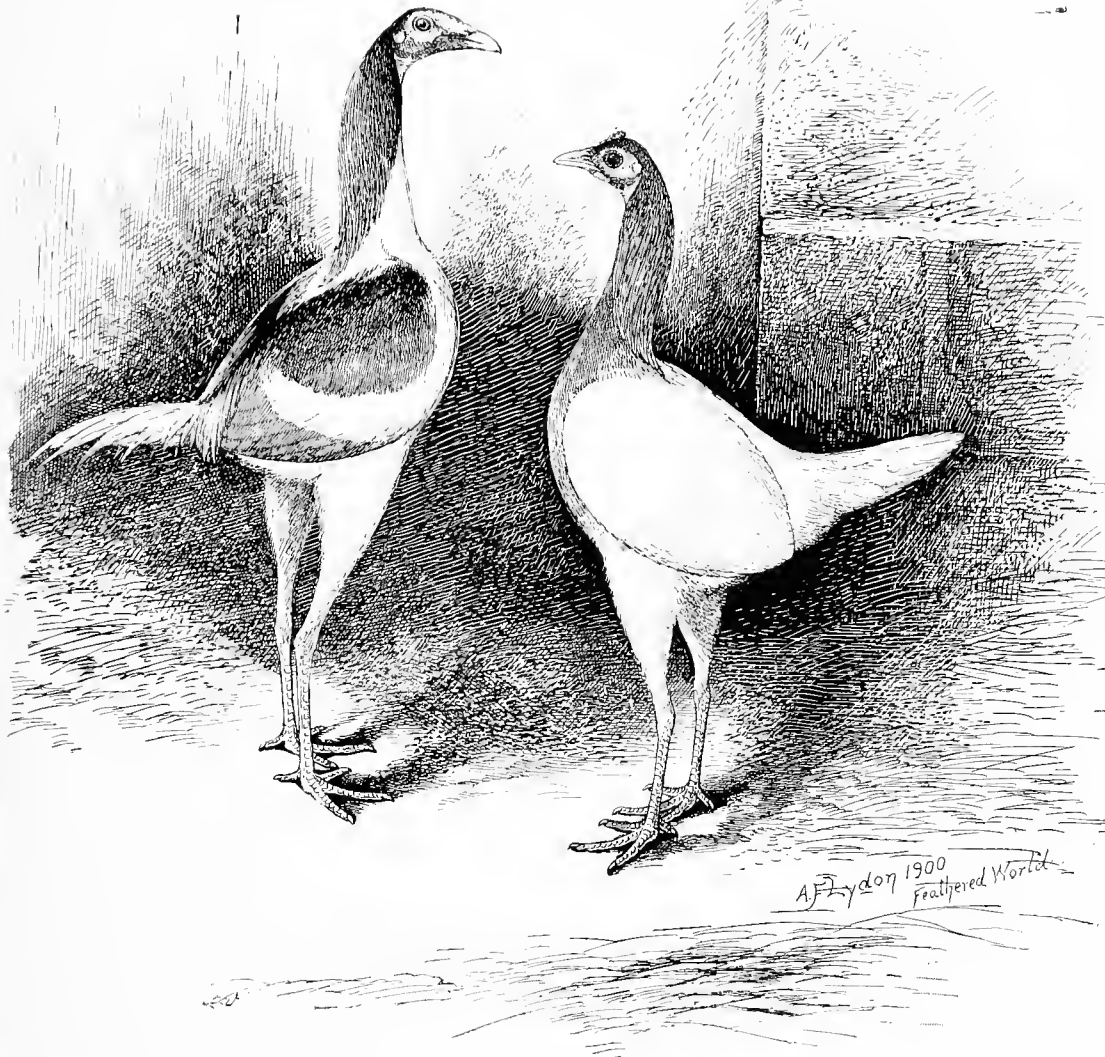
In the first place, the pile cockerel should be identically the same colour as the exhibition black-red cockerel, but with this exception, that where the black-red is black the pile cockerel must be a sound white, viz., the breast, thighs, wing butts, wing bars, and tail; legs and beak a rich orange yellow; willow legs and white legs being very objectionable. Although ten or twelve years ago, willow-legged piles could frequently be seen at the top of the prize list at our shows, at the present time a pile with willow legs, however good he may be in other points, does not stand the slightest chance of figuring successfully in the show pen. The face should be a bright healthy red, and when undubbed the earlobes should also be red and free from white. Although it is somewhat difficult to obtain the rich ruby eye in piles as in black-reds, still they should be as red as possible. In the show pen, from a colour point of view, judges differ. Some prefer the top colour to be a very dark colour both in wing bow, back, and hackles, the same as one would expect to find in a pullet-breeding black-red cock. For my own part I much prefer the bright top colour and rich orange hackles, but, above all, a pure white breast and dark wing ends.

The breast of the pile cockerel is a very important feature, as it is much easier to obtain the desired top colour than a perfectly white breast.

The pile pullet should match the cockerel in point of colour of face, eye, legs, and beak; breast should be a rich salmon, shading off to the thighs; the body, wings, and tail should be a pale creamy-white, as free from red or foxiness as possible. Although a rich dark breast and a clear wing is most difficult to obtain, yet in the present-day competition a pullet or hen inclined to foxiness or rose-winged cannot hope to be successful in the show-pen, although, however careful you may be in the selection of your breeding pen, to produce one pullet perfectly clear on breast and back, and a sound rich salmon breast, you will breed fifteen to twenty that are rose-winged more or less, or, what is still worse, a dark creamy colour throughout. When the foxiness on the wing is only confined to a few feathers on each side, these are often removed by the unscrupulous or habitual faker, and such birds have been known to win repeatedly. Still, by a practical judge this irregularity can quickly be detected, and in such cases the bird should not be passed, but disqualified, for when these feathers grow again the bird is useless as a show specimen, unless the same operation is resorted to, which I am sorry to say is very often the case. I will now go on to show how to breed piles, and will mate up two pens as in black-reds.

In mating up the breeding pens of piles, I will in the first place endeavour to give my readers the best advice in mating up pure bred piles—that is, birds that are bred from piles on both sides, as many of the very best exhibition pile cockerels are bred from black-red cocks, and it is very important that the young fancier should know when mating up his breeding pens how his stock birds have been produced.

Taken for granted that the pile cock selected is the most suitable for cockerel breeding in shape and reach, as described in the cockerel-breeding black-red pen, the next most particular point is to see that he is perfectly sound in his white, free from lacing or smokiness on breast, and above all possessing a sound, deep bay on wing end, for without the latter he is no use as a cockerel breeder. I have never known a male bird that was weak in colour on wing ends produce a single exhibition specimen, and this is quite as essential in breeding for pullets, therefore bear in mind that a pile cock or cockerel weak in his bays is practically of no good whatever either as a stock bird or for exhibition, however good he may be in all other points. Next select three or four tall stylish pullets, deep in breast colour, short in back, and possessing plenty of reach, and showing the shoulder points prominently, preference being given to those which are nicely rosed on the wing, but *not* creamy on wing ends. From this pen I should expect to get sound-coloured cockerels, although the pullets would be too warm in colour for exhibition, yet as stock birds they are invaluable, and especially so if mated back to the sire. In pullet breeding, the cock must be sound in wing ends, clear white in his wing bars and shoulder points; in top colour I prefer a bird of one uniform colour of the darker or brickish colour, and if laced on breast all the better. The hens or pullets to mate to this cock should be as clear as possible on wing and back, free from rosiness or creaminess, and preference being given to those possessing good salmon breasts, although it is quite possible to breed the very best pullets from hens which are pale in breast colour, providing the body colour is perfectly clear. Cockerels bred from this pen will be found too pale in colour as exhibition birds; but those which are extra good in bays and whites should be retained as



MR. WALTER FIRTH'S PILE GAME BANTAMS.

Cock, Winner of Firsts at Penistone, Bingley, Gisburn, Ulverston, and Guernsey, and First and Special Swansea. Hen, First and Special Penistone and Belfast, Firsts at Gisburn, Guernsey, Otley, and Darwen, Firsts and Two Specials Swansea, Third Palace, Second Birmingham and Liverpool.

stock birds for another season. Having mated up pens of pure bred piles, I will now go on to show how to breed exhibition specimens by crossing with black-reds.

It is a well-known fact that in breeding from pure bred piles for four or five years in succession, the top colour in the cockerels is lost altogether; therefore it is necessary to introduce black-reds to build up the colour. The best way to do this is by selecting a black-red cockerel, extra rich in top colour, rich mahogany saddle, the more colour the better, the breast and wing bars a sound black, free from ticking or lacing; this is a very important point, if we would have piles with a sound white breast. Another special point to note is that the wing ends are a dark chestnut, sound from wing bar right to the very end of the wing. Don't breed from a black-red which fails in wing ends, as it will be only labour in vain; but if care is used in only breeding from a bird as described, and mating him to two or three white pullets, you will be rewarded by breeding the very best coloured pile cockerels it is possible to produce. When I say white pullets I mean what are sometimes called lemon piles—viz., pile pullets clear on wing and almost white on breast—the clearer on breast the better. Although the cockerels from this pen will be yellow-legged, quite 75 per cent. of the pullets will be willow-legged, and as such are useless in the show pen, though generally these are clearer in body colour, more stylish, and sounder in breast than the yellow-legged pullets, and if used judiciously in mating them to a reliable pullet-breeding cock—that is pure pile bred, good-coloured pullets can be obtained.

If the pile pullets have a tendency to come pale in breast, it would be advisable the next season to put these to a yellow-legged black-red cockerel that has been bred from piles, preference being given to one of a light brickish top colour of the same shade from neck to saddle hackle, care being taken that his wing bars and wing butts are free from lacing, although a little lacing on breast is no detriment whatever. To those whose space is limited to one breeding pen I should use a tall, short-bodied cock or cockerel, approaching as near as possible to the exhibition pile cockerel in colour, and to him I should mate up two pullets or hens clear on wing and with good deep salmon breasts, and a couple of stylish and reachy rose-winged pullets, and from this pen I should look for good all-round cockerels, also pullets that would be able to hold their own in second rate competition, although I should hardly expect the pullets to be as clear on wing as those specially bred from a pen mated up for pullet breeding. Piles are best kept on a good grass run, and the nature of the soil has much to do with the leg colour. A heavy clay or a light sandy soil is best for preserving the rich orange colour, while dry limestone soil will quickly transpose the rich yellow to a white. I have proved this over and again. Feeding is a very important point in piles. Maize, although beneficial to leg colour, will have a tendency to make the body colour creamy, therefore use maize very sparingly in feeding piles. Those piles which are bred from black-reds will invariably be found to have the richest leg colour, and this is a capital guide to the young fancier in introducing a strain of black-red. As soon as he finds that the leg colour is deteriorating, it is a proof that a cross is required to strengthen the colour, although there is no fixed rule as to how long a time should elapse before introducing the black-red, some strains requiring a change more frequently than others. Still, as a guide, once in three or four years will be found to be sufficient.

Whilst on the subject of piles, it will be as well for me to inform the would-be fancier of this very charming

variety that in all the varieties of Game Bantams there is no other breed that is so difficult to breed true to colour as piles, and none that requires so much attention in preparing for exhibition; for to be successful in the show pen with piles they require washing very frequently, and be it known that constant washing takes all the nature out of the feather. Fanciers who have not a good grass run, with a good loamy or clay soil away from the smoke of factory chimneys, should not entertain the idea of joining the ranks of pile fanciers. Again, breeding pile Bantams is not all lavender—far from it. Should you be successful in rearing, say, 150 chicks, and out of this number you can manage to select 20 good enough to win, you may count yourself one of those lucky individuals that Dame Fortune has smiled kindly upon.

There is always a good demand for really high class exhibition piles, and although £50 has been obtained for a single cockerel at Liverpool some years ago, it is rarely that the price exceeds £25, this being the sum paid for a cockerel which was exhibited at a small north-country show three years ago, and in his unwashed condition he only scored third, and was catalogued at £3, and unclaimed; but on his return he was washed, and put on the boards spick and span at one of the leading shows, where he carried off 1st in his class, also gold medal for best Game Bantam in the show, and was run up by auction to something like £18 10s., and the purchaser, a week or so later, had the good fortune to accept the tempting offer of £25 for him. From this it will be seen that it pays to wash piles now and then, since a profit of £22 was derived from the use of a little yellow soap and water. These, of course, are top prices. Still, really good birds are always in demand from £5 to £15; therefore one of the latter will cover the cost of keep of a good number of wasters, which will always put in an appearance, no matter how much care you exercise in mating up your breeding pens.

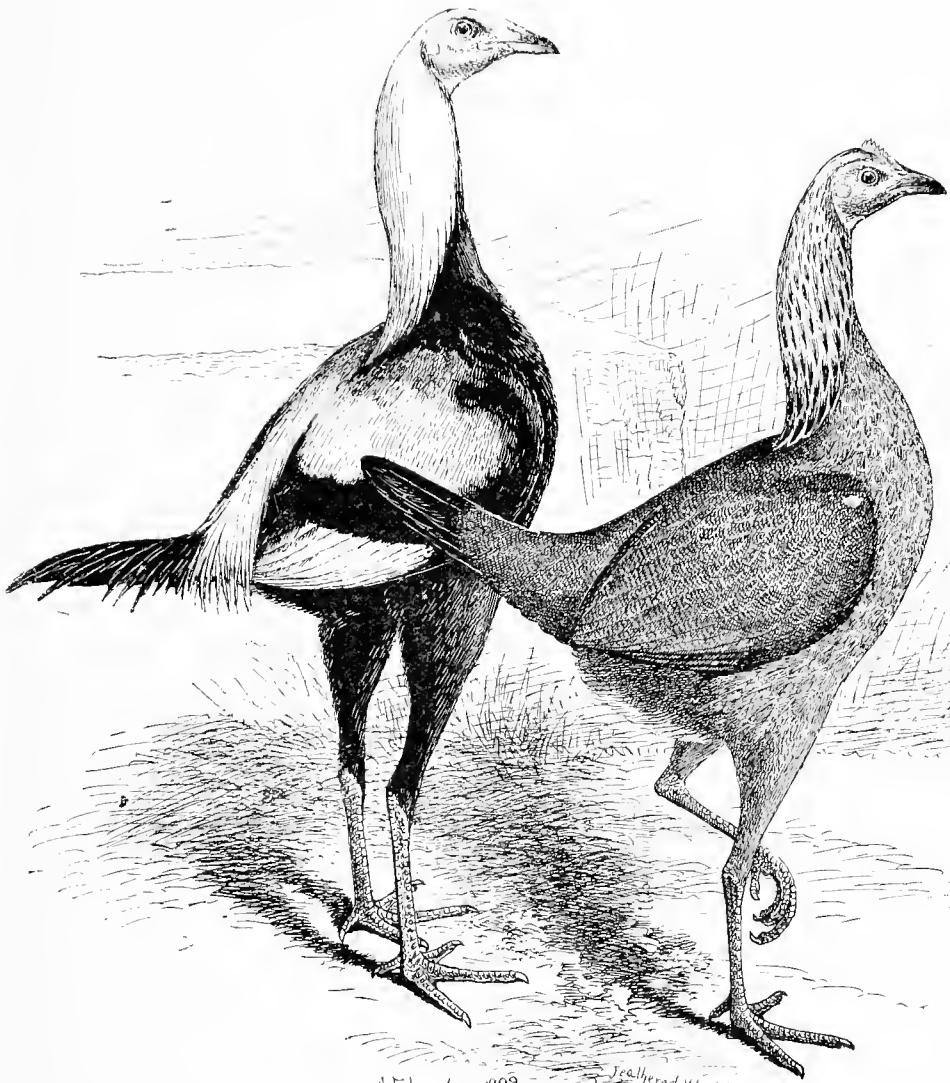
DUCKWINGS.

Duckwings come next on the list in point of favour, and are a very pretty and taking variety, and, like the piles, are rather difficult to breed true to colour. Unlike the duckwing Leghorns, which are divided into golds and silvers, and exhibited as such, the duckwing Bantam is restricted to golds, as the silvers have not yet found favour in the exhibition world.

The duckwing cock should, like the black-red, be red in face and eye, breast sound black, also wing butts, wing bar and thighs down to the hock black, the neck hackle and saddle hackle a silvery white, as clear from black striping as possible. Although it is somewhat difficult to breed out this defect, it is a most important point, and should receive careful attention when mating up the breeding pens. The saddle and wingbow should be a rich yellow or orange colour, shading to silvery white in hackle, the wing-ends from the black wing bar to the end of the wing clear white, free from rusty colour at the outside edge of the top feathers. Quite 50 per cent. of duckwing cockerels fail more or less in this respect. The tail of the duckwing cock should be identically the same as described in the black-red.

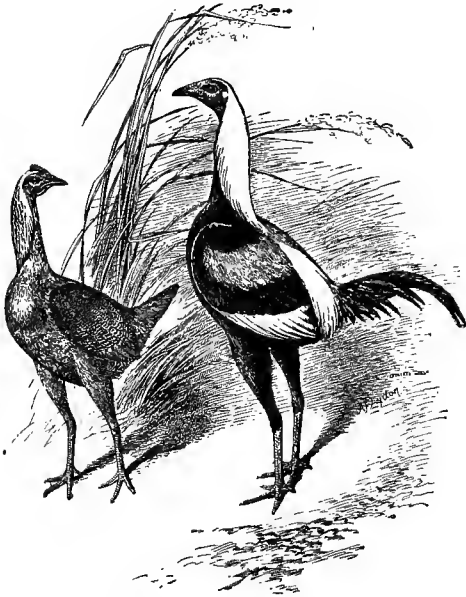
The duckwing pullet should, like the black-red, be red in face and eye, legs willow, her body colour and wings a light slate colour, or grey evenly and finely pencilled with black, and free from shaftiness, some strains showing more or less the white shaft on each feather, which should not be; the colour should look one even soft grey throughout, the more uniform the better.

The breast should correspond with the black-red pullet, viz., it should be a dull salmon, although it is one of the most difficult points in duckwing breeding



MR. P. PROUD'S DUCKWING GAME BANTAMS.

Hen, bred 1898, Winner of 15 Firsts and 7 Specials, including Special for Best Bird of any Breed in Show at Whalley Bridge. Cock is father of the Hen, Winner of 6 Firsts, 2 Specials, and 1 Second.



DUCKWING BANTAMS.

to get a sound breast colour, together with a perfect body colour; the weakness being to run pale in breast, more or less. This is not a very serious defect unless the breast be very pale or almost devoid of salmon shading, then it counts heavily in the show pen.

As duckwings are derived from black-reds, it is absolutely necessary that you should know how the birds you intend using in the breeding pens have been produced.

If the duckwing pullets are pure I should take two or three and put to a black-red cockerel, which I have before described in the black-red cockerel-breeding pen, and from these I should expect good coloured duckwing cockerels, but no pullets; the pullets would be black-reds, and, being bred from the duckwing hens, they should be marked or rung to prevent them being used in the black-red pens another season. The best use for such pullets, if they are sound and level in colour, and clear in hackle to crown of head—*i.e.*, free from dark in cap—is to put them to a silver duckwing cockerel, and by doing so good-coloured duckwing pullets should be the result. Another way to breed duckwing pullets is by mating a sound-coloured duckwing cock—that is, pure duckwing bred for two or three years back, and with him mate three or four of the soundest-coloured hens or pullets, care being taken that they are not pale in breast. Any pullets from this pen that are not up to exhibition standard in point of colour should be put back to a black-red cockerel the next season, for the purpose of breeding duckwing cockerels.

In breeding duckwings, where other varieties of Game Bantams are kept, it is advisable to keep them rigorously by themselves, and their produce carefully rung, or incalculable harm can soon be done, especially amongst black-reds.

BROWN-REDS.

Brown-reds will next engage our attention. Although 50 per cent. of the shows provide classes for black or brown-reds, it is very rarely we find one single specimen of the latter. What is the reason? Well, in the first

place, black-reds have always taken the lead, and I am firmly of the opinion that they always will, although the brown-reds appear to be making steady progress, so much so that, in pullets especially, there are to-day some that could hold their own against the best black-reds, both in type and quality; still, the judges have always hitherto given preference to black-reds. In cockerels the brown-reds are still a long way behind the black-reds. The colour has been obtained almost to perfection, but there is yet too much feather, and, with one or two exceptions, the type and stateliness of the miniature Game Fowl, which we find in black-reds, piles, and duckwings, is still wanting more or less in brown-reds. Another reason why so few brown-reds are found competing against black-reds is that, as yet, the former are practically in the hands of three or four exhibitors, whom we find clearing the boards at our more important fixtures; and until they become more widely distributed this state of things will continue. But the main reason, I believe, is that the judges have a decided preference for the black-reds; that is why we very seldom find brown-reds competing. In my own mind, I think that black-reds should compete alone, and let the brown-reds come under the head of A.O.V. Game Bantams where classes cannot be provided for them. I believe this would in some measure be the means of making the brown-reds more popular.

Brown-reds, like the black-reds, breed true to colour, and are much less trouble in preparing and keeping in show form than piles or duckwings, and can be kept almost anywhere, where it would be next to impossible to keep the former. The brown-red cock should have a very dark mulberry face, almost approaching black, the darker the better; the eye should be as dark as possible, a red or light eye counting heavily against the bird in the show pen; the legs and feet should be almost black. The neck and saddle hackle should be a pale lemon, the back and saddle rich lemon, breast black ground colour, with pale lemon lacing round each feather and showing the shaft of the feather, the lacing to start at the throat, and continue down to the top of thighs. Wing bar and tail black, the latter as fine and as short as possible, although it is very rarely we find the brown-red so fine in feather as the black-red, especially when the bird possesses that pale lemon top colour which is all the rage at the present time. A few years ago the lemon top colour had not been obtained; in its place we found then dark orange or nearly red, and I believe it is the result of breeding for colour alone that brown-red fanciers have lost the hardness of feather; for it is a



BLACK-RED COCK.

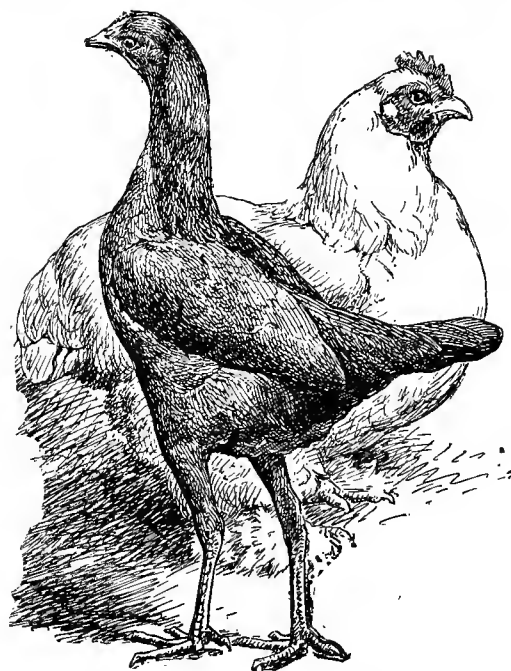


AN AMERICAN PILE GAME BANTAM COCK.

well-known fact that the lighter the colour the softer the feather, and *vice versa*; yet, to be successful in the show pen, a brown-red cockerel must possess that beautiful lemon top colour which to-day is more than half the battle, irrespective of hardness of feather. Still contend that in judging Game Bantams shape and type should be the first requirements, then colour and hardness of feather. The brown-red pullet to match the cockerel should be identically the same in face, eye, and legs. The neck hackle should be a pale lemon with a narrow black stripe, and this colour should reach to the crown of the head; the weakness in brown-red pullets is to be coppery or dark capped, viz., the top of the hackle towards the head runs a dirty coppery colour, which is a great objection; although it is one of the mysteries of Game breeding to produce clear lemon-hackled pullets free from lacing on the back and shoulders, still, it can be done with careful mating and perseverance. The body and wing should be a glossy black, free from lacing or shaftiness; the ground colour of the breast should be black, each feather from the throat to the thighs distinctly laced with pale lemon, the lacing to be uniform, and continued well down to the thighs, the breast lacing being one of the most important points, as quite 30 to 40 per cent. fail more or less in this respect.

In mating up brown-reds for producing exhibition cockerels, it is necessary to have a separate pen, and to do this I should select the most perfect coloured male bird I could find, one possessing that beautiful pale lemon top colour and plenty of it. I should like him to have all the breast lacing possible, but, at the same time, I should like the lacing to be clear and distinct, and yet possessing black shoulder butts free from lacing. Another important point to look for is a sound dark eye, the blacker the better; never breed from a light-eyed bird. The pullets to mate with this cock should be as pale as possible, tight in feather, and as pale in

neck hackle as possible, care being taken to see that the pale lemon is continued to the top of the head; this is one of the great secrets to obtain bright coloured cockerels. If you want bright coloured cockerels, never use dark capped pullets or hens; see that they are clear lemon right up to the comb; never mind if they are laced on the back, all the better, as you will get more colour in your cockerels, and although the pullets from this pen will be useless as show specimens, they are invaluable as cock breeders, and should some of them come with bright pale hackles, laced on back, and continued on to the wing or saddle, guard these in the same way as you would guard a Klondyke claim, for there is gold in them as cockerel breeders, although in other respects they are worthless. The next season it would be advisable to put these pullets back to the sire, and put the best cockerel of that season's breeding back to the hens. In breeding for pullets it is not necessary to have the cock bird so pale in colour as the cockerel breeder. One of the orange shade, or even darker, would be preferable; care must be taken to see that he is sound in eye, very clear in lacing on breast, and that the lacing is carried well down to the thighs, and not patchy or irregular. To him mate four or five pullets or hens that are perfectly sound in body colour, quite free from lacing on back, yet well laced on breast. This is absolutely necessary in pullet breeding; the hackle should be as clear almost and as bright as the pullets I have already described; in fact, pullets for pullet breeding should approach as near as possible to the exhibition standard; from this pen I should look for the very best coloured pullets, but the cockerels would be found deficient in colour, and of a darker shade; these, however, although only suitable for second-rate competition, should always be retained as



SOME AMERICAN BANTAMS.

pullet breeders, and by doing so you are building up your own strain, which is very desirable in Game Bantam breeding.

Having described the mating-up of the breeding pens of pure brown-reds, I will now go on to show how the young fancier may produce exhibition specimens by introducing a cross of another variety.

Years ago, when the now fashionable pale lemon top colour was first produced, many fanciers were at a loss to know how it had been obtained, although had they been able to have got to the right side of some of our celebrated large Game breeders of this variety, they would have learned the secret much earlier, for the bright lemon colour had been secured in the large Game years before we ever saw it in the Bantam.

How was it obtained? Simply by crossing with birchen blood. The question that will naturally rise in the mind of my readers now will be, Yes, but how are birchens produced? But for answer you must "bide a wee." This information will come in due course, but sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. Although I am not in favour of the introduction of birchen blood in brown-reds, for the simple reason that by doing so, to a certain extent, you are losing the dark gipsy face so characteristic in the pure bred brown-red, still there are times when the young fancier is driven into a corner as it were, and will puzzle his brains how it would be possible to get the desired pale lemon top colour and lacing already described, seeing that he does not possess the colour in the cockerel breeder.

The only remedy for this defect is to select a Birchen cock or cockerel with plenty of top colour, as silvery white as possible, and well-laced breast, and put him to three or four pullets or hens; if you use a cock then put pullets, and *vice versa*. In this case it is not absolutely necessary to have the hens so pale in hackle as described in the cockerel-breeding pen above.

From these you should obtain cockerels quite as bright in lemon as those from the pure cockerel pen, with the only exception that there will be a tendency for the produce to be lighter in eye and face.

From these cockerels it would be advisable to select two or three of the tallest, palest in top colour, preference being given to those having plenty of distinct lacing on breast. By using one of these with the same hens the following season, and another with the best coloured and tallest pullets, you will still retain the desired colour and at the same time be improving the face colour and eye. It would not be found advisable to use the birchen cock a second season, unless it was with the idea of breeding more birchens, and this could be brought about by putting him to the birchen pullets which are certain to be found among the produce of the birchen cock and brown-red hens, and of course the following season the percentage of birchen would be much greater.

BIRCHENS AND WHITES.

There is no variety of Bantam, with the exception of Old English, that has grown more in public favour during the past two or three years than birchens, and this is not to be wondered at, for I know of no prettier or more taking bird than the birchen pullet.

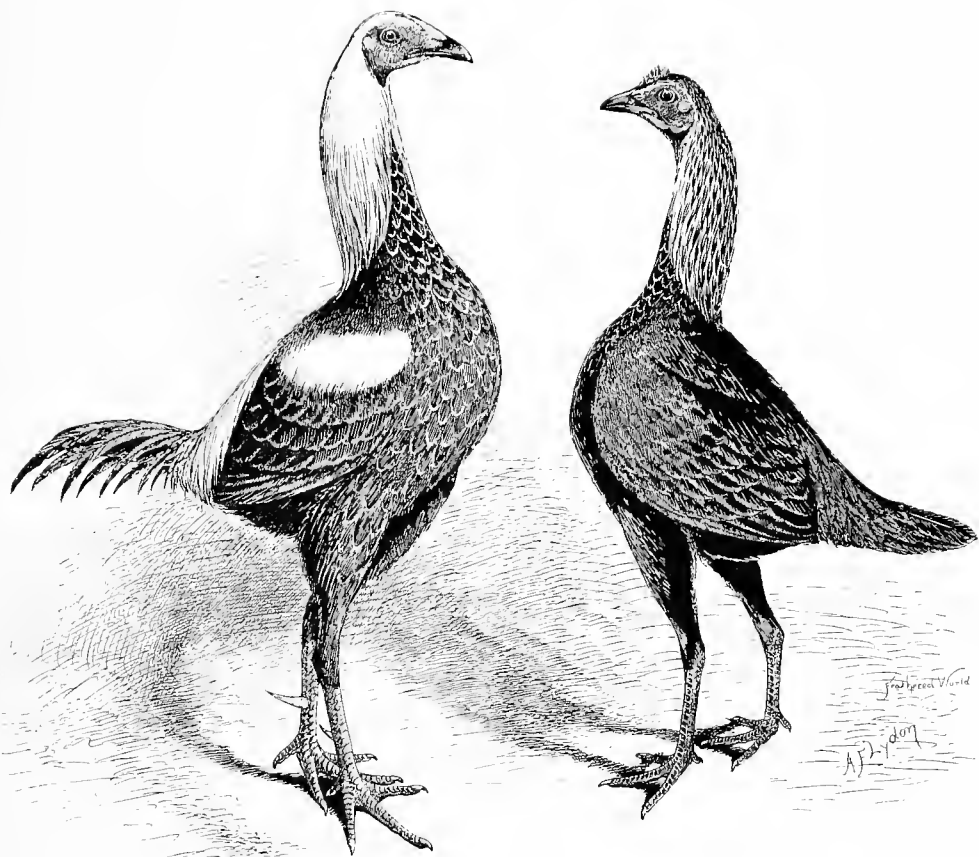
Birchens have been bred and exhibited for many years, but it is only lately they have been able to make headway, and if persevered with, now that they have found favour, they have every appearance of being as fully established a variety as the duckwings and brown-reds from which they have descended. Birchens were obtained in the first instance by crossing a silver duckwing cock with brown-red hens, but at the present time they are bred true to colour from pure

birchens. The birchen cock should resemble the brown-red in every respect except top colour and breast lacing—viz., where the brown-red is lemon the birchen should be silvery-white, the whiter the better, providing that the dark gipsy face is still retained, although it is a difficult point to obtain, the same depth of dark mulberry face colour in birchens that is found in brown-reds, simply because the variety has been obtained by a cross with a red-faced variety. Still, with perseverance and careful mating to breed out the defect it can be done, and has already been accomplished by one or two who have made this variety a speciality. The birchen pullet, in body colour, face, head and eye, and legs, should be identically the same as the brown-red pullet. The neck hackle should be a silvery white, with a narrow black stripe on each side of the white, and should be free from any other tint, such as lemon or straw, both being considered defects in birchens, but which will be found more or less in those strains which have not been bred pure. Birchen pullets also have a great tendency to be dark-capped, *i.e.*, the silvery hackle, which should be one distinct colour from base to the crown of the head, becomes much darker or nearly black towards the comb; this should not be, as I pointed out in my remarks on brown-reds, and it counts heavily against the bird in the show-pen. Another weak point in some strains of pullets is the scarcity of lacing on the breast. I have seen some of the most typical-shaped, clear hackled pullets which have been thrown back for the want of breast lacing. The breast should be well and distinctly laced from the throat almost as far down as the top of the thigh, but at the same time the back and wing must be free from lacing, which is not easy to secure, as only those who have bred them know. Of course, as I have just said, the want of breast-lacing will throw a bird back considerably in the eyes of a competent judge, yet it would not be so fatal as laced back and shafty wings, providing it was as good in other points; and it would be as well for the young fancier to bear this in mind when making his selection for the show-pen.

Another stumbling-block in birchens is the colour of the eye, which should be dark brown, as near black as possible, although it is next to impossible to breed birchens as dark in the eye as brown-reds, but red eyes are certainly not to be countenanced, no more than a dark eye is in black-reds, yet birchens with red eyes are often found winning, but this is wrong, and should handicap the bird heavily in the show pen, whilst light eyes should put the bird out of the running altogether, the same as in black-reds or brown-reds.

In breeding birchens they must be mated up precisely the same as described in brown-reds. Should the young fancier be unable to procure birchens, which he should have little difficulty in doing by inserting an advertisement in *The Feathered World*, it would be advisable for him to get a brown-red hen or pullet, one heavily laced on breast preferred, and mate her to a silver duckwing cockerel; the latter can be obtained from any breeder who makes a speciality of breeding exhibition duckwing pullets, and such a bird can be obtained for 15s. or £1, simply because silver duckwing cockerels are useless in the show pen, but essential in the breeding pen. Still, where birchens can be secured I strongly advise their use, in preference to crossing as above, as it is a great saving of both time and trouble.

Another variety that has come forward more prominently during the last year or two are whites, and, strange to say, these originally descended from brown-reds, and at the present day some strains of brown-reds will still throw whites. Although a very pretty variety, I don't think they will ever "take on" with the Fancy.



BIRCHIN GAME BANTAMS.

Whites can also be produced by breeding from the light lemon-coloured piles, but it will take at least three years to breed out the lemon tint in the hackle. Still, as pale lemon piles are only "wasters" in the eye of the pile breeder the foundation could be laid for an outlay of 30s. for a breeding pen. By breeding from lemon piles as near white as possible, and there are plenty of these to get, especially about August or September, when pile breeders will be glad to dispose of such at from 7s. 6d. to 10s. each, the rich orange-yellow leg so necessary in whites will be all the more readily obtained, as whites bred from the offshoots of brown-red are more or less willowy in leg colour, which is considered a defect in the show pen. Whites should be pure white in body colour, rich yellow legs and feet, also beak; face, comb, and eyes red. Willow legs a disqualification.

Whites can only be kept satisfactorily where the atmosphere is free from smoke, and where they can have free range on a good grass run. Kept under such circumstances they look very pretty indeed.

SCALE OF POINTS FOR GAME BANTAMS.

Good head and neck	8
Good eyes	10
Good body and wings	10
Good legs and feet	10
Good tail	8
Good shape and style	12
Good colour	15
Good condition	8
Hardness of feather	9
Correct size, etc.	10
	100
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The same scale to apply to defects, and deducted accordingly.

DISQUALIFICATIONS. — Crooked breast bone, duck-footed, wry-tailed, roach-backed.

CHAPTER II.

OLD ENGLISH GAME BANTAMS.

There is no other breed of Bantam that has awakened such interest, or caused such a boom in the Fancy during the year 1898 as Old English. For years this charming variety has been hanging fire as it were, but, like all other new breeds, once they are launched in the exhibition world, and classes provided for them, their popularity is quickly assured by such a novelty lover as the English exhibitor. And why, I ask, should not the Old English Game Bantam find equally as much favour as the large breed of Old English Game, from which they have descended? To-day in North-country shows and at all the big events throughout England, there are no classes which fill better or pay better than Old English Game, and I have no hesitation in saying that, with proper attention in breeding, the Old English Game Bantam would soon become a very popular breed.

I was greatly amused at the correspondence which appeared early in 1899 in the columns of *The Feathered World*, re the origin of Old English Game Bantams, and whilst reading this correspondence, and enjoying my evening pipe, with my feet on the fender, my thoughts have gone back nearly thirty years to my schooldays, when I first entered the ranks of Bantam fanciers. My first purchase I well remember, even yet, was a pair of lovely little yellow-legged spangled or speckled Bantams, for which I paid the modest sum of 1s. 4d. each, and these were spangles, beautifully broken in colour, cobby in shape, and nice flow of feather, perhaps not quite so small as the present day type, but otherwise quite their equal. At that time I was only

eight years of age, and I also remember, as if it was only yesterday, the schoolmaster examining us in history one sultry afternoon in July, and as we each toed the mark round the blackboard, and it came to my turn, the master in solemn tones asked me who was the originator of Old English Bantams, and in those days I had a lot of George Washington's disposition about me, and could not tell a lie, so I replied, "Please, sir, it wasn't me." At this he smiled, and said, "I am quite aware of that, Pringle. But you keep Bantams, don't you?" I answered, "Yes, but I bought them from Richard Noah, at the Mill, and I believe he got them from his grandfather, who kept them, so he says, ever since he was a lad." The master did not ask me any further questions that day.

This was my first experience, and ultimately I gave up the spangles in favour of the modern black-reds, which I have kept on and off ever since. But I am digressing, and, as the old lady remarked, I must get on with my knitting.

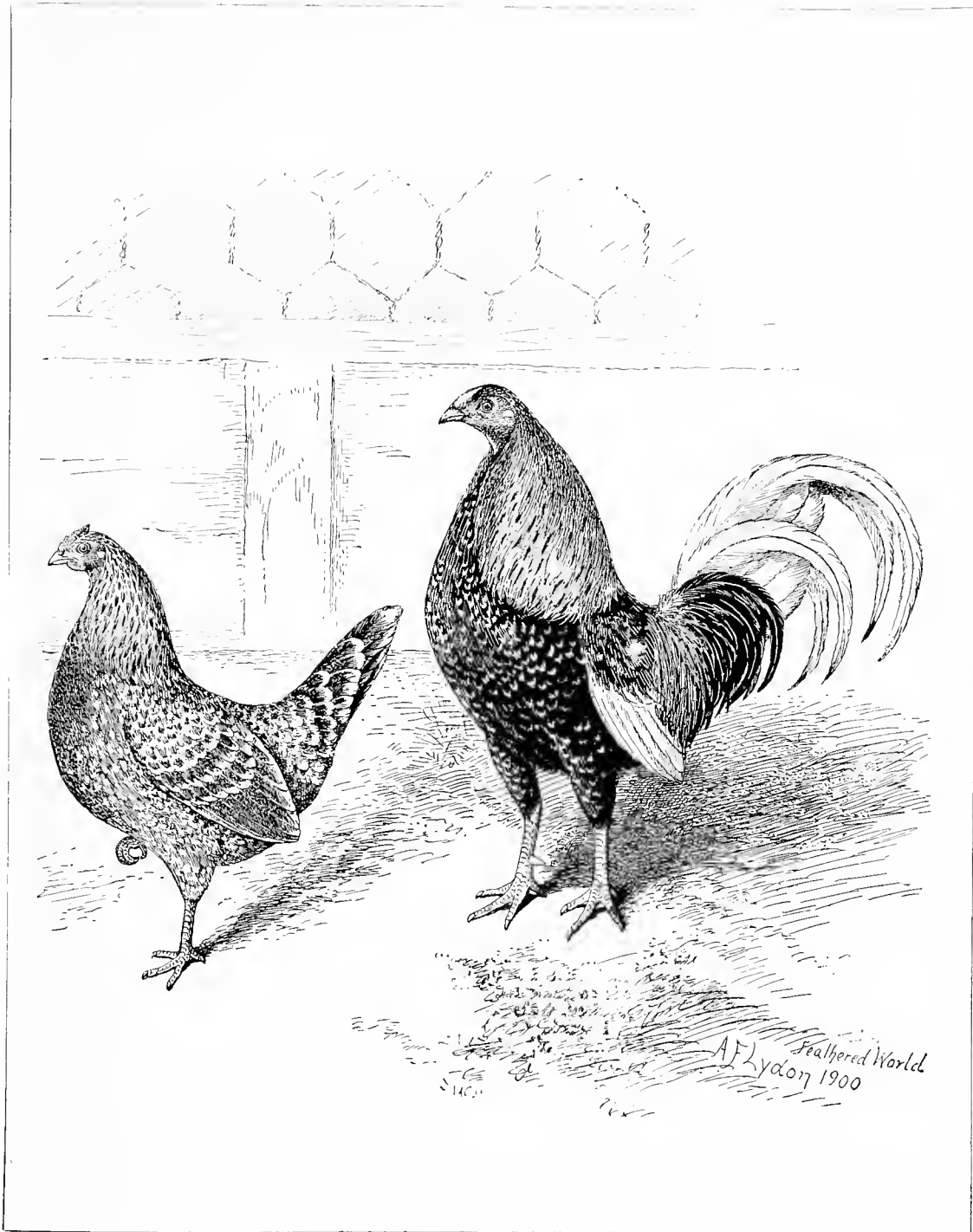
As an example of the rapid strides the Old English Bantam has made I need only refer to Whitehaven Show of November 11th, 1898, where a black-red cockerel which carried off first prize was claimed at catalogue price, £10, although, had this bird been seen running about in any of the back yards twelve months previously, it might have been bought for eighteenpence. Then at Birmingham Show, three weeks later, the third-prize bird was bid up to £11 1s. and which a couple of years ago would not have fetched as many shillings.

Why is it, then? you ask. Simply a whim of the Fancy, which must have something novel, no matter what the price may be. Still, I honestly believe that Old English Bantams have come to stay, and I shall be greatly surprised if they don't become very popular in a short space of time. They are exceptionally hardy and healthy; they will live and thrive where it would be impossible to rear the Modern Game Bantam. Of course, like the Old English Game fowl, the variety of colours is legion, but those which up to the present have found most favour, both in the eyes of judges and the Fancy, are spangles and black-reds, whilst here and there a blue dun will be found in the prize-list, but for my own fancy give me the spangles, which I consider a very attractive variety, and which must ultimately become the most popular.

Compared with the Old English fowl, the Bantam is yet in its infancy, as it were, from a standard point of excellence, and some little time must elapse ere the necessary improvements can be attained, even by careful breeding.

I will now try and describe what I consider should constitute an ideal Old English Game Bantam.

Head medium length. *Beak* strong, slightly curved. *Eye* large, fiery red and bold. *Comb* small and single and of fine texture. *Earlobes* free from white. *Face and wattles*, bright healthy red. *Neck*, fairly long, and well set on between square and prominent shoulders. *Neck hackle* to come down well on to the shoulders. *Chest*, broad and full. *Breastbone* straight (this is very important), the breast being firm and well developed. *Back* short, broad at shoulders, and tapering towards the stern. *Wings* short, first meeting under tail and fitting closely to the body, and should be full, otherwise the bird has the appearance of what is termed flat-sided. *Tail* should be directly in opposition to the Modern Game Bantam, viz., main or primary feathers, fairly long and strong; sickles, broad, good length and nicely bowed, with four or five side-hangers of medium length covering the width of the tail each side. *Legs*, short, thick, muscular in thighs, well set



MESSRS. R. & D. KERR'S O.E.G. SPANGLE BANTAMS.

Cock, Winner of First and Specials, Distington and Longtown, also Fourth Manchester. Hen, Winner of First at Cleator Moor, Egremont, Distington and Blennerhasset.

apart; *shank's*, medium length, round in front—not flat (which shows weakness), and in black-reds, spangles, and blue duns the colour of legs should be *white* or *yellow*, white for preference. *Toes*, fairly long and muscular, straight; the back toe to be carried in a direct line with the middle toe, and should grasp the ground firmly, the point of the toe being flat on the ground. *Carriage*, quick and sprightly, with a bold, defiant look. The bird in the hand should handle hard and firm; the harder the better.

Points of Colour. In *Black-reds*.—Cocks: Face and eyes, red; beak, white or yellow, to match the legs; neck and saddle hackles, bright orange-red; back and wing-bow, deep red; breast and thighs, black; wing-bar, blue-black; wing-end or bay, rich chestnut; tail, glossy black. Although white in tail is to some degree a fault, it should only count against the bird very slightly in the show-pen.

The hen to match this cock should be either partridge or wheaten. The former should be the same as the cock in face, eyes, beak, and legs; neck, lemon or light orange, with a narrow black stripe on each side of the shaft; breast, rich salmon, shading lighter towards the thighs; back and wings, partridge colour, or a brownish drab of one even colour all over, and free from rustiness and shaftiness; tail, black, except the two top feathers, which should correspond with the body colour. The wheaten hen should match the cock in face, eyes, and legs; neck, bright golden; breast and thighs, pale fawn; body and wings, darker shade of wheat colour; tail, black, with the top or outer feather tinged with wheaten. **Size:** Cocks, 18 to 25 oz.; hens, 15 to 20 oz.

Spangles.—Both the cock and hen should resemble each other in every respect as to colour, viz.: face, head, and eye, bright red; plumage throughout, black, red, or blue, evenly spangled with white; tail, black and white; legs, white or yellow.

The breeding of Old English Bantams is as yet a bit of a lottery, as no standard has been fixed that I am aware of, and such being the case, there is no guide for the young fancier as to what is really required. Still, if he breeds to my description of what I consider an ideal Old English Game Bantam, as the Yankee says, I guess he'll come out on the top of the heap when the prize cards are distributed.

Black-red cocks may either be bred from partridge or wheaten hens. Strange to say, the soundest and brightest coloured cocks are to be bred from a partridge hen; if the cock bird is also partridge bred, this is important. Partridge-bred cocks, as a rule, are much brighter in colour than wheaten-bred cocks, and are frequently found to be a bit striped in hackle, and it is these bright-coloured birds that find most favour in the show-pen.

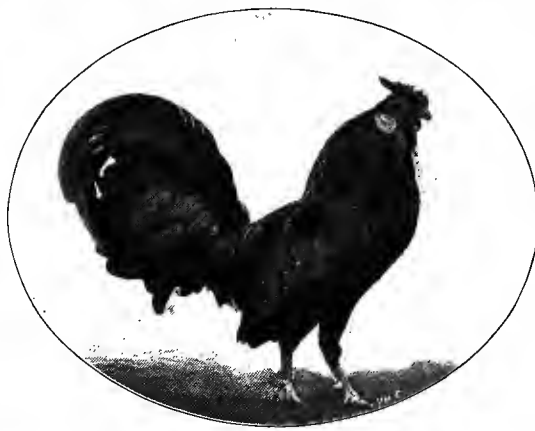
To breed sound coloured partridge hens I would proceed on the same line of colour as stated in modern black-red Bantam pullet breeding, care being taken that your male bird is *not wheaten bred*. If he is your labour

will be lost. To breed partridge pullets you must have a partridge-bred cock bird, and don't you forget it. A wheaten-bred cock, with partridge hens, spoils the colour in both wheaten and partridge chickens. To breed wheaten hens I should select a good-coloured wheaten hen and put her to a wheaten-bred cock. The cocks from wheaten hens are generally a shade darker than the partridge-bred birds, and are more inclined to show red in breast more or less.

In breeding spangles I think if even-coloured birds are selected on both sides, the produce both in cockerels and pullets will be found satisfactory, as, unlike many colours, one pen will be found to produce good specimens of both sexes. Should, however, the chicks come too light in colour the following season I should use a partridge hen, or even a wheaten, although for preference I should use the partridge, as partridge-bred spangles always appear to me to be much harder in feather and more taking in colour than wheaten spangles. To breed evenly-spangled pullets it is best to use a light-coloured cock, but as an all-round breeder I should prefer a medium-coloured, evenly-spangled bird.

Blueduns or blue reds are only to be found here and there, although they are quite as pretty as the black reds. In

the first place, I think the name blue dun hardly correct. The blue-breasted red cocks I would call blue red. These may be bred from blues on both sides, but I think one could hardly know what colour to expect in the chicks, as they "sport" all ways, and require very careful breeding to get the colour fixed. I have seen a good blue cock bred from a sound blue-breasted cock and wheaten hen, and I think a pullet could also be bred same way, or from blues on both sides. A blue-red cock can be bred from a blue hen and a sound-coloured black-red cock. In fact, they can be bred any way almost, and as colour is only a secondary consideration in

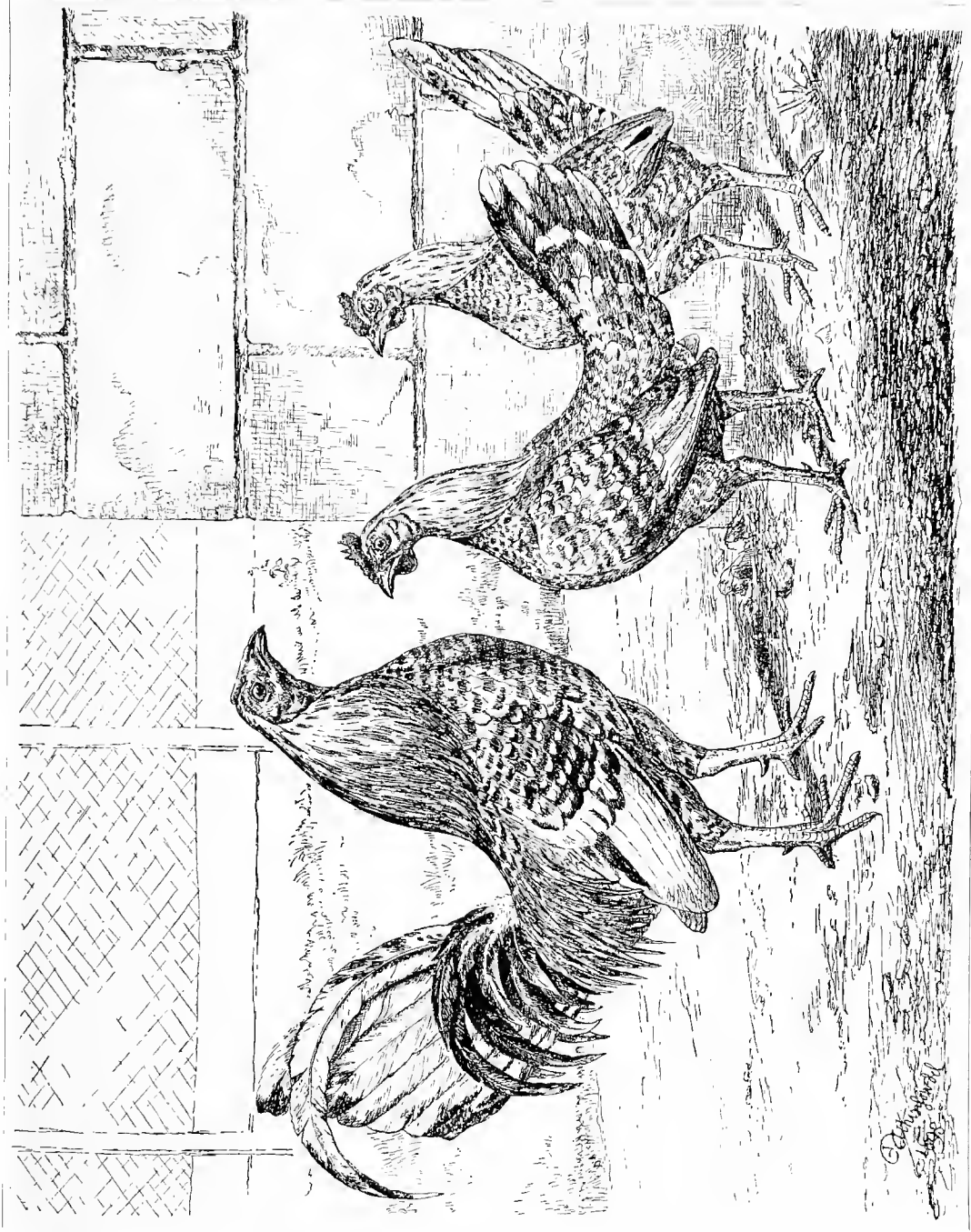


MR. F. GOODACRE'S BLACK ROSECOMB, A NEW ZEALAND WINNER.

Old English Bantams, it is not of very great importance how they are bred, providing the proper shape, type, and size is all there.

A little advice, and then I've had my say on this variety. Don't try to breed Old English Game Bantams by crossing with the Modern Game Bantam, for it can't be done; and don't try and palm off a rank waster of a Modern Game Bantam to a judge as an Old English Game Bantam, for that won't do in 1900, although it did in 1898. If they have to be Old English let them be Old English, for there are hundreds of them in the country to-day, and have been for years.

In judging Old English Bantams care should be taken to have the proper cobby type, broad in chest, low on leg, firm in breast, and straight in breastbone, strong in head and beak, with a red fearless eye, feet well on the ground, and sound in back toe, with bold but graceful carriage, quick in movements, and ever on the alert. The tail should be full, and the sickles and side-hangers of the cock should be fairly long and well curved, not whip-tailed, as is often seen. Dark legs, light eyes, crooked breast-bones, wry-tailed,



OLD ENGLISH BANTAMS (SPANGLES), OLD STYLE.

and duck-footed should one and all amount to disqualification.

SCALE OF POINTS FOR OLD ENGLISH BANTAMS.

Head and beak	8
Eyes	10
Back	8
Breast and body	12
Wings	6
Thighs	4
Shanks	6
Feet	10
Style and carriage	10
Handling	12
Plumage	6
Colour	8
	100

CHAPTER III.

ROSÉCOMBS.

Having gone fully into all the principal breeds of Game Bantams, and which have hitherto received the whole of our attention from the commencement of this book, I will now go on to the Variety Bantams, which are quite as popular as the Game, and as a rule present less difficulties to the young fancier in rearing and preparing for exhibition, with the exception of Rosecombs, which are undoubtedly the most popular of Variety Bantams.

I don't think there is any other variety that has improved so much during the past five or six years as black Rosecombs, or any breed that has attained the height of perfection as this charming variety.

At the present day, competition in Rosecombs is excessively keen at all shows, and a bird to be successful at any show must approach very nearly to the ideal standard of perfection, or his chance of success in the prize list will be a very poor one. There is no doubt whatever but that the Variety Bantam Club is largely responsible for the rapid strides this breed has made during the past few years, as well as doing much good work in furthering the interest of all Variety Bantams. Yet there is, I am sorry to say, much more to do, and although I shall undoubtedly offend some of my readers, I candidly think there is no other breed except Hamburgs which is improved by science and art more than the Rosecomb Bantam. I do not hesitate in saying that quite 40 to 50 per cent. of the present-day Rosecombs are manufactured, not bred. That is a large percentage, but it is nevertheless correct, and yet these birds go on winning and will do so until either the Variety Bantam Club or the Poultry Club put their foot down firmly in the matter. It seems a great pity that it should be so, for there is no more handsome bird on the whole poultry list than black Rosecombs, which have been before the Fancy for nearly fifty years.

Black Rosecombs are fairly hardy, but the chickens require very careful attention during the first few weeks, as they are at times difficult to rear, especially so on a cold, damp soil. They are capital layers, and not very apt to become broody.

I will now describe what is considered an ideal Rosecomb cock: Comb fitting close to head, fairly broad and full in front, tapering to a long leader or spike at the back, the leader to be fine, and have an upward tendency towards the end; the comb to be well and evenly serrated, not hollow in front or centre, but level throughout; face cherry red, smooth, and free from white, which is often found just under the eye; head short and fairly broad, beak dark and slightly curved; eyes dark and full, earlobes white, large, and round, of smooth texture, and the thicker the better, although a bird with a large thick

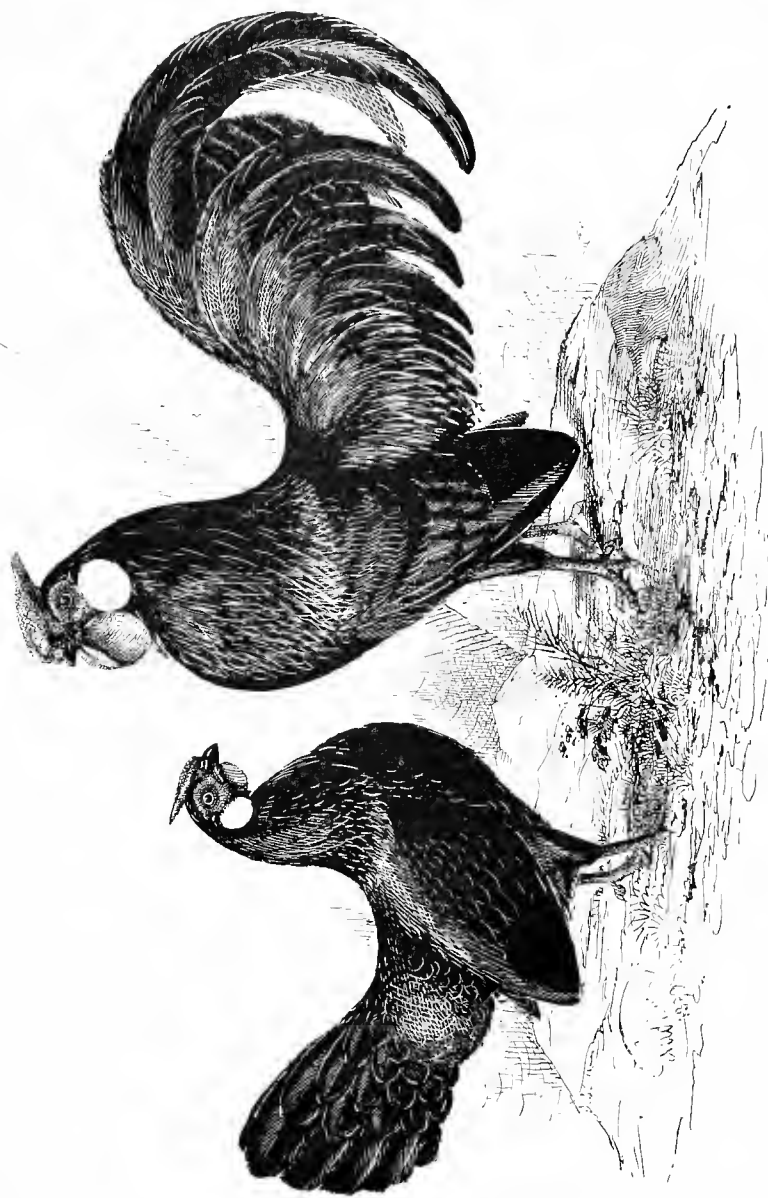
lobe is liable to go white in face as a rule; wattles round and smooth, neck short and thick, full hackle, covering the shoulders well; back short and broad, wings fairly large, but not too long; tail large, primary feathers long and broad, sickle feathers long, and as broad as possible, the end of the sickle to be almost as broad as the commencement, not running to a fine point. The sickle should be gracefully curved till it almost touches the ground. The side hangers which cover the tail should correspond with the sickle, as broad as possible, and the more of them the better. The breast should be broad and full, and carried forward, with the head thrown back. Legs short and fine, black in colour, not slaty-blue or pale, although adult birds will be found paler in legs than cockerels, and either black or white toe nails, latter preferred. Carriage jaunty and lively, yet graceful in movement; weight, 14 to 18 ozs.; colour lustrous, greenish black, the brighter the better.

Hen: Comb, head, face, eye and lobes same as described in cock; earlobes of nice size, the larger the better, if smooth, white, and of firm texture; wattles fine, round, and bright healthy red in colour; back as short as possible, tail carried rather gay, wings carried slightly below the body, not too long; breast full and carried forward as in cock; legs short and fine and black in colour; carriage jaunty yet graceful.

Having described my ideal I will now try and instruct my readers how to mate up to obtain these requirements. Before doing so, just a word of advice. If you contemplate taking up this variety, go in for some reliable strain, and keep that strain pure. Don't buy from first one and then another, and hope for success; if you do you will regret it, for the only sure road to success in Rosecomb breeding is by keeping one strain pure. Of course it would not always do to breed year after year from your own, unless you retain a certain number of stock birds annually for this purpose, which is done by our most successful breeders, and then this must be done judiciously. Let the health of your chickens guide you as to the necessity of fresh blood in your stock, and then it is advisable to use only those with a dash of your own strain in them, rather than a direct cross, as by using quite a new strain you will in all probability get your birds much too large.

To breed exhibition black Rosecomb cocks, I would select a cock with a long comb nicely worked throughout and tapering off to a long leader, lobe of good size, round and of good texture; body small, and short in back; plenty of feather, and low on leg, which should be black. To this bird I would mate three or four hens or pullets, former preferred, all possessing good combs and long leaders; this is important. The lobes should be thick and smooth, and of nice size; face free from white, and dark in eye and dark legs. Body as short as possible, but plenty of tail, and see that the tail feathers are broad, and if the top feathers on each side of the tail are curved all the better. From this pen you should get a good percentage of first-class exhibition cockerels. Although it is quite possible to breed both good cockerels and pullets from one pen, still, it is advisable, where practicable, to use separate pens; for to breed from one pen you must have a thorough knowledge of how each individual bird is bred and whether of a cockerel strain or a pullet strain.

In pullet breeding the male bird should have a big lobe, as thick and as smooth as possible, but must be free from white in face, both these requirements being of great importance. He must also be short and cobby, and by no means long in back. The hens to mate with him should approach as near as possible to the ideal



T.C.

MR. H. INMAN'S BLACK ROSECOMB BANTAMS.

Cockerel, First and Cup for Best Variety, Brighton Cork, Liverpool; First and Specials (2), Kilmarnock; First and Cup for Best Rosecomb Bantam, &c., &c. Pullet, First and Special, Lockwood; First, Gairstang; First, Kilmarnock; First and Special Widdoware, First, Liverpool; the only times exhibited.

already described. The produce from each pen should be marked and kept separately for future breeding. From the pullet pen, should you by chance breed a cockerel good in head points and shape, yet faulty in colour, viz., red or bronze in saddle or back, don't go and wring his neck as a "waster"; if so, you are killing the goose that lays the golden egg, as it were, for it is these bronzed backed, red hackled ones which breed the richest coloured birds. You didn't know that before, did you? yet it is a fact all the same. Here endeth the blacks.

Whites, like the Irishman's promotion, have had a downward tendency the last few years, so that at the present time a really first-class white is very rare indeed. This variety appears to have been greatly neglected, but why I am at a loss to tell, as it is a very pretty and taking variety. True it requires more care and attention in preparing for the show pen and preserving its colour, which is liable to become tanned by exposure to the sun and weather, still, where kept under favourable circumstances, there is not a more taking variety. The points required are the same as in blacks, with the exception of the colour, which should be pure white, not yellow or creamy on back; legs, beak, and feet should also be white; lobes white; face, comb and wattles, bright red.

In mating up whites the same lines must be followed as in blacks, and where lobe and length of feather have been deficient, these have been remedied by crossing white hens with a black cock, and for this purpose it is best to select a male bird that is inclined to be slate coloured in leg, the paler the better, but possessing plenty of feather and large lobe. The produce from this pen would come all self-colours, i.e., blacks or whites, not mottled; the whites would in all probability show a little duskiness in leg colour, but this could be remedied the following year if bred back, viz., the white hens mated to the best of the cockerels, and the pullets mated to a white cock; by doing this you would greatly improve the lobe and length of feather.

SCALE OF POINTS.

Comb	20
Lobe and face	15
Length and width of feather ..	15
Shape and carriage	15
Colour	10
Size and weight	10
Colour of leg	5
Condition	10
	100
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CHAPTER IV.

PEKINS.

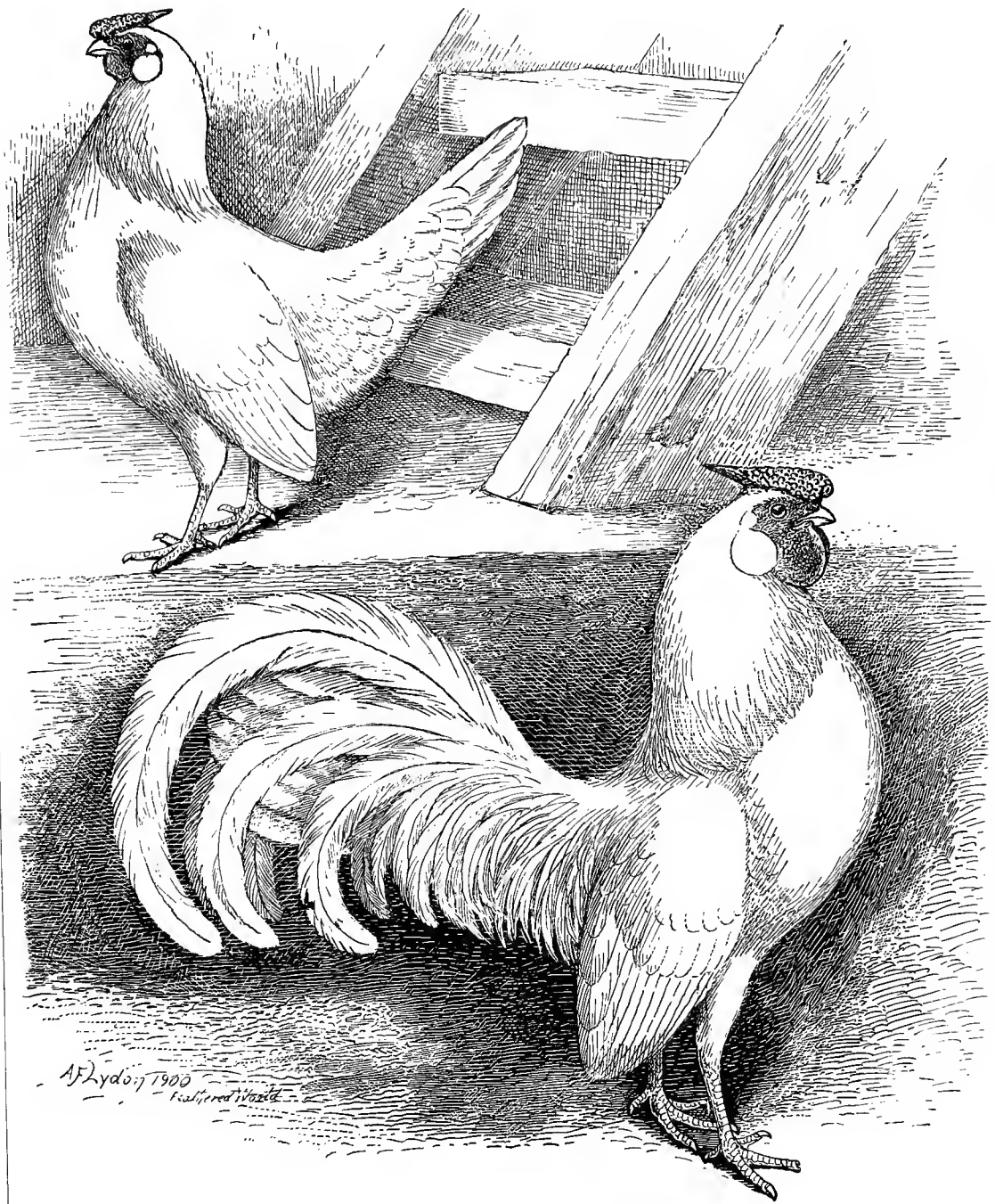
There is no doubt whatever that next to the rosecombs in popularity comes the Pekin, or what was formerly called the Cochon China Bantam, owing to the variety having originated from China, the first pair we believe having been imported from Pekin about 40 years ago. At that time buff was the only colour established, but to-day we have buffs, blacks, whites, cuckoos, and partridge; to say nothing of mottles or Ancona Pekins, which are the very latest additions to the breed. The original buffs were quite different to the present-day type, both in shape and colour, being higher on leg, longer in back, and more inclined to be what is termed "vulture hooked," more after the style of the booted Bantam. Through the introduction of the Cochon blood by breeding down from the larger breeds, the shape and feather, as well as colour, have been greatly improved, whilst the size also has been reduced.

With the exception, perhaps, of the very best exhibition specimens of buff Cochons, the Pekin Bantam can lay claim to superiority over all the other varieties of Cochons, from an ideal standard of perfection point of view.

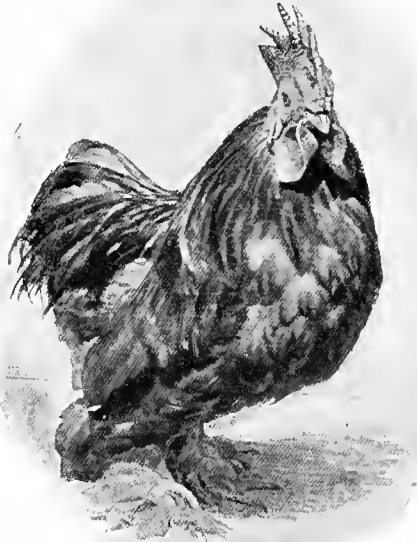
As an instance of the growing popularity of the Pekin I need only refer to Liverpool Show of 1899, where in the two black rosecomb classes we find thirty-nine entries, and in buff Pekins alone there were no less than thirty-eight entries. Although the cup for the best Variety Bantam cock was secured by the winning rosecomb cockerel, the cup for the best hen fell to the black Pekin, the honours thus being equally divided, and both these birds were pronounced to be as near perfection as it is possible to attain.

Pekins can be kept under almost any circumstances, if they are liberally supplied with fine sand for the floor of their houses and runs to protect the foot feather, which is the only drawback to the variety. They are capital layers of tinted eggs, they lay early in the season, and the chickens are easily reared if the breeding stock are healthy. Of course, like all heavily-feathered birds, unless the foot-feather of the male stock bird is cut short, there will be a large percentage of clear eggs, but this can always be remedied by cutting the foot feather short in cocks and round the vent of the hens, and for this reason it is best to keep birds, especially for stock, apart from the exhibition ones. This is done by some of our most successful Cochon breeders, and a system I can thoroughly recommend to everyone, as by doing so you will not only have a greater percentage of fertile eggs, but the chickens will also be much stronger and a pleasure to rear. Pekin hens are capital sitters and mothers, they very rarely lay more than a dozen eggs before becoming broody—this is one of the drawbacks to keeping Pekins. Again, for breeding the very best broody hens by crossing the Pekin hen with a Silky cock, their produce cannot be equalled. There is little wonder then that Pekins are such favourites, as even the "culls" in pullets will fetch 5s. each as brooders, and find a ready sale at this through an advertisement in *The Feathered World* during the hatching season, from January to June. I have proved this over and over again; in fact, just through a casual mention of their being such reliable sitters in one of my recent articles I have been infested with applications from all parts for sitters, and have had to refuse quite fifty or sixty applicants, as I had none to spare. Sitting hens suitable for Bantam eggs appear to be a very scarce commodity indeed, and I am surprised that someone does not go in for these as a speciality. Where the fancier has plenty of accommodation I feel sure it would pay well. Unlike the rosecomb mentioned in my last, the Pekin offers little scope for the habitual faker or trimmer, apart from its tail, which, I am sorry to say, is more often left at home than sent with the bird to the show. The time has now come for this fraudulent practice to be discontinued, for it is nothing short of fraud or dishonesty to show a bird with a pulled tail. A Game Bantam or a rosecomb Bantam with a pulled tail would not be acknowledged by the judge; then, I say, why should the Pekin be made an exception, and be allowed to score in the prize list, as is now the case in 50 per cent. of the present-day Pekins?

I will now describe what I consider an ideal Pekin, and, for simplicity, give the shape and type first, which is the same in all the different varieties. In the first place, the Pekin is intended to represent the large Cochon in miniature, and should therefore be as near as possible the same shape as the Cochon. Commencing at the head, the comb should be single and



WHITE ROSECOMB BANTAMS.



MISS SOUTHAM'S BUFF PEKIN COCK.

finely serrated, and the smaller the comb the better although it is almost an impossibility to breed Pekins as small in comb in comparison to the Cochín: eyes red, or nearly red, face red and smooth, lobes free from white, neck short and thick, chest broad and carried well forward, back short and broad, the shorter the better; cushion full and nicely rounded, tail short and full, the feathers of the tail proper, twelve in number, being much softer in the quill than in any other breed of Bantam, and should be curved, not straight, as in other varieties. In addition, the cock's tail should be well furnished with side hangers corresponding in colour with the body. The wings should be short, and tightly tucked up, legs short as possible, so that the body almost touches the ground; the legs should be abundantly feathered right to the end of the middle toe without being "vulture hocked," which is a great defect in all Pekins. The colour of legs in all the varieties of Pekins should be yellow, and the richer the yellow the better, although it is a difficult point to get in blacks. Willow or green legs should count heavily against the bird in the show pen. The one prevailing weakness in all Pekins is scaly leg, but this can be prevented by proper care and attention in keeping the houses and runs dry and clean. Where the birds are kept on nice dry sand scaly leg will rarely appear.

Colour will now engage our attention, commencing with the leading variety—Buffs. The exhibition cock should be a rich dark orange, not red; one uniform shade throughout, including tail and flight feathers, when the wing is opened out. The fluff should also be solid buff, not white or dusky, which is often the case. White or black in the flight feathers or tail is a serious defect, more especially white, and a cock showing this defect should never be retained as a stock bird, for in all probability a great percentage of the produce would be useless. The hen to match the cock should be a rich golden buff, just a shade lighter than the cock;

or, to be more definite, should correspond as near as possible with the breast colour of the cock. This is also a capital guide in mating up the breeding pen. The colour should be even throughout, not paler in breast than in body colour, but one rich level buff all through, free from white or black, and buff in under colour or fluff as well.

From outward appearance a bird may seem a solid buff, but when examined carefully may be found slaty in fluff, sometimes almost black. The flight feathers when the wing is opened out may contain more black or white than buff, and the tail likewise. It is, therefore, really necessary in judging buffs to examine each specimen carefully for these defects, which are often hidden by outward appearances. In mating up buffs preference should be given to a male bird of the darker shade, providing he is pure in flights and tail, especially free from white, which is highly important. When I say darker shade, I don't mean a red or dark cinnamon, but a rich, deep orange buff of a level colour, not dark in saddle and pale in breast, the richer or deeper in under colour or fluff the richer will be the colour of the produce: this is one of the most important features in buff breeding. The bird may appear to be an excellent top colour, but on examination his under colour may be white or nearly black, both of which are detrimental to producing satisfactory offspring.

The hens to match this cock should be as rich and level in colour as possible; don't breed from pale mealy hens, or those showing a mixture of white in the feather, and, above all, avoid those white in flights or tail. By selecting a pen as described, say not more than four hens and a cock, exhibition specimens of both sexes can be produced from the same pen. Unlike most varieties of Bantams, the Pekin does not attain perfection until after the second year, as it is not fully developed until twelve months old. They can be hatched as late as July with success, and by hatching late the size and



MISS SOUTHAM'S BUFF PEKIN PULLET.



AN AMERICAN BLACK PEKIN COCK.

length of leg are reduced, both important features in Pekins.

Blacks should be the same as buffs in comb, face, eyes, and legs. The plumage should be a lustrous beetle-green, as seen in the black Hamburgh, although it is hardly possible to obtain the same sheen as in Hamburghs, but the more lustre the better, as colour in blacks is a very important point. The fluff or under-colour should also be black to the skin, not grey, which is often found in blacks, although birds with sound black fluff are few and far between, still, if bred pure and not allowed to cross with the whites, they can be bred sound in fluff; it is the crossing with whites to strengthen the strain and obtain the length of feather that is the cause of grey in under-colour and hackle, which we frequently find in blacks. To breed blacks, although it is quite possible to breed exhibition specimens of both sexes from one pen, I should advise, where practicable, to mate up a cockerel-breeding pen separate from the pullet pen. In the cock pen I should select the shortest backed bird I could find, one possessing plenty of feather on shanks and around the hocks and carried out to the end of the centre toe. I should like him low on the leg, excelling in lustre and free from white or grey in under-colour and foot feather. The male bird in the pullet pen should be descended from a pullet-breeding strain. A good guide in the selection of cockerel for pullet breeding is to notice if he possesses, more or less, a tinge of red in the saddle and neck. If this is found, you can mate him up with confidence that he will produce the glossy sheen in the pullets, but the hens in both pens should be free from any foreign colour and as shapely as possible, discarding those grey or white in fluff or white in lobe.

White Pekins have found many admirers during the past few years, and are making steady progress. When kept under favourable circumstances—*i.e.*, shaded by covered runs, or kept in small woods or orchards from the sun's rays—white Pekins are a very pretty variety to keep, but should never be attempted where the only accommodation is a backyard. To be successful with whites they must have grass and a run with covered top and a portion of the sides and front, whilst the floor of the house should have fine sea-sand, to the depth of three or four inches, to protect the foot-feather and keep it clean. Whites are easy to breed true to colour by

keeping them pure and in-breeding, but should your chicks come weakly through too much in-breeding then the best plan would be to introduce a sound-coloured black cock, and mate him to the white hens. From these you would get both blacks and whites; the former would be more or less grey in under-colour, and show perhaps a little white in foot feather, which, as a rule, disappears before the bird is exhibited; the whites will be found very pure in colour, although perhaps not quite so rich a yellow in leg colour, but the produce will be found stronger than the previous year, and more feathers will have been obtained as well. It would not be wise to breed from the blacks produced in this way, even should they be perfectly sound in colour.

Cuckoo Pekins are a much later addition to the Fancy than blacks or whites, and do not appear to be making any headway at all. Doubtless this is greatly due to the difficulties of producing them true to colour. It is very rarely we find a single first-class exhibition specimen at any of the provincial shows. In markings they should be similar to the Scotch Grey Bantam, the ground colour should be a very pale blue, with dark (almost black) bars; the more clearly defined in barring (as in Plymouth Rocks) the better. Like the Scotch Grey and Plymouth Rock, the ground colour varies considerably, but the colour should be as uniform as possible, and the barring fine and distinct; and not only should the top feather be barred, but the under-colour and foot feather as well. This is very important when mating up the bird for breeding purposes. I have seen perfect top-coloured birds entirely devoid of fluff barring; but these are not the birds that should be selected for the breeding pen, and, again, never select birds that show any great amount of white in tail or flights. This is a great weakness in all barred varieties, and should be strictly guarded against.

In mating up the breeding pens, it would be as well to use two pens. For the cockerel-breeding pen, select a very uniform-coloured bird of the medium shade. See that his tail and sickle feathers are well barred down to the root, and that his flights when opened out are sound and free from white. With him mate up three hens or pullets of a nice level colour and clear in ground colour. In the pullet pen I should use a lighter shade of colour in the cock, but not brassy on top. This is a serious fault. See that his breast is clear and fine in markings, not blurred or indistinct; a little dark on tail is no objection, but he must show no trace of white either in tail or wing. By mating him to three or four distinctly barred hens, nice and clear in ground colour, and especially sound in the black of the barring, you should be rewarded by a good percentage of exhibition pullets,



AN AMERICAN BLACK PEKIN HEN.

and the cockerels the following year would be found useful if mated back to the hens again, as well as breeding cockerels and pullets together. By doing this you will have two strings to your bow as it were. Should any of the pullets come black, by mating these to a finely barred cockerel of the lighter shade you would in all probability breed the very best of cuckoo pullets, and pullets bred in this manner are very useful as future pullet breeders.

We have now come to partridge Pekins, which are one of the latest editions to the variety. These are intended to represent the partridge Cochins in miniature, though as yet they have made but slow progress towards the ideal, and have not made many friends. This is no doubt owing to the many difficulties experienced by those who have endeavoured to establish the correct colour and markings in the pullets, combined with length of foot feather and small size, all difficult points to overcome, although with care in mating and in-breeding there is no reason why the desired requirements should not be obtained, although it will require a lot of patience and perseverance, both essential traits in every would-be successful fancier's life, and without which no fancier can hope to reach the top rung of the ladder of fame in the Fancy. To describe the colours of the partridge Pekin cock I cannot do better than refer my readers to the top-colour of the black-red Game Bantam cock. Both these birds are identical in colour, except in hackle, where the partridge Pekin shows more striping and is generally two shades of colour in hackle, dark orange towards the head, shading off towards the shoulders to pale golden. The breast and thighs should be a sound black of a greenish shade, legs and feet yellow, and well furnished with black feathers right to the end of the centre toe, and as free from white foot feathering as possible, and the longer the feather the better. The hen should be a rich chocolate ground colour, of one even shade throughout, every feather evenly pencilled with black, except hackles, which should be a light golden, the ground colour and pencilling being two of the most important and difficult points to obtain.

To breed partridge Pekins it is desirable to have two pens, as it is next to impossible to breed exhibition cockerels and pullets from the same pen. In the cock pen you would require to have the male bird particularly bright in his top colour, and sound black in breast, thighs, fluff, and foot feather, otherwise your cockerels would be rusty in fluff and breast, and white or grizzly in foot feather. The hens to mate with this cock should be as pale in hackle as possible; they need not be particularly good in pencilling, as this is not necessary in cockerel breeding, but see that they are well feathered, and especially so on middle toe. Now, to produce the best exhibition pullets you should select a cock a shade darker than the above, and one that is coarser in his striping of hackle; in all probability he will be more or less faulty in breast colour and fluff, showing red or rusty coloured feathers, if so, all the better for the purpose you require and a capital guide that he is a pullet breeder. To him mate three or four of the very soundest ground-coloured hens you can find, well and distinctly pencilled, and from these you may expect a good percentage of sound coloured pullets.

In mating up both pens always have the proper shape in your eye—viz., broad in chest, short in back and leg, low on the ground and abundantly feathered, all necessary points to be considered when mating up.

In the first place strive for colour and type, and when you have mastered these requirements you can always reduce the size and retain the colour, etc., by inbreeding.

SCALE OF POINTS—PEKINS.

Head and comb	10
Length of feather and fluff	25
Colour	20
Shape and carriage	15
Shortness of leg	10
Size	10
Condition	10
	100

CHAPTER V.

BRAHMA BANTAMS

are another variety of the feathered-legged tribe, which have been before the Fancy for the past ten or twelve years, but as yet are in the hands of only a few breeders, who may be counted on the fingers of one hand; consequently it is not often that classes are provided for them, apart from the big events, such as Palace and Liverpool, where we find classes set apart for them. Although a very pretty and hardy variety, I do not think they will ever become as popular as either the Pekin or Booted, principally on account of the difficulty of breeding them true to colour, and at the same time keeping down the size and producing the required length of foot feather, a point in which fifty per cent. of the Brahma Bantams of to-day fail.

Like the large Brahmas, from which there is no doubt but they have descended in years gone by, there are two varieties only, viz., lights and darks, the former as yet being most favoured, doubtless on account of being the easier of the two to breed true to colour. Still, I consider the darks equally as handsome, in fact, a very taking variety.

The hens are good layers of a tinted egg, and the chicks are fairly hardy, and easy to rear.

In shape they should resemble the Pekin as near as possible, with the exception that the Brahma is a trifle higher on the leg, and the hens especially being longer in back and tail. The light cock should have a triple or pea comb; face and wattle, red; hackles, silvery white, striped with black towards the bottom; the back, wings, shoulders, breast, and thighs, white; tail, black; the top outer feathers, or what are termed hangers, slightly edged with white; legs, yellow, heavily feathered with white feathers to end of middle toe, the more free from black the better; beak, yellow, to match the legs; eyes, red or yellow.

The hen is white in body, with neck hackle also white, but plainly striped with black; the wings when opened out should show black in primaries, and also in under-secondaries; tail also black, to match the cock; legs, feet, and beak, yellow, and well furnished with white feathers to end of toes; eyes, red or yellow.

The dark Brahma cock should have a triple or pea comb, face red, also wattles and lobes, latter free from white; beak and legs, yellow or horn colour; neck hackle, silvery white, striped with black, the stripe to be broader towards the bottom of hackle; breast, thighs, leg and foot feathering, tail, wing butts, and shoulders, sound black; wing bow, back, and shoulders, silvery white; the saddle hackle same colour, but with distinct black striping; wing bar and tail hangers, rich green-black; the leg and foot feathering to be a sound black and as long as possible—the less white in foot-feather the better, although it is a difficult matter to get the foot-feather absolutely sound in either colour, as black will invariably show in the foot-feather of the lights, but it should always be guarded against when mating up the breeding pen. This only refers to the cocks, as the hens are generally fairly sound in this respect. The dark hen should be identically the same as the cock in face, eyes,



WHITE ROSECOMB BANTAMS (photograph from life).¹

and leg. Hackle silvery-white, ground-colour distinctly striped with black, tail also black. Body, breast, and wing-colour to be a nice steel-grey colour, pencilled with black, the pencilling to be as distinct and as even as possible, and continued right up to the throat and out towards the fluff behind the legs; the pencilling and ground-colour being the chief and most important parts in dark Brahma, together with length of feather, which should be as long as possible and carried right to end of middle toe.

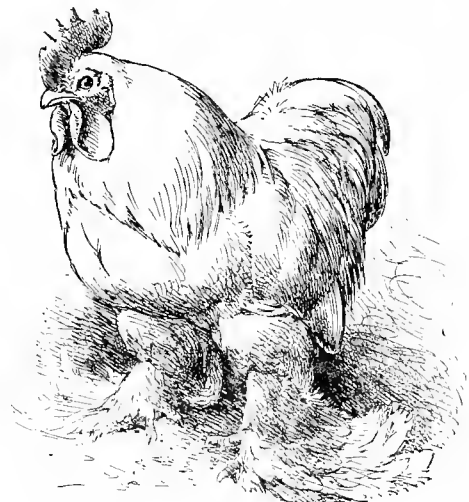
And now to the breeding of Brahma Bantams. Although the proper ground-colour of the dark hens is hardly properly established yet, it would be advisable to mate up two pens to obtain the best results. To breed the best cockerels it is always best to have the soundest coloured bird you can possibly find; one sound in his black, and clear in his top colour. See that he is well feathered and good in shape, but not large, the smaller the better, as size is as yet a failing point in Brahmans. With him mate three of the best-shaped pullets you have, good in head points and comb, and the lighter and more silvery in hackle to top of head the better for cockerel breeding; although their body and breast colour may be very pale and defective in lacing, this is no detriment in cock breeding, so long as the neck hackle is a very pale silvery white.

In breeding pullets the order must be reversed. See that your hens or pullets are sound and uniform in ground colour, also regular and even in pencilling. This is absolutely necessary. The cock should be as described before, with the exception that if he shows a little pencilling on breast and fluff, and also wing bar, all the better for pullet breeding; the more lacing he shows proves him to be descended from a pullet-breeding strain. From this pen it would be advisable to retain three or four of the best and soundest-coloured pullets, also a couple of the best-shaped cockerels, and the following season breed from these. Then you would be able to establish a thoroughly reliable pullet-breeding strain, and at the same time you are reducing the size and improving the colour.

To breed lights it would scarcely be necessary to use two pens, as both cockerels and pullets might be produced from one if properly mated. Take a cock that is as near perfect in colour as possible, not too heavily striped in hackle or too pale, but use one of the medium shade, but see that his striping in hackle is sound, rich black, not tinged with grey, and finely-striped saddle hackle. He must have plenty of feather, and be a good shape, with a small, neat comb. With him mate a couple of hens or pullets as clean white on back and wings as possible, and if a little fine in striping of hackle all the better; these are for breeding cockerels. Also two hens that must be perfectly sound on back, a pure white, and the whiter the fluff or under colour the better; hackle well striped with black, the broader and more distinct the striping the better; these for pullet breeding. Brahma Bantams require the same housing and attention to the protection of the foot feather as described in last article on Bantals, and may be bred to advantage until May, June, or July.

SCALE OF POINTS.

Head and comb	10
Length of feather and fluff	20
Colour	20
Shape	20
Size	15
Condition	15
	100



AN AMERICAN WHITE PEKIN COCK.

CHAPTER VI.

MALAYS.

The Malay Bantam is undoubtedly descended from the large breed of Malay, and during the past few years has greatly improved, both in size and type, but there is yet much room for further improvement. In my own mind I am firmly convinced that some Malay breeders have made a great mistake by introducing the modern black-red Bantam in order to reduce the size, but by doing so they have lost the type and carriage peculiar to the Malay. My contention is that in judging Malay Bantams the first thing to look for is type, shape, and carriage, then head points, size, and colour, for the latter is only what one might call a secondary consideration, whilst type and carriage are absolutely necessary. No matter how good the bird may be in colour and size, if it lacks the general character, type, and carriage of a Malay fowl, it should not be countenanced in the show-pen.

Malay Bantams are generally much too large, although there are here and there small and typical specimens to be found, at our big shows in particular. If fanciers would only follow a system of breeding by first getting the proper type and general characteristics, irrespective of size, and afterwards inbreeding from these typical specimens, the desired size as well as type will be obtained in the long run, and much quicker than by introducing Modern Game Bantams, which can never have the desired effect, and bound sooner or later to end in complete failure.

There are four varieties of Malays—reds, whites, piles, and blacks, although it is very seldom we find either of the two last named at any of the shows. The reds and whites have found many friends, and the winners are widely spread, which is one great advantage to the welfare and future prosperity of the breed. The Malay Bantam should be an exact miniature of the Malay fowl.

The head should be broad, with overhanging eyebrows, giving the bird a fierce expression. The beak should be strong and curved, horn or bright yellow, the latter preferred. Eyes yellow or daw, and well sunk in the head. Comb small, walnut shape, and set well forward on head. Face red, smooth, and free from feathers. Neck as long as possible, and carried very erect. Hackle short and fine. Back fairly long, and sloping towards the tail. Shoulders broad, and carried high and well forward, having the appearance of being apart from the body, the shoulder points to be very prominent, which gives the bird a bold appearance. Wings short and strong, and fitting closely to the body. The tail of the male bird should be drooping, medium length, narrow in feather and sickles, which should be slightly curved. The hen's tail should be short and square, and carried slightly above the horizontal line. Breast deep and broad, and almost bare of feathers. Thighs long and powerful, scantily feathered, and set wide apart. Shanks long and fine, round in front, and a rich orange yellow in colour. Toes (four) long and straight, the back toe set on low, and resting firmly on the ground in a direct line with the middle toe. Plumage short, and as hard as possible.

We now come to the colour of Malay Bantams.

There are two distinct shades of the red, either or both of which are acknowledged in the standard and in the show pen. The one is much lighter and brighter altogether in top-colour of cocks than the other, and should be as near as possible the colour of the Modern Game Bantam which I have described for pullet breeding, and the hens to mate with this should be partridge, and if sound in body colour they should produce both good cockerels and pullets, for as a rule they breed very

true to colour. The other shade of red is the dark maroon top-coloured cock. The breast, wing bar, flights, and shoulder points should be a lustrous black, hackle a dark red, wing-ends or secondaries rich bay. The hens to mate with this shade of bird, which, as a rule, are harder and shorter in feather than the bright reds, should be the wheaten or cinnamon of one uniform shade of colour throughout. By mating in this way exhibition specimens of both sizes can be bred from one pen, which is a great advantage to those where space is at a premium.

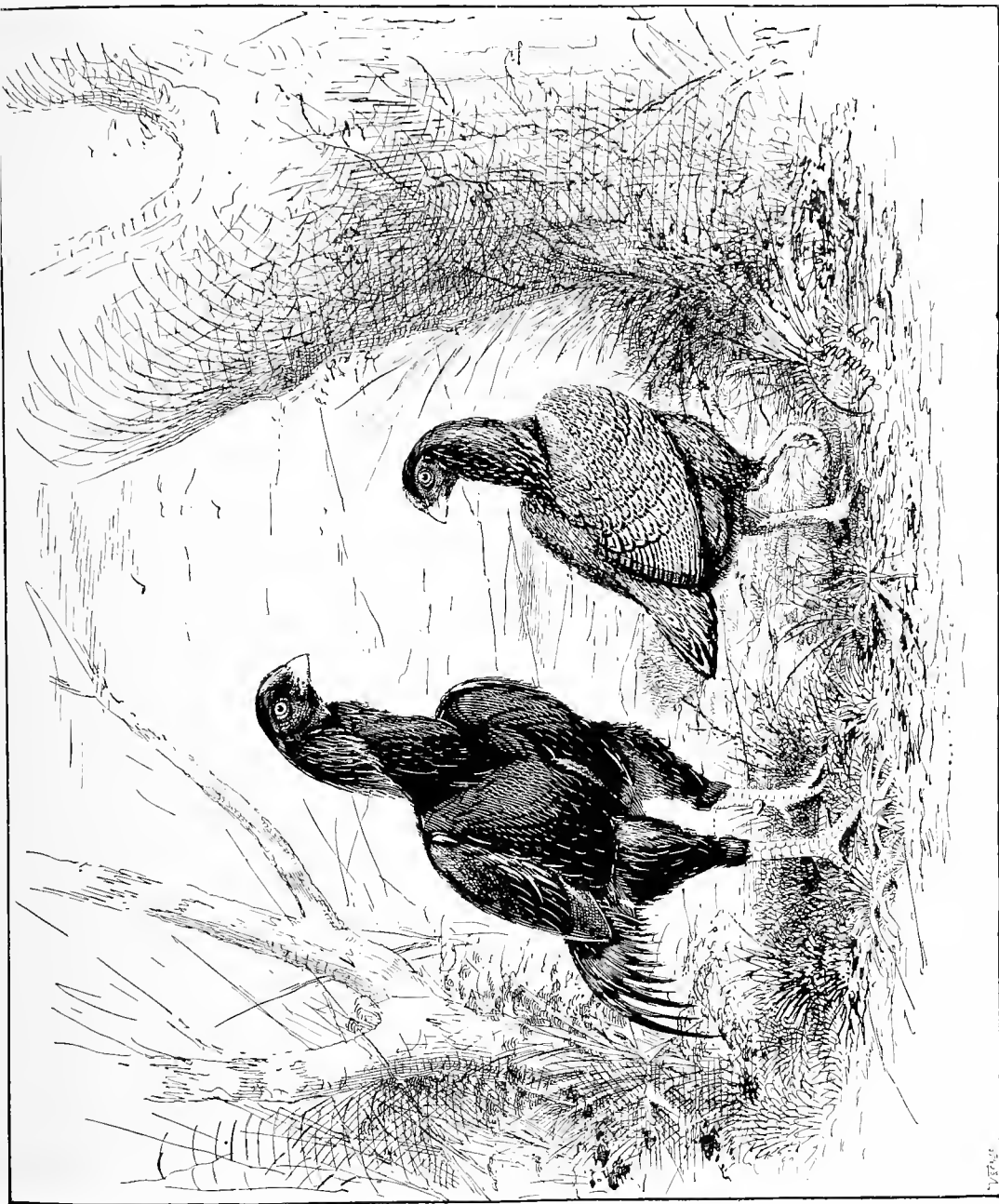
Whites are a very taking variety, their beautiful snow-white plumage and rich orange legs and beaks showing up well together. They are easily bred, providing care is taken not to breed from male birds that are *strawy* or *yellow* on top, for using such birds is simply a waste of time, as the produce will invariably turn out fifty per cent. worse, and as such are useless in the show pen. In mating up your whites, then, let your first object be to select a cock pure white on saddle and back, and one free from willow in leg, for this is one of the failings of whites, but with proper selection in mating up the fault can easily be remedied.

Piles are very few and far between, no doubt owing to the difficulty in obtaining the desired colour in the male birds, but this can be remedied if my instructions in breeding pile Game Bantams be followed out, viz.: Take a couple of white hens, and mate them to a rich deep-coloured red cock, care being taken that he is a rich dark bay on wing ends, and particularly sound in his black both on breast and wing bar, and by doing so you will be rewarded by a fair percentage of better piles than have hitherto graced the show pen.

The following year I would breed brothers and sisters together, and should the percentage of good birds from the first cross be satisfactory, then by all means go on again on the same lines, as well as by using the best of the pile cockerels from these, and mating him to his sisters. Never use a pile cock that is weak in his bays as a stock bird, for it is labour in vain, as they are useless either for stock or exhibition purposes; I would much prefer to use a dark wing-ended bird, even should he be faulty in breast or top, rather than use an otherwise perfect-coloured bird with faulty wing ends. This reminds me of what a noted Bantam breeder and exhibitor said to me the other day, "Proud, you are telling young Bantam fanciers too much"; but from the numerous encouraging letters I have received from all parts of the country, I am happy to learn that the practical information I have penned, with a view of giving all young fanciers a helping hand, has been so thoroughly appreciated, that no matter whether I am telling too many of the secrets of breeding, etc., or not, I shall continue on the lines I have set down, and shall carry out my promise set forth in the opening chapters of this work—viz., that everything that can be of use to the young fancier will be written in language as brief and as simple as possible, that he who runs may read, and may benefit by his reading. It is not that I am telling young fanciers and amateurs too much, but I am telling them, perhaps, something hitherto unknown to them, and which those already in the know would prefer keeping secret.

If you can give a struggling fancier a little advice by the way or put him on the right road to successful breeding after his years of toil, I say do so, and I feel confident that he will be heartily thankful for your assistance; and remember that "good advice costs little, but is worth much."

While on the pile question, a little incident has just flashed through my mind which occurred some 18 to 20 months ago, which will prove what I have said, viz., that good advice, if acted upon, is valuable in the Fancy.



MR. GEOFFREY JOYCES INDIAN GAME BANTAMS.
Cock, 2nd Birmingham, 1898, and 1st Liverpool, 1898, &c.
Hen, 2nd Liverpool, 1898, &c.

A friend of mine, whilst acting on my behalf as reporter of a certain North-country show, purchased a pile Leghorn pullet at a nominal figure, and as he had never had any experience in pile breeding he asked my advice. After seeing the pullet and ascertaining how she was bred, I told him which I thought would be the best way to mate her. He acted upon my advice; the result was that no less than 75 per cent. of the chicks turned out winners, including Dairy medal and challenge cup winners.

Did I tell him too much, think you? I do not think so, but I evidently told him enough, and it pleased me not a little to see him, as the Yankees say, "On the top of the heap," when the cards went up.

The advice cost me nothing and I gave it to him at the same price, and I am sure it was gratifying to him to breed so many winners the very first season, and with a variety which he had never kept before.

SCALE OF POINTS.		
Head .. .. .	..	15
Eyes .. .. .	..	10
Shoulders .. .. .	..	15
Legs and feet .. .. .	..	10
Shape and reach .. .. .	..	15
Size .. .. .	..	15
Shortness of feather .. .. .	..	10
Condition .. .. .	..	10
		100

Faults to be deducted accordingly.

CHAPTER VII. INDIAN GAME.

Amongst the many new additions to the Bantam Fancy there is no more beautiful or more noble-looking miniature Game fowl than the Indian Game, which, if my memory serves me correctly, were introduced to the public about the year 1887.

Of course, at that time the variety was much larger than we are accustomed to see now at the big events; and although during the past four or five years they have made fairly good headway, there is yet ample room for further improvements both in size and type. There is very little doubt that the Indian Game Bantam owes its origin to some extent to the Aseel and Indian Game cross, and afterwards by inbreeding from the Indian Game late in the season to reduce the size.

Of course, to reduce Indian Game to Bantam size is a considerable undertaking, and means many years of labour, on account of the massive build of the Cornish Indian Game.

Although Cornwall has always been considered the stronghold of the larger breed, still, in Indian Game Bantams, they would appear to be entirely out of the running. At most of our large shows classes are provided for them, and which usually fill well; whilst at the smaller provincial shows it is quite a common occurrence to see an Indian Game Bantam figuring prominently in the prize-list in the A.O.V. class.

Now that the Indian Game Club have recognised their merits by admitting them into their ranks, it is more than likely that their future progress towards perfection will be more rapid.

The present type of Indian Game Bantam appears to favour the Malay more than the Indian Game, being much too high on leg, and long in back. This is altogether wrong, and the sooner that Indian Game Bantam breeders know it, the better it will be for their future welfare in the show pen. In every respect the Bantam should be an exact miniature of the Indian Game fowl, and as small as possible consistent with type and build.

In judging Indian Game Bantams shape should be the first essential point, then colour and size; but however good in the two latter points, if the bird does not possess the necessary shape and build it should not be countenanced in the exhibition pen.

Therefore let type be your first aim, then colour, whilst the required size can always be obtained by inbreeding. I will now try and describe what I should consider an ideal bird.—*Cock.* *Head*:—Rather long and thick, skull broad and inclined to be a little beetle browed. *Neck*:—Medium length and slightly arched. *Leak* — Well curved, strong, giving the bird a powerful expression. *Face*:—Red, fairly smooth and fine in texture, and dotted over with black feathers. *Comb*:—Peacombed or triple, small and neat, closely set on head, and bright red in colour. *Eyes*:—Full and prominent, pale red preferred, eyebrows slightly arched. *Gene al Shape*:—Thick and compact, back short and flat, broad as possible at the shoulders and tapering towards the tail, but not flat sided. *Breast*:—Deep and wide but well rounded, and breast bone straight. *Wings*:—Short, clasping the body closely and firmly, carried well forward high at points, and well tucked in behind. *Tail*:—Medium length, slightly drooping, tail feathers proper, bard and close fitting, with a few side hangers or tail coverts narrow and glossy. *Thighs*:—Much shorter than Malays, stout, and well rounded. *Shanks*:—Medium length, strong, and nicely rounded, close fitting scales, and a deep, rich yellow in colour, the richer the better. *Feet*:—Strong, toes straight, long and well spread, back toe carried well on the ground. *Plumage*:—Hard and glossy. *General Appearance*:—Powerful, sprightly, very vigorous, bold, upright carriage, with the back sloping towards the tail, flesh firm and hard in handling.

Colour:—Head, neck, breast, and thighs black, with a lustrous green sheen; the lower part of the neck hackle a little mixed with bay or chestnut, which, however, should be almost entirely covered by the body feathers; shoulders and wing bows a rich glossy green black, the shaft of the feather to show chestnut; tail coverts, rich beetle-green; lack, green glossy-black broken with rich bay; wing bar, glossy black; wing end, bay or chestnut. *Defects*: Twisted claws, flat shins, crooked breastbone, rusty hackles, white in hackle, twisted hackle, high on leg, heavy in feather.

The *hen* should correspond with the cock in shape and build, also head points, neck, and legs. *Colour*: The ground colour should be a rich mahogany brown or chestnut brown, the lacing to be double on each feather if possible, viz., an outer edge of green glossy black, and an inner one enclosing shaft of feather of green glossy black, the chestnut ground colour between the lacings being perfectly clear and free from black or smut. *Defects*: Same as above.

In breeding Indian Game Bantams it is advisable to mate up two pens, one for cockerel and the other for pullet breeding, as it is next to impossible to produce exhibition specimens of both sexes from one pen.

To breed the best cockerels I should require a typical shaped bird, low in leg, with plenty of substance of thigh, and broad in chest. Let his shoulders be as prominent as possible, and see that he is free from rust in neck hackle and a sound bay on his wing ends. Never breed from a narrow, flat-sided cock, or 100 per cent. of your chicks will be worthless. The hens or pullets to match the cock (hens for preference) should be a sound, rich dark in ground colour, short and dark in hackle, and the more typical in shape the better, and select those short in back and prominent in shoulders; by doing so you may expect the cockerels from this pen to be



BLACK ROSECOMB.

JAPANESE.

SILVER AND GOLDEN SEBRIGHTS.
BANTAMS.

BRAHMAS.

WHITE ROSECOMB.

BOOTED.



all that you could desire in colour and shape. The pullets from this pen I would recommend being put back the next season to the sire and the best shaped cockerel to the hens; by doing this you are keeping down the size and retaining the proper type and colour as well as breeding up a strain of your own.

In the pullet pen colour and lacing are both requisite and necessary, therefore select a cock that shows a fair amount of lacing; if he is a bit red in hackle so much the better, but be careful at the same time that you do not overlook the shape and type which is absolutely necessary. In other words, you want a good-shaped, low-legged cock that is faulty in colour, *i.e.*, red in hackle and showing lacing, both serious faults in an exhibition cock. With this cock, put about four hens or pullets; it does not matter which in pullet breeding. Select those possessing a rich chestnut ground colour, discarding those pale or washed out in colour; see that the lacing is both double and distinct. Indistinct laced ones are useless as pullet breeders. The lacing must be a sound rich green glossy black, hackle must also be sound and free from rust or red. Preference should be given to those low on leg and short in back, and the broader in chest the better.

It would be advisable to keep a couple of the best shaped cockerels from this pen which show the most lacing throughout for future pullet breeding. It is much better to build of a strain of your own that can be relied upon, for you can rest assured that if the pullets from this pen are satisfactory as exhibition specimens, especially from a colour point of view, you can depend upon the cockerels being all that you would require as pullet breeders, although they are of no use as exhibition birds. Further, it is not wise to introduce a fresh strain, for this would have a tendency to increase the size, and in all probability spoil the colour and type you had already built up. Never use flat-shinned birds. My advice is, build up a strain of your own, and retain three or four of the very best each year for future stock, and if you do so and peg away perseveringly you are bound to come out at the top of the eap in the long run, although you cannot reasonably expect to do so the first season.

SCALE OF POINTS.		
Shape	20	
Size	15	
Colour	10	
Hardness of feather	15	
Legs and feet	10	
Eyes	5	
Head	10	
Tail	5	
Condition	10	
	100	

Faults to be deducted accordingly.

CHAPTER VIII.

BOOTED.

Although not yet a very popular variety, Booted Bantams are slowly but surely coming to the front, thanks to the Variety Bantam Club and a few enthusiastic lovers of the breed, who have endeavoured to obtain classes for them at our principal Bantam shows, and where classes have been provided they have invariably filled well.

There are several varieties of booted, but the two most popular are the blacks and whites, and for preference we should prefer the former, owing to the difficulty in keeping whites pure in colour, especially the foot-feather, which, if not kept under very favourable

circumstances, is apt to become stained, whereas in the blacks it does not show; and, again, the whites suffer also from exposure to the sun and weather.

Booted Bantams are a very taking variety, and greatly resemble the Pekin. They are fairly hardy and not difficult to rear, the only trouble being to keep down the size. Although of late years this has to some extent been done, still, upon the whole, there is room for further improvement in this respect, as we find them too big and leggy as a rule, especially so the blacks. By inbreeding and hatching late in the season this fault could be easily remedied, and, at the same time, the length of foot and hock feather could still be retained, a point which is the most important feature of Booted Bantams.

Another improvement in Booted which I should like to see is the "carriage," which is becoming far too near that of the Pekin. We do not want Booted to resemble the Pekin at all; instead of the short, close-fitting wings of the Pekin we want to see the long drooping wings carried low, tail elevated, though not too near the head, long, with good length of sickles and side hangers.

Booted are single combed, ear lobes free from white, although white will often be found, but it is a defect and should be guarded against, wattles red, not too large, neck short and curved, back short, wings low and drooping, tail long and carried high, with plenty of side hangers, legs not too long, abundantly feathered, the feathers being much stiffer than those of the Pekin hock feathers, as well as footings to be as long as possible, and carried out to end of middle toe. Carriage more erect than the Pekin. The leg colour of blacks should be black, and white in whites.

The mating of Booted Bantams presents no difficulty whatever, and exhibition cockerels and pullets can be bred from the same pen; still in mating up always give preference to birds short in back and leg, and well furnished both in foot feather and hocks—the more feather the better; see that ear lobes are free from white, and comb evenly serrated.

Keep the blacks pure and give preference to those having some black under-colour down to skin, as it is a great mistake in breeding from blacks which are white in fluff or under-colour. On the other hand, should your whites show a tendency to come yellow or creamy in colour, this can be remedied by introducing the black for a single season, and although it may produce a bluish tinge in the leg colour, the body colour will be found to be greatly improved; and the following season, if bred back to whites, the leg colour will again be secured. The blacks from a cross of blacks and whites should never be kept as stock birds, but should be carefully marked when young to prevent mistakes. By breeding from these blacks you would find the majority of the chicks another season would be grey in fluff and throwing white in foot feather and tail, all of which are defects which would count heavily against the bird in the show pen.

In addition to the blacks and whites we have the white Whiskered or Muffed, which are identically the same as the white aforesaid, with the exception that they are furnished with feathers round the cheeks and under the throat like whiskers; hence the name Whiskered Booted.

There are also a few splashed or spangled, but they are few and far between, and do not appear to become favourites, as they are seldom met in the show pen.

In breeding Booted I should prefer to hatch the chickens from the end of April until the middle of June, and should inbreed as long as the foot feather and health of the produce were maintained.

One great drawback the young fancier who takes up Booted will experience is the number of unfertile eggs each season, owing to the length of foot feather of the male bird preventing him from treading properly. This difficulty is experienced by all heavily-feathered birds, both in the poultry world as well as pigeons.

The only remedy is to keep birds used for stock purposes apart from the exhibition birds, and before putting the cock with the hens in the breeding pen to cut off the cock's foot-feathers short. This will be found to remedy the failure. There is no necessity to interfere with the foot-feather of the hens. Three hens with the male bird will be found quite sufficient.

In keeping Booted let me impress upon my readers the advisability of having proper houses and runs, for without these success cannot be obtained. In the first place, the runs must be covered at the top, side, and ends, leaving only the front open, and this must be board d about 2 ft. from the ground. At the bottom of the run I should prefer to have a thick layer of fine sea-sand, from four to six inches deep. Failing this, get a few sacks of oat husks, or what is known by the name of "seeds," from your miller; these can generally be obtained from 3d. to 4d. per sack at the most. Cover the floor of the run and inside the poultry house with these to a good depth, not less than three or four inches. Remove the droppings two or three times a week, and turn the seeds or sand with a rake at the same time. By carrying out these instructions and keeping the floor of the run thoroughly dry you will be repaid by always having the foot feather of your birds in perfect condition and your birds clean, which is half the battle in the exhibition pen.

If your birds are put into a damp earthen run, or an unevenly boarded run, you can only expect broken foot feather, and broken foot feather spells failure in the show-pen. Booted do not require perches; they are all the better for roosting on the ground.

SCALE OF POINTS.

Length of feather	20
Colour	20
Shape and carriage	15
Size	15
Head and comb	10
Leg colour	10
Condition	10
	100
	—

Faults to be deducted accordingly.

CHAPTER IX.

SEBRIGHTS.

This variety is one of the oldest and prettiest members of all the Bantam tribe, and has been before the Fancy for a great number of years, having been brought out and perfected by the late Sir John Sebright. There are two colours, golds and silvers; the latter are by far the most popular, being easier to breed true to colour. The greatest difficulty in breeding golds is to obtain the rich bay or golden bay in the ground colour, together with a fine, even, lustrous green-black edging to each feather, at the same time keeping the centre of each feather perfectly clear.

The failing in golds is to run pale in ground colour and coarse in lacing, whilst the latter is very often found to be a dull brownish black instead of a rich green shade of black.

Sebrights are capital layers, but the chickens during the first few weeks are somewhat difficult to rear, except to the professional breeder. Damp and cold are the worst enemies of the Sebright breeder, the chickens requiring

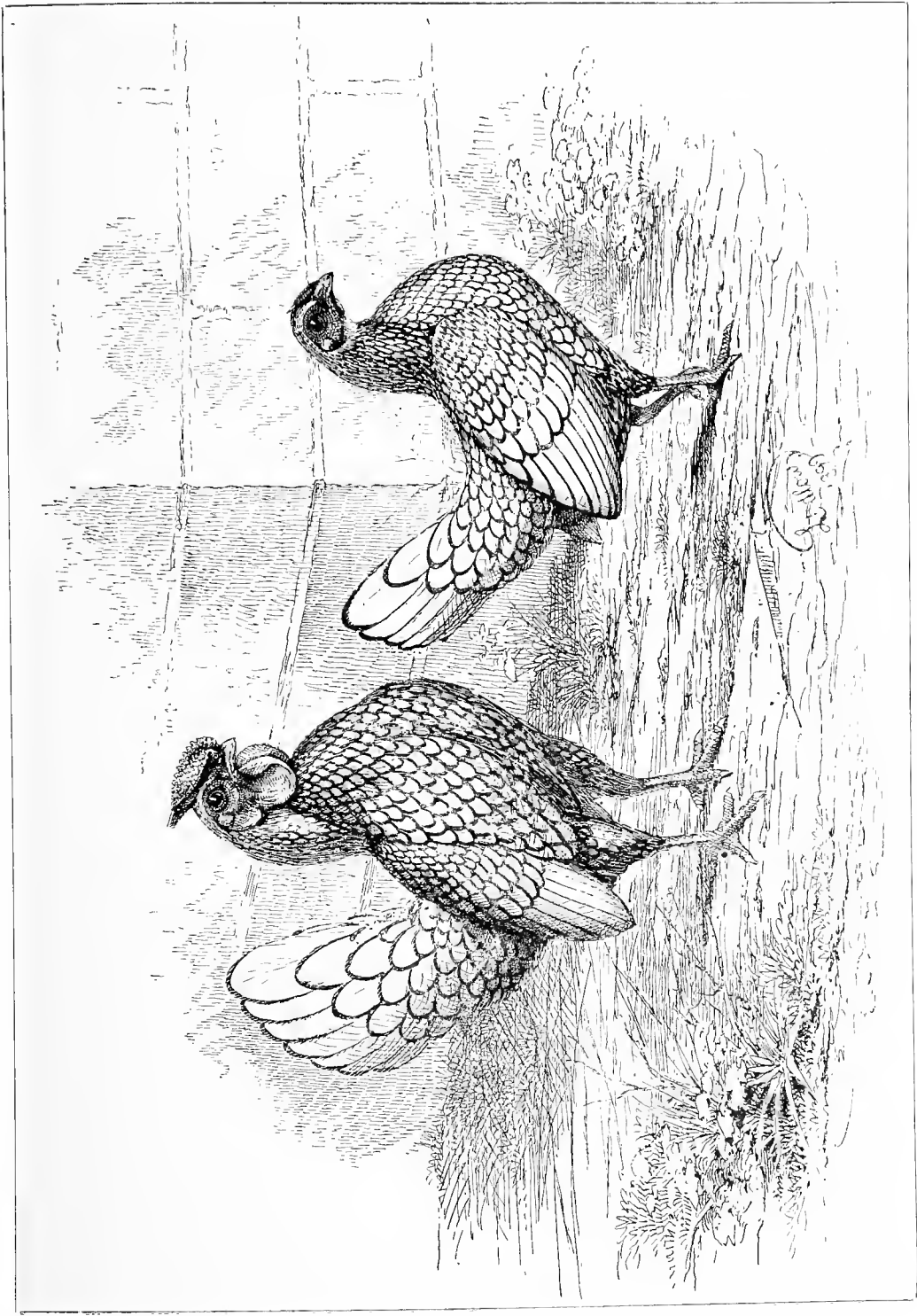
a dry shaded run, free from damp, and well protected from the east winds.

I have known some Sebright breeders experience great difficulty in rearing many chicks and having a large percentage of clear eggs, although at the same time I have known others to be just as successful in the same district. What was the reason? Why, the first-named had been doing the round of shows with his stock birds, whilst the latter had seldom or never exhibited the birds he intended to breed from. How often this is the case, and if the young fancier would only bear this in mind, it would save him endless trouble and annoyance during the breeding season.

You cannot burn the candle at both ends. If you want to have a successful breeding season and healthy, vigorous chicks, the less you exhibit your stock birds the greater will be your success in breeding, not only in Sebright Bantams, but in every variety of poultry. I will now try and describe what I consider should constitute an ideal Sebright, and will take the *silvers* first.

In cocks, I like to see the short square back, perfectly flat, breast full and prominent, wings carried low, head small, comb rose shape, fairly broad in front, and tapering off with long fine leader, the latter not to be carried upwards but should follow the bend of the neck, or helmet shape, as is found in Wyandottes; face in cocks should be inclined to mulberry. Although it is impossible to get the deep mulberry or dark purple in the face of the cocks the same as in pullets, especially the first year, still they should have a certain amount of damson eye-circle, the darker the better. Ear-lobes free from white, but a little blue or purple is an advantage rather than an objection. Eyes dark as possible; beak horn colour, short and stout; wattles fair size and nicely rounded, not folded or creased; legs and feet free from feathers, slaty blue in colour; tail fairly large and well spread, and, unlike the other breeds of rosecombs, must have no sickles, although it will sometimes be found that some are produced with sickles, and these are invariably the best breeders, and especially useful as pullet breeders, but it is not advisable to use them in the cockerel pen. The tail should be carried high and the head well thrown back; plumage, pure silvery white ground colour, each feather finely and distinctly laced with rich green black. When I say distinctly laced I mean that the lacing should be even and distinct all round the feather—not narrow round the sides and broad at the bottom, but one uniform width of lacing right round the feather. The tail feathers should be clear silvery white centre, laced as above, but the ground colour of each feather should be *clear*—i.e., free from black, or what is termed "peppery," and this fault will be found in quite fifty per cent. of silvers. Still, with care and perseverance this can be bred out completely; only it requires a little time and patience. When mating up your breeding pens clear-tailed birds should always be preferred to those which are "peppered" or "splashed" in tail. The silver hen is identically the same in colour and shape, the only difference being the face and comb of the hen should be a very dark mulberry, much darker than the cock; like the cock, she should be short in back, small and compact—the prevalent fault in hens is "long backed," which is a very serious defect, and should be guarded against in the show pen.

The only difference between golds and silvers is the ground colour, which should be a rich *deep* golden bay or chestnut, not the pale golden we very often find in the present-day exhibits, which are getting much too pale in colour, whilst the lacing, which should be a sound deep



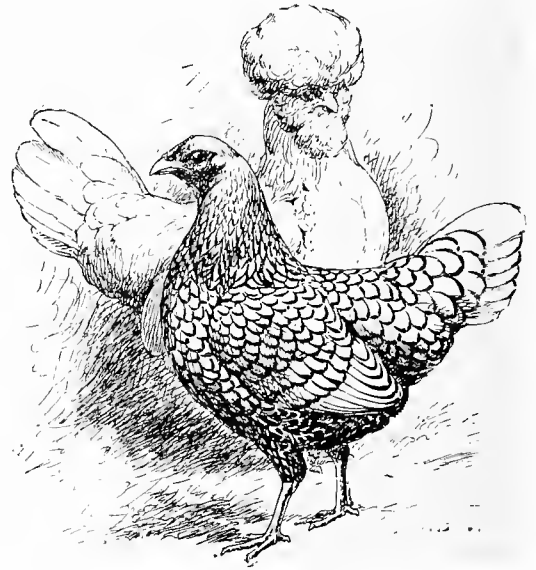
MR. J. C. PRESTON'S SILVER SEBRIGHTS.

Cock, Winner of Firsts, Liverpool, Southampton, Gt. Harwood, Ashford. Hen, First, Dairy; First and Special for best Bantam, Ashford; First and Special for best Hen in Show, Mossley; First and Special, best fowl in Show, Limerick.

greenish black, is more of a brown than a black, and such birds we generally find devoid of lacing on the flight feathers, which failure should count heavily against the bird in the show pen.

In breeding Sebrights it is much the best to use two pens, one for cockerel breeding and the other for pullets. In the cockerel pen select a sound laced cock, inclined to the heavy lacing rather than fine. He must be particularly good and distinct in breast lacing and tail. This is highly important. The flights or wing ends of the cock should be well laced, ground colour of tail clear, and take care that he shows the desired damson colour round the eyes, the more the better. The hens to match him should be lightly or finely laced, but the lacing should be a sound black, not edged with brown. Each flight feather of the wing should be distinctly laced right to the end, tail perfectly clear in the centre, but every feather laced, face dark mulberry.

In breeding for pullets I should prefer the cockerel to be very fine in lacing, but would at the same time require the pullets to be rather heavily laced, as dense a black as is possible to get, and at the same time the lacing must be distinct and even. The cock for pullet breeding should also have a fairly good breast, a good comb essential, clear in centre of tail feathers, each



AMERICAN POLAND AND SILVER SEBRIGHT BANTAMS.

feather laced, and well-laced wing ends. As I said before, a cockerel with a tendency to have sickles is very useful as a pullet breeder, and the eggs by a "sickled" cock have been found much more fertile than by others. On the other hand, cocks possessing short tails have invariably been found to be poor breeders.

The hens in the pullet pen, in addition to being rather heavily laced, should possess a good amount of lacing down the thighs, tail coverts, and tail. This is very important in pullet breeding.

In breeding Sebrights always select a small cock in preference to small hens, as larger hens are always the most productive and the chickens easier to rear than those hatched from eggs from small hens, and on account of the delicate nature of the Sebright chicks it is at all times best to use hens in preference to pullets in the breeding pen, although if the pullets are a good size and early hatched I see no reason why they should not prove equally as good.

In conclusion, let me remind my readers of the great value of inbreeding in Sebrights, a breed in which colour and markings play such an important part, and which are almost impossible to obtain without inbreeding. If you think by purchasing half a dozen of the very best exhibition specimens from Tom, Dick, and Harry, that you are bound to breed the same the following season, you will quickly find out your mistake, for it is very probable that the majority of the produce would be little better than wasters, whereas had you purchased only a couple of good breeding birds both of the same strain I have no hesitation in saying that the produce of these two birds would be of more value than all those bred from the half dozen exhibition birds, which would no doubt have cost you four times as much. Therefore start with some reliable strain and keep it pure. As long as your chickens are healthy you can go on with the same strain; always breed from healthy stock birds only, and when your chickens come weakly and are difficult to rear you will know that you have reached the limit of inbreeding beyond which you should never try to go, but introduce another male bird with a certain amount of your own



AN AMERICAN JAPANESE COCK.

strain in him, when you will be able to go on again as successfully as before.

	SCALE OF POINTS.	
Colour and lacing	25
Sound tail	15
Shape and carriage	20
Size	15
Comb and face	10
Lobe	5
Condition	10
		100

Faults to be deducted accordingly.

DISQUALIFICATIONS.—Single comb, wry tail, feathered legs.

CHAPTER X.

SILKIES, NANKINS, JAPANESE, AND POLANDS.

SILKIES.

Although not yet a popular variety in the show pen they are steadily making headway in the Fancy. At the Tunbridge Wells Show of July 20th, 1899, a class for Silkies was provided and was accorded a bumping entry; also at the Dairy Show of 1900 we find forty entries in the two classes, and the quality throughout a very marked improvement.

Apart from its useful qualities as a sitter and mother when crossed with the buff Pekin, the Silkie hen is a decidedly pretty variety, with its silken plumage more resembling hair or down than feather, pure white in colour, although its skin, face and legs are black or mulberry; still there are the red-faced variety as well, but for my own part I prefer the mulberry-faced breed as the contrast is so marked. The Silkie hen is also an excellent winter layer of tinted eggs, very docile, and one of the hardiest and easiest of all the Bantam tribe to rear. If you want a variety where accommodation in your backyard is at a premium, and one that will provide your children with a nice cream-coloured egg when the snow is on the ground, there is no other variety of Bantam that will answer your purpose so well. The only drawback is her love to become broody.

On the other hand, if you desire to breed the very best of sitters and mothers to rear your Bantams, by crossing with the Pekin you will have the best natural incubator and rearer, one that can be relied upon at all times. They never run from their nest, but will sit till further orders, and very seldom do they crush a chick.

Silkies are apt to become scaly-legged, but in the majority of cases it is the result of uncleanliness, and it is the same in nearly all the feathered-legged varieties.

The Silkie should be pure white in colour, mulberry face, small crest, walnut-shaped comb, black skin and legs, with feathers down the shanks, but not nearly so heavily feathered as the Pekin or booted, more resembling the Langshan fowl; toes five. In breeding only one pen is required, as the Silkie breeds very true to both type and colour, and eggs as a rule are remarkably fertile. From a pen of three hens and a cock fifty to sixty chicks could easily be reared in a single season.

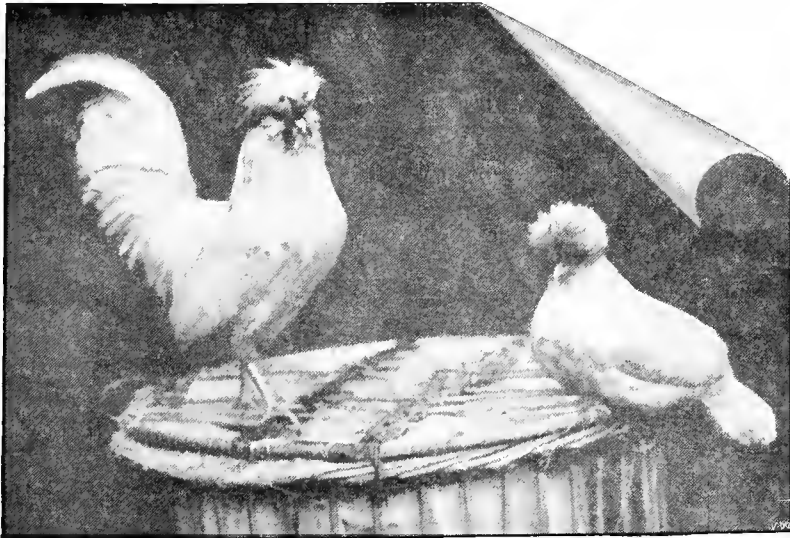
SCALE OF POINTS.

Head and crest .. .. .	.. .. .	15
Colour .. .. .	.. .. .	15
Texture of feather .. .. .	.. .. .	15
Size .. .. .	.. .. .	15
Ear lobes .. .. .	.. .. .	5
Foot feather .. .. .	.. .. .	10
Colour of skin .. .. .	.. .. .	15
Condition .. .. .	.. .. .	10
		100

NANKINS

are a variety that appear to be have almost dwindled out of existence. I remember having some about twenty years ago, and if I had them now I should be able to palm them off in the show pen as buff Orpingtons. I remember at Carlisle Show of November 29, 1899, a class was provided for buff Orpingtons. I shall never forget the specimens I saw. The only buff part about them was their name; an ordinary Nankin would have been streets ahead of them from a colour point of view.

It is very seldom now that we find a Nankin exhibited. I have visited upwards of sixty shows during the past



WHITE POLISH BANTAMS, BELONGING TO H.R.H. THE PRINCESS OF WALES (photograph from life).

season, and I don't remember seeing more than a couple of Nankins altogether.

Even at the Palace Show classes are not provided. From this it would seem that the day of the Nankin has gone, never to return.

The Nankin cock is a very deep cinnamon or reddish buff all over, except tail, which shows more or less black, the less the better of course; legs and feet blue, comb, face and lobes red, comb single, eyes red. The hen is similar to the cock in all points except body colour, which instead of being cinnamon should be a rich buff.

In breeding Nankins care should be used in selecting only those birds which are the soundest colour throughout, especially in flights and tail; any showing white should be rejected from the breeding pen.

SCALE OF POINTS.

Colour	25
Leg colour	15
Shape	15
Size	15
Head	10
Style and carriage	10
Condition	10
	—
	100
	—

JAPANESE

are fairly popular, thanks to the late Mrs. Ricketts, of Knighton Vicarage, who always patronised liberally shows where classes have been provided for this charming variety. They are amongst the oldest varieties of Bantams, and although perhaps not so hardy or so easy to rear as some of the other breeds they have steadily held their ground.

In shape they differ from all the other varieties, being very short in thigh and leg, so that their bodies are just clear of the ground; the lower they are the better. Their wings are long and carried below the line of the body so that they touch the ground, whilst the tail is carried perfectly erect, almost touching the head. There are several colours, whites, blacks, greys and buffs, the first named being the most popular.

The body is white and the tail black; the sickles of the cock, also side hangers, should be edged with white; face, comb single, and lobes red; legs and beak yellow, four toes, the wing primaries and secondaries black in inner web. Blacks are a sound black throughout and in all other respects are the same as the whites. The grey cock should be silvery white on back, wing bow, and hackles on a black ground; the hen finely laced with silver, the lacing to be clear and distinct; comb, face, lobes and wattles same as above; eyes red, legs and beak yellow. Buffs should be what their name implies, a sound buff throughout, including tail and flights. Japanese as a rule are not at all difficult to breed and rear providing the ground is dry, and they breed true to colour and type.

SCALE OF POINTS.

Shape and carriage	20
Colour	20
Carriage of tail	15
Size	10
Shortness of leg	15
Head and comb	10
Condition	10
	—
	100
	—

POLANDS

are a variety that do not make many friends as yet. Why this is so I am at a loss to tell, unless it is the difficulty of breeding them true. They are a very pretty and taking variety. Unlike the larger breed of Poland the most popular colours are the whites and the white-crested blacks, with here and there a buff or a gold and

silver; whereas in the large breed of Poland the favourite colours are the silvers and golds. Poland is doubtless a cross between the large Poland and the several breeds of variety Bantams, such as the Sebright and the rosecomb both blacks and whites.

If I were going in for breeding Polish I should use a big crested Poland cock of the large variety, the larger the crest the better.

To produce silvers I should of course use a silver Poland cock and silver Sebright hens. The following season I should pick out the best pullets from this produce and mate them back to the sire, choosing the pullets that were the best in crest formation. The following season I should be able to reduce the size considerably by breeding from brothers and sisters; selecting those which excelled in crest, I should then expect a reasonable percentage of Polish Bantams the following season, and would continue to inbreed again for another year or two until perfected. Golds could be produced likewise by using a gold Poland cock and gold Sebright hens, and blacks from a white crested black Poland cock and black rosecomb hens. For producing buffs I should use a gold Poland cock and Nankin hens.

Of course, the first season you would have quite a number of unfertile eggs, especially so at the beginning of the season. This could to a certain extent be remedied by using the smallest male bird you could find, but possessing the needful large crest, which is absolutely necessary. Having done this, you must not expect; to be all lavender, but with perseverance and a reasonable amount of patience your labours will ultimately be crowned with success.

SCALE OF POINTS.

Colour	25
Size and shape of crest	25
Muffing	10
Comb	10
Shape and carriage	10
Size	15
Condition	5
	—
	100
	—

CHAPTER XI.

CUCKOOS OR SCOTCH GREYS, AND BARRED ROCK BANTAMS.

CUCKOOS.

The Cuckoos, or Scotch Greys as they are called across the Border, are one of the most interesting of all varieties of Bantams. They are also entitled to rank among the oldest of the fixed breeds. It is nearly forty years ago since they were first brought prominently before the public by Dr. Boulton, of Beverley, who, with his famous Field Spaniels and Bantams, was much interested in colour-breeding, and published a pamphlet on the subject. Although he undoubtedly originated the variety in England, there seems every reason to think that similar birds had been produced in Scotland some years before that, and were known, as they are to-day, as Scotch Greys. The late Mr. Henry Beldon was very successful in variety classes with a pair of Dr. Boulton's birds, and also, it is asserted, with Scotch bred ones. The Cuckoo hen is an excellent layer, and they are very hardy and easy to manage. I have often wondered how it is they have not become more popular. Reproducing, as they do, fairly well to type, it requires no great experience to keep a bird up to average form.

If, however, the amateur wishes to try conclusions at the Palace or Birmingham with the few enthusiastic veterans, such as Dr. Richmond, of Paisley, and Mr. F. E. Schofield, of Morpeth, who annually fight their

battles there, he must be prepared to devote much thought and attention to them. One sees frequently a bird at the shows hit off by the reporters in a single sentence with a certain fault or other. In spite of all precautions, white feathers will come in wings; white tips to otherwise perfect feathers, and the most promising cockerels have a provoking way, when least expected, and at the last stage, of developing white or black sickles or brown saddles.

It is a rare thing to see a cock's tail remain perfectly sound for the second year when one does stick to him for the breeding pen. Opinions differ greatly as to the exact shade of ground colour. Many of the Scotch birds I have met in my travels are too dark and indistinct in barring; on the other hand, many of the English birds are quite the reverse, being too light and washed out.

What I like to see is a clear steel grey ground colour, with close narrow distinct black barring. The greatest fault I have found with many birds successfully exhibited is that the barring is only black in the centre and not right across the feather. It is, in short, a modification of "mooning" rather than barring, and though the general effect to the eye produced by such a bird standing in the pen is much the same, when carefully examined in the hands it will be found to be absolutely wrong in principle.

The legs should be very fine in bone, quite free from feathers, and as white as possible. Spotted legs I don't greatly object to, but yellow or dark I cannot tolerate. The one great failing in Cuckoos is to keep the deaf ears red. Nature seems to object to it and continually endeavours to reassert herself. Truth to tell, when I look around at the different shows, I cannot help thinking she succeeds fairly well in some strains. My advice to remedy this grave defect, pay more attention to ears. It is interesting to note in passing that almost every black pullet produced from Cuckoos—and black pullets are produced in nearly every brood of good-coloured chicks—show white in deaf ears. You will invariably find that where you have one or two black chicks in a brood, the remainder will be good-coloured ones, whilst if there are no blacks it is very probable the majority of the brood will be washed out in colour. So do not be disappointed when black chicks put in appearance providing they are not more numerous than the barred ones.

By far the worst faults of the Cuckoo Bantam of the present day are that they are yet too large and coarse in bone and lack the style and carriage we should like to see. In the endeavour to get them improved, we see birds exhibited decidedly Gamey, short and narrow in feather, and too long in leg. On the other hand we see birds much too long and narrow in back, and, worse still, with squirrel tails. The Cuckoo should be a short bird, broad across the back, full feathered, with the chest well expanded, the same as the black rosecomb, the head erect, and flowing tail well thrown back.

In mating up your breeding pens of Cuckoos it is scarcely necessary to use two pens, as it has been found by our best breeders that the best cockerels are bred from the same birds as the best pullets of the same year.

The one thing needful in mating is never to fix a fault. Never, under any consideration, use stock birds that are white in ears or feathers tipped with white. If your birds show a tendency to light ears, do your best to stamp out this grave fault by using a male bird that is absolutely sound in his ears, and which has been bred from sound eared birds; and the following season use

only the best of his produce, mating the sound pullets back to the sire; by doing this you will be remedying the defect, and building up your strain. Use those birds whose barring goes right across the feather (not just tipped), and as fine in barring as possible, and have the ground colour a sound steel grey, and the flights and tail as free from white as possible you will not then get far wrong. Keep to one strain, and especially one which you know to be reliable, for in breeding for colour, as in Cuckoos, it is absolutely necessary to do so.

Keep a strict account of the pedigree of your stock, so that you can see at a glance how each bird is bred, and thereby recall to your mind's eye the chief characteristics of the bird, and whether such and such a fault is inherited or a mere accident, and mate him or her accordingly. There are plenty of thoroughly reliable stock birds which are not fit to grace a show pen through having some glaring fault, but which are invaluable as breeders to those who are fully acquainted with their pedigree and how produced; yet to anyone else these same birds would be useless, simply because they would not know how to mate them to remedy their existing faults. There is one thing about Cuckoos I feel certain of, and that is, upon no consideration in the effort to improve them should crossed blood be introduced. There is no breed which could possibly be used which would not damage them. On the other hand, as I have said in a previous chapter, they have been used freely in the production of new breeds of Variety Bantams. Strive to improve them by inbreeding; fix for your standard the shape of the rosecomb or Sebright, endeavour to keep them small and low on the leg, the leg to be as white as possible, carriage sprightly and erect, and steer clear of white in wing, tips of feathers, and tail. In point of colour, aim for the medium shade with a clear steel ground colour and rich, glossy black barring, then we judges will be able to place them in that honourable position in the prize list which they, as one of the most handsome of all Variety Bantams, deserve to hold.

SCALE OF POINTS TO BE DEDUCTED.

Bad head and comb	10
White in ear lobes	10
White, black, or brown feathers in wings and tail ..	10
Bad colour and barring	25
Bad feet and legs	10
Bad shape and carriage	15
Incorrect size and weight	10
Want of condition	10
	100

BARRED ROCK BANTAMS.

Although seldom found in the show pen as yet, I do not think there is another variety of Bantam that offers a better opening for a beginner than barred Rock Bantams, and once they are firmly established they will undoubtedly find many friends, the same as the large breed of barred Rocks, which to-day takes the lead in the soft-feathered varieties. It is only during the past two or three years that the barred Rock Bantam has been introduced to the Fancy. The best of those which have come under my notice have been exhibited by Mr. Johnson, and for a new venture they were decidedly good, although not so clear in ground colour and markings as we should have liked to have seen them, although the size and shape left nothing to be desired. There is no doubt whatever that by the introduction of clearly marked Scotch Greys the colour of the barred Rock Bantam could be greatly improved, using those that are clear from dark spots on the legs, which we invariably find in Scotch Greys.

Now I will proceed to give my idea of how to com-

nence to breed barred Rock Bantams from breeds other than Rocks.

Having obtained a couple of distinctly barred Scotch Greys, of the lighter shade, and which at the present time do not find favour with Scotch breeders, consequently would be cheaper and easier to obtain, and at the same time more suitable for the purpose—I should look round to find a cock the same colour, but with yellow legs, this being absolutely necessary, as the hens I am about to breed from are white legged.

To meet these requirements I can find nothing better than the Cuckoo Pekin, which possesses the requisite barring and also yellow legs. Years ago it was quite possible to pick up yellow-legged Scotch Greys, but these being an eyesore to Scotch breeders were always killed off when very young, consequently the yellow leg was entirely stamped out. I fancy I hear some of my readers remark, "Yes, but the Cuckoo Pekin has feathered legs." Quite so; and to remedy this grave defect as far as possible under the circumstances, I should try and get a Cuckoo Pekin as scantily feathered on leg as possible, at the same time I should require the leg-colour to be a good rich yellow.

In making new breeds we cannot have everything cut and dried ready to our hand, but must use those which come nearest to our views of what is required. Naturally, the first season we should expect a fairly good percentage of feathered-legged ones, still not so heavily feathered as the sire, and in all probability there would be several perfectly free from feather on shanks, and these I should certainly retain as breeders for the following season. I should select the best cockerel, richest in leg colour, and mate him back to the Scotch Grey hens, and if I could also mate up a small pen of, say, a cockerel and two pullets out of the first season's result, all the better, especially so if they were absolutely smooth in leg; but still I should not object to a few feathers on leg if the markings and type were there. You could then dispose of your Cuckoo Pekin, as you would have no further use for him. Having established the yellow leg, I should then proceed to improve the ground colour and markings. With this object in view I should select a cockerel free from brassiness on his back, and one as free from white in tail as I could find. The clearer you have him in top colour the better he will be, either as a cockerel or pullet breeder. These two faults are very important ones when mating up your pens, and should always be borne in mind. By using this precaution you would save a lot of time and trouble, as it is an utter impossibility to breed clear marked birds from a bronzy-backed male bird.

The hens to match the cock for pullet breeding should be those clear and distinct in barring, with a nice steel grey ground colour; the barring must be pure black, not a brownish-black.

For cockerel breeding you would require the hens fine in barring and darker than those for pullet breeding; still it is very important that the barring be a rich sound black and the ground colour not cloudy, otherwise your cockerels will come bronzy, which to-day is a very prevalent failing in barred Rock cocks.

Always strive to produce the clear steel ground colour, with rich black barring combined with a bright orange-yellow leg and beak, then you will not get far wrong.

Do not expect fifty per cent. of flyers the first season, or yet the second; be content with three or four really good ones, stick to these, and inbreed, and with a little patience there is no reason but that in three years you will be able to produce Bantams equal in colour and type to the best Plymouth Rock of to-day.

SCALE OF POINTS.

Colour and barring	25
Shape and carriage	15
Size	15
Head and comb	10
Ear lobes (red)	5
Legs and feet	10
Sound tail	15
Condition	5
	100

Faults to be deducted accordingly.

CHAPTER XII.

FRIZZLES.

We have now come to the most quaint and charming of all variety Bantams, viz., Frizzles, which, notwithstanding the fact that they have been exhibited in England nearly thirty years, have failed to "take on" in the Fancy. This is probably on account of the difficulties experienced in rearing the chicks; as the variety has been greatly in-bred in order to obtain the type and character so essential in Frizzles, the stamina of the breed has been greatly weakened.

There is great diversity of opinion as to what country this breed originated in. Some say Japan, other Friesland, whilst some ideas of their origin are both too numerous and too funny to enumerate in this article. However, their nationality matters little; they are here, and having been here so many years are likely to remain, especially seeing that both judges and fanciers are gradually beginning to appreciate their charms.

With such an enthusiastic pioneer of the variety as Mr. G. Reyner, there is every prospect of their becoming more popular. Although they have invariably to compete against many varieties, even at such shows as Dairy, Palace, and Birmingham, they generally give a good account of themselves, as reference to reports will show.

The most trying time with Frizzle chickens is the period of getting their first feathers. At this time they are difficult to rear, but when the ground is dry and sandy successful results can be obtained. Having got their first feathers they will be found quite as hardy as most varieties.

Many persons imagine that curling-irons play an important part in preparing Frizzles for exhibition, and in some cases such is the case. I remember once seeing a lady manipulate with the curling irons on a white Frizzle hen for two hours one Sunday night, and although I have often heard it said that "better the day, better the deed," it was not so in this case, for this exhibit just managed to struggle into fourth place. Then, again, I remember some years ago, either during the Palace or Dairy, the latter I believe, a certain exhibitor had occasion to attend the hairdresser's shop near the show, and on entering was surprised to see a brother fancier, one of the lilywhite innocent ones, too, holding a wee Frizzle pullet on the back of a chair whilst Mr. Hairdresser was assisting nature to curl the feathers. On this occasion their united labours were rewarded with success.

There are few, very few, if any of the varieties of poultry that cannot be materially improved by artificial means, and Frizzles may probably be no exception to the rule. Still in many breeds of to-day science in breeding has played such an important part as to leave no necessity to improve. So it is with this quaint variety; when carefully bred on scientific lines with a view to



FRIZZLE BANTAMS.

perfect the type and character, and given a thorough good wash and a nice bright fire to bring out the desired curl, there is no necessity for curling irons to "fake"—I beg pardon, I mean to assist nature.

You have no idea how careful I have to be now what I say, ever since I made that little slip of the pen and said that fifty per cent. of Rosecombs were faked. You would scarcely credit it, but one solitary breeder and exhibitor way down in Suffolk began asking me questions through *The Feathered World*—awkward questions, too, which I was too bashful at that time to answer. But I am sliding. Frizzles appear at their best on either a warm summer day or a sharp, clear, frosty day, but the slightest fog or rain deprives them of their beautiful curls at once, the same as it does the ladies' curls when not in papers. This is one great drawback (to the Frizzles, I mean) when they have to be sent long journeys in the damp winter months.

Frizzle Bantams throw a large percentage of plain feathered chickens which are utterly useless for exhibition, but are of invaluable service in the breeding pen; in fact, really good specimens are rarely produced without them.

The curled hens are excellent mothers and sitters, but the plain feathered ones are not to be depended on in either capacity. This seems strange, but nevertheless it is quite true.

There are several colours of Frizzle Bantams, but the whites, blacks, and buffs appear to be most popular; and, in my opinion, the first-named are decidedly the prettiest, and breed very true, whereas the other varieties throw a lot of mis-coloured ones, especially in wing and tail.

Judges have no easy task at present in making the awards, as there does not appear to be a recognised standard, and prizes have in many instances been awarded to the best curled specimen irrespective of type or colour. For this reason I herewith give a standard applicable to both cocks and hens.

Comb.—Single, bright red, medium in cocks, and very small in hens.

Head.—Small, and neat.

Face.—Ear lobes and wattles bright red, and of smooth texture.

Eyes.—Bright red and full.

Beak.—Short, strong, yellow, or horn in whites and buffs; dark willow or black for dark varieties.

Neck.—Rather short, well arched, and in cock abundantly frilled.

Back.—Short and broad.

Wings.—Long and drooping.

Breast.—Very full and round.

Legs.—Very short, and quite free from feathers; yellow in buffs and whites; dark willow in dark varieties.

Feet.—Four toes, well spread.

Tail.—Rather large, very full, but loose, the cock having good sickles and plenty of side hangars.

Plumage.—Moderately long, hard, and well curled backward towards the head, and very close.

General Shape and Carriage.—Compact, erect, active, and strutting.

Weight.—Cock, 20 to 24 oz.; hens, 14 to 17 oz.

SCALE OF POINTS.

A perfect bird 100 points. Points to be deducted for defects, viz. :—

Bad head and comb	..	..	..	..	5
Bad feet and legs	..	..	..	..	5
Defect of colour of plumage	..	..	..	..	20
Insufficiency of curl	..	..	..	..	25
Soft feather	..	..	..	..	15
Want of symmetry	..	..	..	..	10
Want of condition	..	..	..	..	10
Incorrect size and weight	..	..	..	..	10
					100

To breed Frizzle Bantams it is advisable to have two breeding pens; this is only necessary on account of getting *curl*, as one breeding pen if properly mated will produce both good cockerels and pullets.

No. 1 pen should consist of a hard-feathered, well-curved cock, short in back, full in frill and breast, with short legs of the standard colour; mate to him two small, well-curved hens and two plain feathered hens or pullets, whose appearance should be as round and as squat as possible.

No. 2 should consist of a cock similar to above, but plain in feather and very full feathered; to him make three or four well-curved hens, the closer in curl the better. The plain pullets from No. 1 pen I should use with the best curled cock the following season.

It is no use trying to rear Frizzle chickens in February or March, it will only be labour in vain. The months of May and June are most suitable for this variety in England, especially in the northern counties, and not earlier than April in the south.

CHAPTER XIII.

BUFF ORPINGTONS, ROCKS, AND LEGHORNS.

Having described fully the barred Rock Bantam, I will now go on to show how it is possible to breed the fashionable buffs.

The nearest approach to buff Orpington Bantams came under my notice on a visit to the yards of Mr. John Wharton during May, 1898; the parents of these I learned had been imported across the pond, along with some buff Wyandotte Fowls from the United States. These were very small, short on leg, and a very level buff for a new breed, and although free from feather legs they possessed quite a bluish tinge in leg colour. This, I informed Mr. Wharton, was a very serious fault, and that if he could only obtain the necessary white leg he would undoubtedly "strike oil," as the Yankees say.

The next time I saw buff Orpington Bantams (if you will excuse the name) was at Carlisle Show, November, 1899, where a class had been provided for them, but instead of buff Orpington Bantams they reminded me of "the Boer army," a mixture of all nationalities, but never a trace of buff Orpington could I find, and it must have puzzled the judge not a little to come to a decision in his awards.

The only rational way that appeals to me for the production of buff Orpington Bantams, is to get a very late hatched buff cockerel of the large breed, as small as possible, and sound in colour, and mate him to a pale-legged buff Pekin, as scantily feathered as possible. The following year I should inbreed from the produce of this pair, and should there be one or two pullets extra good in leg colour and free from feathering that I could spare (after mating up a small pen of a cockerel and two or three of his sisters), I would put the former pullets back to the father; afterwards I should inbreed and breed late in the season for some three years, by which time I could reasonably expect a fair percentage of exhibition specimens.

The necessary requirements would be the same as in the larger breed of buff Orpingtons, viz., pure rich orange or golden buff; clear buff in flights and tail, no white or black feathers. The former I should consider a fatal defect in the show pen. Legs, perfectly white and free from feather; shape, same as in Orpingtons, viz., low on leg, deep square body, and short in back; comb single or rose; lobes perfectly red, any white in lobe to

count heavily against the bird in the show pen; size as small as possible consistent with shape.

SCALE OF POINTS.	
Colour, sound level buff, including flights and tail ..	25
Shape and carriage	20
Pure white smooth legs	15
Sound red ear lobes	15
Size	10
Condition	10
	100

Faults to be deducted accordingly.

DISQUALIFICATIONS.—Feathered legs, white in tail and flights, pulled tail or shanks, white in lobe, leg colour other than white. Weight.—Cocks not to exceed 24 oz., pullets 18 oz.

We will now pass on to

Buff Rocks and Leghorns.—To the best of my knowledge Bantams of these two varieties have not yet appeared in public, although they have been experimented upon for several years, and now almost perfected by Mr. F. W. Jones, of Middlewich, who has kindly sent me on specimens for my inspection, and I must say for a new production they are wonderfully good, especially in colour and point of size, being sound in tail and flights.

Mr. Jones has kindly given me his experience in the breeding of these two varieties, which I will give to my readers in his own words:—

“In the year 1894 it occurred to me that, seeing it was possible to produce the large breeds of buff Rocks and buff Leghorns, it would be equally as easy to breed Bantams of these varieties. To this end I purchased a pair of buff Pekins with as little leg feather as possible. From the produce of this pair I selected those chickens that were the nearest approach to clean-legged. The following year I inbred from these, and obtained two clean-legged pullets and two or three fair cockerels. The best cockerel I mated to the two pullets in 1896, and was rewarded by thirty promising chickens, which ultimately turned out very satisfactory, in every way miniature buff Rocks. The following year, 1897, I purchased a very small buff Leghorn pullet which had been hatched very late the previous year, but good in colour and head points, and mated her to the best of the Rock cockerels bred in 1896. The result of this cross was very fair coloured Rocks and Leghorns, but unfortunately the Leghorn cross spoiled the red earlobe, so essential in buff Rocks, and also produced a decided ‘willow’ tinge in leg colour.

“To remedy these faults in the Rocks, I purchased a pile Game pullet with sound ear lobes and rich orange legs, but very, very creamy in colour, and mated her back to the best Pekin bred cockerel.

“From this pair I was rewarded with a cockerel and pullet good in every point. The cockerel I drafted off to the buff Leghorn hen, and the pullet I mated to my best Pekin-bred cockerel. The following year I bred some typical specimens.

“I then inbred, and although quite satisfactory both in size and colour they are apt to throw up a few with feathers on leg, and these I invariably find are the best coloured; still, the percentage is very small, and I have been able to mate up separate pens of each for 1900 which are perfectly clear on leg, whilst the colour of plumage and also leg colour is all that could be wished for.”

Such is Mr. Jones’s method of producing buff Leghorn and buff Rock Bantams, but to me it seems a very roundabout way of getting to the destination. Had Mr. Jones, in the first instance, selected a small, late hatched buff Rock cockerel of the large breed, and mated him to a buff Pekin hen, sparsely feathered, or, better still, to a Nankin hen, and then inbred from their progeny late in the season, the result

would have been more satisfactory in half the time. The same way in breeding Leghorns, using the smallest Leghorn cockerel that could be obtained, and especially one which excelled in lobe and comb (this is highly important), together with orange yellow legs. By mating such a bird to a buff Pekin, with as little leg feathering as possible, and breeding as late as July or August, and afterwards in-breeding from the produce each year late in the season, you ought in three years to obtain the desired results.

The most difficult points appear to me to be lobe and comb in Leghorns, especially the former; but still, by careful selection each year with this point in view, viz., to use those excelling in head points and lobe rather than in colour, they should be obtained. For the Pekin hen used in the first cross, I should select one showing white in earlobe, but should like her with as few feathers on shanks as I could get, but would place most importance on earlobe and sound colour in my selection for Leghorn breeding.

Now, as regards the buff Rock Bantam, I really don’t think for one moment that they will ever become popular; but, on the other hand, the miniature buff Leghorn would, I feel confident, “take on” immensely in the Fancy.

Although by careful mating and judicious selections as described it would take three or four years to bring about the desired results, still the time and labour spent would eventually be fully repaid, to say nothing of the pleasure to be obtained in the production of this hitherto almost unknown, though handsome, variety.

BUFF ROCKS AND LEGHORNS.

SCALE OF POINTS.	
Colour, sound throughout, including tail and flights ..	25
Shape and carriage	20
Size	15
Sound ear lobe	15
Rich smooth legs	15
Condition	10
	100

Faults to be deducted accordingly.

DISQUALIFICATIONS.—Whites in tail and flights, pulled tails, leg colour other than yellow, and in buff Rocks white in lobe. Weight.—Cocks not to exceed 24 oz., pullets 18 oz.

CHAPTER XIV.

MINORCAS, ANDALUSIANS, AND SPANISH.

Experiments have been tried with all the three varieties above named, but, with the exception of one or two isolated cases, they have not been persevered with to any extent, simply for the reason that it is a difficult, uphill game to achieve anything like satisfactory results; and, again, I do not for one moment think that the years required to produce exhibition specimens of these varieties would be repaid financially. Still there are fanciers—thorough out-and-out fanciers—who delight in experimenting in new breeds simply for the love of the breed and the pleasure to be derived therefrom.

To produce the Minorca Bantam I should select a Minorca cock, as small as I could find, but one possessing a good comb, well serrated, and plenty of lobe. To this bird I should mate two or three black rosecomb Bantam hens, if faulty in comb all the better, but good in ear lobe, and not too small.

Of course, the first season you must expect a fair percentage of clear eggs, and of what chicks do hatch some will possess rosecombs instead of single; still, if good in lobe and shape, these pullets will come in useful the following season to mate back to the sire, and from which cross the majority

of the chicks would then come single-combed. I would then inbreed and breed late for the next three or four years, by which time I should quite expect that a few would be fit to grace the show pen as miniature Minorcas.

To produce Andalusian Bantams I should follow the same course, using a small, distinctly-laced Andalusian cock, not too dark, a shade light would be all the better, but the *lacing* must be *perfect*, this is very important. I should then inbreed from the single-combed produce of this hen until I obtained the desired type and colour, which should be a miniature of the blue Andalusian. Of course, it is quite possible to get good Minorca Bantams from this cross as well. Still, I should prefer to breed Andalusians only, as they are much prettier and command a better sale, for the Minorca Bantam looks too much like a single-combed black rosecomb.

SCALE OF POINTS.		
Head and comb	.. .. .	25
Lobes	.. .. .	15
Size and weight	.. .. .	20
Colour	.. .. .	15
Shape	.. .. .	15
Condition	.. .. .	15

		100

DISQUALIFICATIONS.—Wry tail or deformity of any kind, any colour except black in blacks, and white in whites.

For some years now exhibition specimens of Andalusian Bantams have been exhibited, and so pretty have they looked that I have often wondered that they have not made more headway. Still their production to anything like perfection must necessarily occupy many years of time, and careful breeding, on account of the difficulties that arise in producing the necessary marking and head points, whereas whole-coloured birds like the buffs and blacks might easily be reduced in about three years.

The Andalusian Bantam should represent the large Andalusian in colour, shape, and carriage. It should be compact and erect, rather square in build, fair length of back, tail full and flowing, and carried well back; comb, single and well serrated, erect in cocks, and folded in hens; face, smooth and red, any white in face being a serious fault; lobe, large, smooth, and white, almond shaped, the larger the better consistent with a sound red face, which are difficult points to obtain together, for invariably when a bird excels in size of lobe he is liable to run white in face; legs, not too short, and dark slate in colour.

The colour of the cock should be: Hackles, back, and wing bow a soft shade of bluish black, the remainder of the plumage being medium slate colour or inclined to grey, each feather distinctly laced with black. The hen to be medium blue-grey in ground colour, one even shade all through, and each feather distinctly and evenly laced with black. The neck hackle should be a bluish black.

SCALE OF POINTS.		
Colour and lacing	.. .. .	35
Comb and lobe	.. .. .	15
Size and weight	.. .. .	20
Shape	.. .. .	10
Condition	.. .. .	20

		100

DISQUALIFICATIONS.—Wry back or tail, folded comb in cocks, ear lobes other than white.

The Minorca Bantam should be identically the same in head points and shape, but a lustrous green black in colour. Instead of Minorca Bantams I should like to see the Spanish Bantam more popular.

I remember judging at Kendal Show two years ago, where I awarded 1st and 2nd, I believe, to Spanish

Bantams, little beauties too, real miniatures of the present-day Spanish, with smooth white open face and glossy black plumage. They were really very taking, and I remember they found many admirers that day. If my memory serves me right, they were local productions, being bred by a Mr. Thompson; since then I have never come across them in the show pen. How they were produced I know not, but I should think by using a small Spanish cock, excelling in face, and mating him to a big-lobed black rosecomb hen, which, as a rule, you will find are more or less white in face, the more the better in this case for your requirements. If she is a bit large never mind, as you would then get more fertile eggs than from a small one, therefore more chicks to choose from for your next year's mating. The pullets that were best in face and possessing the necessary single comb I should put back to the sire and breed as late as September the following season, and afterwards in-breed for the next two or three years, brothers and sisters, etc., always having the head points and large white open face as your guide in mating up, rather than size, as this can always be reduced by in-breeding and breeding late in the season. The Spanish Bantam cock should have single comb carried erect, large open face, the wattle to be as white and smooth as possible, and without any break in the face, eyes dark, plumage raven black, not too low on leg, medium length of back, tail full, flowing, and carried fairly well back, legs as near black as possible; the hen to be the same with the exception of comb, which in all the three varieties should be folded.

SCALE OF POINTS.		
Face and lobes	.. .. .	30
Size and weight	.. .. .	20
Comb	.. .. .	15
Colour	.. .. .	10
Condition	.. .. .	15
Shape	.. .. .	10

		100

DISQUALIFICATIONS.—Wry tail, or wry-backed, any coloured feathers except black.

CHAPTER XV.

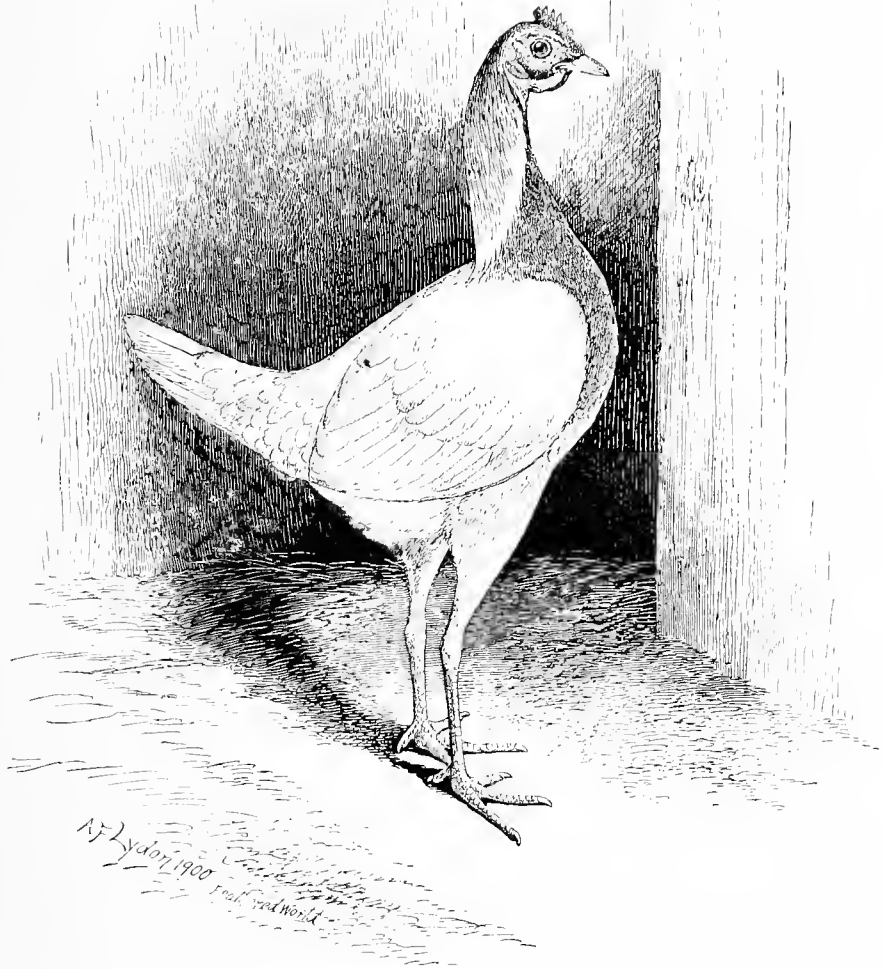
HAMBURGH BANTAMS.

In concluding the Variety Bantam articles with Hamburg Bantams, I bethought myself that I could not do better (seeing I had never bred these beautiful varieties) than write to Mr. John William Farnsworth, whom I knew had made a speciality of silver spangled Hamburg Bantams for many years, not only breeding them, but also exhibiting them successfully at a few shows where the classification was at all suitable.

To my request for information for the readers of *The Feathered World* as to how he started and eventually perfected the silver spangled Hamburg Bantam, Mr. Farnsworth wrote me a thorough Fancier-like reply, which I cannot do better than give in his own words.

"The following I do not say is the right way to go about the work, but it is the line pursued in producing my birds.

"My accommodation has always been limited, hence anything but Bantams in the fowl line were out of the question. Born with the hen-fever of a permanent character, a general liking for anything small, and a great admirer of the 'black and white' combination, the silver spangled Hamburg Bantam, although only existing in my mind's eye, stamped itself at once to be *the very thing*. A really good but undersized silver spangled Hamburg cock-er of notable descent, having been mated to a couple of rather large silver Selbright hens, resulted in my being



MR. J. W. HILL'S PILE GAME BANTAM PULLET

Winner of Second, Palace; First, Birmingham and Kendal; and First, Special, and Metal, Bury.

the following year, in possession of a fairly good Mooney cross cockerel, which was mated to a somewhat large blue-legged white rosecomb hen, a black rosecomb hen, and his sister, a Mooney cross pullet. Another similar pullet was bred to a pure white rosecomb cock.

"The remaining Mooney cross pullet, the smallest of the three, was put back to her sire, the Hamburg cock, the services of the Sebright hens being at once and for ever dispensed with.

"These three pens produced a number of odd-looking chickens, of various markings, but a very good selection was obtainable therefrom, some of which were bred together, others were mated with white rosecombs and black rosecombs to improve size and spangling. By continued perseverance I produced some grand little birds in every respect but tail, which I could not get satisfactory. Eventually I bought a silver spangled Hamburg cock with a *perfect* tail and but $3\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. in weight (of the same strain as the original Hamburg cock), which, mated to a couple of my largest spangled hens, gave me some chickens with the desired tail, but, of course, oversized.

"These, bred together, with care in selection, for a few seasons, enabled me to pen three birds at Basingstoke Show under Mr. W. M. Leach, a club judge of the Variety Bantam Club, which supported the show; and I was awarded first prize in the A.O.V. cock class, and second and third prizes in the corresponding hen class.—a, to me, very gratifying result. Since then I have but once missed the money when exhibiting them, and that at the Midland Counties Bantam Show, at West Bromwich, where in seventeen entries I got h.c.

"I have, of course, had the usual amount of *trouble, expense, and disappointments* in bringing them into form, but I consider them without doubt one of the handsomest Variety Bantams out at present, and *The Feathered World* and other Fanciers' papers have all spoken most favourably of them."

Such is Mr. Farnsworth's method of producing silver spangled Hamburg Bantams, which are without doubt one of the prettiest of all Variety Bantams, and the production of which presents no difficulties whatever. With ordinary luck and careful selection each year, by in-breeding after having obtained the desired colour, and by breeding as late as June to reduce the size, there is no reason why exhibition specimens should not be produced in about four years. The only difficulty I can see would be in keeping the length and flow of tail feather, which, to a certain extent, would be lost in breeding very late.

Colour and length of feather should be your guide in mating up your breeding pens, rather than size, as size can always be remedied, and very materially so, by feeding and in-breeding.

Gold spangles could easily be bred in the same way by using a gold Sebright hen, but they are not nearly so beautiful as the silvers, and I don't think for one moment that these would ever become popular, or pay for the time and labour.

I should think it would be quite possible to breed silver and gold *Pencilled* Bantams by using small silver and gold *Pencilled* Hamburg cocks, preference being given to those birds which excel in length of tail feather, and mating these to rather large Sebrights of their respective colour. To get the proper fine and even pencilling would take four or five years, as it would be difficult to get rid of the lacing on flights, but the time would be fully repaid in the long run. Unless the young fancier is prepared to devote both time and patience, and to persevere for a few years at an uphill game, he cannot possibly expect to perfect any new breed, and more especially Hamburg Bantams.

	SCALE OF POINTS.
Head and comb	25
Lobes	10
Colour and markings (except blacks)	15
Shape and carriage	10
Size and weight	20
Condition	20
	100

DISQUALIFICATIONS.—Wry tail, single comb, and deformity of any kind.

CHAPTER XVI.

HATCHING AND FEEDING CHICKS.

In the first place, the selection of a suitable broody hen is one of the most important features in hatching and rearing Bantams. It is useless putting a big hen of 5 or 7 lbs. weight on Bantam eggs, for even should she be fortunate enough not to smash the lot during the period of incubation, she would in all probability crush the life out of the whole brood within a week of hatching.

It was only the other day I received a letter from a young fancier, written in jubilant spirits, on having hatched twelve lovely chicks; but, alas! within three days, another letter reached me informing me of the demise of nine out of the twelve, and doubtless the other three will have ended their brief career by being trampled to death by a big hen. You might as well put Bantam eggs under a Turkey and hope for a good result. Years ago I was greatly troubled over sitting hens breaking eggs and trampling chicks to death, so I determined to remedy the grievance by rearing suitable hens for hatching Bantam eggs.

What I did was to purchase three or four buff Pekin hens, which cost me 5s. each, and these I mated to a black faced white Silky cock, and from this pen I hatched some twenty or thirty pullets, which for sitters and mothers are worth their weight in gold. Sit! why, they'd sit in the middle of the road on a few small stones; or, if you are hard up for room, you can put them on the top shelf in the scullery, or on the mantelpiece, and they will sit from three weeks to three months if required. They will sit anywhere, and, as a rule, will rear two to three broods of chicks each year, for I have never known them lay more than a dozen eggs before becoming broody, and are so quiet and reliable that no Bantam fancier should be without them.

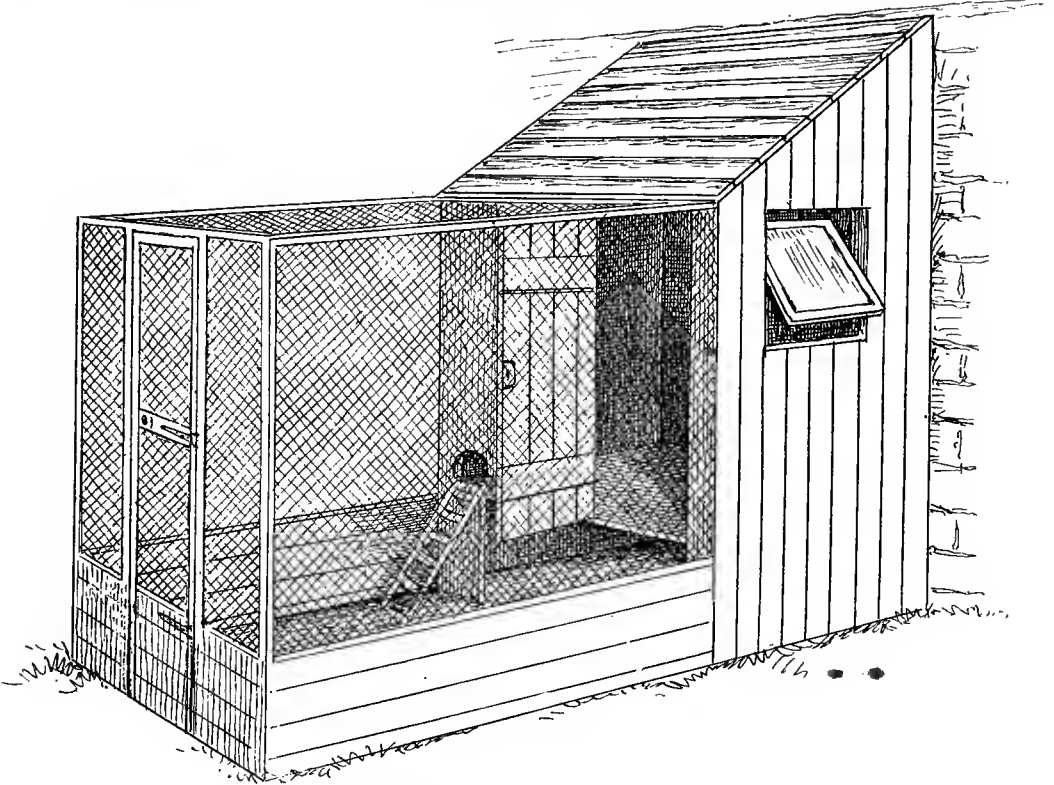
Having secured a suitable hen, which should not weigh more than 3 lbs. at most, before putting her on the nest give her a good sprinkling with insect powder, and see that she is perfectly healthy, and, if possible, not scaly-legged. The latter point is of great importance, especially where smooth, clean-legged chicks are a necessity, as in Game Bantams. I fancy I hear many of my readers say, "But what effect can a scaly-legged broody hen have on the chicks she rears?" My answer is: A very marked effect, and if you have never had scaly-legged chicks before you can depend upon having them the first brood you rear under a scaly-legged hen. This is a wrinkle, and you would do well to bear it in mind.

Now as regards nests. I very rarely use anything except the usual orange boxes, which can be purchased from any of the greengrocers for 2d. or 3d. I lay these down on their side, and nail a strip of wood about four inches deep along the front. You will then have three good roomy nests. The next thing to do is to get plenty of nice soft hay, and make a nest in the shape of a large basin, *i.e.*, hollow in the middle and nicely rounded at the sides, to prevent the eggs from rolling out when the hen leaves the nest to partake of food. There is an old saying, which many breeders follow, I've no

doubt—that is, before putting in the hay, they will tell you it is necessary to have soil at the bottom. This is all “bunkum.” And, again, they will tell you that they must be set on the ground. Let me tell you that it is quite unnecessary in both cases. Why, only last summer I had a Bantam hen which my children had made a great pet of, and this hen came into the scullery, where the servant was generally at work, and used to be fed there. The result was that she laid her first egg among the pans on the top shelf, about nine feet from the ground. So the servant took the egg and got a small chocolate box and put a little hay in and replaced the egg, and in this box, nine feet from the ground, she laid eight eggs and hatched every one of them,

night time; the clear eggs can then be taken away, and are easily distinguished from the fertile ones, the latter looking cloudy, and the veins of the germ will be quite distinct. By taking out the unfertile ones, in addition to making more room for the fertile ones it gives them a much better chance of keeping the proper temperature.

The front of the nest should be covered either by a piece of board or sack, and each night carefully remove each hen to feed, and keep her off for ten to fifteen minutes. The best food for sitting hens is maize, and let them have plenty of water and a good supply of cinder ashes for them to dust in. Should the nest become fouled, or any of the eggs broken, take out the nest, replace with fresh hay, and wash the eggs with



LEAN-TO BANTAM HOUSE AND RUN.

and, moreover, they were one of the healthiest broods I reared last season. So what price the soil in this case?

Having put the hen on the nest, give her a dummy egg or two until she properly settles down, which should not take more than a few hours. If at the end of that time she does not attempt to fly off when you place your hand under her, it will be quite safe to put the proper eggs under, and this is best done at night-time. Early in the season, when cold winds and frosty nights are prevalent, it is unwise to give a hen her full complement of eggs; better two less than one too many, for if she has too many it will make her uneasy, and in all probability she will spoil several eggs in her endeavours to get them all properly under. At the end of four days after setting hens, examine the eggs by holding them before a candle. This must be done at

lukewarm water. If the nest is properly made, nice and soft, and the hen allowed off sufficient time each night until the wants of nature have been attended to, and providing she is a suitable hen, as I have already described, this trouble will very rarely occur.

At the end of nineteen days the eggs will be hatched, if they were fresh when put under, and not later than twenty days at the most. If you would have strong, healthy chicks use fresh eggs, and the larger the better.

FEEDING CHICKS.

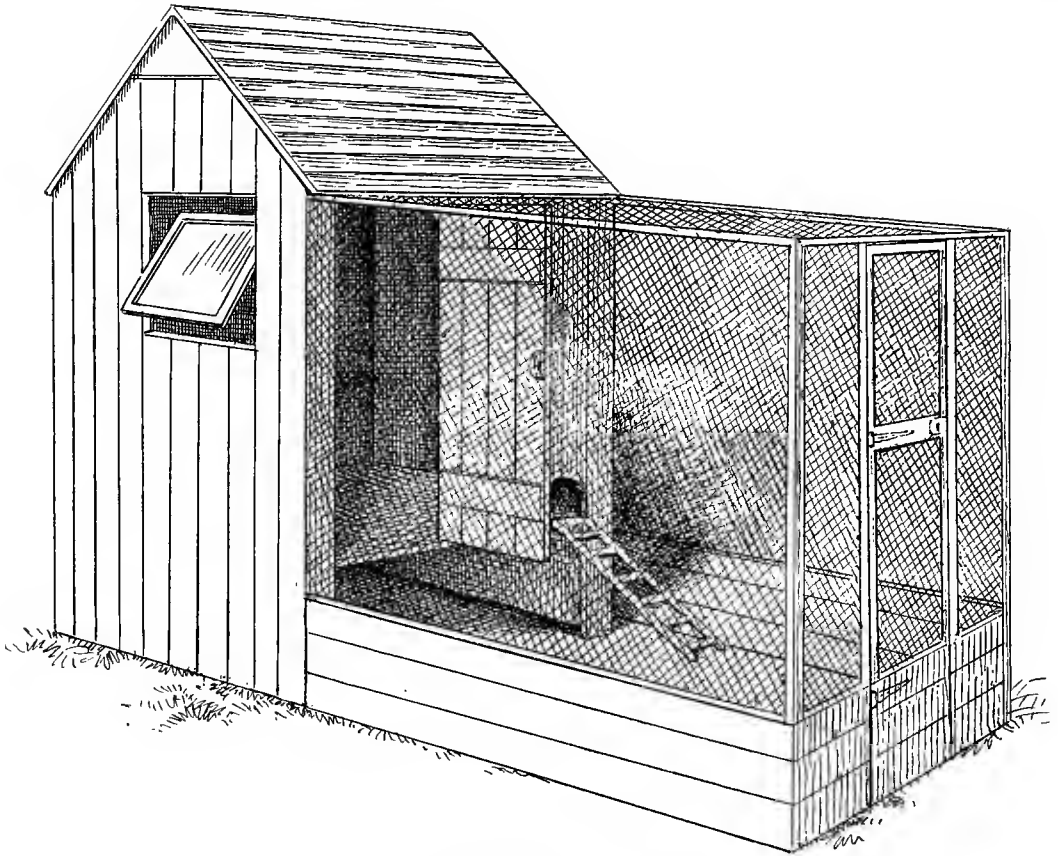
Don't attempt to hatch and rear Bantam chicks by artificial means, for you cannot do it with any degree of success. Incubators and foster mothers are all right for the larger breeds of fowls. I don't say that you cannot hatch Bantam eggs by incubators, as with a good reliable machine and careful attention daily, and by allowing the

egg-drawer to be open from fifteen to thirty minutes daily, according to the period of incubation, you can obtain very fair results, but the Bantam chick, hatched by artificial incubation will invariably be found a very fragile, puny little mite, that will be quite an impossibility to rear, and during his brief sojourn in this world will be a misery to himself and an eyesore to those around him.

Returning to the sitting hen, on the eighteenth day of incubation, when she comes off the nest for her usual feed, dust her again with insect powder, and do not disturb her again until the next night, when the chicks ought to have put in an appearance. Let hen and chicks

the third morning give them for the first meal Spratt's chicken or game meal scalded, and allowed to stand until nearly cold. The next feed should be given about two hours later, and this should consist of pure oatmeal mixed with sweet milk until crumbly, or stale bread crusts soaked in water and mixed with oatmeal till crumbly. This should be given at least three times a day, with the addition at noon-day of a little lean meat chopped fine for the first two months. When the chicks are a fortnight old, groats can be given for the last feed at night, and when two months old wheat should be substituted.

The question has often been asked how frequently



BANTAM HOUSE AND RUN.

remain quiet until the next morning, when you can give them their first feed. Before doing so, give the hen a good feed of maize and water to drink or she will be liable to eat all the food away from the chicks. Nature has so provided that the chick does not require food for at least sixteen to twenty hours after hatching, whilst in the large breeds twenty-four hours can elapse before giving food.

The first feed then may be egg boiled for about five or six minutes, just long enough to cause it to be set; this should be chopped up fine and mixed with equal parts of coarse oatmeal and stale bread crumbs. Continue this feed for the first two days, by which time the brood should be well on their legs. On

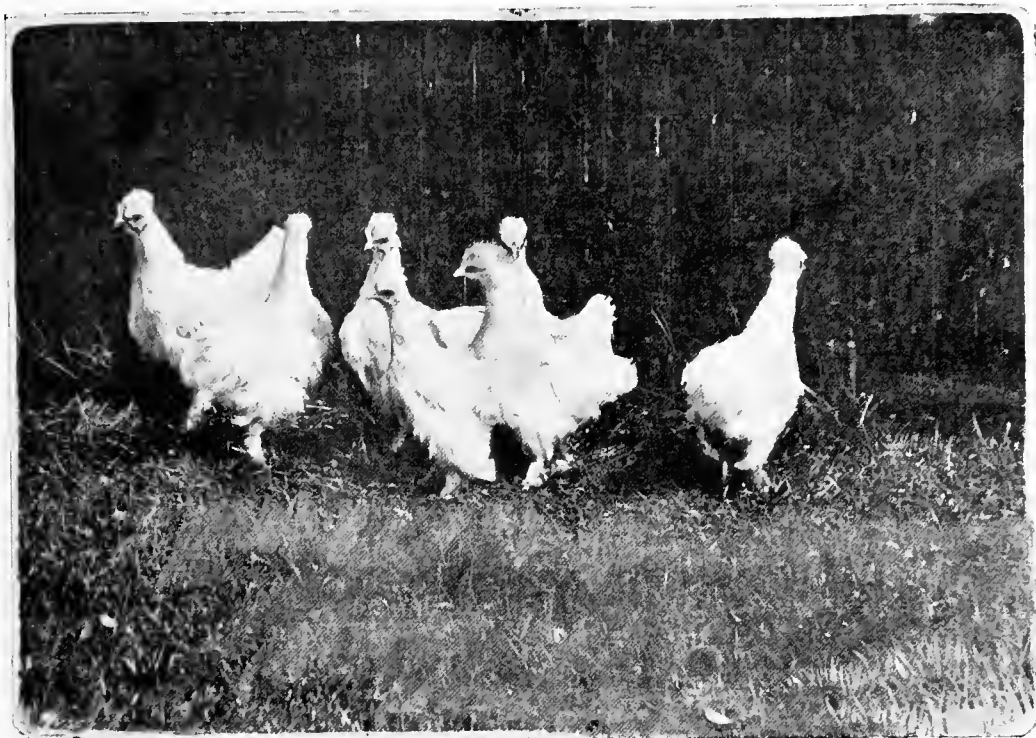
should chicks be fed? To a great extent this depends upon the breed, but for Bantams every two hours for the first week, and from that time till they are three months old, four times daily will be sufficient. From three to five months, three times a day. A fair allowance of animal matter, such as lean meat chopped fine, granulated meat, or maggots should be given to chicks once daily, especially during February, March, and April; this will enable them to withstand the cold winds and damp. Where chicks have not the liberty of a grass run, boiled vegetables mixed with the soft food should be given at the noon feed. Above all, feed regularly.

We now come to the water question, and which has been freely discussed in *The Feathered World* from time

to time. My advice to you is the same as *Punch's* on the marriage question, "Don't." I know of many successful breeders and exhibitors who rear from 200 to 500 chicks every season, and the only water they get is what they can obtain from the grass after a shower or heavy dew. For my own part, I don't believe in water for chicks. Since I discontinued the use of water for my chicks I have not had one solitary case of diarrhoea, but let them have access to water, especially in hot weather, then your trouble begins. If you never give chicks water they never require it, and are much healthier without; but once you start giving them water, you must continue till the end of the chapter. If your chicks have a grass run and are fed as stated above, they will not require water. Of course, when the bird reaches the age of, say, four

of the chicks. The tin is easily kept in its place by a couple of wire staples.

During the months of February, March, and April I prefer false bottoms to the chicken coops, on account of the damp, cold weather generally experienced at that time of the year, and by having them loose they can be very readily removed for cleaning. When the warm weather sets in it is advisable to take out the bottoms and allow the chicks to sleep on the ground; but where rats and other vermin abound, the bottoms should be kept in all through the year. It is advisable also to have a hinged shutter to the coop for protection at night, and which also affords a shade from the sun in the daytime; the shutter can be lowered to any desired height by having a chain attached. The coops should be



A GROUP OF SILKIES (photograph from life).

months, when grain will necessarily be his principal food, then and then only need water be given.

When chicks are old enough to be taken away from the hen—viz., about three months—the cockerels should be separated from the pullets and put on different runs where they cannot get together. By doing this you will find that both sexes will thrive better and settle down more contentedly; and a good plan is to put an old cock along with the cockerels to prevent their fighting and to maintain order.

Although chickens do not require water, the hen must not be forgotten, and to meet the necessity I fasten one of the ordinary drinking tins inside the coop, about eight inches from the floor. This enables the hen to drink what she requires, and at the same time it is out of reach

limewashed every five or six weeks; this is very important, if you would have strong healthy chicks.

HOUSES AND RUNS.

With regard to size of Bantam houses, all will depend upon the number of birds kept together. For a pen of half a dozen hens and a cock, the house should measure about 4 ft. by 3 ft. From the floor to the eaves should be at least 2 ft. It would be better 2 ft. 6 in., allowing 6 in. more to the ridge of roof. Under the floor should be a shelter reaching 18 in. from the ground, and boarded all round with the exception of the front. This shelter will prove extremely useful to the birds in bad weather. Into this shelter put a good supply at frequent intervals of peat moss, chaff, or cut straw. This

will keep them dry and comfortable in the time of cold winds and wet weather. Another capital plan, if the top of the run will bear it, is to cover it with a layer of bracken and fir branches during the winter months. It is wonderful how such an arrangement keeps the snow off. Melting snow has a very bad effect upon Bantams' feet. It is pretty generally known that any solid substance like ice or snow when melting absorbs surrounding heat, and with the absorption of heat from the foot chilblains, etc., arise, the feet will become blistered, and in some cases the toes even will be frozen completely off.

On the floor of the run it is best to have fine dry sand, such as sea-sand or very fine gravel, and kept fresh and sweet by removing the droppings and raking the sand over once or twice a week. A dust bath must also be put into the shelter, otherwise your pets will soon be swarming with vermin. The best dust bath is fine ashes to which a small quantity of sulphur has been added. This should be put into a small box about 18 inches long and six inches deep, a fresh supply of ashes and sulphur to be given at least once a month. Where possible, the run should be on sloping ground, so that the water is naturally drained off it. During the winter the runs should be boarded quite 18 inches or 2 feet from the ground. Shelter like this is absolutely necessary if the fancier's object be early eggs, and early eggs mean early chicks in readiness for the early chicken shows. Not only is it a case of early eggs, but of a better egg production all through.

Keep plenty of moss litter or sawdust in the house itself, and never adopt the merely occasional method of clearing out. It may answer all right for crossbred laying fowls, but Bantams are not built on the same lines. See that your houses are well done once a fortnight at least. Give them a good lime wash from time to time. Into the lime-wash add a little carbolic acid. This will effectually kill fleas, ticks, etc. Clean the floor well. Put fresh litter or sawdust down, to which has been added some disinfectant. Then if ventilation be properly attended to you may expect your birds will keep in good health. Remember to put up proper perches. Eschew all square perches or flat boards unless you wish to ruin the birds' feet. The perches for all Bantams, with the exception of the feathered-legged varieties, should be round and about the thickness of a broom handle, made so that they can be easily taken down and cleaned.

Houses such as I have described, and which I have found to act admirably, only cost a trifle under £1. They are well made, of three-quarter inch boards, tongued and grooved, with door and window complete, and it is, therefore, the height of folly, when valuable first-class stock has to be kept, to put up with any kind of a make-shift house, and run the risk of disease and probably ultimate loss. It will be found that the initial expense is after all the least expense, for once get birds thoroughly out of health, it is quite a question whether they will ever again be really fit for either exhibition or breeding.

Whilst on the question of houses, let me warn the young fancier against the unscrupulous advertisers of cheap poultry houses. Thanks to the Editress of *The Feathered World*, when these fraudulent transactions are made known to her, the columns of *The Feathered World* are closed against them once and for ever, and this is as it should be.

Before leaving the subject of housing, see that they are free from all access of vermin. A solitary weasel in half an hour may do £100 worth of harm, and rats are by no means particular if they cannot find grain

handily, they will go for small birds like Bantams. The boarding of the run is a great protection against vermin, and if the mesh of the wire-netting immediately above the boarding be small, this will act as a further safeguard. It is well to have a wire covering over the run too, especially if it be in the neighbourhood of a wood. Some of the larger kinds of Hawks, Carrion Crows, and Ravens have been known to swoop down upon small Bantams and carry them off. A covered-in run is a safeguard, too, against dogs and cats. Stray dogs and cats are at times a source of uneasiness to every keeper of dwarf poultry; but wire netting is effectual against them, and prevention is better than cure. Attention to such details as I have here set forth on the part of Bantam fanciers will well repay them. It will be found on trial that the old adage so often quoted will come true in the case of Bantams as in that of most other things—"A thing that is worth doing at all is worth doing well."

TRAINING AND PREPARING FOR EXHIBITION.

It is necessary in a book of this kind to say something upon the way Bantams should be trained and prepared for exhibition. Apart from the necessary washing of the white-feathered birds, there is a certain amount of schooling through which all fowls, *but especially Bantams*, should go, if they are to make their successful debut in the show pen. Fancy a lad tumbled into life without any previous preparation for that which he was to encounter, raw, crude, and unsophisticated. Should we expect him to win all along the line? Even so is it with our feathered pets. They are unsophisticated in exhibition ways, and have to take their lessons like other things. Many a good bird has been quite spoilt through lack of training. Certain things are required of them in the show pen; they do not do them, and the judge has neither time nor patience to stand waiting for them whilst they pick up by natural intuition, if they can, what should have been taught them before they came to the show. For instance, the bird won't settle, runs about its pen in a wild, frightened manner, sticks its head in a corner, and, if disturbed, dashes against the sides and top of the pen to the disgust of the judge and no small injury to itself at times. In the end it is passed over, naturally so, and marked in the judging book "wild in pen." Now, a very little care would obviate this, if it were exercised at the right time. If, when the bird was some four or five months old, a few minutes' training in a pen had been gone through daily for a short time it would have removed all chance of a fiasco when exhibition time came round. What I do myself is something after this manner: I generally take the bird off its run in the evening when it has gone to roost and put it into a suitable training-pen for the night. Such a pen is about 18 in. by 18 in., and can be procured from any penning firm for about 1s. 9d. each. They are clean, light, and airy, better by far than home-made wooden ones, and are, in fact, such as the bird will have to be exhibited in. Here, in the pen, I leave him for a quiet hour or two to settle down a bit; then, when it is quite dark, I take a candle, and go and stroke him *very quietly* from the back to the tail, then from the throat to the thighs, talking kindly to him all the while, and touching him very lightly and gently at first.

It is astonishing how much a bird will stand by artificial light that it would not endure by open daylight. When I have handled my bird till I have succeeded in getting him to stand still in one position, I take a small stick and repeat the operation with that. If the bird is inclined to carry his tail high, I repeatedly pass the stick over his back and tail, gently pressing the tail



SILKIE PULLET.

down as I go, to induce him to carry it lower. This habituates the bird to the feel of the wand on his back, and he gradually associates with that feeling the passing of the wand over the tail. I have known birds well trained instantly to lower their tail the moment the stick rested upon their back. They acquire, too, a habit of slightly walking away from the stick, and naturally lower the tail to be free of obstacles. If he droops his wings, which they often will, then I touch him under the wings, lift them up, and in every way try to induce him to shrink himself into proper shape and form before I leave him. Even very good birds have sometimes naturally more or less bad habits of wings, tail, etc., etc., but they can—if there is really nothing radically wrong with them, and it is merely careless habit acquired in their free state of chickenhood—be easily schooled out of them. A few gentle taps on the back of the legs or toes will greatly improve the style and carriage of a bird. The training having progressed thus far, I next secure some tit-bits, bread sop, or a little meat, and hold it high up in front of the pen, to induce the bird to reach up, a great desideratum in the Game Bantams, but in the soft-feathered varieties it is a thing of lesser, and, in some cases, of no moment. This kind of training is carried on for a few nights. The bird may then be approached in the daylight, and more and more familiarities indulged in till finally such a stage is reached that, when he sees you coming, he gets himself pretty well prepared beforehand, knowing well what *is coming*. Birds that have been handled very much in their chickenhood require very little training indeed. Sometimes after the chicks have left the old hen, for safety we have had to remove them by hand every night to their proper roosting places, which they could not reach of themselves from the runs. Such birds have most easily become trained and ready for exhibition; in fact, we have known such successful at the show when they have hardly been in the training pen half a dozen hours altogether. A little bread and milk sop, with a little lean fresh meat cut up fine and given to the birds for a week before the show, will invariably get them into good show condition. A little canaryseed and millet, too, is very beneficial if given once a day through the training period. Like a horse that has been well broken, so a bird that has been well trained never forgets the discipline he has been through, and is well mannered on all subsequent occasions, the pride of his breeder, and a delight to the judge, if, added to a thorough training, he is also a first-class exhibition specimen.

But there is a little more yet to be done, even with a well trained bird, before he reaches the show pen. He must be suitably despatched to the show. Most of our best shows are in winter, and it does not do to send birds to exhibitions in flimsy structures, ill-lined, and at the mercy of any great box or parcel to crush them. See that you have good, strong, sound baskets, lined with comfortable material, and if the weather be very severe a double lining will be better still. I have known exhibitors go one step further, and sew sacking round the outside and over the lid of a double-lined hamper. If many birds are going to the show, it is better to have partition-baskets. In this way the birds are kept warmer. Each tends to heat the basket, and they mutually keep each other warmer than if they went in separate baskets, then it is cheaper. Four or five birds can travel in one basket at about the rate of two in separate baskets. There is not so much risk either of the baskets going astray. In every way, both on the score of convenience and economy, this is the best way to send birds to the exhibition. See that

each compartment is duly padded well with dry hay at the bottom to prevent the birds suffering a severe shaking when the baskets are roughly thrown down at the stations. Some porters have anything but a gentle way with them; they seem to take a delight in smacking down the hampers as if they were cast-iron.

Before starting the bird off to the show, give it a feed of milk sop. Soak the bread in cold water first, squeeze out all the water with the hands, and add good fresh milk. Remember that anything of a sour nature tends to give the birds diarrhoea, and unfits them for show. On the return of the bird it is necessary to give the same food, no matter whether it is 1st and special or only vhc. It must be well cared for or it will feel the effects more and more of both journey and exposure in the show. Keep the bird isolated for a day or two on its return as a precaution. One can never tell what disease a bird may have contracted at a show, and it is possible that you may thus contract in your yard something highly undesirable, such as roup or diphtheria, unless due caution is taken. If the bird be kept by itself for a few days, then you will be enabled to see whether it is all right before turning it down with the rest. Nothing is more common than for birds to return from show with some contagious disease, generally contracted from the drinking vessels, which have been provided in the show pens, but which nevertheless have, in many cases, never been properly washed out or disinfected after a previous show. This is a point that show officials and pen-owners should be extremely careful about. The wonder is that public attention has not long since been drawn to the matter. If the cups after a show were turned down into a solution of Jeyes', or Condy's Fluid, the risk of contagion is very much minimised. The diseases contracted from foul cups are unfortunately of the worst and most virulent type, and the harm done in yards from such sources is incalculable. Only very recently some birds, under four months old, were sent to a show; they won. They were on their return put with the rest. In about a week, though previously there had not been a vestige of roup about the place, almost every bird in the yard was going about with swollen faces and closed eyes. Fortunately it was promptly dealt with, and eradicated about as quickly as it had arrived. But in the case of real roup and diphtheritic roup, it is unfortunately a thing that cannot be so summarily dealt with, so that every care should be taken by those who supply cups at exhibitions to see that they are clean and disinfected. There should be a special cleansing after each show. By this means we should soon hear less and less of these hateful diseases, and our birds would be a less cause of anxiety to us.

CHAPTER XVII.

DISEASES.

We now come to the final chapter of our work, and close these hints and instructions on what is to many people a most fascinating hobby by some reference to the diseases to which our favourites are liable, and from which we may in measure relieve them. Bantams, being so much in-bred, are consequently weaker in constitution and more liable to certain diseases than their bigger brethren, though, of course, there are others from which they hardly ever suffer, more particularly leg and foot weakness, so prevalent in the heavier breeds. Bumble-foot and hock trouble seldom or never attack Bantams owing to their slender build, but, on the other hand, we find Bantams more liable to egg trouble, owing

to their diminutive size and, in Game Bantams, their peculiar shape, which requires them to be bred too fine to always allow of the free passage of the egg, so that this quite makes up for their immunity from such diseases as before mentioned. Everyone feels it hard to lose a good bird from disease, and especially if it has been a heavy drain on the exchequer; still, it seldom pays to doctor fowls, our experience being that in almost every case a bird that has passed through a very severe illness becomes useless either for showing or breeding from. We like to do our best for the suffering one, but often it would be wiser to put the patient at once out of its misery, both for its own sake and that of its owner. Slight ailments are, however, quite a different matter, and may be dealt with successfully.

Roup is, perhaps, the most prevalent of all diseases, and is nothing more nor less than a neglected cold, which, if treated promptly, can be nipped in the bud. A free dose of salts, as much as would lie on a shilling, keeping the birds in a warm room free from draughts, and feeding on warm bread and milk, will do more to cure than all the patent pills in the pharmacopœia. I am not a believer in pills. The more you give a bird the more it seems to want. However, for those who do pin their faith to all and everything advertised, they will find their wants supplied freely by application to "specialists," but so far I have been unable to give my preference to any. A friend of mine, however, who is somewhat susceptible to chills on slight occasions, is a great believer in half a dozen drops of terebene on a lump of sugar when he feels the cold coming on, and this has led him to try the same remedy (on the first discovery of cold) upon his Bantams with good effect. Occasionally he varies it with eucalyptus oil, or mixes the two, and, if the bird shows signs of emaciation, administers about four drops of the compound in cod-liver oil. The results are, he says, invariably successful. Still, keep your birds in good, well-ventilated houses, give them plenty of fresh water as often as possible, with a bit of sulphate of iron as large as a pea dropped into it; feed on good sound dry corn, and let it be given them as advised in previous chapters, and you will be little troubled with roup. If, however, your bird contracts roup at a show, treat as described as soon as you notice any watery discharge from the nostrils or eyes. If taken in time, before the thick yellow, disagreeable smelling deposit comes on the beak, four or five days will, in the generality of cases, effect a cure.

Diphtheria is the most contagious and difficult of all diseases to cure, and though I have cured dozens, still I think the safest plan is at once to kill the bird and burn the body, as by trying to cure one you may spread the disease through the whole yard, by carrying it in your clothes, feeding vessels, water pans, etc. In this way you may very easily lose your whole stock, and bitter as may be the first pill, especially if the bird affected is a valuable one, it is perhaps, after all, the least difficult one to swallow. Having taken the drastic method in hand, next proceed to limewash all the places which the bird has used for roosting in, etc. Add a few drops of carbolic acid to the mixture, or, if this is not available, try an ounce of permanganate of potash. You will get a purple colour instead of the pure lime-white; but, never mind, you have secured a powerful disinfectant, and that is really what you want. With the disease checked, take care not to let your birds contract it again, and a safeguard will be found against this in the sulphate of iron in water, as before recommended.

Cholera is another disease difficult of cure. It is also

highly contagious. The symptoms are diarrhœa with excessive thirst. Simple diarrhœa can generally be checked with a good peppering of prepared chalk over the food, which for a day or two should be rice boiled in milk, but when the more aggravated symptoms of cholera put in an appearance, it is better to put the bird down at once. Thoroughly cleanse all feeding troughs and drinking vessels, and limewash as before. A little camphor and a drop or two of laudanum in the water will prevent the disease spreading.

Cropbound is generally caused by foreign matter of a stringy nature being taken into the stomach, such as horse hair, dried grass or straw, and which obstructs the outlet of the crop, causing the crop to become quite hard. The best plan is to fill the bird's crop with water, syringed into it as hot as it can bear it. Then carefully knead the hard matter with the hand till it shows signs of dissolution. When it seems to have assumed a fluid state, eject the same by turning the bird's head downwards, squeezing all matter out of the crop with the hand. If this process be repeated about three times it is not difficult generally to wholly remove the offensive matter.

The bird will then require feeding on soft food, milk sop for preference, for a couple of days. No hard corn should be given for at least two days.

Gapes is a trouble which affects little chickens in some localities more so than others. This is caused by a thread-like worm lodged in the lining of the throat. How it comes there is more or less a matter of conjecture; still, when once it is there, if it be not removed or killed, the chick will speedily lose its life. The best plan is to place all the affected birds in a small box and treat them to a thorough dusting with camlin. This should be blown into the box through a small hole by means of a small bellows supplied for the purpose. This powder incites coughing on the part of the chick, and in the act the worm is ejected. One dose is generally sufficient. Or you can try the remedy so frequently advised by Mr. Cobb in the query columns of *The Feathered World*.

Lice are a nuisance to poultry, and from which our Bantams unfortunately have no immunity. A good dust bath is a grand preventative, and especially if a little sulphur or insect powder can be dusted over it. However, a good practice is to periodically go over the birds with Keating's insect powder, a safe and sure remedy against these parasites. Early summer is the worst time for them, and at such times one can hardly go wrong with the dusting-box.

Feather Disease, or what is sometimes called feather-curl, very frequently troubles Bantams. It generally shows itself worst on the breast, where the feathers appear dry and shrivelled. Their abnormal appearance is caused by a parasite, which practically sucks the virtue out of them, and thus causes them to curl. A good way of dealing with this trouble is to prepare a solution of paraffin with boiling water in the proportion of half and half. Rub this well into the feathers with a piece of rag; one dressing will usually be found to be sufficient.

Egg-bound.—This is the most serious trouble to which Bantams are liable. The sooner it is noticed and taken in hand the easier it is to cure. If the bird is noticed on the nest an unusual length of time, it may at once be assumed that she is finding difficulty in laying. Do not wait until matters have got beyond remedy, on the supposition that she will manage it by and by. It is safest to take her at once, before her strength is exhausted and rupture has occurred, and place her up to the thighs in water, as hot as you can bear your hand in, for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, and then

after drying her with a towel, grease the vent well with vaseline. If the egg is in view, a little gentle pressure from the outside with the thumb and fingers will often eject the egg; but it must be done very carefully, or a fracture of the egg will result, and then the case usually becomes fatal.

I have heard of a recent case where the sufferer was kept in the hot water for three-quarters of an hour before a change for the better ensued, the egg being in view the whole time, and the vent syringed with warm olive oil. But perseverance was rewarded in due time, and the egg produced a chick. The whole operation is in reality very simple, but requires great care and some patience.

Scaly-leg is another complaint from which Bantams sometimes suffer, and which is generally caused by very scaly-legged hens being used as brooders. The scale referred to is a parasite feeding on the leg, so the sooner it is taken in hand the better. Thoroughly soak the bird's legs in hot water, then brush them well with soap and a hard nail brush; afterwards anoint them with a

dressing of sulphur ointment, made of vaseline and flowers of sulphur.

In slight cases a thoroughly good wash, and a good rubbing with crude paraffin oil will suffice to get rid of the parasite.

These seem to be the principal diseases attacking Bantams, and if the young fancier faithfully carries out the instructions I have given for their treatment, no difficulty will be experienced in effecting a cure.

In conclusion I may say that throughout this work my sole aim has been to assist the novice as far as I possibly can, and from the multitude of grateful letters that I have received it has given me the greatest pleasure to learn that my endeavours have been so heartily appreciated.

There may be little matters of interest that I have failed to include in these pages; if so, I shall be most happy to write to any reader of *The Feathered World* who encloses a stamped envelope for reply, and answer any question or give any advice that may have been overlooked in this work. All letters to be addressed to *The Feathered World* office.



WHITE BOOTED HEN.

APPENDIX.

OWING to an oversight the following was omitted from page 51, before paragraph commencing "Houses and Runs":—

FEEDING AND HOUSING

In a former chapter I have gone fully into the feeding of Bantam chicks, but it is necessary to carry the subject somewhat further and throw out suggestions for treatment as the adult stage is reached. For unless all kinds of Bantams are judiciously fed and cared for it will result, to use a Shakespearean expression, in "love's labour lost."

A Bantam so brought up that size and feather are ignored is a Bantam ruined. Of course, it is possible that failure in these respects may be the result of breeding, but it very often happens that from the very best breeding pens procurable, the stock, through being kept on wrong lines, result in failure.

I have seen Game Bantam chicks that have been given a liberal diet of cooked meat, scraps, etc., and other soft food, in addition to a plentiful supply of grubs and worms that the chicks may have picked up in the kitchen garden, grown so large and feathery that by the time they reached four months they were much too large and coarse even for adult birds, larger even than the parents they were bred from, consequently useless either for exhibition or breeding purposes, and simply because they had been brought up on unsuitable food.

The above diet is all well and good for pushing on big breeds where size and bone are required, but in Bantams the order is reversed. Feeding, therefore, becomes a matter for the highest consideration. In Bantams size must be kept down, and discretion used in feeding for hard or soft feather. As a general principle it may be set down that hard feed produces hard and short feather, and *vice versa*.

Breeders of Game, Malays, etc., will therefore proceed on the lines of hard corn as staple food, with only small additions of soft food, the less the better; whereas breeders of rosecombs, Pekins, and kindred soft-feathered stock will judiciously place soft food first, and give hard corn merely as a nightcap before roosting time. In neither case will the food be chosen of too fattening and frame-making a nature, yet sufficiently nourishing to build up and keep up a sound constitution. For if the birds be brought up in too starved a condition, weakly, debilitated frames will result, and lead to much after trouble.

Where birds have full liberty on a good grass run, less food is required than if they are kept rigidly confined to a pen. In all cases a little soft food should be given in the morning, composed of Spratt's Biscuit Meal, scalded with hot water, and brought to a fine crumbly state with fine sharps, or what is sometimes called

"thirds"—a meal much resembling flour. A very little maize meal may be added. One handful of this mixture to two or even three full-grown Bantams will be sufficient for morning feed, presuming the birds have full liberty; at night, before roosting time, good sound wheat in a similar proportion. A change to *dari* occasionally will be useful, and be greatly appreciated by the Bantams, for, like their bigger brethren, they like change of diet. In the early spring hempseed should take the place of *dari*, as it furnishes natural heat, and will be found very beneficial in the production of eggs, especially where the birds are kept in exposed positions. Buckwheat is also an excellent food, but, as a rule, birds do not take to it, and will rarely eat it unless given separately from other grain. I do not advocate mixing the grains; this precludes the possibility of change. Where birds are kept in confined runs, the same *menu* may be given, but it will be well to add any available household scraps, such as boiled cabbage, bits of meat, etc., chopped fine, avoiding a too free use of boiled potatoes, or their peelings, which are most fat-forming, therefore unsuitable for Bantams.

Never stint the supply of green food; young dandelion, watercress, lettuce, young cabbage, in fact almost anything that is green, should be given to closely confined birds daily, whilst the cooked meat chopped fine given three times a week will be sufficient. If the green food be introduced largely in the pen, it should be removed at once as soon as its freshness has passed away. Nothing can be more harmful than decaying vegetable matter. And with regard to both corn and meal, see that it is not damp or mouldy, for nothing I know of will set up disease sooner than this. Wheat especially is injurious, if it gets into this state. All food stuffs should be kept in large air-tight tin canisters or bins, and in this way kept secure from damp and mildew. The flesh meat, too, should be thoroughly wholesome. Some people seem to have an idea that any sour, putrid stuff will do. This is a grave mistake. I find Brand's Meat Meal, a lean meat fibre, very beneficial, both in rearing chicks and given in small quantities to adults in morning meal, during February, March, and April, when eggs are at a premium. Spratt's Crissel is also an excellent addition to the soft food, and I have heard it highly spoken of. I do not advocate poultry spices. They will doubtless produce eggs, but at a great cost of constitution, and a Bantam has not enough original vigour to stand such drastic helps. Where birds are confined the grit supply is very important; shell and flint mixed, which can be had from 5s. per cwt., will well pay for its cost. It should be given in a box, and not scattered about anyhow in the run. The only thing that will bear scattering is the corn. If this can

APPENDIX.

be flung amongst loose straw, bracken, chaff, and the like, the search will always afford useful exercise for the birds.

WATER.

Water, which we deprecate for chicks, should not be withheld from adult birds. In fact it is absolutely necessary for them. It should be given fresh twice each day, if the weather is sultry three times or even more. Under all circumstances keep it as much out of the sun as possible. Use earthenware vessels well rinsed out each time. Studiously avoid the use of zinc or lead vessels.

As a tonic and for keeping the birds in good health, I put a small piece of sulphate of iron about the size of a small bean in the water twice a week. Two pennyworth will last months. This must not be put into zinc drinking tins.

The soft food is best given in wooden troughs. These can be thoroughly scalded out from time to time. Never leave any food to be soured by the sun, nor yet to form an inducement to vermin. In confined runs a few shady boughs of trees should be laid over the runs, or some kind of awning be put up in tropical weather, not only to keep green and other food fresh the longer, but to furnish a welcome shade for the birds.

It will be found that eggs from Bantams come much more freely, as in fact they do from any breed of fowl, in warm weather than they do in the cold spring months. If eggs are wanted early, see that the soft morning food is given hot, as reasonably hot as the bird can take it, and that they are not fed in the evening so long before roosting time that their crops have got rid of the corn before retiring, and so are left to pass the cold frosty nights without the natural essential for keeping them warm.

I think I have gone fully into all the details of feeding, and the proper food to be given, and will now pass on to

HOUSING.

The Bantam fancier who flatters himself that any sort of a dirty, damp, draughty place is good enough to bring up and keep his pets in, cannot possibly make a greater mistake, and so first-class men who know their business never attempt it. Housing correctly is quite as much a panacea to healthy condition, whether for breeding or exhibition, as correct feeding. In fact, to put the matter shortly, all the work of mating, rearing, feeding, etc., may easily be rendered abortive by a

week's housing in unsuitable quarters, and such a fiasco seems deplorable in the face of the fact that Bantam quarters good and suitable in every way can be had nowadays at a most reasonable figure; in fact, no kind of poultry house or pen costs so little as those for our pigmy pets. First of all, the place must be weatherproof. So many of us are amateur carpenters, not a few think they can construct a Bantam house for themselves. And, we ask, why not? I have seen almost as good houses turned out by the amateur as by the professional carpenter. But in amateur carpentry the temptation comes in to use any kind of odd timber that is lying about, odd lengths, short and long, and it very often happens that when all is put together there are cracks and chinks showing here and there when we view our work from the inside.

Now this must be avoided. Draughts must not be allowed; better far let the birds roost out in the open than exposed to a draught. The wind blowing in from a hole the size of a Bantam's quill, on a cold stormy night, direct upon the face of a bird, will leave its mark in the shape of a swollen face, bad cold, and sometimes roup.

Stop all such crannies with putty or wooden plugs. A home-made house is all the better for being covered with felting. Get the best. It is cheapest in the long run. But if our Bantam house has to be draught-proof it must not in consequence go unventilated. This is most important. More cases of roup are caused every season by allowing birds to be cooped up in badly ventilated houses than from all other causes combined. Birds that are allowed to roost in large numbers huddled together in evil-smelling, badly-ventilated places all night, come out into the cold morning air more dead than alive, and the contrast of the sleeping quarters and the outside atmosphere is so great that the birds catch cold and are soon down with roup and kindred ailments.

The house should have a current of pure air passing through from end to end, well above the birds' heads, the higher the better. These ventilation holes are best if provided with shutters that will let down and take up, and even off. Two kinds should be to hand, the one of solid wood in case of very high cold winds in winter, the other a frame covered with perforated zinc for cold gusty weather in general. In fact, it would not be a bad plan to so have the frame in which they slide constructed that both could be used together. In this way just the requisite amount of fresh air could be given that circumstances called for.



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