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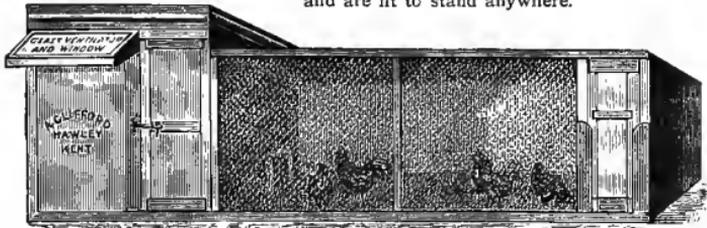
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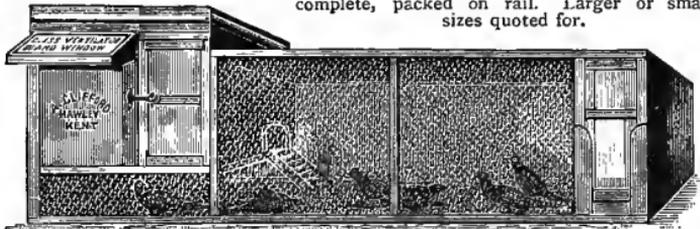
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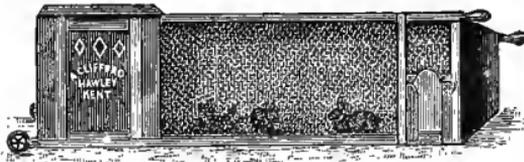
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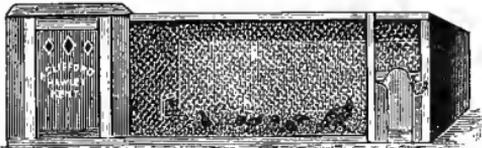
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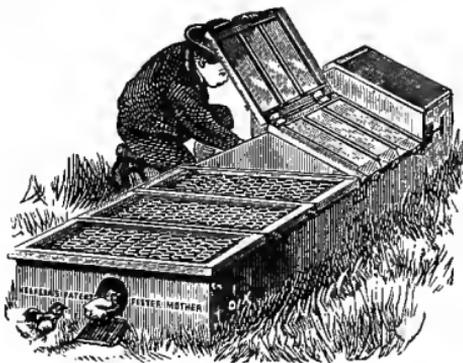
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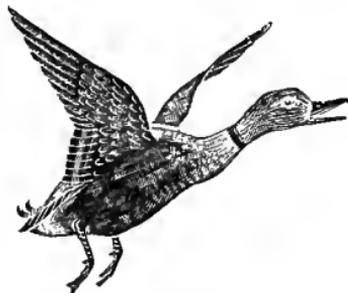
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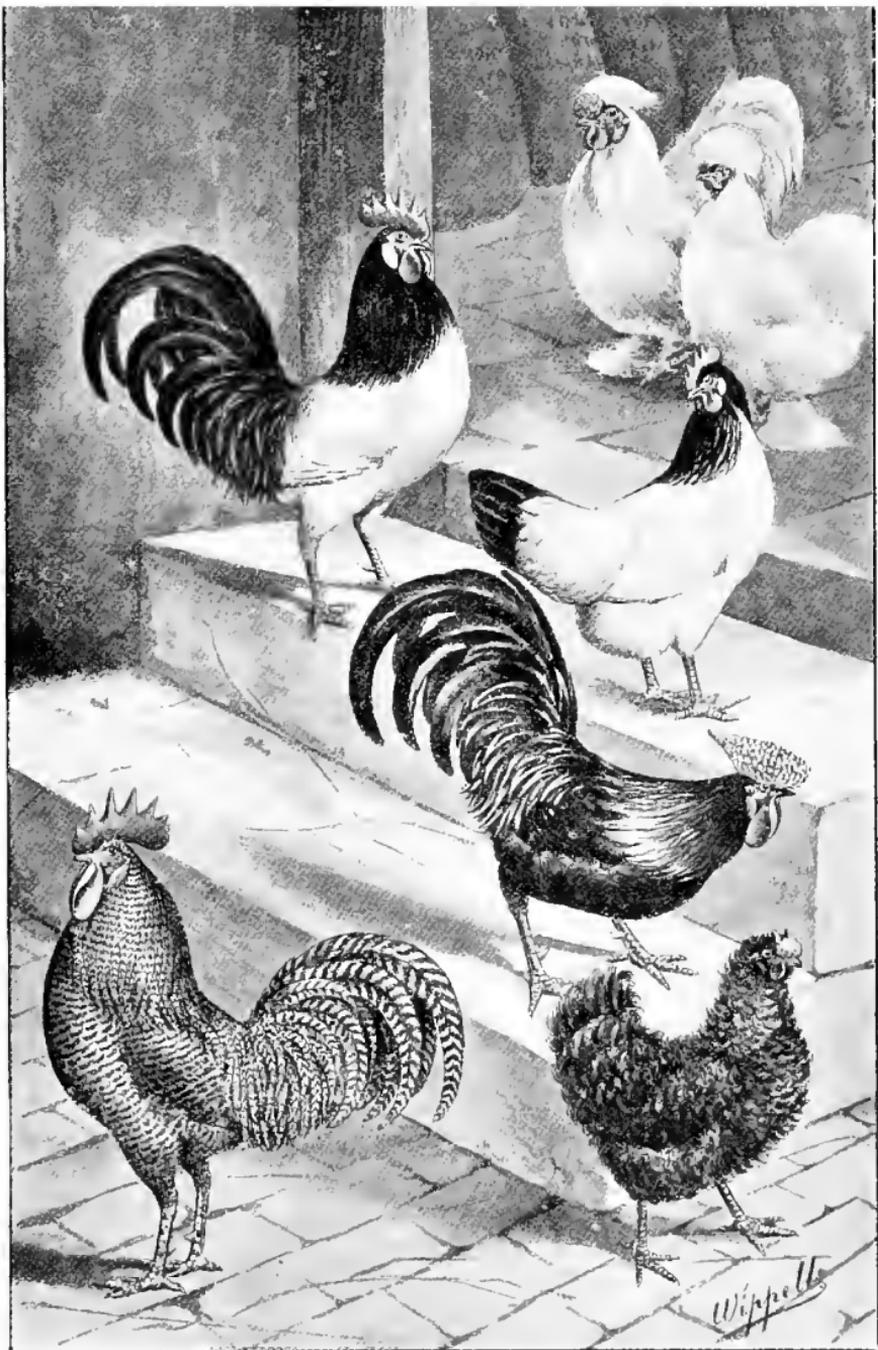
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Preface.

IN accomplishing my task of bringing this book up to date the work has been practically re-written, and this has been necessitated by the changes that have taken place in the Poultry World during recent years. Breeds have multiplied; old ones have suffered as a natural consequence of excessive in-breeding for exhibition, and have given way to many new and composite varieties; whilst new methods of breeding, rearing, and general management have completely changed the aspect of poultry-keeping for exhibition. Consequently this book may be accepted, for all practical purposes, as a new and original work under an old and popular title.

Many books that are written on the subject of Fancy Poultry contain merely descriptions of the various breeds and leave the reader entirely in the dark with regard to the details of breeding for show points and the general management of exhibition stock; but I claim that no person who reads this book and acts upon the advice contained therein need fall into the errors that have proved fatal to so many beginners.

For the feathers used to illustrate some of the breeds I am indebted to several successful exhibitors—to Mr. Charles Preston, Manor House, Earlsheaton, Dewsbury, for Silver-Laced Wyandottes; to Mr. John Wharton, Honeycott, Hawes, Yorks, for Partridge Wyandottes; to

Mr. W. Slater, Highfield, Lancaster, for Barred Plymouth Rocks; to Messrs. W. Cook and Sons, Orpington House, St. Mary Cray, Kent, for Diamond Jubilee Orpingtons; to Messrs. Firth Bros., Wharton Farm, Acton Vale, London, W., for Indian Game; to the Rev. J. N. Williams, Chapel-le-Dale Vicarage, Kirkby Lonsdale, for Silver-Spangled Hamburgs; to Messrs. Turton and Son, Nesfield, Charlotte Street, Ilkeston, for Gold-Pencilled Hamburgs; to Mr. R. Little, jun., Rokeby Cottage, Glossop, for Andalusians; to the Rev. E. Lewis Jones, Heyop Rectory, Knighton, for Campines; to Mr. J. Eadson, 316, Padiham Road, Burnley, for Anconas; and to Mr. R. P. Percival, Beech House, Northenden, Cheshire, for Silver Sebright Bantams. These feathers have been taken from some of the most typical specimens that have ever been bred, and my best thanks are due to these gentlemen for enabling me to present such an excellent collection.

W. M. ELKINGTON.

LADYE'S HILL, KENILWORTH,

Dec., 1908.

Contents.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. A HOBBY AND AN INDUSTRY .	1
II. THE LAWS OF BREEDING . .	5
III. MANAGEMENT OF EXHIBITION STOCK	11
IV. PREPARING FOR EXHIBITION .	16
V. THE POINTS OF A FOWL	25
VI. BRAHMAS AND COCHINS	32
VII. DORKINGS .	42
VIII. LANGSHANS	46
IX. ORPINGTONS .	51
X. WYANDOTTES AND PLYMOUTH ROCKS	60
XI. ENGLISH GAME .	83
XII. ASIATIC GAME . .	94
XIII. HAMBURGHS AND REDCAPS .	101
XIV. MEDITERRANEAN BREEDS	111
XV. SPANISH BREEDS	123
XVI. FRENCH BREEDS .	129
XVII. OTHER CONTINENTAL BREEDS . . .	136
XVIII. OTHER DISTINCT VARIETIES	146
XIX. BANTAMS .	160
XX. WATERFOWL AND TURKEYS . .	174

Poultry for Prizes.

Chapter I.

A Hobby and an Industry.

DURING recent years the breeding of poultry for exhibition purposes has attained a degree of popularity that fanciers of forty years ago would have looked upon as phenomenal. Out of a hobby, indeed, has sprung an industry, directly or indirectly providing employment for thousands of workers, although in a work of this kind one cannot too strongly emphasise the fact that fancy poultry breeding must ever be the hobby of the many and the industry of the few. The truth is that in no other branch of the poultry industry is practical experience so necessary, and the amount of capital essential in establishing an exhibition poultry farm makes the risk considerable for those who engage in the business without knowledge. The wisdom of recommending this as a suitable industry for persons with a little experience and small capital is questionable, and the usual term of twelve months as a pupil on a poultry farm cannot go far to ensure success when it is remembered that only the elementary lessons can be learned in that time, and that a poultry fancier is continually being called upon to face new problems, the satisfactory solution of which may mean all the difference between success and failure.

2—Poultry for Prizes.

The comparative few who are able to treat fancy poultry keeping as an industry are those who, besides having natural qualifications, have built up a successful business, generally from a humble start, and whose life-study has been the breeding and exhibiting of fancy stock. There is a select circle of professional fanciers at the present day who have steadily mounted the ladder until they have found what was once a hobby a very satisfactory source of income, and it is only natural that their success should have fired the ambition of many who never realise what has to be overcome to attain the position these fanciers occupy.

The person who lacks practical experience will do well to look upon exhibition poultry breeding as a hobby, though it is a hobby which, backed with judgment, good management, and some amount of luck, may return more or less profit, or, in the absence of the same, may prove somewhat expensive. We call to mind the case of an operative in a Midland shoe-manufacturing centre who, with no more than a mere smattering of knowledge, invested £7 in a quartette of exhibition breeders. Luck was certainly with him, for as the result of the first breeding season he sold over £30 worth of stock, and still retained two breeding-pens of the estimated value of £15. There are many authentic cases of beginners clearing three or four hundred per cent. as the result of the first season's breeding, but, of course, there is a good deal of luck behind such cases, and on the other side of the picture there are many to whom the first investment becomes a dead loss. It must, however, be stated that absolute failures such as these are largely due to inexperience, bad management, or carelessness. The beginner is first of all handicapped by not knowing where to buy, and being anxious to economise he often falls a victim to the catchy advertisements of those who profess to offer much for

A Hobby and an Industry.—3

little. Then, again, he may be entirely ignorant of the common laws of mating for breeding exhibition stock, to which we shall refer at length in a subsequent chapter, in which case he runs the risk of throwing money away to no purpose. Fully fifty per cent. of the failures are thus doomed from the first; and of the others, many become tired of the hobby and neglectful, a few are the victims of real hard luck, and quite a number lack the instinctive ability to succeed with any kind of poultry.

To the average individual, possessing a love of feathered life and a taste for fancy stock, the breeding of exhibition poultry offers attractions so varied that it is doubtful if any hobby has a more lasting influence upon the life and habits of its devotees. The beginner enters a world peopled by men and women in all grades of life, among whom there are no social barriers, and among whom the highest attainment in life is the breeding of prize-winners. The enthusiast will find kindred spirits, and even the luke-warm cannot fail to be affected by the keenness of his fellows. For the charm of fancy poultry breeding is not merely the delight of winning prizes. There are scores of beginners to whom a prize is a remote possibility, but who yet manage to realise many of the pleasures of breeding in watching the growth and development of their stock. Certainly, as a hobby, exhibition poultry breeding offers a thousand charms.

The poultry fancy has been the object of attack at the hands of individuals who imagined themselves to be doing a good turn to the utilitarian side of the poultry industry by deprecating the objects of fancy breeders. They have called the fancier the spoiler of our domestic breeds, they have attributed to him the most unworthy intentions, and for the sins of a few they have condemned the poultry fancy, and all who engage in it, lock, stock and barrel, as worthless and corrupt. Needless to say, such intolerant

4—*Poultry for Prizes.*

abuse does not have the sympathy of intelligent utilitarians, who recognise the valuable services rendered by fancy breeders in producing many new species possessed of splendid utility qualities, and who, moreover, thoroughly understand that fanciers and utilitarians each have their own objects to attain; and when their ways lie apart what is the value of mutual recriminations? To a very large extent fancy and utility go hand in hand at the present day, and many exhibition strains are, to our own personal knowledge, fit to take a place with the best of layers. But, as will be more fully realised in a later chapter, utility qualities must, sooner or later, suffer to some extent. The fancy breeder's first object is exhibition points, and if he can only gain that object by sacrificing qualities of usefulness, then he must accept the situation. It is a perfectly fair and reasonable course, and the utilitarian can only suffer if he is relying upon the fancier's cast-offs. But he, too, has his object to gain, and the advanced utility breeders of the day have profited much by copying to a large extent the fancier's methods in selecting and breeding. In poultry-keeping nowadays specialising is the road to success. The utilitarian has become a specialist just as much as the fancier, and if the latter chooses to put mere form and feather before the more substantial charms of eggs and flesh, that is no reason why he is less deserving of praise when he attains his object.

Chapter II.

The Laws of Breeding.

THE amateur poultry-keeper who sets out to purchase stock without any knowledge of the breed he intends to invest in, or of the value of fancy birds, is naturally liable to fall a victim to his own ignorance just as much as to the wiles of others. Very often people see fowls at a show that take their fancy, and on returning home determine to go in for that breed. Lacking the guidance of an experienced person, they may deem it sufficient to invest a small sum in breeding-stock, and the plunge into fancy poultry keeping is often made without even considering the qualities and peculiarities of the breed. We wish to prevent this mistake. If a breed of poultry takes your fancy, read all you can about it, and study the common laws of breeding. Having done that you will have learned several valuable lessons. You will know that exhibition specimens cannot be produced by the casual throwing together of birds of the same breed, that "strain" is the most important consideration in breeding, and that nearly every variety has its own natural peculiarities, which must be understood and mastered.

In order to realise the meaning of the word "strain" one must understand how breeds of poultry have been produced. A strain is in common parlance a family of the same blood. It is built up and maintained

by careful selection and the survival of the fittest among the same family. In starting a strain, as in commencing to evolve a new breed, experimental crosses between totally unrelated stock are, of course, essential; but, having hit upon a mating that leads in the direction one desires to go, further outcrosses would merely undo one's work, and would only be justified in case one desired to introduce or eradicate a certain point, and then it could only be done carefully and at some risk, since the introduction of foreign blood into an established strain inevitably causes reversion, and a person who had been labouring for ten years to attain a certain degree of perfection by close selection and breeding among a strain might in one season find himself back where he started, by utilising unrelated blood.

Obviously, all this entails close-breeding or in-breeding, and it is just as well to explain thoroughly the necessity of, and the objection to, this practice. It is adopted because it is the sole means to the end desired. There is no alternative. We have already said that the introduction of strange blood causes reversion, so it needs little consideration to realise that without close-breeding one cannot possibly establish any desirable quality. Some writers in the past have deliberately misled their readers upon this subject of close-breeding, and to that may be attributed a very general objection to the practice. There are, however, two forms of close-breeding: one that inevitably leads to degeneracy, and the other by which any natural trait may be developed and established. Degeneracy is, of course, the result of allowing fowls to breed together without any consideration for the fitness of things. Very often it occurs on a farm. Through utter carelessness, too much inter-breeding is allowed, and, consequently, all the faults, weaknesses, and diseases that may be inherent in the flock are established and repro-

The Laws of Breeding.—7

duced in greater degree in generation after generation. This is the in-breeding that all must condemn.

On the other hand, systematic in-breeding can only be harmful when carried to excess, or when such important considerations as health, size, and vigour are sacrificed to fancy points, as has unfortunately too often been the case. We assert that close-breeding can no longer be justified when size and vigour are being lost, and it is then an out-cross becomes essential, or future operations can only lead to total failure. That is why we impress upon breeders the necessity for considering physical fitness as well as fancy points in the selection of breeders. No matter how excellent may be the colour or the lacing or the shape of a bird, one runs a great risk in using it for breeding if it lacks size, vigour, and general health. This is exemplified in the case of many new varieties that are difficult to breed. The fancy points are so elusive that breeders come to consider them before anything. Consequently, year by year the stock become smaller, until by the time the type becomes fairly established it is absolutely necessary to seek new blood to impart vigour to the strain, and more than one beautiful variety has failed to achieve popularity by reason of this fact.

Excessive in-breeding must inevitably result in deterioration in stamina in the course of time, in spite of careful selection. This is the mating of father and daughter, mother and son, year after year. There is less danger in mating brother and sister, because the relationship is hardly so close, but there should be no need even for that more than once now and again. An advanced breeder cares little what his matings are so long as he gets what he requires; but then he knows what he wants, so that he has every excuse for excessive in-breeding if he indulges in it. The beginner, who has to find out how to breed show specimens, may do more harm than good by

pursuing the same methods. If he purchases a good breeding-pen from a reliable breeder he may mate the pullets back to the cock, a cockerel back to the hens, and also run some of the pullets with a cockerel. If one of these matings produces something exceptionally good he would be justified in developing his sub-strain by breeding closely among the birds that have given such good results without introducing blood even of the same strain that might cause deterioration; but if he should want comparatively fresh blood he should get a cockerel from the original breeder which, whilst being only distantly related, is of the same strain. But it is better for anyone who takes up exhibition breeding to realise that close-breeding alone will produce winners, and consequently one must play others at their own game in order to compete with them.

There is another complication, known as "double-mating." There was a time when it was considered sufficient to mate one pen of birds in order to produce show specimens of either sex; but in these days of fierce competition such a course is deemed wholly inadequate. In many varieties the sexes differ greatly in respect to plumage. Take the Dark Brahma, for instance, in which the cock has a black breast, fluff, tail, and foot-feather, and a silver-grey top, whilst the hen has grey ground-colour, pencilled all over with a darker shade. It has long become an accepted fact that better specimens of each sex can be produced by creating separate sub-strains for breeding cockerels and pullets respectively. The females of the cock strain are, of course, useless for show, lacking, in this particular variety, the typical pencilling, and in the same way the cockerels of the pullet strain are equally valueless for exhibition purposes. They must be considered solely as breeders, and in order to produce exhibition cockerels, or exhibition pullets, male and female must be of the same cock-breeding or pullet-breeding

The Laws of Breeding.—9

strain, as the case may be. The mating together of a prize-winning cock and a prize-winning hen would merely produce rubbish, especially in these days when separate cock-breeding and pullet-breeding strains have become so firmly established. But it is not merely in varieties where male and female differ that double mating is practised. In the case of self-coloured varieties of Leghorns and Minorcas the shape and carriage of the comb is the matter that influences selection; in buff-coloured breeds it is the shade of colour; and whilst in some varieties there would appear to be no valid reason for double mating, still many advanced breeders consider it a surer way to success, although infinitely more troublesome. But, having briefly explained the necessity for double mating and what it means, we must defer further explanation until we reach the chapters dealing with different breeds, when the method of breeding each one will be more fully discussed.

There is no fixed rule in breeding exhibition poultry. It is largely a matter requiring close observation. Further, breeding is to some extent a matter of chance, because a mating that may appear to be entirely suitable may be less productive of good than an apparently inferior one. The same rules do not apply to every variety, but in most cases it may be said that the best show bird is not always the best breeder. One gets to know the breeding value of a bird by noting its products, and this brings us to the keeping of pedigrees, for by such alone can one keep a record of the manner in which every bird has been bred. Naturally, the knowledge that can be gained from this record is invaluable in future operations.

In order to record the parentage and pedigree of every chicken bred it is necessary first of all to keep a careful account of the origin of the eggs, and this is more easily accomplished since the trap-nest has been introduced. This

appliance, which will be found fully described in Part II. ("Poultry for Profit"), keeps a hen confined after laying her egg until she is released by the attendant, and, each hen having been previously fitted with a ring or leg-band bearing a number, her number is then marked on the egg. During the period of hatching, in order to make sure which chicken comes from a particular egg, it is advisable to use pedigree trays with compartments in the incubator, all eggs bearing the same number and coming from one hen having a compartment to themselves, thus preventing any possibility of the chickens' getting mixed. When eggs are set under hens efforts should be made to put eggs from the same birds only under one hen, similarly with the object of avoiding mixing. As the chickens are hatched small indiarubber bands should be put upon their legs. These can be bought in different colours from nearly all makers of poultry appliances, and a white ring can be used for chickens from No. 1 hen, red for No. 2, and so on, whilst further variations can be made by putting the rings on different legs. Later, as the chickens grow larger, numbered metal rings should be substituted, careful record being kept of the numbers attached to the chickens from different hens. Thus, at the end of the season, when the birds have developed, one can tell by referring to the pedigree book from which parents the best chickens have been produced, and this information must naturally have a great bearing upon future breeding operations. Considerable trouble is entailed by this system, but it is amply justified by the results.

Chapter III.

Management of Exhibition Stock.

To keep the adult stock healthy and productive, and to produce rapid growth and development in the young, are the objects of the fancier just as much as of the utilitarian. Early hatching demands an early supply of fertile eggs, and these can only be produced from hardy stock. Our experience with exhibition poultry convinces us that much of the supposed delicacy of fancy strains is more imaginary than real. True, there are strains of delicate and unproductive birds, especially among some of the older breeds that have been subjected to excessive close-breeding for many years, but, on the other hand, we have met with some of the most prolific layers and hardiest birds among fancy stock.

In the matter of early hatching one must be guided by the variety one keeps. For instance, a Leghorn matures a month or six weeks quicker than an Orpington, and consequently there is less necessity for having the chickens out so early. The breeds that take longest to mature are those that possess the greatest bulk and bone, or those with an exceptional amount of feather. Orpingtons, Plymouth Rocks, Wyandottes, Indian Game, Langshans, &c., come under the former category, and Brahmas and Cochins under the latter. The lighter class, that mature more quickly, include Leghorns, Minorcas, Anconas, Cam-

pinés, La Bresse, &c. ; but it should be remembered that it usually takes longer to rear a bird to show condition than to bring it into productiveness.

Exhibition breeders invariably endeavour to have their first chickens out on New Year's Day. Birds that are hatched before the New Year are not legitimately entitled to compete in cockerel and pullet classes, so that in order to act strictly within the letter of the law, one should not set eggs before December 11th. The reason for such early hatching is, of course, the common desire to compete in chicken classes at the early summer shows. These classes commence during the first or second weeks in June, and all through the summer they are provided at different agricultural and other shows. Of course, the career of an early show bird is not lasting. Frequently it falls into moult in July, August, or September, and may never be fit for exhibition again ; but it has served its purpose, and even if it has no value as a breeder its existence is justified in the owner's eyes if it has won a few prizes. For the autumn and winter shows and for breeding purposes the bulk of the chickens are hatched during February, March, and April, according to the class to which they belong. For the heavy breeds February and March are the best months, and for the lighter ones March and April. Late hatching is to be deprecated. For one thing, the later chickens seldom attain the same size as the earlier ones, and, what is equally important, they are too late to compete at many of the important shows, and they are not sufficiently developed to lay good fertile eggs and to throw vigorous chickens until late in the following season. Breeding from late-hatched cockerels and pullets is the surest way of losing size in one's stock. To ensure success in early breeding operations one must therefore choose stock birds that are well developed and in good hard condition. We consider the strongest chickens are produced

Management of Exhibition Stock.—13

from two-year-old hens mated with a well-grown February- or March-hatched cockerel, but many early pullets do equally as well. Old cocks are not always reliable early in the season, and this is more especially the case with the heavy varieties.

The number of females to run with one male must depend upon the class to which the birds belong and also upon the accommodation, as a cockerel could safely be run with more hens on an open range than in confinement. For the very heavy breeds it is sufficient to mate four females with a vigorous male early in the season, increasing to six as the weather becomes milder, whilst for the light breeds, such as the Leghorn, from six to eight hens may be run with a cockerel at the commencement, and later the number may be increased to a dozen. Some cockerels are so vigorous that even this number may be exceeded, but one must be guided entirely by the habits of the birds at all times, and when it is seen that hens are becoming bare upon the cushion it is a sure sign that a few more females may safely be introduced in that family.

The exhibition of breeding-stock is a practice that must be condemned, frequently resulting in total failure. Certainly, a bird may be exhibited a few times and still give satisfaction as a breeder, but as close confinement is necessary in the case of show specimens it has a very bad effect upon a bird's vigour. The result is perhaps the more disastrous when it is the male bird that has been kept up for show purposes, and in any case the breeding-stock should not be exhibited during the time when fertile eggs are required, as so often happens. For early breeding we should mate our pens during the first week in November, and when once put together they should not be interfered with. Acting on this plan, fertile eggs may reasonably be depended upon, and every fancier must realise that the

breeding season is of far more importance than the winning of a few prizes.

In the matter of accommodation for exhibition breeding-stock it may be said that special shelter is only necessary when birds, after leaving the breeding-pens, are required for show purposes at summer exhibitions. The beginner who hopes to win a few prizes when the breeding season is over will find his birds fail sadly in show condition unless he takes especial care of them, for the sun and rain spoil the colour of the plumage, and the attentions of the male often result in the disfigurement of the hens. Consequently, it becomes necessary to provide shelter, in the form of canvas screens, whilst to prevent damage to the hens the cock should only be allowed to run with them for an hour or two night and morning. Beyond that, the particulars regarding housing which will be found in Part II. (*"Poultry for Profit"*) apply equally to fancy and utilitarian poultry. A good open range is a valuable factor in the production of hardy chickens, but in the case of somewhat delicate breeds judgment must be used to provide them with shelter in winter if early eggs are required.

In the matter of feeding, to a very great extent the same conditions apply both to fancy and utilitarian poultry. The fancier requires winter eggs just the same as the utility breeder, and he must produce them by the same methods, whilst the same may be said of size and quick growth and development. So that, in order to avoid repetition, we will deal broadly with the question of feeding in Part II. (*"Poultry for Profit"*). A matter that more particularly interests the fancy breeder, however, is the use of special foods for some especial purposes. The production of rich and abundant feather, for instance, calls for food containing a large percentage of oil or fat. Hemp, linseed, and sunflower seed are of particular value in such cases, and a moderate proportion, say one-fourth

Management of Exhibition Stock.—15

part, given daily with other grains, will make a great difference when young birds are putting up their last or full plumage, when old birds are coming through the moult, or when specimens of any age are being got into condition. In growing the combs of large-combed varieties animal food is widely recommended, but this is a process that may result in harm rather than good, for the operation of forcing by means of heavy feeding on meat usually produces those great beefy combs that are neither desirable nor lasting; and though a certain amount of animal food is required during the growth and development of a comb, it is better to leave something to nature and to confinement in a warm and darkened room, treatment which causes a comb to spring without actual forcing.

The forcing of breeding-stock by means of poultry powders has a weakening effect upon the constitutions of the birds, and may be condemned as one of the causes of degeneracy. The breeder must aim to have his stock in the best natural condition, hardy and vigorous, not weakened by overshadowing, overfeeding, or overforcing. Strong and vigorous chickens come only from well-developed and well-conditioned stock, and the worst effects of in-breeding may be warded off by ensuring these qualities in the breeders.



Chapter IV.

Preparing for Exhibition.

ONE of the first lessons that an amateur exhibitor learns is that condition counts for much in the showing of fancy poultry. The sooner one learns this lesson the better, for at the present time the chances of hundreds of good birds are entirely spoilt by the careless manner in which they are shown. We are constantly seeing birds put into the show-pen with all the accumulated dirt they have brought with them from their runs, with legs caked with mud, with combs rough and blistered, and with plumage torn or ruffled, and though these birds may possess many of the standard requirements, they stand no chance whatever against the splendidly-prepared specimens of more experienced exhibitors. Preparation for exhibition is indeed an art, which in the case of many breeds carries one a long way towards success; but it is an art that may be understood and studied by everyone, though all may not achieve the same success.

In the first place, a bird must be clean. White and light-coloured fowls are, of course, difficult to keep clean even in sheltered runs, and consequently washing is an absolute necessity. But it is no use washing a bird when the sun and rain have already stained the plumage (if it is a white fowl), or have bleached it (if it is buff or any light colour). Therefore, as soon as a young bird, or an old

Preparing for Exhibition.—17

one coming through moult, is seen to be developing in a promising manner, it should be sheltered from the weather. A range of shedding is useful for this purpose, or two or three birds may be put into one of those small contrivances described in Part II. ("Poultry for Profit") as a cockerel house, with a sheltered run and a roosting compartment. Here they may remain until they are fully developed and fit to be trained for the show-pen, though they may be let out for exercise in the evenings or on fine but dull days when there is no sun to spoil them.

Then comes the process of washing. For this you need a tin bath or wooden tub, or, better still, two baths or tubs. Into one put hot water in which you can comfortably bear your arm, to the depth of eight or nine inches. The bird to be washed should be taken by the legs and dipped into the water so that only its head remains out. Work your fingers among the feathers and spread out the wings so that the water saturates to the skin. Then let the bird stand up in the bath, and start to lather the feathers, using a good white soap for the purpose. It is better to start with the neck-hackle, working down the back, and it is necessary to take a bunch of feathers at a time, rub the soap well in among them, so that it penetrates to the skin, and scrub them between the hands. When you have worked down the back and the tail, start on the wings, spread them out, and see that every feather is well soaped and scrubbed. Afterwards, take the bird from the bath, and if you cannot hold it and wash it as well, get someone else to hold it whilst you treat the breast, sides, and fluff in the same way. When the bird has been thoroughly soaped and scrubbed all over (care being taken, of course, not to break any of the quill feathers) it should again be put into the water, which will have cooled considerably, in order to get the soap out of the feathers. Work your fingers well among the feathers so

that the water properly penetrates, and when the soap seems to be all out empty the bath, have it filled again with tepid water and put the bird into it, when you will no doubt find there is much more soap to be got out by working among the feathers. It is most important to remove all the soap, or the plumage will not set properly in drying—all your work will be in vain. At last, when there is no more soap to be got out, have the other bath or tub filled with cold water with just a little blue well stirred up in it in order to heighten the purity of the colour, and dip the bird into this once or twice to get it thoroughly wet without giving it too great a shock.

The drying process then begins, and the bird should be stood upon a table so that as much water as possible can be squeezed from the feathers. If the water is still soapy the work has not been done properly, and another drenching is necessary. A dry cloth or towel may then be used to rub among the feathers, in order partially to dry them, and afterwards the bird should be put into an unlined hamper with some clean straw in the bottom, and should be placed in front of a good drying fire, but not too near it. When fairly dry the bird may be put into an exhibition pen in the same room to complete the process naturally. The floor of the pen must, of course, be littered with clean straw or chaff. In case the bird faints during the washing process, as sometimes happens when it is in the warm water, it may easily be revived if a little cold water is thrown over it, and no serious ill-effects need be feared from the process. Washing should be done a couple of days before a show, so that the feathers may properly dry and set before the bird is despatched; whether it will require washing again for the next show will depend entirely upon its condition. Washing is, no doubt, a deal of trouble, but judges reward a well-washed bird and have little liking for a dirty one.

Preparing for Exhibition.—19

Black and dark-coloured birds should not be washed, but the gloss of the plumage may be improved by wiping it over with a damp sponge. This is often sufficient in the case of parti-coloured birds, but one must, of course, be governed by the state they are in.

Apart from the actual washing of the plumage there arises in all breeds the necessity for cleaning the legs, and this is of more importance in the case of yellow or white-legged varieties, because dirt shows up much more on them. The bird should be held by one person whilst another scrubs the legs, and in order to avoid ruffling the plumage a silk handkerchief should be bound round the bird tightly enough to prevent it from getting its wings out. Have a basin ready with some hot water, a nail-brush and soap, and after soaking the legs in the water give them a good scrubbing until all dirt on the surface is removed, taking care to avoid soaping the feathers. But there will still remain some dirt concealed beneath the scales, which looks very bad, and to remove this it is necessary to get a small piece of hard wood and sharpen it to a flat point so that it can be passed beneath the scales to scrape out the dirt without causing bleeding. When this is finished, give the legs another scrubbing, then dry thoroughly, and rub a little sweet oil over them, finally polishing with a silk handkerchief or a clean cloth.

The preparation of the comb and lobes must commence at an earlier date, for one cannot pick up a bird from the open run and improve its comb and lobes in a few hours sufficiently to send it away to a show at once. Confinement in a fairly warm and partially-darkened room for a week or two will soften the texture of combs and lobes that have been roughened by exposure to the weather. As we have already stated, when it is necessary to cause a comb to spring or grow to greater size, the confinement in a darkened room, together with a supply of

meat, will bring this about. The colour of the comb may also be improved by gently rubbing it with the fingers dipped in sweet oil, and this should be done immediately before the bird is sent to a show. In the case of breeds that have large single combs, some trouble is often experienced through the comb of the cock having a tendency to fall over to one side. A wire contrivance known as a comb-erector (Fig. 1) may be used in such cases, being fitted upon the bird's head whilst it is in the exhibition training-pen, and being removed before it is sent to a show. A is the front, B fits round the comb at the back, and C supports the comb.

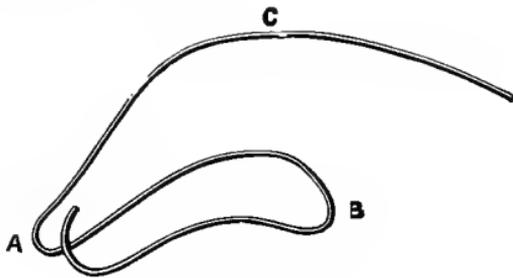


Fig. 1. Comb-Erector.

In the case of white-lobed breeds the lobes require considerable attention. They become roughened and often blistered when the bird is out of doors, whereas in an exhibition specimen they should be of soft texture, like a kid glove, and of milky whiteness. In order to improve them the bird must, of course, be kept in confinement for a week or two, and every day the lobes should be carefully wiped over with a soft piece of Turkey sponge, dipped in tepid milk and water. They should then be thoroughly dried with a piece of soft woollen material, and afterwards a little violet powder should be dusted over them, but this powder should not be left on when they are sent to the show.

Preparing for Exhibition.—21

All this is legitimate preparation, and there is a wide difference between that and "faking," for which the penalties are very severe. No colouring matter whatever may be put on any part of the bird, no feathers may be plucked or inserted, no trimming or operation may be performed upon the comb (except in the case of Game cocks, which are dubbed), lobes, or any other part, and the bird should be exhibited as it is bred. These are the hard and fast rules, and we advise exhibitors to observe them. We do not deny that a good deal of faking is carried on with very few exposures, but we are sure nothing can be gained by explaining methods that, being illegitimate, may at any time lead the perpetrator into serious trouble.

No bird should be sent to a show until it has been trained, as this makes a vast difference to its chances, for a bird that is unused to the show-pen is afraid of the judge when he comes to examine it, and flutters about in its pen and refuses to show itself off. Many judges will take no further notice of such wild specimens. The confinement in the exhibition pen which we have already recommended as being desirable naturally tames the wildest bird, and if the attendant will occasionally pass a stick through the bars of the pen and turn the bird about as the judge does, and encourage it to take dainty tit-bits from the hand, it will very soon stand and walk naturally in its pen and show itself off to the best advantage.

The amateur exhibitor must not aim at too high game. It is well to remember that exhibiting is a somewhat costly business, for at a show where the first prize is 10s. or 12s. the entry fee is usually 2s., and in addition there are the railway charges each way, amounting perhaps to 2s. or more, so that unless one can win a few prizes one soon finds a heavy debit account mounting up. At the larger shows the entry fees range up to 8s., and though many amateurs consider that a "highly commended" card at one of these

22—Poultry for Prizes.

classic shows amply repays the heavy outlay, it is obviously costly work unless one has some really good specimens to exhibit, in which case the mere showing of such birds is an advertisement of some value, for if one wants to sell eggs and breeding-stock at a remunerative price one must become known as a successful exhibitor as well as a breeder. Therefore, it is desirable that the beginner who finds it necessary to study economy should patronise those smaller shows where his birds will compete with others of their own class.

Every exhibitor in time gets to know the particular fancies of the different judges. One man has a strong liking for one point, and another for something else, so that one obviously has a better chance by showing a bird under a judge who will be likely to appreciate its characteristic qualities.

In the journals devoted to poultry-keeping many of the shows are advertised, and in some cases details are given showing the number of classes given for each variety, whilst a long list of forthcoming shows, with the names and addresses of secretaries, is published in every issue of *The Bazaar*. Having procured a schedule of the show, the would-be exhibitor makes his entry, enclosing the fee, and receives in return a label denoting the class and pen-number of the exhibit. This is attached to the hamper, the exhibitor's name and address having been written on the reverse side for the return journey, and the hamper is then despatched by passenger train, carriage paid, to arrive at the show in time to conform with the regulations printed in the schedule.

Special hampers are made for the purpose, some single and others with two, three, or four compartments, the latter being more economical for those who send a number of birds to a show. The single hampers are usually made of open wickerwork, and are lined with strong

Preparing for Exhibition.—23

canvas, but the larger ones are of close work, and are very strong and durable. Lined single baskets may be bought for 2s. each, and the price for a four-compart-

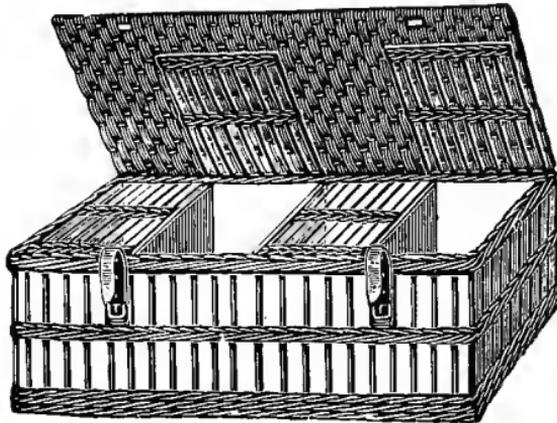


Fig. 2. Four-compartment Poultry Hamper.

ment hamper ranges from about 17s. 6d. upwards. Two useful types of basket made by John Plater and Sons are shown in Figs. 2 and 3.

A matter of great importance is the management of a bird when it comes back from a show. Being usually very hungry and thirsty, it will often gorge itself if allowed, and this may cause the crop to swell and produce that distressing complaint known as swelled crop. Give the bird first of all a little soft food and a very little water. Then after a while let it have a moderately small feed of corn and a little more water; but never allow it an unlimited supply of either. If the bird is going away to another show in a few days, it should not be let out

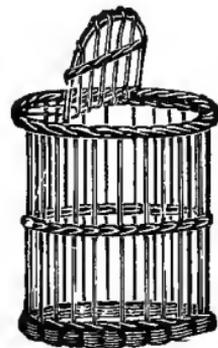


Fig. 3. Upright Show Basket.

24—*Poultry for Prizes.*

in the open, but as constant confinement in a small exhibition pen precludes exercise of any kind, the best plan is to put it out into a covered run or a cockerel-house. If it is not going to any more shows the bird may be let out into the breeding-pen or into any open run, but not at once. It must be remembered that it has been kept in warm rooms for some time, and if let out into the open during wintry weather would probably contract a severe cold. Therefore let it run in covered scratching-sheds for a few days until it gradually becomes hardened.

Avoid over-showing, for the enforced confinement weakens the constitutions of stock birds. The amateur who has his way to make in the poultry fancy will undoubtedly find it pay better to give more attention to breeding matters than to showing, at any rate for the first year or two.



Chapter V.

The Points of a Fowl.

IN the following chapters many terms are used that may be strange to beginners, so that a perusal of the list appended, and a study of the accompanying diagram, will be of great assistance in reading the descriptions.

Back and Shoulders.—The top part of the body, the back extending to the saddle or cushion.

Barring.—Broad marking across the feathers, as in Barred Plymouth Rocks.

Bean.—The bean-shaped tip of black on a duck's bill, as in Rouens.

Beard.—A bunch of feathers under the throat.

Bib.—A small tuft of feathers growing at the throat, forming a bib-like appendage, as in Houdans.

Bill.—The beak of a duck.

Breast.—The fore part of the bird, extending from the throat downwards to the point of the breast-bone.

Breed.—A distinct class or race of fowls, often embracing many varieties.

Broody.—A hen possessed of the brooding instinct, indicated by her sitting closely upon the nest, ruffling her feathers, and clucking.

Cape.—A term seldom used, to indicate the feathers under the base of the back hackles, between the shoulders.

Carriage.—Bearing, attitude, and style.

Carunculated.—Plenty of small protuberances on a rose comb.

Chick.—This word and chicken are used indiscriminately, the former generally denoting a very young bird, whilst a fowl may be called a chicken until it is twelve months old.

Cock.—A male hatched before January 1st of the current year.*

Cockerel.—A male hatched on or after January 1st of the current year.*

Comb.—The red protuberance surmounting the head.

Comb-leader.—The pointed end or spike of a rose comb.

Condition.—State of health, indicated by redness of face and brightness of plumage.

Coverts.—See Tail-coverts and Wing-coverts.

Crest, or Topknot.—A tuft of feathers on the head, varying in formation and size.

Crop.—The receptacle in which food is stored before digestion.

Cushion.—The posterior part of the back, generally applied to hens, but more properly used in the case of breeds that have a pronounced rising cushion, as in Cochins or Orpingtons.

Deaf-ears.—Another name for ear-lobes.

Diamond.—The wing-bay; a term sometimes used by Game fanciers.

Double Comb.—A term sometimes used to denote a rose comb.

Double-laced Feather.—Feather having an edging of ground-colour outside the true lacing, such as an edging of white outside black lacing in Silver Wyandottes.

* These definitions apply to exhibition specimens.

The Points of a Fowl.—27

Dubbed.—Comb, wattles, lobes, &c., removed, leaving the head clean and smooth, as in Game cocks.

Ear-lobes.—Folds of skin hanging from the ears, white in some breeds, red in others.

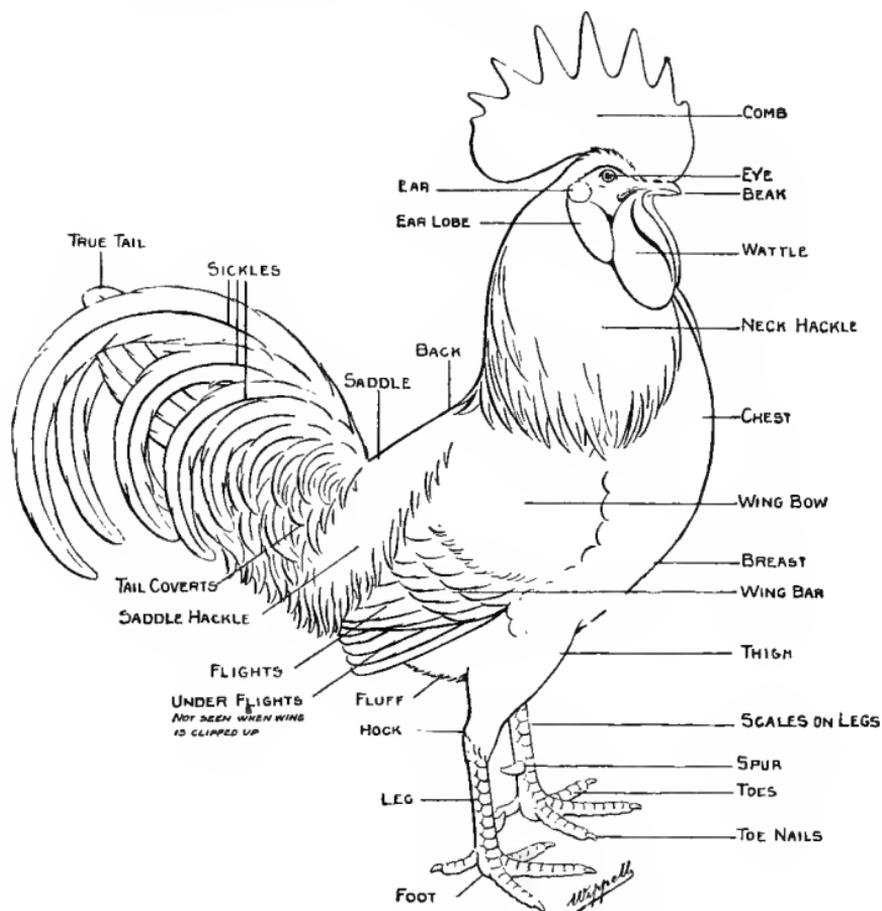


Fig. 4. Diagram showing the chief Points of a Fowl.

Face.—The bare skin round the eye.

Flights, or Primaries.—The long flight-feathers of the wing that are tucked out of sight when the wing is closed.

Fluff.—The soft fluffy feathers about the thighs, very much pronounced in Cochins.

Folded Comb.—A single comb falling over, as in Minorca hens.

Foot-feather.—Stiff feathers on the feet, as in Brahmas and Cochins.

Furnished.—When a bird is in full feather, with comb and other features properly developed, he may be said to be “well furnished.”

Gills.—Wattles; this term is sometimes used to indicate the throat.

Hackles.—The narrow feathers growing on the neck. Similar feathers on the saddle of the cock are called saddle-hackles.

Hen.—A female hatched before January 1st of the current year.*

Hen-feathered, or Henny.—A male bird that resembles a hen in the absence of hackles and sickle-feathers, and in plumage generally, as in Sebright Bantams.

Hock.—The knee or elbow joint of the leg.

In-kneed.—The hocks standing near together, instead of well apart.

Keel.—The ridge formed by the breast-bone proper, as seen in Aylesbury ducks.

Lacing.—A sharply-defined edging surrounding the feather, such as black edging round a white feather, as in Silver Wyandottes.

Leader.—The spike at the end of a rose comb, either standing straight out, as in Hamburgs, or following the line of the head and neck, as in Wyandottes.

Leg.—This term is used to denote only the scaly part, or shank, in a live fowl, whereas in a table fowl it refers to all the leg joints.

* This definition applies to exhibition specimens.

The Points of a Fowl.—29

Leg-feather.—Feathers on the legs or shanks, but more often used to denote the fluff, as on Cochins.

Mealy Feather.—A term generally used in the case of buff fowls, denoting a feather in which minute spots of white are visible, giving an uneven appearance.

Mossy Feather.—Feather in which the marking is indistinct.

Mottling.—Smaller spots of colour at the end of feathers, evenly distributed, as in Anconas.

Muffling, or Whiskers.—A bunch of feathers on each side of the face.

Pea Comb.—A double comb, in the form of three peas, as in Brahmas.

Pencilling.—Fine clear marking, either across the feather, as in Hamburgs, or round the feather, as in Partridge Wyandottes.

Poult.—A young turkey.

Primaries.—See Flights.

Pullet.—A female hatched after January 1st of the current year.*

Rooster.—A cock.

Rose Comb.—The broad comb, flat on the head, as in Wyandottes and Hamburgs.

Rump.—May describe either the cushion or the caudal appendage, commonly known as the “parson’s nose.”

Saddle.—The posterior part of the back, generally applied to cocks.

Sappy Feather.—A white feather with a creamy or yellow tinge, often caused by the sap in the young feather.

Secondaries.—The long wing-feathers that show when the wing is closed.

Self-colour.—One whole colour throughout.

* This definition applies to exhibition specimens.

Shaft.—The quill or stem of a feather.

Shafty Feather.—Feather in which the quill is lighter in colour than the web.

Shanks.—The joint of the leg below the hock, covered with scales.

Shape.—Form and outline.

Sheen.—The bright shiny surface of the feathers, producing a beetle-green appearance in black fowls.

Shoulders.—See Back and Shoulders.

Sickles.—The long curved feathers of a cock's tail.

Single Comb.—The narrow comb with serrations or spikes, as in Minorcas.

Spangling.—A spot of colour at the end of each feather, as in Spangled Hamburgs, or of two colours, as in Spangled Orpingtons.

Spur.—The sharp, horny substance on a cock's heel.

Squirrel-tail.—Tail carried very high, above the perpendicular, and over the back.

Stag.—A term sometimes used to indicate a young Game cock.

Strain.—A race of fowls that have been bred carefully in order to develop and fix an individual character of its own that can be more or less relied upon.

Striping.—Distinct striping down the feather, usually seen in hackles.

Tail.—The long stiff feathers of the tail; called the true tail in the cock.

Tail-coverts.—The glossy curved feathers at the root of a cock's tail. Many are the same colour as the tail, and are sometimes called short sickles.

Thighs.—The joint of the leg above the shanks, covered with feathers.

Top-colour.—Colour on back and shoulders; usually refers to a cock.

Topknot.—See Crest.

The Points of a Fowl.—31

Tri-coloured.—A term applied to birds of a self-colour, and particularly buffs, in which the hackles and top, wing-bows, and body colour are of three distinct shades.

Trio.—A cock or cockerel, with two hens or pullets.

Under-colour.—The colour of the feathers beneath the surface when the feathers are lifted; generally denoting the soft down at the root of the feather.

Underparts.—The parts below the breast, between the legs, and extending back to the vent.

Variety.—A definite division of a breed, sometimes called a sub-variety.

Vulture Hocks.—Long stiff feathers at the hock joints.

Wattles.—Hanging folds of skin on each side of the base of the beak, larger in males.

Web.—Denotes either the flat or plumed portion of the feather, or the flat skin between the toes.

Well-worked Comb.—Plenty of carunculations or protuberances on a rose comb.

Whiskers.—See Muffling.

Willow Legs.—Legs of willow colour, as in Modern Game varieties.

Wing-bars.—Two lines of short stiff feathers across the wing, generally differing in colour from the rest of the wing, sometimes called wing-coverts, covering the roots of the longer wing-feathers.

Wing-bay.—The triangular part of a folded wing between the wing-bar and the point of the wing.

Wing-bows.—The shoulder part of the wing, above the wing-bars.

Wing-butts.—The upper parts of the wing, sometimes called shoulder-butts.

Wing-coverts.—Broad feather forming the bar, and covering the roots of the secondary quills.

Wry-tail.—Tail carried to one side.

Chapter VI.

Brahmas and Cochins.

THESE two breeds, both of Asiatic origin, may be said to have been the foundation of the modern poultry fancy in more ways than one. It is nearly sixty years since they were introduced, the Brahmas making their appearance in America about the same time as the Cochins came upon the scene in England, and at that time poultry-keeping was largely confined to mongrels. The new breeds, as they were called, soon became the rage. Queen Victoria gave them her personal patronage, they were illustrated in the newspapers, and from all this there sprang the present-day popularity of prize poultry and shows. Now adays these breeds attract comparatively few, but they have served another purpose in taking a prominent part in the formation of several of our most popular modern composite varieties.

Brahmas.

The Brahma of the present day is very different from the birds that were sent to England from America in 1853, the greatest dissimilarity being in the amount of leg-feather, which has so greatly increased that the modern Brahma is much more heavily feathered than the Cochin was on its first introduction. To describe briefly the general characteristics of the Brahma, we may commence



Light Brahma Hen.
Dark Brahma Cock.

Buff Cochin Hen.
Dark Brahma Hen.

Partridge Cochin Hen.
Partridge Cochin Cock.

BRAHMAS AND COCHINS.

Brahmas.—35

with the comb, which should be of triple formation, *i.e.*, composed of three distinct ridges, the comb following the line of the head, which should be well rounded, with the eye fairly prominent. The body is deep and squarely built, and broad and compact, with upright and bold carriage, the back being short and flat, with a cushion gently rising from about half-way between the base of the neck and the tail, which latter should be of medium length, the cock having rather short but well-curved sickles, and the hen having her quill feathers well spread out. The legs should be set well apart and should be very strong and of medium length. The feathering is of great importance. The lower feathers of the breast should nearly cover the thigh, behind which there should be abundant soft fluff, though not so prominent as on the Cochin. The leg all the way down should be well covered with feathers, and if possible without the heavy quill feathers on the hocks—the condition known as vulture hocks—these without plenty of soft feathers to cover them being objectionable. The feather extends down to the extremity of the middle and outer toes. The plumage altogether, though plentiful, is harder and closer than that of the Cochin. The shanks are yellow, face and lobes bright red, eye orange-red, and the standard weights are 11lb. for a cock, 9lb. for a cockerel, 9lb. for a hen, and 7lb. for a pullet.

There are two varieties of the Brahma, Dark and Light. The *Dark Brahma* is of very striking appearance, the male differing considerably from the female. The cock should have a pure silvery-white head and neck-hackle, each feather having a broad and clear stripe of brilliant black down the centre, without any white shaft if possible, the saddle-hackle being precisely the same, with the striping as distinct as possible. The back, shoulders, wing-bow, and wing-bay are all silvery-white, whilst the

breast, under-parts of body, thigh, fluff, wing-bars, and tail should be brilliant black. According to the standard, white mottling or lacing is permissible on breast and fluff, but in the opinion of most breeders this is a fault that should be bred out, and pure brilliant black should be looked for in an exhibition cockerel, for the simple reason that if white-laced birds were tolerated in the show-pen, pullet-breeders, which are marked in this way, would be of as much merit as genuine cock-bred birds. A little white in the foot-feather is not so objectionable.

The hen has a silvery-white head and neck-hackle striped with black, and a black tail, but the remainder of the plumage is pencilled with black or very dark grey on a ground of clear grey, the pencilling being clearly defined and following the outline of the feather. The bands of pencilling should be as numerous as possible, and on a finely-pencilled feather there are usually three distinct bands of black. The pencilling should extend all over the body-fluff and leg-feather, and the more distinct the better, so long as the ground-colour is of a clear grey shade, though in the case of old hens a brownish tinge may be discernible.

The sexual difference being so marked, double mating is necessary in breeding exhibition birds. In breeding cocks the male bird should be as typical as possible, with sound black breast and fluff and rich silvery top-colour, but his mates should be actual cock-bred birds and not show specimens. They should have boldly-striped hackles, but they will have no pencilling to speak of, and the general body-colour will be a dull grey, though we should prefer birds that showed some black shaft in the feathers. For breeding pullets the male to mate with exhibition females should show white lacing or edging round the black feathers on breast, fluff, and legs, as evenly as possible, whilst if he shows some pencilling in hackle and

saddle so much the better. It is, however, absolutely essential that he be actually of pullet blood. The general characteristics of the breed must be observed, and birds should be selected also for shape and carriage, comb, and leg-feathering, which should be ample, without any excess of hock-feather. Avoid cocks with patches of red or brown, or with white in tail, and in order to maintain size use females that are well developed.

The *Light Brahma*, whilst possessing the general characteristics of the breed, is a study in pure black and white, and male and female are very much alike. The neck-hackle of the cock is silvery-white, with a clear broad stripe of black in each feather. The saddle-hackle may have a little striping, and in the case of heavily-striped neck-hackles this is difficult to avoid; but a white saddle is preferable. The top and shoulders are white, and the breast and under-parts of the body should be pure white, though a little grey under-colour is no disqualification so long as it is not visible when the plumage is unruffled. The foot-feather may be either pure white or, as is more usual, white with some black mottling, and breeders are allowed a similar alternative as regards the tail, which may either be solid black or black edged with white, but the small tail-coverts should show some striping. In the wing, the primaries should be black or edged with white, and the secondaries white on outer web and black on a part of the inner web, the wing showing white when closed. In the hen there are only the usual sexual differences, the hackle being boldly striped with black, the tail black or laced with white, and the remainder of the body pure white, grey under-colour being permissible in the fluff, as well as black in the foot-feather, and the wings as in the cock.

In breeding the *Light Brahma* there is no necessity to mate different pens to produce each sex, thanks to the

similarity in colour and marking between male and female. It is of great importance that head-points, shape, size, and foot-feather should be as perfect as possible, and in regard to colour care must be taken to avoid a yellow tinge. One of the greatest difficulties lies in getting the dense black striping of the hackle without patches of black among the plumage elsewhere, and it will be found that if two birds with very dense hackles and dark under-colour are mated together the progeny will usually show more black than is desirable, whilst if one breeds from birds that all have light under-colour there will be difficulty in getting the striping dense enough. One type can best be used to counteract the other, and a bird with ideal striping and good in other points need not be rejected even if it shows a good deal of black about the body, so long as it is mated with a bird with light under-colour.

At the time Brahmas first came into notice they were rightly considered excellent winter layers, but being kept nowadays almost entirely for show purposes their useful qualities have been allowed to lapse, although it is significant that the breed has been utilised as the foundation of several of our most valuable composite varieties.

Cochins.

Cochins were first exhibited at Birmingham Show in 1850, and they shared with Brahmas in the great boom in poultry-keeping. The first importation of which there is any reliable account came from Shanghai in 1847, and naturally since that time the breed has undergone considerable change, but whether for better or worse depends upon the way one looks at it, for though our modern Cochins are marvels of fancy-breeding, their utility qualities do not enjoy the repute they did in the early days. There are four recognised show varieties: Buff, Partridge, White, and Black. The two former were bred

from the original importations, of which we gather that some of the birds were light and others dark in colour. From the lighter birds a buff or lemon-coloured variety was produced, whilst the Partridges, with their elaborate markings, have been evolved from the dark birds. The Blacks appear to have cropped up from among the aforementioned dark-coloured birds, and where there is black it is easy to understand the existence also of the white, this colour being a natural sport.

The general characteristics of the Cochin differ considerably from those of the Brahma. In the first place the head is small and neat, and the comb is single, straight and upright, and evenly serrated. The general shape is broad, deep, massive, and rounded in appearance, the back being short and broad, with an abundant cushion, whilst the fluff should be so profuse as practically to hide the thighs. The plumage is all very soft and fluffy, and the carriage is bold, with the head carried rather forward, and the fore-part of the body rather low, giving an appearance of great bulk, an adult cock weighing about 12lb., a cockerel about 10lb., a hen about 10lb., and a pullet about 8lb. The legs are bright yellow, the feathering being very prolific.

The *Buff Cochin* is perhaps the most popular variety. Its plumage throughout should be of an even shade of buff, the exact shade being of minor importance, so long as it does not run too dark nor too light. There should be no black or white in tail or wings, and the under-colour should be as sound buff as that on top. In breeding Buff Cochins it is important to remember that the tendency is for the progeny to come lighter than the parents, and consequently in mating together birds of typical exhibition colour there would be considerable risk of producing comparatively poor-coloured chickens. White is the colour that must especially be guarded against. Many birds are

seen with very light or white under-colour, white shafts to the feathers, white in tail or wings, and mealiness—that is, minute specks of white in the buff. Such birds are not reliable breeders, and as they throw a greater amount of white in the progeny they should be avoided. Black is a fault in a show-bird, but in a breeder one need not mind a little black in tail, provided there is not too much of it, for in dark-coloured buff birds, such as make the most reliable breeders, it is very difficult to avoid the black. Select birds with sound buff plumage to the skin, and mate a dark-coloured cockerel, but not a red-backed one, with good show hens, and a show cock with darker-coloured females.

The *Partridge Coch*in has practically the same colour-groupings and markings as the Dark Brahma, substituting orange, red, and brown for silvery-white and grey. The cock has an orange or golden-red hackle, commencing golden-red at the base and shading into orange about half-way down the feather, each feather having a glossy black stripe down the centre. The saddle-hackle should match this, and the back, shoulders and wing-bows should be rich dark red, the breast, fluff, under-parts, tail, and wing-butts being rich metallic black, and the wing-bay brown. The hen has a golden-yellow hackle, each feather being striped with glossy black, although a pencilled hackle is frequently seen. The remainder of the plumage is light brown, with fine but distinct pencilling following the outline of the feather. The legs are usually dusky yellow.

This is one of the varieties in which double mating is necessary, and the case is very similar to that of the Dark Brahma. A cockerel for mating with exhibition pullets must be of a genuine pullet-breeding strain, and he should have brown edging or lacing on the black feathers of the breast, fluff, and foot-feather, whilst we should prefer to

Cochins—41

see pencilling in the neck- and saddle-hackle instead of the clear black stripe. His colour need not be quite so bright as that of an exhibition bird, but the most important point is that he *must* be bred from actual pullet-bred stock, and if possible we should always choose the son of a hen that breeds the best pullets. On the other hand, females for mating with an exhibition cock to produce good cockerels must have plenty of size, and good bold striping in the hackle without any shaftiness. The colour should not be too red, and pencilling is quite immaterial; in fact, many of the best cock-breeding hens have no pencilling at all. A sound black tail, some black shaft in the breast and foot-feathers, and good-coloured legs are all desirable, but the hens must, of course, be actually cock-breeders, and not merely mismarked pullet-breeders.

White Cochins must be pure white in colour, without a trace of black or any yellow tinge, and in breeding it is, of course, necessary to select birds that are as sound in colour as possible. A bird that is really white to the skin all over is invaluable as a breeder, provided other characteristics are present.

Black Cochins have plumage of a glossy green-black shade, and breeding-stock should possess this sheen in as great a degree as possible, all birds showing bronze colour being avoided.

In breeding all varieties of Cochins it is most important that the general characteristics of the breed should be observed. It is necessary to have neat, upright combs, with even serrations, plenty of foot-feather, and an abundance of fluff, for if breeding birds are lacking in this they will never produce chickens to catch the eye of a Cochin judge. Always select hens of good size.

Chapter VII.

Dorkings.

THE Dorking is the oldest English race of poultry, its distinguishing characteristics having been handed down from the time of the Romans. Four varieties are recognised for exhibition purposes : the Dark or Coloured, the Silver-Grey, the White, and the Cuckoo. There is an old variety known as the Red, for which no standard has been drawn up, and which is nowadays seldom kept, and then for table purposes only, although birds of the original strains are of a very high standard of usefulness.

All Dorkings should be massive in appearance, the body being bulky, deep and square, and the carriage of the cock noble and stately, with the breast long, deep, and broad, and the back very wide ; the thighs short and stout ; the legs short, pure white, clean, and stout, with the spur inside, the feet having five toes, well separated and developed ; the tail well expanded, erect, large, flowing, and the feathers broad ; the wings large and well clipped up ; the head rather broad in skull, but free from coarseness, the comb being either an evenly-serrated single, which stands upright in the cock and falls over to one side in the hen, or a straight, well-spiked rose, even and square in front. Darks may have either a single or a rose comb, Silver-Greys only single, and Whites and Cuckoos rose. The beak should be strong and rather

Dorkings.—43

short; the ear-lobes long, pendent, and bright red, the wattles very long, broad, and rounded. The weight varies somewhat in the different varieties, but the standard puts the weight of a cockerel at from 9lb. to 10lb., of a cock at from 12lb. to 14lb., of a pullet at from 7lb. to 8lb., and of a hen at from 9lb. to 10lb. Although the birds

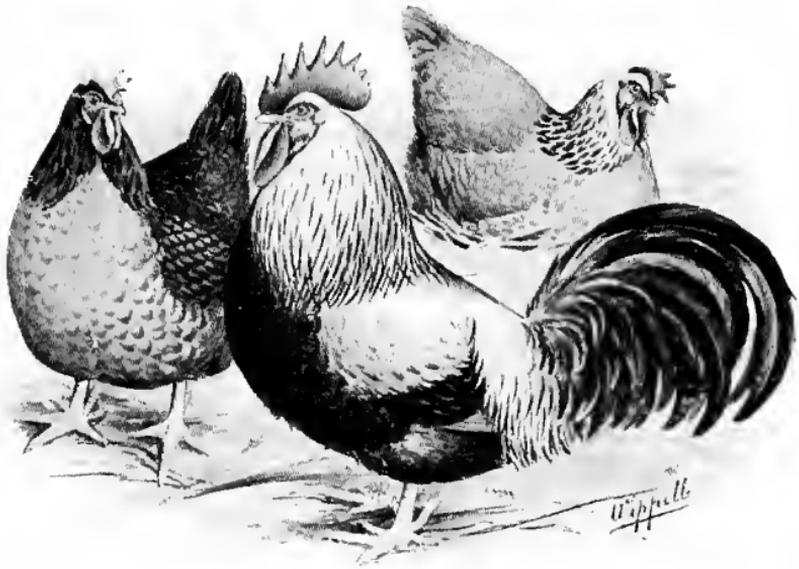


Fig. 5. Pair of Dark Dorkings and Silver-Grey Hen.

are bulky and heavy, the bone of a Dorking should be fine. Coarseness is objectionable.

The *Dark or Coloured Dorking* (Fig. 5) has, in the cock, a white or straw-coloured neck-hackle with black striping, and saddle-hackle to match. The back is of various shades of white, black-and-white, or grey, with sometimes a mixture of maroon, and the wing-bow white, or a mixture of white and black, or grey. The wing-bars

are glossy black, as is the large and flowing tail, and the breast and underparts are also black, without any trace of white. In the hen the hackle may be either white or pale straw, with stripings of black or grey. The breast is salmon-red, with tips of dark-grey or black to each feather, and the rest of the body is very dark-brown, nearly black, the shaft of the feather being dull white. In breeding this variety there is no necessity to resort to double-mating, as good specimens of either sex can be bred from one pen. Many people prefer a light-coloured bird for breeding rather than a dark-coloured one, mainly on the ground that the progeny have better coloured legs. This is an important feature in all Dorkings. Birds for breeding must have pure white legs, stout and free from feathers, with the five toes well developed and spread out, and the toe-nails perfectly white. Beyond this, choose hens of good bulk, with deep square bodies and well-developed combs, and with good rich colour, and mate them with a male bird that is perfectly sound in his black, besides possessing other good qualities.

In the *Silver-Grey Dorking* the neck-hackle of the cock is pure silvery-white, a narrow grey stripe being permissible, with saddle-hackle to match. The back and shoulders are also pure silvery-white, and the wing-bar, breast, underparts, and tail lustrous black. The hen (Fig. 5) has a silvery-white hackle, with a narrow black stripe in the broad part of each feather, a rich salmon-red breast, shading to pale grey on the thighs, body and wings of clear silvery-grey, peppered or pencilled finely with grey of a darker shade, and a dark-grey tail with black feathers on the inside. Double mating is not necessary in breeding this variety, although it is practised by some people. A male bird with perfectly sound breast and underparts, if mated with females that are not of too light a shade, will produce good chickens of both sexes,

Dorkings.—45

but when the hens in the breeding-pen are light in colour there is a danger of grizzle-breasted cockerels. The alternative is to mate exhibition cocks with hens of very dark body-colour for cock-breeding, and grizzle-breasted cocks with lighter-coloured hens for pullet-breeding, though the present fashion is for darker-coloured hens than such a mating would be likely to produce.

The *White Dorking* should have white plumage, free from any yellow or straw tinge, and the colour should be pure to the skin. This is most important in selecting breeders, and the other noteworthy points are shape and legs, and the form of the comb, which should be of the rose pattern, evenly set, and with the spike standing straight out behind and not following the line of the head.

The *Cuckoo Dorking* has barred plumage, the ground-colour being light bluish-grey, and the bands across each feather a darker shade of bluish-grey. The barring should be uniform all over the body, and the colours should merge without any hard line of separation. The variety is now seldom bred, but the same rules apply to its breeding for colour and marking as to the breeding of Barred Plymouth Rocks.



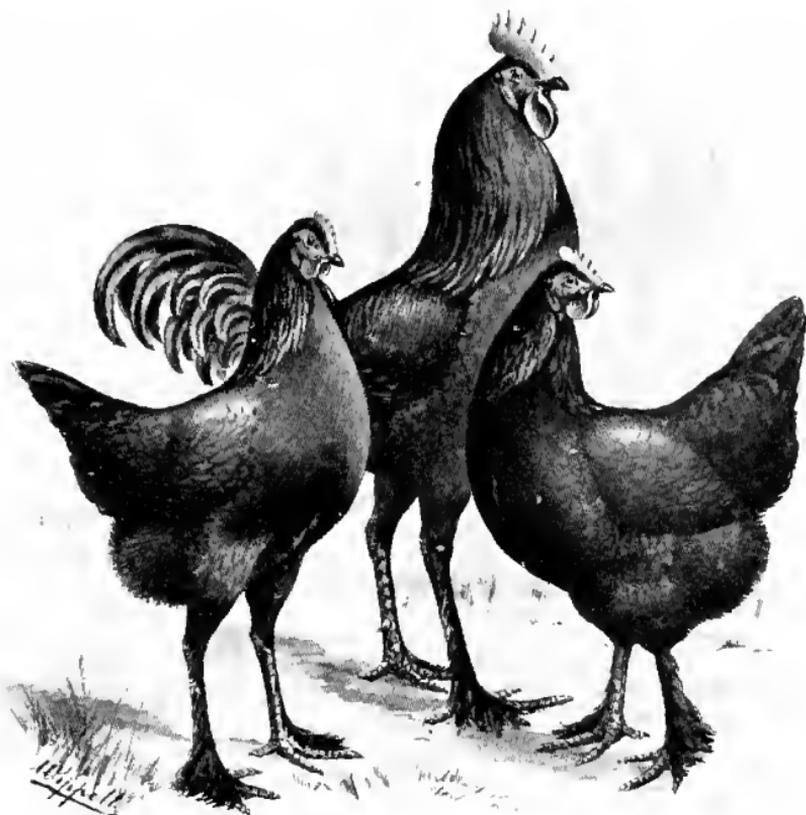
Chapter VIII.

Langshans.

THE Langshan is of Chinese origin, and when first introduced into this country it was generally supposed to be a direct branch of the Cochin family, possessing all the points of an inferior Cochin, such as deficiency of feather, length of leg, and fulness of tail. Whilst it is extremely probable that the Cochin and the Langshan had a common origin, the fact remains that the latter breed, as it was brought to England, was of considerable antiquity, and certainly not a mere sport from the Cochin. But the Langshan has undergone a considerable change at the hands of English breeders. Originally a bird of square and cobby type, with shanks of medium length, the type has gradually been altered until we have birds equalling the Modern Game in length of shank. The reason generally given for the change is that the appearance of the Orpington made it necessary for Langshan breeders to strike out in a distinctive line, and though the Modern Langshan is a triumph of the breeder's skill, there has naturally been much controversy concerning it. A section of breeders favouring the original type, headed by the late Miss Croad, whose family has been connected with Langshans since they were first imported, have maintained a stout opposition to the Modern type, with the result that a club has been formed to encourage

Langshans.—47

the breeding of the old type, so that at the present time there are actually four varieties of Langshans bred, exhibited, and standardised, viz., the Modern Blacks,



MODERN HEN.

MODERN COCK.

CROAD HEN

Fig. 6. Langshans.

Pure (Croad) Blacks, Blues, and Whites, the last two being bred to the Modern type.

The *Modern Langshan* (Fig. 6) is tall and alert, with graceful, upright carriage. A young bird appears to be

taller than an adult, because the fulness and depth of body do not thoroughly develop the first year. The shanks are long, but a bird must be strong on the leg, and active withal. When the Modern type first came into being many specimens were weak on the leg, and many of them very heavy in bone, whereas a good bird should be comparatively fine in bone, with clean-cut limbs. The shanks are slightly feathered with a fringe that extends on the outer sides down to the outer toe. The head is carried erect, with a small single comb, evenly serrated, and standing upright. Ear-lobes and wattles are of medium size. The body is large and deep, broad at the shoulders, with a long breast-bone, and the wings are carried close to the sides, whilst the tail of the cock is carried rather high, with gracefully curved sickles. The plumage is exceedingly hard and close. Cockerels weigh about 8lb., cocks 10lb., pullets 6lb., and hens 8lb.

Black is the most popular colour, and in this variety the plumage must be sound black throughout, with brilliant beetle-green sheen, this characteristic having been bred to wonderful perfection. The face, lobes, and wattles are red, the beak should be black or dark horn colour, and the eye dark hazel or black, though usually the darker the eye the more is the bird valued. The shanks are black, of a dark-grey shade, becoming lighter with age, whilst the toe-nails are white, and the under-parts of the feet are pink, the same colour showing between the scales, between the toes, and down the outer side of the shanks. In breeding this variety there is no necessity to mate separate pens to produce either sex. One properly-mated pen will produce both cockerels and pullets, and where one's birds possess faults one must strive to counteract them. As a rule, two-year-old hens make the best breeders, and these should be large, shapely specimens with good carriage, but fine in bone, with neat,

Langshans.—49

evenly-serrated combs, eyes as dark as possible, well- but not heavily-feathered shanks, nice and wide between the thighs, and of good colour. The cock should always have good colour, with an especially brilliant tail, and he should have a good dark eye, strong and straight limbs, and close plumage. As a general rule, it is better to sacrifice colour in the female, and such points as comb, size, and shape in the male, when something has to be sacrificed.

The *White Langshan* has pure white plumage, white beak, dark or black eye, grey legs, white toe-nails, and the same presence of pink about the feet and legs as in the Black variety. In breeding, the same general lines may be followed, except that the plumage should be as pure white as possible, with a silvery sheen.

The *Blue Langshan* has plumage similar to that of the Andalusian. In the cock the neck- and saddle-hackles, back, wing-bow, and tail are a very rich and deep slate colour with purple sheen; the remainder of the plumage and that of the hen is slaty-blue, as clear as possible, each feather being laced with a darker shade of slate, the lacing as clearly defined as possible. The beak is dark horn, eye dark hazel or black, and legs a medium shade of grey. The chief difficulties in breeding this variety arise from the colour and lacing. As is natural in a breed in which white and black were the foundations, both these colours occur very frequently, and it is not unusual to produce twenty or thirty per cent. of black or white chickens. It is safer to attempt to arrive at a happy medium in the matter of colour by mating light and dark together, than to form a breeding-pen of specimens of the actual colour desired. It will be found that a dark-coloured cock with clearly-defined lacing will usually mate well with rather light-coloured hens, and this mating may produce the better cockerels, whilst dark-coloured, clearly-

laced hens should be mated with a male rather lighter than the exhibition type.

The *Original or Croad Langshan* (Fig. 6) differs from the Modern mainly in length of limb, and to a less degree in plumage. In place of the stiltiness and hard Game-like plumage of the Modern we have a large-bodied, well-balanced bird, with graceful, upright carriage, but moderate length of limb, rich-coloured plumage, fairly close, but scarcely as tight as in the Modern variety. That this type is more useful than the Modern is perhaps a very reasonable assumption, seeing that for some years it has been bred entirely for utility purposes, but recently it has again been brought into prominence as an exhibition fowl, and breeders will, whilst conserving its distinguishing characteristics, probably find their greatest task lie in the direction of producing more brilliant plumage.



Chapter IX.

Orpingtons.

UNDER this name are included several composite varieties which, while possessing no common origin, have been bred to the same general characteristics, with the exception of colour; or rather we might say that the standard drawn up has credited the same qualities of form and shape to each of the several varieties. The Orpington fowls were introduced by the late Mr. William Cook, a well-known Kentish poultry farmer, the first being the Black, which is said to have been produced by crossing a Minorca cock with Black Plymouth Rock hens and mating the pullets of this cross with clean-legged Langshan cockerels. A few years later (in 1894), the Buff was exploited, and aroused considerable discussion, mainly on the ground that the name "Orpington" having already been given to the original Black it should not be again used for a variety that possessed none of the same blood. It is no discredit to Mr. Cook to state that in again using the name he had business motives in view; and as the general public, recognising that a valuable new variety had come upon the scene, apparently cared nothing about the name, the Orpington group has still further been enlarged, first by the White—which for some time was also known as the Albion—and then by the Diamond Jubilee, the Spangled, and the Cuckoo.

The general characteristics are the same in all varieties of Orpingtons, the shape being cobby and compact, with erect and graceful carriage. The breast is broad and deep, the back short, with broad shoulders, the saddle rising slightly in the cock, whilst in the hen the cushion rises sufficiently to give the back a short and graceful curved appearance. The tail is of medium size, and both thighs and shanks are short and stout, the feet having four toes. The plumage should be hard and close, and birds should be of large size, cocks about 9lb. or 10lb., cockerels about 8lb., hens 7lb. or 8lb., and pullets 6lb. or 7lb. There are both single- and rose-combed varieties, either being recognised by the standard, though it is usual to see the rose combs only in Blacks and Buffs. The single comb is of medium size, upright, and evenly serrated; wattles are of medium length; lobes red. The skin and flesh of all Orpingtons should be white.

The original Orpington, the *Black*, has black plumage with a green lustre, and without any white or coloured feathers. Both beak and shanks should be black, and the eye black with dark-brown iris. Size, shape, and brilliance of lustre are the principal points to strive for, and in breeding for exhibition it is desirable to select hens excelling as far as possible in size and shape, whilst the male bird should possess particularly rich colour, the sheen being actually green, and not a purple tinge. Both sexes may be bred from one pen, and among the points to avoid in breeding-stock are white or coloured feathers, too much fluff, long shanks and thighs, narrow bodies, and absence of the characteristic shape, in addition to malformation of combs, white or yellow in lobes, or legs any other colour than black—except in old birds, the legs of which become slate colour. To produce the largest specimens it is better to breed from adult stock, or, at any rate, from adult hens, rather than from yearlings.

Orpingtons.—53

The *Buff Orpington* (Fig. 7), according to the originator, was produced by mating Gold-Spangled *Hamburgh* cocks with *Dark Dorking* hens, the pullets of this cross being again mated with *Buff Cochin* cocks. The colour

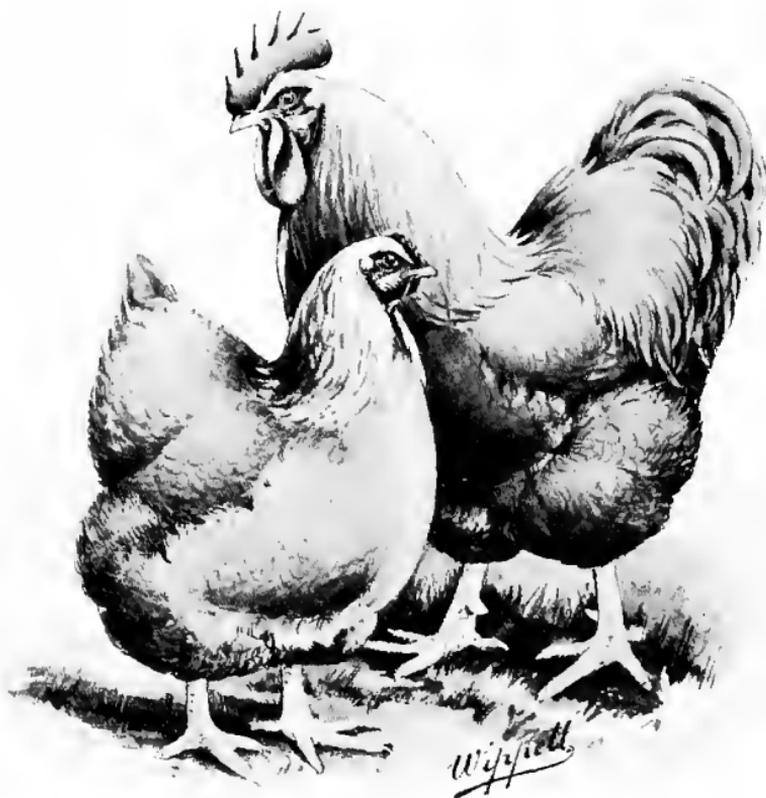


Fig. 7. Pair of Buff Orpingtons.

is rich buff throughout; any shade is permissible, from lemon to rich buff, avoiding washiness or actual redness, and it must be level throughout, allowing only for the lustre on the cock's hackle and saddle, and for a slightly

richer shade on the wing-bow. The beak is white or horn colour, the eye red or brown, and the shanks white, Owing to the difficulty in producing birds of sound and level colour, shape has not received so much attention in this variety, and at some of the more important shows in recent years winners have been selected for colour alone, the shape being quite contrary to the standard. So much has been said and written on this point that there must now be a gradual change in this respect, though we doubt if Buffs will possess shape equal to that of the Blacks for many years.

To breed a Buff Orpington absolutely sound and level in colour is a sufficiently difficult feat to make good specimens of this variety very valuable, and when the general characteristics of the breed can be secured as well there is no lack of reward for the successful breeder. The number of sound-coloured Buffs, however, is comparatively small, and of the defects that so constantly occur the most serious is white plumage or under-colour. The presence of white is natural in all buff-coloured fowls, so that it needs to be persistently stamped out, and where there is any indication of white in the breeding-stock, especially if they are young birds, there is certain to be a greater proportion in the progeny. Black is another foreign colour very prevalent among Buffs, and need not be so seriously considered when it is only found to a moderate extent in the tail and flights; but dark under-colour or black ticking in the hackle should be avoided.

In breeding Buff Orpingtons it is desirable to bear in mind that the tendency of the progeny is to be lighter in colour than the parent stock. Double mating is found to produce the best results, and in breeding exhibition cockerels we should choose a male as sound and level in colour as possible, and a shade darker or more solid in buff than the medium exhibition colour. He should

Orpingtons.—55

have the same sound colour right through to skin, he should not show a trace of white about him, and as little black as possible in tail and flights, whilst he should not be red on the shoulder. With him should be mated some large, shapely hens of a nice medium colour, free from white, and with good buff tails. Both sexes should have neat, shapely combs, and white legs quite free from feathers. For pullet-breeding the male bird should be of a darker shade, such as would not be of any use for show, but level all over and sound in under-colour. His mates also should be rather darker than the exhibition type, with good tails and flights. The fault most to be avoided is white in any part of the plumage. As Buffs get older they become lighter and more mealy or patchy in colour every year, and the colour is soon spoiled by the weather unless they are sheltered.

The *White Orpington*, which was formerly also known as the *Albion*, is a most useful and beautiful variety, and appears likely to become as popular as any. The plumage should be pure snow-white throughout, and free from any foreign colour, the beak should be white or horn colour, and the legs white. In breeding it is necessary to choose birds as good in type as possible, whilst colour should be pure in its snowy whiteness. Both sexes may be bred from one pen, and from birds of established strains, of good type, and pure in colour a good percentage of winners may be produced.

The *Diamond Jubilee Orpington* (Figs. 8 to 12) has a white or horn-coloured beak, red or brown eye, and pinky-white shanks and feet, although for the present a little horn colour about the legs and feet is not a disqualification. The plumage is black, white, and bright mahogany in equal proportions, evenly distributed to avoid patchiness or fine ticking. The standard says: "For the cock, neck-hackle mahogany, with black stripe



SADDLE-HACKLE.



NECK-HACKLE.

Figs. 8 and 9. Feathers of Diamond Jubilee Orpington Cock.

Orpingtons.—57

and white tip; the shaft mahogany, of same shade as feather; saddle-hackle to match neck-hackle; back to follow neck and saddle; breast mahogany, with black spangle and white tip, the three colours well broken and showing in equal proportions; wing-bow to follow hackle; wing-bar black; secondaries mahogany, black and white; flights the same, but with more white; tail-sickles white, or black and white; true tail-feathers the same; coverts black, edged with mahogany, black and white; thighs and fluff to follow breast. In the hen the head and neck should match the cock, allowing for difference of sex; body, breast, and back mahogany, with black spangles and white tips, the shaft mahogany, of same shade as feather, the three colours well broken, and showing in equal proportions, to give as uniform an effect as possible. The wings are the same as the body, with flights like those of the cock; thighs and fluff should follow the breast, and the tail has the same colouring as the true



Fig. 10. Breast-feather of Diamond Jubilee Orpington Cock.

tail-feathers of the cock.” There is considerable difficulty in breeding a well-broken, good-coloured specimen, and at the present time well-marked birds are very rare. White is a colour that has a tendency to come out more strongly in successive



Fig. II. Hackle of Diamond Jubilee Orpington Hen.

The tip of the feather is white, the body is black, and the shaft and fringe are chestnut.

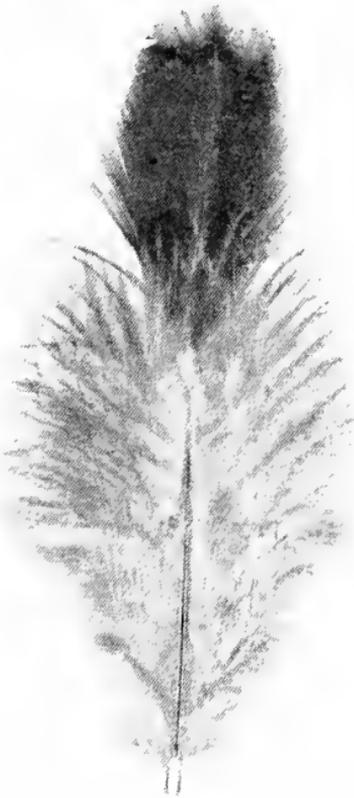


Fig. I2. Body-feather of Diamond Jubilee Orpington Hen.

The feather is tipped first with white and then with a narrow bar of black, the body of the feather being chestnut, with $\frac{1}{2}$ in. of black next the fluff.

generations, and if both male and female in the breeding-pen carried much white it would in all probability run to excess in the progeny. It is better to select a male that has well-broken colour, with regular white ticking, and to mate him with hens that are rather short of white but with the other colours as evenly broken as possible. The general characteristics

Orpingtons.—59

of the breed should not be overlooked, and the hens especially should possess good size and shape.

The *Spangled Orpington* has a black or black-and-white beak, brown eye, and black-and-white mottled legs and feet, with white toe-nails. The plumage is black tipped with white, the general effect being a bird in which the two colours appear to be evenly distributed, although on examination each feather is found to be merely tipped with white. In breeding we again have to avoid the excess of white that is generally the result of mating together birds that carry it in any quantity. We should, therefore, recommend a male bird with even spangling, and with good black sickles tipped with white, to be mated with hens on the dark side, and with very light ticking (though even) all over the body. General characteristics must be looked after as in the former case.

The *Cuckoo Orpington*, the latest variety of this popular breed, possesses the general characteristics of the Orpington together with the attractive barred plumage of the Plymouth Rock—a combination that should gain for the variety a prominent place among show breeds, and assure its popularity for general utility purposes.



Chapter X.

Wyandottes and Plymouth Rocks.

THESE two breeds, which are among the most popular at the present day, are a living testimony to the skill and originality of American breeders, for both were fashioned and introduced in the United States. They possess the merit of great hardiness, and their useful qualities have had as much to do with their popularity as their fancy charms.

It may be explained that in America yellow legs are preferred to white legs for table fowls, and that all the popular American breeds possess yellow legs, with the accompaniment of yellow skin and fat.

Wyandottes.

The Wyandotte first made its appearance under that name about the year 1880, although for some years previously laced birds had been bred in America under various titles. The name is taken from one of the oldest tribes of North-American Indians, and it was the Silver-Laced variety that was the first of this great family. The Gold-Laced followed in a few years, and for some time these were the only two varieties. Then a race of Whites were bred from sports thrown by Silvers, and very quickly the family was increased by the addition of the Partridges, Buffs, Buff-Laced and Blue-Laced, Silver-

Wyandottes.—61

Pencilled, Columbians, and Blacks, whilst Cuckoos and Piles have been bred.

The general characteristics of all these varieties are the same. We have birds of good medium size, the weight running to about 8½lb. in cocks, 7lb. in cockerels, 7lb. in hens, and 6lb. in pullets, with the general shape and carriage, the rounded breast, and the broad short back of the Brahma, but with clean yellow legs totally devoid of feather, and a neat-fitting rose comb of moderate size, with spike following curve of neck. Shape and carriage must be highly considered, and it is unfortunate that they have too often been sacrificed in the endeavour to secure other qualities.

The *Silver-Laced Wyandotte* has a horn-coloured beak and bright bay eye, with bright red face, wattles, and lobes, as in all the other varieties. In the cock, the neck-hackle and saddle-hackle are silvery-white, with a clear black stripe through the centre of each feather. The back and wing-bow are silvery-white, the wing-coverts are evenly laced with black on a white feather, forming two distinct bars, and the secondaries and flights are black on the outer web and white edged with black on the inner web. The feathers on the breast are laced with dense black round the white web, the tail-feathers are all black with a rich green sheen, and the fluff is black or dark slate, with as much clear lacing as possible down the thighs, whilst the under-colour throughout is dark slate. The lacing must be as clear and distinct as possible, and the black should be perfectly dense, whilst the white should be free from mossiness or peppering of black spots. In the hen we have the same kind of neck-hackle, a black stripe in the centre of a silvery-grey feather, whilst the remainder of the body is clearly, finely, and evenly laced with black on a white ground, with dark slate fluff and under-colour. Feathers are shown in Figs. 13 to 18.

62—Poultry for Prizes.

Although Silvers have been bred for upwards of twenty-five years, it is still a very difficult matter to breed a specimen approaching anything like perfection, for the reason that there is so much to be sought after. In the cock there is the difficulty of getting the pure silvery-white top-colour together with the clear and sound breast-lacing, whilst in



NECK-HACKLE.



BREAST.

Figs. 13 and 14. Feathers of Silver-Laced Wyandotte Cock.

the hen the difficulty in producing sharply-defined lacing, sound and rich in black and running all round the feather, without any of the objectionable mossiness or peppering among the white, is such that unfortunately many pullets are subjected to trimming in order to remove faulty feathers. In some cases weak lacing on the breast is a serious fault, whilst in others there is the defect of double-lacing, the feathers having an edging of white dis-



Fig. 16. Breast-feather of Silver-Laced Wyandotte Hen.



Fig. 15. Hackle of Silver-Laced Wyandotte Hen.

tinctly discernible outside the black.

In breeding this variety it is necessary to resort to double mating, and to have separate strains for producing cockerels and pullets. In a pen of cockerel-breeders the male should have particularly good top colour,

with rather heavier lacing than one would choose in a show bird, but both colours should be perfectly sound, and his tail should be free from any trace of white.



Fig. 17. Shoulder-feather of Silver-Laced Wyandotte Hen.



Fig. 18. Cushion-feather of Silver-Laced Wyandotte Hen.

The hens to run with him should come from a cockerel strain and be of good size and shape. They should have clearly- and openly-laced breasts, and should also be well laced on the wings, but we prefer them to run light on the shoulders, and we do not object to mossiness on the cushion, so long as the tail is black. For pullet-breeding the male bird should come from a pullet strain, and he should carry as much

lacing as possible. The laced feathers will run right down the breast and up over his shoulders, and they should also show up among the tail-coverts, whilst we consider some white in tail rather a virtue than a fault. Such a bird should be mated with the best hens obtainable. They should be as clear in colour and as sound as possible; in fact, good show specimens. Combs should always be good, especially on the male side, whilst size and shape are most important in the hen.

The *Gold-Laced Wyandotte* is the counterpart of the Silver, with the substitution of rich golden-bay in place of silvery-white or white, so that it is unnecessary to go into a detailed description. The colour of Gold Wyandottes has, however, varied somewhat in recent years, and whilst at times very dark top-coloured cocks have been in favour, at other times preference has been shown for the more correct gold top-colour. The dark or maroon tops were the result of the endeavour to produce richer ground-colour in the lacing, and with the lighter tops we have to be satisfied with a somewhat paler shade in the body. In the hens there is great difficulty in getting the same shade of gold all over the body; the wings usually come a decidedly richer shade than the cushion and breast, and this can only be remedied in time by very strict selection.

The same rules for breeding may be adopted as those given in the case of Silver-Laced, but as regards colour it may be added that, as the general tendency among pullets is for the progeny to become lighter than the parents, it is advisable to select birds of rich colour, more especially on the breast and cushion, whilst in cockerel-breeding we prefer the male bird of a good standard colour and the females rich on the breast as well as on the shoulders.

The *White Wyandotte* (Fig. 19) was originally, as has

been said, a sport from the Silver-Laced. It should have a bright yellow beak and pure white plumage. As the purity of plumage is a most important feature, one must avoid using birds for breeding that are of a yellow cast. There is no necessity for double mating in this case, but

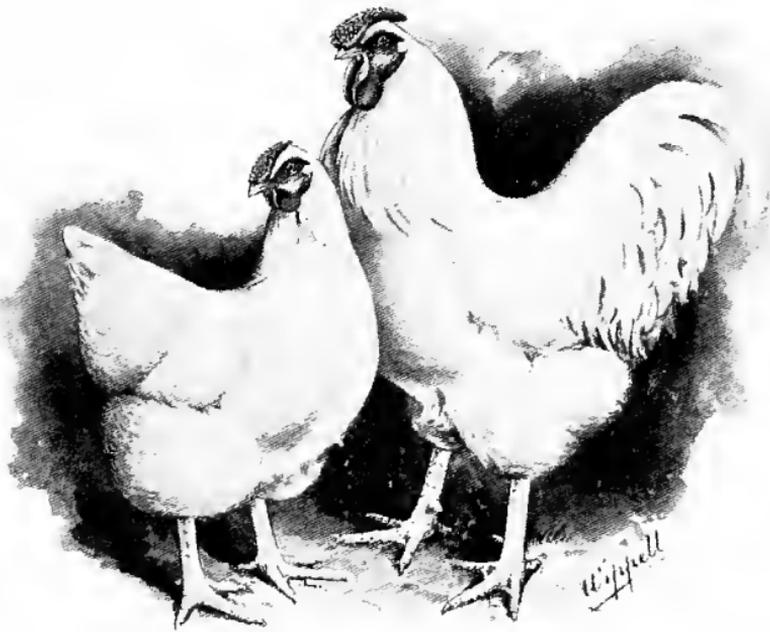


Fig. 19. Pair of White Wyandottes.

the points to be sought for are size and shape, which should be especially marked in the females; comb, which should be good in both sexes, and particularly in the cock; in addition to colour. The finest-coloured chickens are bred from white-skinned parents, but selection on these lines has led to somewhat pale leg-colour, so that, as in



HACKLE OF
EXHIBITION
HEN.



SAADDLE-HACKLE OF COCK.



NECK-HACKLE OF COCK.

**Figs. 20 to 22. Feathers of Partridge
Wyandottes.**

many other cases, it will be seen that it is difficult to attain one point without sacrificing another. The White Wyandotte has become one of the most popular of this large family, and has made many friends by reason of its general usefulness as well as its exhibition qualities.

The *Partridge Wyandotte*



Fig. 24. Breast-feather of Pullet-breeding Partridge Wyandotte Cock.

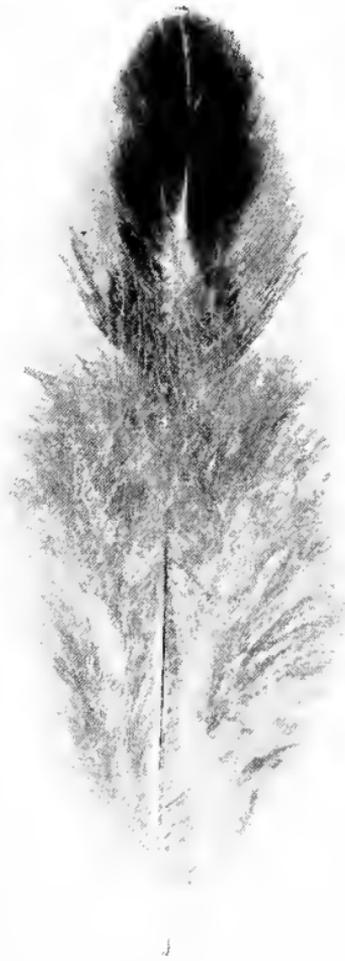


Fig. 25. Thigh-feather of Pullet-breeding Partridge Wyandotte Cock.

dotte is to all intents and purposes a Partridge Cochin with the shape, clean legs, and rose comb of the Wyandotte. In each sex the colour and markings are the same as those of the

Wyandottes.—69

Partridge Cochin, and the method of breeding is very much the same, allowance being made for the general characteristics of the Wyandotte. A general fault in this variety lies in the dark legs of the pullets, which are, of course, inherited from the Cochin, and in breeding for exhibition pullets it is wise to avoid females that have very dark-coloured legs. Double



Fig. 26. Breast-feather of Partridge Wyandotte Hen.

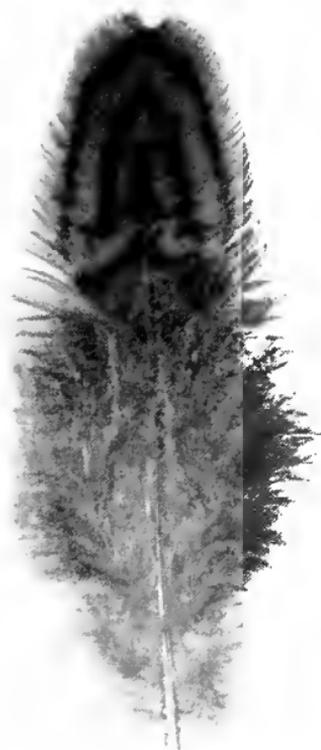


Fig. 25. Cushion-feather of Partridge Wyandotte Hen.

mating is absolutely necessary, and it is most important to keep strains distinct, for a cockerel to breed good pullets must come from a good pullet-breeding strain, and a pullet to produce show cockerels must spring from actual cock-breeders. The main points to look for in a pullet-breeding cockerel are even mottling on the breast and fluff,

taking the form of fine lacing round the feather rather than ticking, whilst the neck- and saddle hackles should show traces of pencilling. A cock-breeding female should have a densely-striped hackle, shapely comb, and plenty of size and good shape, with no pencilling to speak of, but a fairly rich colour. Feathers of this variety are shown in Figs. 20 to 28.

The Partridge Wyandotte has



Fig. 28. Body-feather of Cock-breeding Partridge Wyandotte Hen.



Fig. 27. Hackle of Cock-breeding Partridge Wyandotte Hen.

come prominently to the front of late, and specimens have made very high prices, £165 having been paid for a cockerel, in addition to sums of £80, £75, and £65. Although these prices are exceptional, Partridge Wyandottes of good average quality sell very well, and in addition to their exhibition qualities they rank as one of the hardest general-purpose

varieties. One trait in their favour is the tendency, in the case of females, to moult out better and sharper in pencilling every year up to a certain stage, so that the show career of a good bird may last for four or five years.

The *Silver-Pencilled Wyandotte* is the counterpart of the Dark Brahma, just as the Partridge is of the Partridge Cochin, and between the Silver-Pencilled and the Partridge the only difference is in the colour, the cock having silvery-white in the place of orange and bright red, whilst the hen has grey ground-colour instead of brown. Breeding must be carried on on the same lines, and the same general rules should be followed as are given in the case of the Dark Brahma, allowing, of course, for Wyandotte character, shape, comb, and legs. The legs of the pullets err on the side of darkness as in the Partridge variety, and in both cases it is not unusual to find a few small feathers or fluff on the legs. This fault will probably occur for some years, but it has already been so reduced that by breeding from related stock that are quite clear in legs only a few chickens will show any sign of fluff. This variety has become fairly popular, and in this and the Partridge we have two very attractive Wyandottes, differing in markings from the laced varieties, but comparing in colour with the Silver and Gold.

The *Buff Wyandotte* has never enjoyed much popularity, and has lost much of the favour it once enjoyed. The colour should be buff throughout, of a level shade, and specimens are bred to a high degree of excellence, so far as colour is concerned, though there is a good deal of variation in shape. There is less difficulty in breeding a rich-coloured buff free from white in breeds that have yellow skin than in a white-skinned breed like the Buff Orpington; but in breeding Buff Wyandottes it is easier to produce good pullets from dark-coloured cockerels and good cockerels from lighter-coloured breeders than to

produce both sexes from one mating. Breeding-stock should have as little black in tail and flights as possible, and white feathers should be avoided entirely.

The *Buff-Laced* and *Blue-Laced Wyandottes* have a common origin, but must be bred distinct on account of the objection to blue in the hackle or lacing of the *Buff-Laced*. Although a number of strains of each variety have been produced, the general plan was to cross the Golden and White varieties, but it is possible that other breeds were also utilised.

For the first few years after their introduction *Buff-Laced Wyandottes* were bred with blue hackles and with blue edging to the lacing, and in consequence both varieties were often produced from one pen; but the modern *Buff-Laced* should be quite free from blue, and a blue-hackled female should be penalised as much as a black-tailed cock. In markings both these varieties are similar to the Gold- and Silver-Laced, but the feathers of the *Buff-Laced* are buff with white lacing. The cock should have a buff hackle striped with white, but usually breeders have to be content with white ticking instead of striping. The back, shoulders, and wing-bow should be rich buff, but not too dark, and the tail, fluff, and under-colour pure white, whilst the wing-bars and breast should be laced, as we have indicated. The hen has a buff hackle striped with white, a white tail, and the remainder of her feathers are rich buff of a level colour clearly laced with white.

This variety is a long way from being perfect, and breeders invariably get a great many mismarked chickens, even with the most careful mating. In breeding this variety there is at present no necessity to practise double mating, and the beginner will find it quite sufficient for his purpose to have one pen. But in order to produce good ground-colour and clear lacing he will find it

necessary to breed from darker-coloured birds than he would put in the show-pen. The cock should have a rich-coloured hackle and rich ground-colour to his breast, but with this he is apt to have a very dark top, which should be avoided. The hens also should be rich in ground-colour, and both sexes should be free from blue or black.

The *Blue-Laced Wyandotte* has become more popular. It may be compared to the Buff-Laced, but with rich gold ground-colour and violet-blue lacing. The cock's top and shoulders are gold, and in both sexes the hackle is gold striped with blue, and the tail blue. Here, again, breeders invariably produce a number of mismarked chickens, and as the blue in this breed is made up by crossing white and black, the former colour is apt to appear in wholly white chickens, whilst it is a matter of considerable difficulty to breed a bird free from black in the hackle and round the lacing, especially on breast and wing. In blue varieties as a rule the desirable shade of colour is produced by mating light and dark together, and to a certain extent the same idea may be followed here, though there is a danger in introducing pale-coloured lacing, because the ground-colour will also be washy. It will be some years before breeders can fix the type to such an extent that good birds can be produced by any stated plan, and for the present it is better to trust to close breeding and to use a rich-coloured cock wherever the hens fail in either colour.

In the *Columbian Wyandotte*, the latest American production of this great family, we have a reproduction of the Light Brahma, and this combination of colour with American characteristics has already won for it a considerable share of popularity. The cock should have a distinct black stripe in his neck-hackle, silvery-white saddle-hackle, glossy green-black tail-coverts, with or without lacing, glossy green-black tail-feathers, and the

rest of the body pure white. The hen should have a hackle composed of intense black feathers, finely laced with a silvery-white margin, black tail, and a pure white body, the under-colour in both sexes being either slate, bluish-white, or white, but no black ticking on the feathers should be allowed. In breeding this variety it will be advisable to follow the methods adopted in the case of Light Brahmas, although as the breed is still, at the time of writing, in the experimental stage, it is difficult to determine the most successful method of breeding. The combination of a densely-striped hackle with pure white body-colour will always present difficulties, the most frequent defect being black ticking on the body.

Cuckoo Wyandottes, having the plumage of the Barred Plymouth Rock, were exhibited some years ago, but their relationship to the Plymouth Rock was so palpable that they have never become popular, and are not standardised.

The *Black Wyandotte* has had the most remarkable boom on record, and in spite of much misrepresentation it has become in a very short time one of our standard varieties. Blacks have been sported from Silver-Laced Wyandottes for many years, and later a great number have been bred from Silver-Pencilled and Partridge. Various crosses have also been resorted to, and at the time of writing the breeding of this variety is still uncertain. There is a strong tendency to white feathers and under-colour in cocks and dark legs in hens; and though at first it was claimed that both sexes could be bred successfully from one mating, we think eventually the best pullets will be produced from a cock that has light under-colour but good legs (in order to get the yellow legs in the females), whilst sound-coloured cocks will be used to produce cockerels. The colour required is a rich beetle-green black, and other characteristics should be the same as in all Wyandotte varieties. The Blacks are proving

Wyandottes and Plymouth Rocks.—75

themselves excellent layers, and are likely to retain their popularity as one of the best of the Wyandotte family.

Pile Wyandottes are being introduced at the time of writing, and have been produced chiefly by crossing Whites and Partridges. The colour is similar to that of the Pile Game and Leghorn, the cock having a lemon hackle and saddle, rich chestnut shoulders, and white breast, underparts, and tail, whilst the hen has a pale lemon hackle, salmon-coloured breast shading to white below, and white in other parts.

Plymouth Rocks.

The *Barred Plymouth Rock* (Fig. 29) was first exhibited in this country in 1872, and since that time it has achieved great prosperity. It has in later years been followed by Buff, White, and Black varieties, but none of these have earned quite the same degree of favour. The Plymouth Rock has distinctive shape, being described in the standard as "upright, noble and grand, somewhat like a Cochin," but not fluffy. It is more upright in carriage than the Wyandotte, and, of course, its legs are free from feather, whilst the comb is of medium size, single, upright, and evenly serrated. The birds are large, cockerels ranging from 8lb. to 11lb., cocks from 9lb. to 12lb., pullets from 7lb. to 9lb., and hens from 9lb. to 10lb. The breed is, like the Wyandotte, very hardy, a good layer, very useful for table in spite of yellow skin, and a reliable sitter and mother. In all varieties the beak should be bright yellow, the eye bright bay, the face, lobes, and wattles red, and the shanks bright yellow.

The Barred variety has the plumage that in this country is generally described as cuckoo. The ground-colour should be greyish-white, each feather being evenly barred with bluish-black; the two colours should be clear and distinct, even in width, and free from

rust or smutty colour. Both sexes have the same colour and barring, but in the cock the neck- and saddle-hackles are finer in barring than the rest of the body. The back and shoulders of the cock should be as clear in bar-

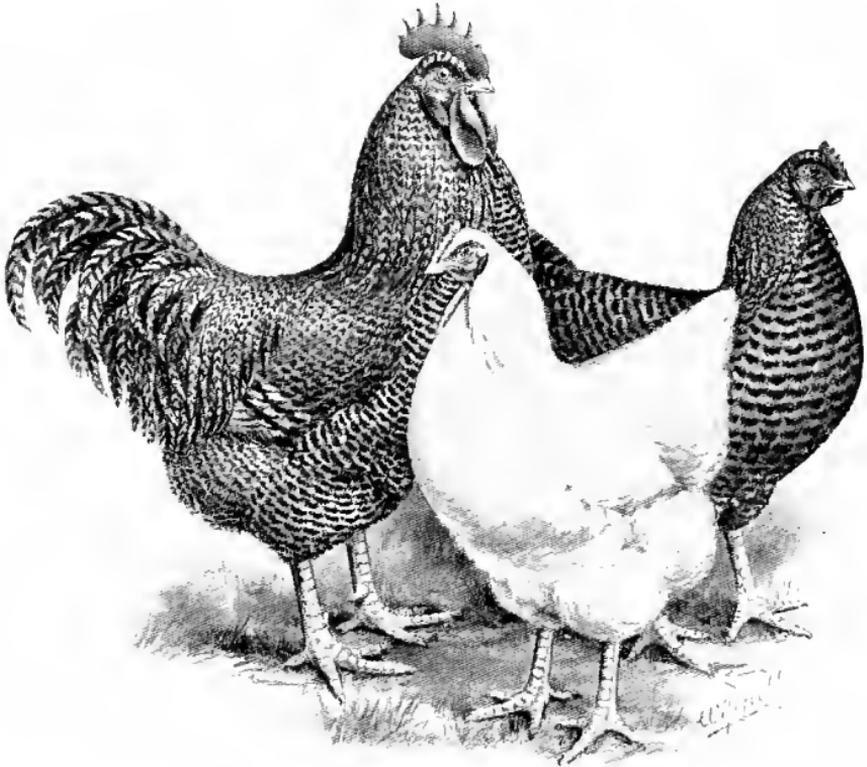


Fig. 29. Pair of Barred Plymouth Rocks and White Rock Hen.

ring as possible, and free from bronze. The tail-sickles should also be clearly barred to the tips, and in both sexes the true tail-feathers have coarser barring than other parts of the body. The colours should be of one uniform shade throughout, and white or black feathers must be

Plymouth Rocks.—77

avoided. In America the colour is lighter and the barring sharper than in our own type, and American strains, though they are undoubtedly superior in the amount of barring they carry, are not favoured by the majority of



NECK-HACKLE.



SADDLE-HACKLE.

Figs. 30 and 31. Feathers of Barred Plymouth Rock Cock.

English breeders, whilst in America our own strains are considered too dark and dense and sadly lacking in clear barring. There is certainly room for improvement in the barring of English birds: we should see the feathers

clearly barred right through to the skin, whilst the colour of the barring should be rich blue-black and not, as in many cases, washy blue. Feathers of the Barred variety are shown in Figs. 30 to 34.

As barred plumage was originally produced from black and white, it follows that the breeding of the Barred



BREAST OF COCK.



BODY OF HEN.

Figs. 32 and 33. Feathers of Barred Plymouth Rocks.

Plymouth Rock is a matter of some difficulty; and although the type of marking has by now become firmly established, we still experience a fair proportion of both white and black chickens. White appears to be the colour usually thrown in the male line, whilst black females greatly outnumber the males, and a black cockerel is a

Plymouth Rocks.—79

comparative rarity. There are various methods of breeding Barred Rocks. In America separate strains are maintained for each sex, but for the English type this is by no means an actual necessity. Double mating is certainly a more reliable method for producing show birds than single mating, but this need not be carried to the length of keeping strains distinct for each sex. The same type of females may be used for either cockerel- or pullet-breeding, and they should be rich-coloured birds, with bold but not too coarse barring, and as much of it as possible. They should possess plenty of size and good shape, and have neat, upright, well-serrated combs. For breeding cockerels the best results would be obtained from a male of good exhibition colour, erring on the dark side if anything, but as clear as possible in barring on back and shoulders, and with a well-barred tail, whilst for pullet-breeding the male bird should be much lighter than the exhibition colour, but evenly and finely barred all over, and he should have a good-shaped comb and rich-coloured legs.



Fig. 34. Hackle of Barred Plymouth Rock Hen.

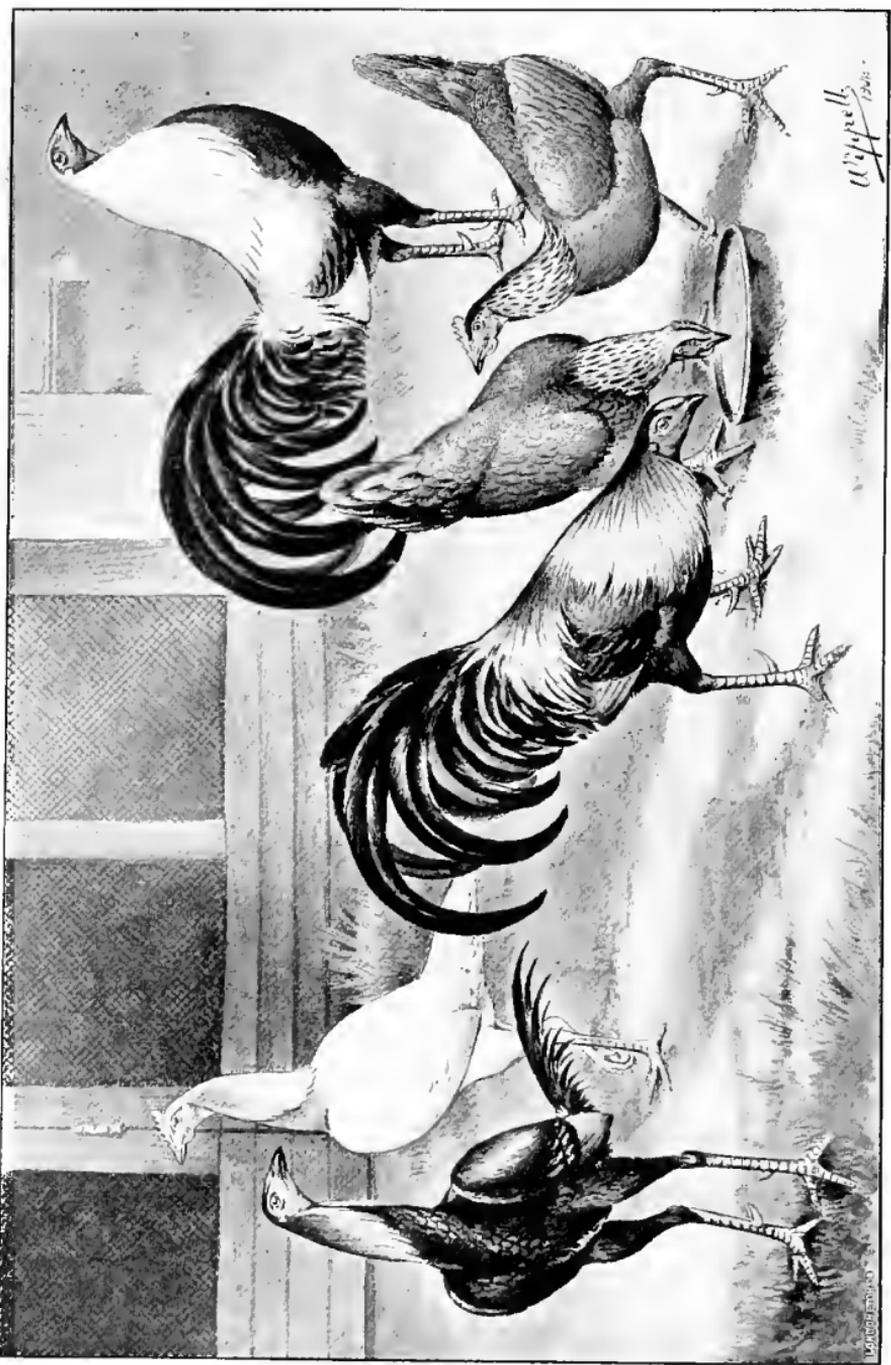
The *Buff* and *White Rocks* differ only in comb and shape from the *Wyandottes* of those colours, and in each case the points and methods of breeding, so far as colour is concerned, are the same as in the *Wyandotte*. A *White Rock* hen is shown in Fig. 29, on page 76. The *Black*

80—Poultry for Prizes.

Rock has only recently been recognised as a pure variety, and is consequently in need of considerable improvement, dark-coloured legs being a great fault, whilst the cocks frequently fail in colour. The plumage should be green-black throughout, free from any white or brown, and the other characteristics should be those common to all Plymouth Rocks.

A *Rosecombed Barred Plymouth Rock* has been introduced, but has been rejected by the Plymouth Rock Clubs on the ground that the rose comb is foreign to the type and nature of the breed.





Modern Pile Hen.

Modern Black-Red Cock.

Old English Black Red Cock.

Old English Duckwing Hen.

Old English Duckwing Cock.

ENGLISH GAME.

Chapter XI.

English Game.

MOST people are aware that until the middle of the last century Game fowls were bred mainly for fighting, and of all the birds kept and bred for that purpose none excelled the English Game in gallantry and skill. It is unnecessary to go into the history of cock-fighting, long and romantic though it be. What concerns us is that when the sport was declared illegal the Game breeds were taken up for fancy purposes, and as the ideal of the fighter differed from that of the fancier, the type gradually underwent a change. Exhibition breeders began to strive for shape and symmetry, and slowly but surely was evolved a type that was quite distinct from the fighters of former days. The change went on, and the result is seen to-day in the Modern exhibition Game fowl, which, as will be seen from the description that follows, is entirely different from the old type. In the meantime, for some years the true English Game appeared to be extinguished by the new type; but later it was revived, and now the Old English Game, differing perhaps in detail from the fighting type, is firmly established as a favourite, and is not only bred largely for exhibition, but is highly valued by utilitarians, especially for crossing to produce high-class table-fowls. On the other hand, the Modern exhibition breed possesses no qualities to appeal to utilitarians.

Old English Game.

From the exhibition standpoint the type, symmetry, and feather of English Game fowls have always been considered of more importance than mere colour and markings, and these are the points first sought after. The Old English Game should have a moderately long and tapering head, strong and slightly curved beak, large, bright, and prominent eyes, a small single comb, erect and evenly serrated, small lobes and wattles, and a long neck, strong at the base, the feathers being wiry and long, covering the shoulders. The breast should be broad and well developed, with a straight breast-bone; the back short, broad across the shoulders, flat, and tapering to the tail; the belly small and compact; the wings long and round, inclining to meet under the tail, protecting the thighs, and furnished with hard, strong quills. The tail of the cock should be well furnished with broad curved sickles, and that of the hen should be rather fan-shaped and carried well up. The thighs should be short, thick, muscular, and set well apart; the shanks of medium length, finely scaled, and not flat on the shin; the toes four in number, spread well apart, the back toe standing well backward and flat on the ground; and the spurs of the cock low on the legs. The carriage should be bold and smart, proud and sprightly, and all the movements quick and graceful, as though prepared for any emergency, whilst the plumage should be hard, firm, and glossy, a bird handling light for its bulk, or "corky" as the standard puts it, but mellow and warm, with strong contraction of the wings and legs. The standard weight is 5lb. to 6lb. for cocks, 5lb. for cockerels, 4lb. to 5lb. for hens, and 4lb. for pullets. Crooked breasts, humped backs, wry tails, duck feet, flat shins, bad carriage, and unsoundness are all very serious defects.

English Game.—85

Many colour-varieties are bred in Old English Game, among them being Black-breasted Reds, Bright Reds, Brown-Reds, Spangles, Piles, Duckwings, Whites, Blacks, Duns or Blues, Dun-breasted Reds, Birchens, Hennies, &c., and to the uninitiated the colours are somewhat bewildering.

The *Black-breasted Red*, or *Black-Red*, is a favourite. The cock has orange-red neck- and saddle-hackles, deep red back, shoulder-coverts, and wing-bows, rich dark blue wing-bars, and glossy black breast, under-parts, and tail. The hen is of partridge colour on back and wings, with a golden-red hackle streaked with black, breast and thighs of a salmon shade, and a dark brown or black tail.

In the *Bright Red* variety the difference is noticeable in the bright red instead of deep red of the back and shoulders, the hackles being light golden-red, and the breast and tail black shaded with brown. The hen is of wheaten colour, deeper on back and wings than on the breast, with a golden-red hackle. In both these varieties the legs may be of any sound self-colour, but white legs are in the majority. The beak should be in character with the legs, and the eyes should be red, though in white-legged birds dark eyes are considered in character, as well as some white in wing and tail, whilst the hackle should have white under-colour.

The cock of the *Pile* variety is very similar to the Black-breasted Red, but with white substituted for black. The hackles are orange- or chestnut-red, the back and shoulders deep red, and the breast, tail, and wing-bar white, the wing also showing the bay colour of the flights. The hen has a light chestnut neck, with breast shading from chestnut at the throat to white down the thighs, all other parts being white. The legs may be white, yellow, or willow, with the beak in keeping.

In the *Silver Duckwing* variety the cock has silvery-

white hackles, free from dark streaks, silvery-white back, shoulders, and wing-bows, steel-blue wing-bars, and black breast, tail, and underparts, the flights of the wing showing white when closed. The hen has a silvery hackle striped with black, dark grey back and wings, pale fawn breast, and grey and black tail. Legs may be either yellow, white, olive, or blue, with the beak in character.

The *Spangled* variety has either black, red, blue, or buff plumage spangled with white, the spangling being as even as possible. The Red Spangle is the most common. Legs may be either self-coloured or mottled. The *Brown-Red* cock has an orange-red hackle streaked with black, dark red back and shoulders, dark brown or shaded black wing and breast, and black tail; whilst the hen has black striped or shaded golden hackle, and black or brown mottled body, with dark legs and dark horn beak.

There are several colour-varieties of *Duns* or *Blues*; among the most popular is the *Dun-breasted Red*, the cock having a slate-blue breast with top-colour of the Black-breasted Red, and the hen being a mixture of blue and gold. Some of these have muffs about the faces. A very distinct race is the *Henny*, the peculiarity being in the cock's plumage, which has none of the usual characteristics of the male bird, but is similar to that of the hen. There are several colour-varieties, including partridges, grouse, wheatens, greys, spangles, duns, whites, and blacks.

There is practically no end to the colour-varieties of Old English Game, and as many of them are never seen in the show-pen, it is unnecessary to describe these in detail. Their number is due to the fact that breeders have always made colour a secondary consideration, and birds that possessed the desirable Game qualities have been bred comparatively without regard for colour. The varieties generally seen in the show-pen are the Black-breasted Reds, Spangles, Duckwings, Duns, with some-

English Game.—87

times a few Piles, Whites, and Blacks. *Birchens* are the same colour as in the Moderns. *Muffs*, which have a bunch of feathers at the throat, are sometimes met with; but *Tassels*, having a small crest or tuft of feathers at the back of the comb, are nowadays seldom seen.

In breeding Old English Game there is no necessity for double-mating, but it is most important to select the healthiest and strongest birds available. The cock should have a broad breast and back, with a long and curved neck, and plumage as tight and "hard" as possible. The hen should have a small comb, with tight plumage and tail. The majority of breeders prefer old cocks for breeding, and these will give best results when mated to two-year-old hens. Birds possessing such defects as short heads or necks, white in lobe, squirrel tails, soft and loose plumage, or feet in which the hind toe does not stand well backward and flat on the ground, should be avoided.

For remarks on dubbing the reader is referred to the end of this chapter.

Modern Game.

The Modern Game fowl is entirely the product of the exhibition breeder, and the fact has never been denied that it has been bred for fancy points alone. It has been ridiculed by those who fail to see any merit in a new departure; but the fact remains that it is a triumph of the exhibition breeder, and judging it entirely from the fancy standpoint there can be no doubt regarding its position as one of the most interesting breeds in existence. As has already been explained, it has been evolved from the Old English Game, but there is little or nothing in common between the two. Even colours have undergone some change, as will be seen by comparing the descriptions. Malay blood was largely used to obtain the

abnormal length of limb, so that the Modern Game is really a composite variety, or a mongrel as some would term it.

The points required in all varieties of Modern Game include a long and snaky head, narrow across the eyes, a gracefully-curved and strong beak, prominent eye, with keen expression, small, upright, and evenly-serrated comb, smooth face, and long neck, slightly curved, and fine where it joins the head. The body must be short, wide across the front and tapering to the stern, with a flat back of the shape of a smoothing-iron, and strong but short wings tightly tucked up to the side, but the shoulders carried prominently. The tail should be short and fine, carried rather above the level of the body, the short hard feathers being closely whipped together, and the cock's sickles remarkably short and fine. The thighs should be muscular, the shanks long and rounded, and the toes long and well spread out. The plumage must be short, hard, and bright, and the carriage bold and fearless, upstanding and active. The weight averages 9lb. in cocks, 7lb. in cockerels, 7lb. in hens, and 5lb. in pullets.

The colour-varieties generally bred in Modern Game include Black-breasted Reds, Brown-Reds, Piles, and Gold and Silver Duckwings, and occasionally one comes across Birchens, Whites, and Blacks.

In the *Black-breasted Red*, or *Black-Red*, the cock should have a light orange-red head and hackles, free from black stripes, rich crimson back and wing-bows, with rich bay showing in the flights, glossy black wing-bars, and sound black shoulders, breast, under-parts and tail. The hen should have a gold head and hackle, slightly striped with black, rich salmon breast shading off to an ashy colour on the thighs, light partridge-coloured back and wings with very fine markings, and a black tail with

partridge-coloured coverts. The partridge colour must be even all over. The legs in both sexes are willow-coloured, the eyes bright red, and the beak dark horn colour.

The *Brown-Red* cock has lemon-coloured head, neck- and saddle-hackles, back, and wing-bow, the hackle being striped with black in the centre of each feather. The breast as low as the top of the thighs should be black edged with fine lemon lacing, and all other parts should be glossy green-black. The hen should have a nice lemon-coloured head and hackle, with striping in the lower feathers of the latter, whilst the black breast should be laced like the cock's with pale lemon, and the rest of the body rich glossy black. No lemon is required except in the parts stated, and the hen must be quite clear in her black on top and shoulders. The legs are black, the eyes jet-black, the beak dark horn or black, and the face also black.

The *Pile* cock has a bright orange head, neck- and saddle-hackles, rich maroon back and wing-bows, chestnut flights showing when the wing is closed, and white in all other parts of the body. The hen has a white hackle tinged with gold, salmon breast, and is pure white in other parts. The legs are bright yellow, beak yellow, and eyes cherry-red.

There are two colours in *Duckwings*—*Golden* and *Silver*. In the former the cock has a creamy-white head and hackle, pale orange back, saddle, and wing-bows, white flights showing when the wing is closed, and blue-black wing-bars, breast, thighs, and tail. The hen has silvery-white head and hackle, the latter slightly striped with black, salmon breast, shading to ashy-grey thighs, French-grey top and wings with very slight and undefined black pencilling all over, and black tail. The *Silver* cock has silvery-white head, hackle, back, saddle, and wing-bows, with a steel-blue wing-bar, and blue-black

in other parts. The pullets are similar to the Golden, but a little lighter in colour, and in both colours the legs are willow, the beak horn colour, and the eyes ruby-red.

The *Birchen* of both sexes is similar to the Brown-Red, substituting silvery-white for lemon, whilst the face should be dark purple or mulberry colour, the legs black, the beak dark horn, and the eyes black. *Blacks* and *Whites* differ only in colour.

There is greater difficulty for the beginner in breeding Modern Game on account of colour and markings being held in more respect than in the Old English varieties. This has led to double mating, which has not tended to popularise the race among the general body of fanciers. There are several methods of breeding in nearly all the varieties, but in all cases it is necessary to look after the general characteristics. We require the long thin head, the long and slightly-arched neck, the flat and tapering body, the long and muscular thighs, round shanks, and the well-spread toes, with the back one standing well behind. The hen's comb should be small, evenly serrated, and standing quite upright, and the plumage throughout should be short and hard, the tail of the cock being well whipped and firm in feather. Soft- or long-feathered birds, or those failing in head, shape, and reach, must be avoided, and it is desirable to breed from hens of good size.

In Black-Reds the best exhibition cockerels are bred from a male of good type with bright orange-red hackles and top, mated with hens that have stone-grey colour on top, with minute black pencilling and little if any of the regular partridge-brown about it, whilst the best pullets are bred from good show hens mated with a cockerel that has very light top-colour, rather lemon than orange-red. The strains in each case must be distinct, and it is most important that cock-breeding hens be

English Game.—91

cock-bred, and pullet-breeding cocks pullet-bred. In cock-breeding hens, also, it is desirable to have the tail carried low, short, and whipped together.

In Brown-Reds there is some possibility of breeding good birds of both sexes from a single mating, and some breeders do this by mating the best show cock with hens that are too dark in their lemon and very bright and glossy in their black. But the more general plan is to mate a good-coloured cock with hens that are dark in hackle and rather short of breast-lacing to produce good cockerels, whilst for pullets good show hens are mated with a somewhat dark-coloured cock, which should be particularly sound in black, and should have a moderate amount of lacing. Birds with a brown cast in their black should be avoided, and also those that are pale and washy in their lemon.

In Piles a good-coloured cock should be mated with hens that show some red on the wings and rich colour on the breast for cock-breeding. In this variety the desired rich top-colour may on occasion be improved by crossing a Black-Red cock with Pile hens, but this is only necessary when the colour is getting bred out. For pullet-breeding the male bird is preferred rather darker in top-colour and with some colour on the breast, whilst the hens, of course, should be free from red on wings and top.

In breeding Duckwings there is a good deal of cross-mating, and the best cockerels are bred as a rule from Black-Red cocks that are sound and rich in hackle with good-coloured Duckwing hens that are inclined to be pale on breast. This mating will produce the best Golden cockerels, Silvers being perhaps better when Duckwings are mated together. For pullet-breeding a good mating is that of a very pure-coloured Silver Duckwing cock excelling in top-colour with sound-coloured Duckwing hens, though by crossing a Silver Duckwing cock with

dark-coloured Black-Red hens some good Silver cockerels are sometimes bred as well as pullets.

The Birchens are bred somewhat after the same plan as the Brown-Reds, and as long as the silvery-white is pure in colour the markings are the chief points to select for. In this variety also it is easier to produce good birds from the same pen, but to attain perfection it is better to mate a good exhibition cock with hens short of breast-lacing for cock-breeding, and good show hens with a sound-coloured cock having a fair amount of lacing for pullet-breeding. Large Birchen Game are not numerous, but the Bantams enjoy considerable popularity. The variety is indeed a charming one.

In breeding Blacks and Whites the main point is to get the general characteristics of the breed, but these varieties are exceptionally rare, the few birds seen of these colours generally being sports from other varieties.

Dubbing.

In both Old English and Modern Game it is customary to dub the cockerels, the process comprising the cutting off of the comb, wattles and lobes. This custom has been assailed by certain persons as unnecessary and cruel, but in order to understand the reason for it we must go back to the days of cock-fighting. Dubbing was then instituted in order to spare birds unnecessary suffering. With the removal of comb, lobes, and wattles there was nothing for an antagonist to take hold of, whereas with these appendages left on a bird might have the side of its face torn away. The custom has been handed down, but people declare that it is now practised merely for exhibition purposes. As a matter of fact, however, even for birds that never go to a show we should still consider dubbing desirable. In all Game breeds there is the natural pugnacious instinct, and if a couple of undubbed

English Game.—93

cocks should chance to get together, as sometimes happens, even in the best regulated poultry yards, the result might be a serious injury, whilst dubbed birds might fight for hours without causing more than a little blood-letting, for it must be remembered that in the old cock-fighting days fatal wounds were inflicted by means of the steel and silver spurs worn by the belligerents. Moreover, the operation of dubbing is not so serious as it is represented to be, as is proved by the fact that a bird will begin to pick up corn a few minutes after it is over.

To make a good job of dubbing for exhibition it is advisable to remove the comb when the bird is about eight months old. Some people cut the wattles at six months, but many prefer to do all at the same time. An attendant should hold the bird to be operated upon, whilst with a pair of surgical scissors, or some made expressly for the purpose, the operator stands in front of the bird and cuts from the front to the back, keeping the scissors down on the head, so as to take the comb off as close as possible. A good clean cut will heal in a few days. Then cut the wattles, starting from the back towards the beak, but taking care not to cut into the jawbone. Any loose flesh about the lobes should also be removed at the same time. After the operation birds should be put into separate runs, for they will certainly fight if brought together again.

It is customary and quite legitimate to clip off the small feathers that grow at the sides of the comb, as well as those upon the bird's face.

Game require plenty of room if they are to be bred successfully, and a good deal of accommodation is necessary for the cocks. The Moderns are not as hardy as the Old English, and as chickens they are more difficult to rear. Moreover, in the matter of feeding, it is desirable to avoid much soft food, and to make use of such grains as white peas, beans, and oats to a large extent.

Chapter XII.

Asiatic Game.

UNDER this heading are included Malays, Aseel, Indian Game, and Black Sumatra Game.

Malays.

Malays are among the giants of the poultry yard. They are huge and ungainly-looking birds, but to the fancier there is something that appeals very strongly in their distinctive features. The head is very broad, the brows overhanging and giving the bird a wicked-looking appearance, while the beak is strong and curved. The comb is shaped like half a walnut, and is set well forward at the base of the beak, the lobes and wattles being small. The neck is long, with a slight curve, the body wide at the shoulder, the breast deep and full, the shoulders carried well up, and the tail drooping slightly with a graceful curve. In fact, the whole appearance and carriage show three distinct curves of equal degree formed by the neck, the body, and the tail. The thighs and shanks are long, the hock being free from feathers. The plumage should be very hard and firm, with much lustre, and the weight should not fall below 10lb. in cocks, 8lb. in cockerels, 8lb. in hens, and 6½lb. in pullets.

There are properly three varieties in Malays, Black-

Asiatic Game.—95

Reds, Whites and Piles, but the *Black-Red* is considerably more popular than either of the others. In the cock, the head, hackle, back, and wing-bow are rich dark red, and the wing-bar, breast, under-parts, and tail are rich glossy black, with the wing-flights showing bright bay when closed. Hens may be any shade of cinnamon, with a dark red or purple hackle, or they may be similar to Black-Red Game hens. The *Whites* are, of course, pure white in colour, and the *Piles* are similar to the Pile Game. In all cases the beak is yellow or horn colour, the shanks are bright yellow, and the eye is pearl, yellow, or daw.

In breeding Malays it is necessary to bear in mind that type and hardness of feather are more desirable points than colour, and birds should be as good as possible in shape and carriage. A tall, well-grown cockerel, standing 2ft. 6in. or more, with good strong limbs and hard narrow feathers, should be mated with hens as good as they can be got in shape. They should have good broad heads, with heavy brows and well-curved beaks. The cockerel should be free from any white feathers, and should, if possible, have a sound black breast. Malays are very quarrelsome, and cruel to birds inferior in size or fighting qualities. They possess few claims to usefulness, though they are hardy and do well in exposed situations.

Aseel.

The Aseel has some connection with the Malay, though which type is the older it is difficult to determine. The Aseel differs, however, in many ways, and though the types vary somewhat in the East, it is apparent that the Aseel has been used for fighting purposes in India until its pugilistic qualities have been developed to a much greater extent than those of the Malay. The head is broad, but short and rather small, the beak short, very strong, and slightly curved, the comb of the pea type, but

small and horny in texture, the ear-lobes very small, and the wattles practically absent altogether. The neck is of medium length, very strong, and carried on very broad and high shoulders, the body being very broad and short, with a narrower but firm stern and short, strong wings. The breast is broad and rather short, and the tail droops slightly. The thighs are very stout and strong, and are carried well apart, the shanks are short and straight, and the feet also short, with straight toes. The plumage is very hard, close, and wiry in texture, and the general appearance massive and strong, without great actual size. There is no regular colour-standard for Aseel. A number of colours are bred, including Reds, Blacks, Whites, Greys, and Spangles, and eyes may be either pearl, white, pink, or yellow, whilst beak and shanks vary in the different varieties, though they should always match. The breeding is largely a matter of selecting for shape and hardness of feather, and if these points are borne in mind one can hardly go far wrong. Aseel are most persistent fighters, hens being very troublesome, and, on the whole, they enjoy comparatively little popularity in this country.

Indian Game.

The Indian Game is a more popular breed than either of those described in the preceding paragraphs, and appears to have been produced many years ago in Cornwall by crossing Aseel with Black-breasted Red Game of the old type. The result is a variety that possesses many of the characteristics of the Aseel, together with valuable qualities which have made the Indian Game a favourite breed for crossing to produce table fowls. The head is broad, with heavy eyebrows, but fairly long and deep, the beak short, stout, and curved, the comb of the pea pattern, and the lobes and wattles small. The neck is

Asiatic Game.—97

of medium length, the body very thickset, broad, with prominent shoulder-butts, flat on the top, tapering to tail, with short and muscular wings and broad and deep breast. The thighs are stout, set wide apart, and the shanks very strong and thick. The general appearance is one of great strength and activity, with upright, commanding carriage, sloping back, and



Fig. 35. Breast-feather of Indian Game Hen.



Fig. 36. Breast-feather of Indian Game Hen, showing treble lacing.

tail (in the case of the cock) carried down at an angle of about 45deg. The hen's tail is carried slightly higher. The plumage is very hard, narrow, and firm, and cocks should weigh not less than 8lb., cockerels 6½lb., hens 6lb., and pullets 5lb. The beak is yellow or horn-colour, the shanks rich yellow, and the eye may vary from pale yellow to rich red.

In the cock the head is rich greenish-black, the hackles,

wing-bows, back and shoulders rich green-black intermingled with rich bay or chestnut, and the breast, underparts, and tail glossy green-black, the flights showing rich bay or chestnut when the wing is closed. The plumage of the hen, with the exception of the rich green-black head and the rich chestnut hackle with green-black edging, should be rich bay or chestnut ground-colour, each feather being laced with black, as shown in Figs. 35 and 36. The marking rather takes the form of coarse pencilling, and on some feathers there are two distinct lines of it, one within the other, as in Fig. 36.

There is no difficulty in breeding good specimens of both sexes from one mating, and this method is certainly preferable. Some advanced breeders practise double mating, and produce the best cockerels from dark-coloured hens with heavy lacing and the best hens from lighter-coloured and well-laced females mated with a red-hackled cock having red ticking on his breast, but this means a lot of waste, and we cannot help thinking it will seriously affect the popularity of the breed if it ever becomes general. For single mating it is necessary to choose birds with the most bone and best shape. A narrow-bodied specimen must be avoided, no matter how good it may be in colour. If the hens are clear and sharp in lacing and have fairly rich colour, and the cock is sound in his green-black, with the rich chestnut in his hackles, back and shoulders clearly defined, the pen should breed high-class specimens of both sexes, and there will be little or no waste. But in commencing to breed in this way it is most important to have stock from a strain that has been bred similarly. If one practised single mating with birds of a strain accustomed to double mating, or *vice versa*, the result would be disastrous.

Indian Game chickens are slow in feathering, and growing birds are liable to develop leg-weakness when forced.

Asiatic Game.—99

They thrive best when they have an unlimited range and are fed mostly on hard corn in variety. On account of the amount of bone or substance required they are better in their second year, and two- or three-year-old birds breed finer specimens than yearlings. There is only one recognised colour-variety in Indian Game. *Whites* have been bred, and also a very pretty variety called the *Jubilee Indian Game*, with plumage similar to that of a Buff-Laced Wyandotte, but the Indian Game Club has declined to recognise either of these as entitled to the name.

Black Sumatra Game.

The variety known as the Black Sumatra Game differs in many respects from the foregoing, being long and flowing in feather, without being soft or fluffy. It appears to have had at some time a connection with the Aseel. The Sumatra Game is an old-established variety, and breeds very true to type. It was kept in this country a number of years ago, and since then has enjoyed some share of popularity in America, but it was not until early in the twentieth century that the breed was once more brought to the front in England, since which time a standard has been drawn up and a club formed to look after its interests.

This variety has a rather small and rounded head, with slightly-curved beak, large eye with fiery expression, a pea comb fitting closely to the head and not too large, small lobes and wattles and smooth face. The neck is rather long, gracefully arched, with a flowing hackle, the body rather long, broad at the shoulders, fairly long in the back, with a broad and rounded breast, wings of good size carried fairly high at the shoulders, but folded well to the sides, and tail carried horizontally, that of the cock having a number of long sickles and coverts, which rise slightly above the stern and droop gracefully over in a

long sweep till the tips almost touch the ground. The legs and shanks are of medium length, set well apart, and it is peculiar to the breed that cocks may have two or more spurs on each leg. The back toe of the foot should stand well backward and flat on the ground. The carriage is pheasant-like, with proud and stately appearance, and the weight is about 6lb. in cocks, 5lb. in cockerels, 5lb. in hens, and 4lb. in pullets. The beak is dark olive, the eye dark red (dark brown or black permissible), the face, comb, lobes, and wattles black or mulberry-coloured (officially described as "gipsy-faced"), the legs dark olive or black, and the plumage very brilliant green-black, the sheen being an important feature.

In breeding, one properly-mated pen may be relied upon to produce good birds of both sexes, and it is important to select birds with good shape and carriage, small and neat pea combs, long and flowing but not fluffy plumage, bright, prominent eyes, and rich green sheen. Cocks especially should be good in the latter respect, and hens should be of good size, with nice shape and carriage. The breed is hardy, a good layer of rather small white eggs, and the hens are reliable sitters.

A variety known as the *Blue Madras Game* is presumably allied to this race, though considerably larger, and with plumage similar to that of the Andalusian, but with clearer blue ground-colour, and of type rather more resembling that of the Aseel. The variety is now, however, practically unknown in this country.



Chapter XIII.

Hamburghs and Redcaps.

THESE two breeds are closely allied, and belong to a distinctive race of active, prolific-laying fowls, and although some of the new sub-varieties appear to have come from abroad, others originated in this country.

Hamburghs.

There are few varieties of poultry more strikingly beautiful than the Hamburghs, but the breed has of late suffered from lack of patronage, and has been unable to hold its own with some of the modern productions. There are five standard varieties : Blacks, Silver-Spangled, Gold-Spangled, Silver-Pencilled, and Gold-Pencilled, and in all these the general characteristics are the same. The comb is of the rose pattern, square in the front, tapering into a long spike that stands out in a straight line, and not following the lines of the head and neck as in some rose-combed breeds. The ear-lobes are white and as round as possible, being larger in the Black than in the coloured varieties. The body is rather small, and the carriage lively and graceful, with head carried proudly and chest well forward. The cock's tail is long, with plenty of long sweeping sickles, and is carried at an angle of about 45deg. The Pencilled varieties are slightly smaller than the others, cocks weighing 5lb., cockereils

4½lb., hens 4lb., and pullets 3½lb.; the Black and Spangled varieties are perhaps half a pound heavier.

Black Hamburgs have very brilliant beetle-green plumage throughout, with black or horn-coloured beak, red eyes, and leaden-coloured legs. Dull colour or a purplish sheen cannot be tolerated, and in breeding it is desirable to select birds that are as bright in colour as possible. Bright colour is especially necessary in the cock, and he should also be good in comb, with a good straight spike or leader, and large round lobes of fine texture, but without a trace of white in face. The hens should also be rich in colour, with good head-points and plenty of size. Some breeders practise double-mating,

using a typical cock with hens of good colour, but smaller in lobes, for cock-breeding, and for pullet-breeding the best available hens mated with a very large-lobed cock that



Fig. 37. Neck-Hackle of Silver-Spangled Hamburg Cock.

Hamburghs.—103

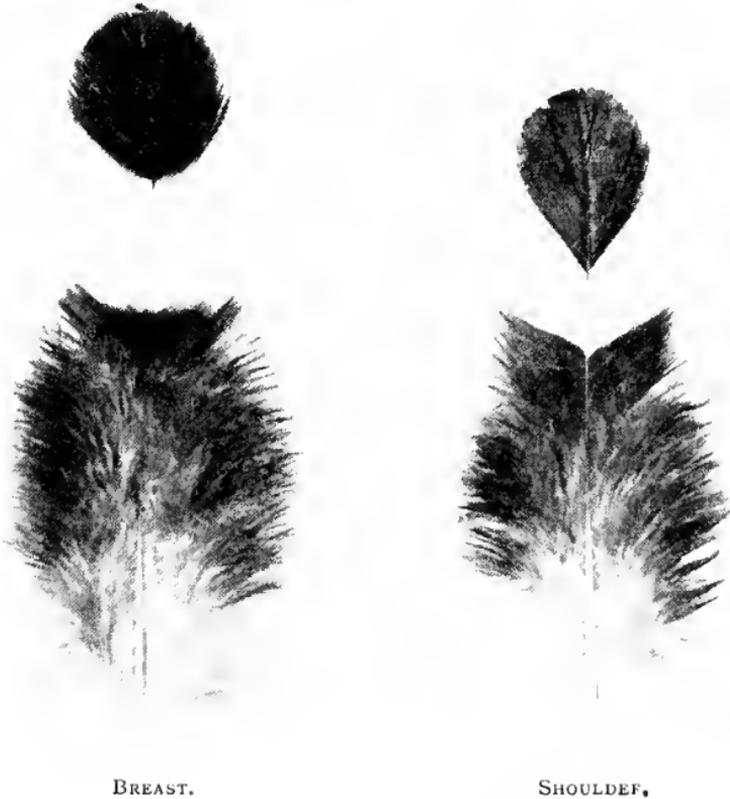
is exceptionally rich in colour. Sometimes such a bird shows red feathers in his hackle, and this appears to be indicative of rich colour, so that a bird with this defect, though unfit for show, might be very useful as a breeder.

Silver-Spangled Hamburghs are particularly handsome. The cock's neck- and saddle-hackles are white, with a tip at the end of each feather running for a short way up the centre in the form of a dagger. The plumage throughout is white, with a beetle-green tip at the end of each feather, varying in size and form, those on the shoulders being dagger-shaped like those of the hackle, and the remainder large and fairly round, except the true tail-feathers, in which the tip is shaped like a half-moon. Pure white and rich beetle-green must be the only two colours. The hen has the large round tips all over the body with the exception of the hackle, where the tips are dagger-shaped, the tail also being tipped with half-moons. (Feathers of the *Silver-Spangled* breed are shown in Figs. 37 to 40.) The beak is horn-colour, the eye red, the legs leaden-blue, and the



Fig. 38. Breast-feather of Silver-Spangled Hamburgh Cock.

lobes and comb should, of course, be of the usual Hamburg type. Double-mating is practised to produce the best specimens, and in cock-breeding a good exhibition cock, with typical comb and lobes, should be mated with large and good-headed hens having very heavy spangling



Figs. 39 and 40. Feathers of Silver-Spangled Hamburg Hen.

of rich beetle-green ; whilst in pullet-breeding, a heavily-spangled cock should run with hens that also err slightly on the dark side but are perfectly pure in colour. It is important to keep cockerel and pullet strains distinct, since they have been produced in different ways.

Hamburgs.—105

Gold-Spangled Hamburgs may be likened to the Silvers, but with rich golden-bay ground-colour in place of white. The hackles, however, are striped instead of tipped, whilst the tails of both sexes are solid rich beetle-green. The lobes are hardly as good as in other varieties, but this point is being greatly improved. In breeding, the best cockerels are to be obtained by mating a good-combed and good-lobed male, possessed of rich colour, with hens excelling in head-points and with heavy spangling, whilst for breeding pullets birds of both sexes should have heavy spangling and neat combs.

Silver-Pencilled Hamburgs are delightfully attractive, having most delicate markings, which have been attained as the result of many years' breeding. The cock has silvery-white neck- and saddle-hackles, back, shoulders, and wing-bows, breast and under-parts, a beetle-green true tail, and sickles and tail-coverts that are clearly laced with white round a solid beetle-green feather. The hen has a silvery-white hackle, and the remainder of the plumage is distinctly and evenly pencilled with beetle-green across the white feather, the pencilling being slightly broader than the spaces of white between. Very great care must be taken in breeding to keep cockerel and pullet strains distinct. The correct mating for producing good cockerels is to run an exhibition male bird, having well-laced tail and good head-points, with good-headed hens that are much too pale and weak in pencilling, some being altogether white in places; and in breeding pullets the best pullet-breeding cocks show pencilling on the wings, and often on the breast, whilst black tails are the general rule, their mates being good exhibition females.

Gold-Pencilled Hamburgs differ only in colour from the Silver-Pencilled variety. The cock's colour is bright red-bay, whilst the ground-colour of the hen is rather lighter, and is described in the standard as bright



TAIL.



TAIL-COVERT.

Figs. 41 and 42. Feathers of Gold-Pencilled Hamburg Hen.



BOTTOM OF HACKLE.



WING



BACK AT BASE OF
HACKLE.



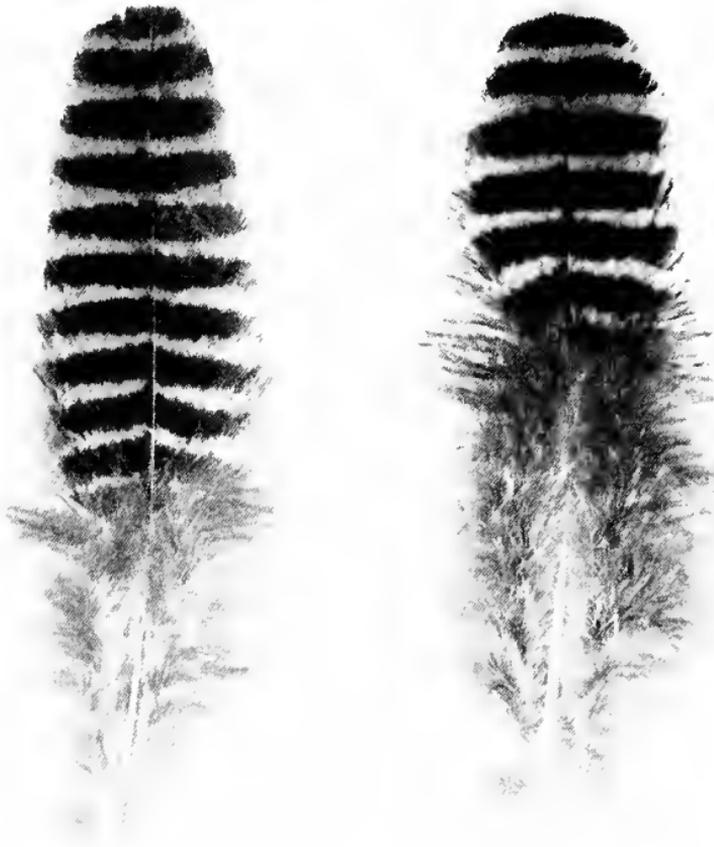
BREAST.



MIDDLE OF BACK
BETWEEN WINGS.

Figs. 43 to 47. Feathers of Gold-Pencilled Hamburg Hen.

sovereign-gold. The Gold-Pencilled are bred in much the same way as the Silver-Pencilled, though, with regard to colour, the cock-breeding hens should be rich golden-red,



CUSHION.

FLUFF CLOSE TO THIGH.

Figs. 48 and 49. Feathers of Gold-Pencilled Hamburgh Hen.

and their pencilling is of little account ; whilst for pullet-breeding the male bird should not be too dark in colour, and he should carry as much pencilling as possible. The

Hamburghs and Redcaps.—109

marking of the feathers is clearly shown in the accompanying illustrations (Figs. 41 to 49).

Several other varieties have been bred, including self-coloured *Whites* and *Bufs*, and *Buff-Pencilled*, the last being pencilled with pale buff on a white ground; but none of these have any vogue, and they are scarcely likely to become popular whilst all varieties of Hamburghs are so fast losing the popularity they once enjoyed. As layers they are mostly very prolific producers of white eggs, the Blacks and Silver-Spangled being especially good. The breed has suffered somewhat, however, from excessive close-breeding, and also from the principles of double-mating, which have made many difficulties for the novice, whilst the trimming of combs has no doubt had something to do with the breed's decline.

Redcaps.

Redcaps are closely allied to the Hamburgh, and must be dealt with in this connection. In appearance they favour the Gold-Spangled Hamburgh, though they have been bred to greater size. The breed has, in fact, been kept in Derbyshire and Yorkshire for many years, and has been valued especially for its useful qualities, being an excellent layer and a very acceptable table fowl. Outside the counties mentioned it has not made many friends in this country, although it has earned a high reputation in America, in some of the Colonies, and on the Continent. The distinguishing feature is the large rose comb, which should be of good shape, set straight on the head, and not hanging over the eye, with a straight spike or leader and plenty of fine carunculations. The shape is very much like that of the Hamburgh, but the weight runs to about 7½lb. in cocks, 6½lb. in cockerels, 6½lb. in hens, and 6lb. in pullets. The beak is horn-colour, eye red, lobes red, and legs slate-coloured. The cock has red

neck- and saddle-hackles striped with black, red back with some black spangling, red wing-bows, red and black-spangled wing-bars, and black breast, under-parts, and tail. The hen has reddish-brown ground-colour, striped hackle, and black half-moon spangles all over the body, with a sound black tail. A cock of this breed is shown in the Frontispiece.

Redcaps of both sexes may be bred from a single mating, and the points to be looked for in breeding-stock are size, good, shapely, and large combs, sound red lobes, and clear half-moon spangling.



Chapter XIV.

Mediterranean Breeds.

THIS is the description generally given to breeds of Italian origin, the best-known of which are Leghorns and Anconas.

Leghorns.

Although Leghorns are of Italian origin, they are sometimes classed among the American breeds, for the simple reason that they came to us by way of America, and no doubt they were polished up somewhat by the American breeders before they reached us. The Whites and Browns made their appearance in England first of all in the early 'seventies; Buffs came later on from the North of Europe, where Leghorns have been bred for many years; Blacks and Cuckoos came direct from Italy; and Piles and Duckwings have been produced by English breeders.

Leghorns have since become very popular in England, but even more so in America, where they rank with the Plymouth Rocks and Wyandottes as one of the national breeds. The type in the two countries also differs considerably. The American Leghorns are more slender and rather on the small side, whilst the combs are of moderate size, quality being held in more respect than mere size. In England, breeders have gone to excess in the production of large combs, and in the case of the

Whites the true Leghorn shape has been altogether neglected for birds of Minorca type, huge, tall, and gaunt, and lacking the delightful symmetry of the Leghorn. At the time of writing (1908), these monstrosities are accepted by the leading judges as the desirable type of White Leghorns, and it is difficult to say where the matter will stop. Whilst the leading breeders and judges favour the foreign type, amateurs and beginners can do no less than follow them, though a reversion to the genuine Leghorn type is earnestly to be desired.

The Leghorn differs from the Minorca in that it is smaller, more sprightly and active, and more rounded in the back. The comb is the same—large, single, upright in the cock and falling over in the hen—and the lobes are almond-shaped, though not usually so large as those of the Minorca. Moreover, the legs are rich yellow, and the breed is hardier and stands exposure better than the Spanish race. It is, indeed, a most charming and profitable breed, and with its many colour-varieties offers an attractive scope for fanciers.

The *White Leghorn* needs little description, being pure white in plumage, with yellow beak, red eye, and white or cream-coloured lobes, the former being preferred. Both sexes may be bred from one pen, but it is becoming fashionable nowadays to adopt double-mating, and for breeding cockerels a good type of male bird, excelling in comb and lobes and with good colour, should be mated with hens that excel in size and also have good colour. For pullet-breeding good exhibition hens should be mated with a good-sized cock that has deep comb-serrations and plenty of lobe. The cock's comb may fall over slightly, in which case the bird should be dubbed; but this falling-over of the comb is not of great importance, and it should not be caused by a thin comb. As in all white breeds, good colour is only to be got by breeding from birds that

Mediterranean Breeds.—113

are pure white to the skin, free from creaminess or straw tinge.

Brown Leghorns, as bred at the present day, are smaller than the Whites, though heavier in body than the original type. The cock is of the colour generally known as black-red, being very similar to the Black-breasted Red Game. He has rich orange-red neck- and saddle-hackles striped with black, crimson-red or maroon back, shoulders, and wing-bows, steel-blue wing bars, and glossy black breast, under-parts, and tail, with rich bay showing in the flights when the wing is closed. The hen has a rich golden-yellow hackle, broadly and clearly striped with black, with rich brown back, shoulders, cushion, and wings, very finely pencilled with black, and free from shafty feathers; salmon-red breast that runs darker about the throat and paler down the thighs, and black tail. The beak is yellow or horn-colour, the eye red, and the lobes creamy-white.

This is one of those varieties in which double-mating is really necessary to produce good specimens of either sex, and strains for cockerels and pullets should be kept distinct. In breeding cockerels a typical exhibition male bird with large and evenly-serrated comb, good lobes, and sound red face, together with rich colour, sound black breast, and as much striping as possible in hackle, should be mated with large hens rather more red in colour than the exhibition type, especially on shoulders. They should have deeply-serrated combs falling over with one graceful fold, and large, sound lobes, together with plenty of striping in the hackle, and, most important of all, they must actually have been bred from the same cockerel strain. In pullet-breeding the females should be of good exhibition type, with nice brown colour free from ruddiness, and with large, deeply-serrated, and well-folded combs. The male bird, of the same strain, will not be

so bright in colour as an exhibition cock, and his breast will be evenly ticked with red, whilst the comb should have good serrations, and the lobes should be large and sound.

Buff Leghorns are, of course, rich buff in colour, and as level and pure as possible, with yellow beaks, red eyes, and creamy-white lobes. Of all the buff varieties none is more attractive than this, for the colour has been bred to a high degree of excellence, whilst the Leghorn characteristics are well developed. As a rule, both sexes can be bred very well from one pen, at any rate as regards the colours, and it is advisable to use a cock that is richer in colour than the exhibition type with hens of a nice level and sound colour. As in all buff varieties, soundness in colour is most important, and if a bird is light in under-colour, or carries white in flights or tail, it cannot be relied upon to breed sound-coloured stock. The male bird should not be red on the wings and top, and both sexes should be level, free from any white, and as free from black in tail and flights as possible. Head-points must be bred for as in the other varieties.

Black Leghorns (Fig. 50) have become very popular of recent years, and have been most successfully bred. The contrast between the rich glossy black plumage, the red comb and face, the creamy-white ear-lobes, and the yellow beak and legs is very pleasing, and the variety is so hardy, and thrives so well in confinement, that it has become a general favourite among working-men fanciers whose accommodation is limited. The most persistent defect in the variety has been the tendency to throw white feathers and dark-coloured legs. Both these are natural faults in a variety of this character, and will no doubt crop up more or less persistently for many years, especially when any attempt is made to cross different strains. In breeding for exhibition it is, therefore, neces-

Mediterranean Breeds.—115

sary to employ separate matings for cockerels and pullets. The best cockerels will be bred from sound-coloured males and large rich-coloured hens with big combs, whilst for breeding pullets the male may be light in under-colour,



Fig. 50. Pair of Black Leghorns.

but should have rich-coloured legs, and the females should be as typical as possible. White feathers and under-colour in cocks and dark legs in hens are the faults most to be guarded against.

Pile Leghorns were first produced by crossing Browns

and Whites, and the colour is the same in both sexes as in the Pile Game, which has already been described. The variety is a very handsome one, but not so popular as the Whites, Browns, and Blacks. Both sexes may be bred from the same pen, by choosing a rich top-coloured male with sound white breast and tail to be mated with good-sized hens having rich-coloured breasts. If double-mating be practised it will be found advisable to use hens with red on wings and shoulders for cock-breeding, and fairly light-coloured cocks for pullet-breeding, whilst bearing in mind the general characteristics of the Leghorn. Breeders of Piles find the rich colour becomes gradually bred out as the result of a period of close-breeding, and in such cases it becomes desirable to cross with a good Brown cock, the progeny, of course, being carefully marked, and the following season some of the richest-coloured birds may be mated back to the Piles of the original strain.

Duckwing Leghorns are of two colours—Gold and Silver—and they exactly resemble the Duckwing Game varieties, with the exception that, whilst the hackles of the Game are free from black, those of the Leghorn should be striped with black. Unfortunately, Duckwings are not so popular as such beautiful varieties deserve to be, and they are seldom seen at the smaller shows. The Golden variety is more easily bred to perfection by means of double-mating, a good rich-coloured cock being put with large hens having rich salmon-coloured breasts and inclined to be red on the wings, whilst to breed pullets the best exhibition hens are mated with a cock lighter in his top-colour than is desired in a show bird. The Silvers, on the other hand, may be bred very well from one pen by mating pure-coloured birds, the general Leghorn characteristics being also considered.

Cuckoo Leghorns have the barred blue and grey

Mediterranean Breeds.—117

plumage of the Plymouth Rock. They are becoming increasingly scarce, however, and those that are now bred are produced from a single mating, medium-coloured birds with clear barring being mated together.

Blue Leghorns have been bred for some seasons, and early in 1908 a club was formed and a standard drawn up which requires that the birds shall be one level shade of blue throughout. A good many breeders favoured the colour and markings of the Andalusian, and at the time of writing there is considerable discussion as to which type shall prevail. The clear level blue is something out of the common in poultry colour, and it is probable that Blue Madras Game may be employed to secure the desired effect.

Partridge Leghorns have been exhibited, though there is little to distinguish them from the Browns. The cock is practically the same, though the hen has the pencilling of the Partridge Wyandottes.

In the United States *Rose-combed Leghorns* are also bred in several varieties, and these are very highly valued as layers, but up to the present they have not been taken up and are not recognised in this country.

Anconas.

The Ancona might reasonably be called a Mottled Leghorn, for it really belongs to the same family, and its connection with the Black Leghorn is very close. It has the same shape and carriage, comb, ear-lobes, and other characteristics, but its legs should be yellow mottled or spotted with black, its beak yellow shaded with black or horn, and the plumage rich beetle-green, each feather being tipped with white in order to show even mottling all over the body. Present-day breeders prefer a small tip of white at the end of each feather, giving a rather dark appearance, and the cocks are almost black on the



BODY OF HEN.



TAIL OF COCK.

Figs. 51 and 52.
Feathers of Anconas.



BREAST OF COCK.



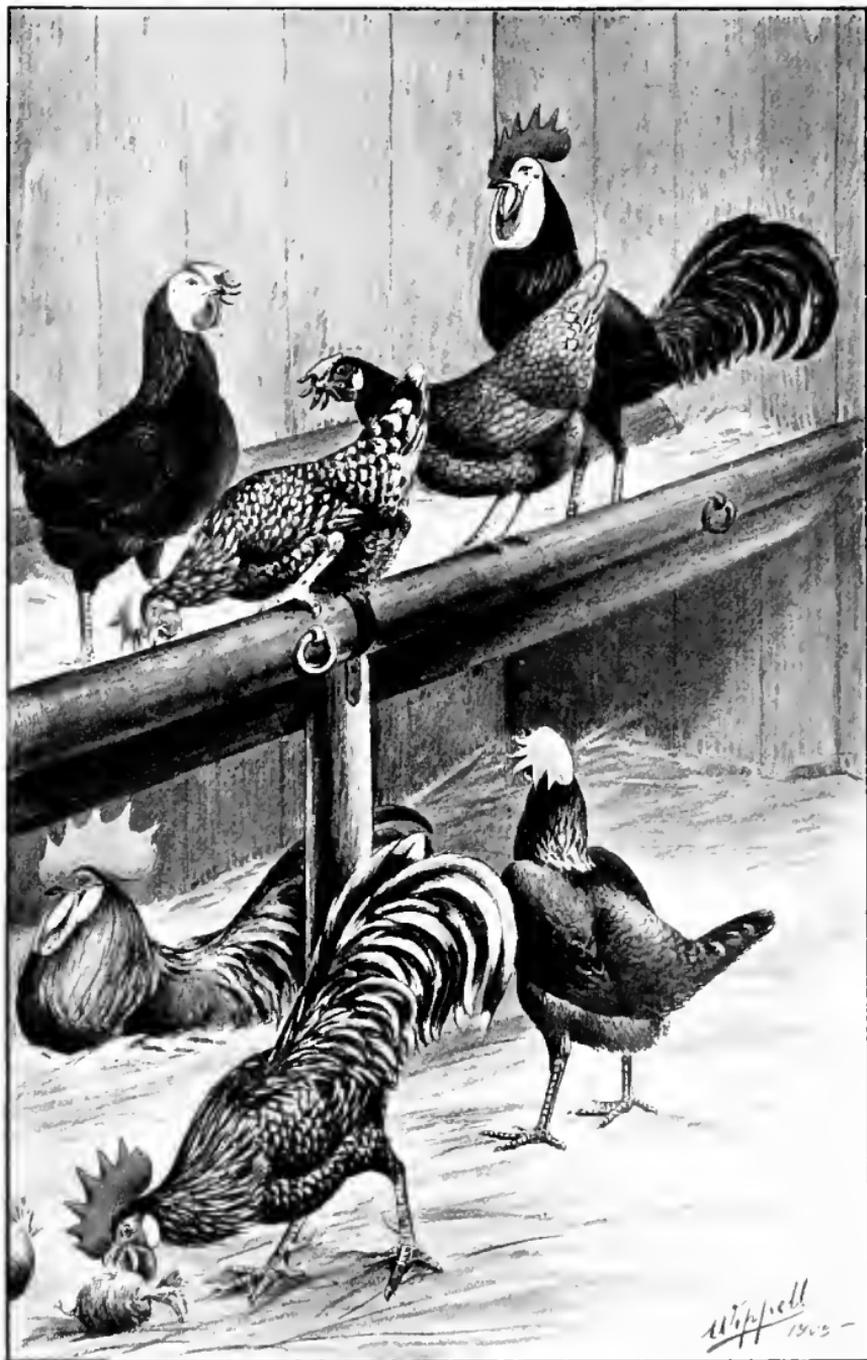
HACKLE OF HEN.

Figs. 53 to 55. Feathers of Anconas.

top and shoulders. White feathers in tail and flights are very frequent, and it is a difficult matter to produce a bird correctly marked to any standard; indeed, whenever breeders do attain any exceptional degree of regularity in marking it will probably be at the expense of vigour and useful qualities, for it can only be done by excessive close-breeding. Feathers from exhibition specimens of Anconas are shown in Figs. 51 to 55, and a pair of birds on p. 122.

Anconas of both sexes may be bred very well from one pen, and the most important point in breeding is to use only birds that are sound black in under-colour, those, in fact, in which the fluff and shaft of the feathers are free from white. It will generally be found that in breeding from a bird carrying a good deal of white the progeny will come lighter, and the best plan is to choose a cock rather dark on top, with fine ticking in his hackle, fine and even breast-mottling, and with his tail and wing-feathers as black as possible, and to mate him with hens that are evenly mottled all over, having clear and distinct V-shaped tips to each feather, and the ground-colour rich beetle-green. Both sexes should have as much mottling in the legs as possible, and the combs should be large, shapely, and well serrated, and the lobes of good almond shape and pure colour. Anconas are hardy, very active, and excellent layers.

Rose-combed Anconas have been bred for a number of years without making much headway, although they show marked improvement. The combs should be of the Wyandotte type, the leader following the curve of the neck and not standing straight out, as in the *Hamburgh*. A peculiarity of this variety is that many of the hens lay rich brown eggs, thus indicating a cross with some of the heavier breeds.



Spanish Hen. Ancona Hen. Andalusian Hen. Spanish Cnck.
 Minorca Cock. Ancona Cnck. Minorca Hen.

SPANISH AND MEDITERRANEAN BREEDS.

Chapter XV.

Spanish Breeds.

THE varieties dealt with in this chapter may be embraced under the general heading of Spanish breeds. They are branches of the great family of non-sitting fowls whose large single combs and white or light lobes are among the distinguishing characteristics. This family includes also the Leghorns; but the three breeds under discussion have come to us direct from the Peninsula, and are, therefore, classified as Spanish.

Spanish.

The Spanish fowl proper undoubtedly stands at the head of this great race, although at the present day it is by no means popular among English fanciers. Forty or fifty years ago this breed held a unique position among exhibition varieties, and the main cause of its decline may be found in the fact that excessive in-breeding, together with close confinement, has converted a hardy breed into one more than ordinarily delicate. The difficulties in preparing birds for show may to some extent account for the lack of patronage accorded the breed nowadays, but this to a less extent than the aforementioned reasons.

Spanish fowls are fairly tall and reachy, with compact bodies, rather long in the back, and with tails carried moderately high. The comb is single, that of the cock

being upright, firm and strong, evenly and deeply serrated, and smooth in texture, whilst that of the hen is also deeply serrated but droops gracefully to one side. A large comb is not so much desired as one of fine quality and texture. The beak is black, the eyes black, the legs slate-grey, and the plumage rich beetle-green. The leading feature, however, is the face, which should be as large as possible, going well back upon the neck and with plenty of space between the eye and the comb. It should be free from wrinkles and coarseness, pure white in colour, like a kid glove in texture, and showing neither blue nor red. That of the cock is much larger than the hen's, and it should hang well below the red wattles, which are long and thin. The face has a number of fine hairy feathers, and at one time it was considered illegal to remove these from birds intended for exhibition. Nowadays, however, it is a recognised custom to remove them with a pair of pincers, leaving small black specks, though the small feathers between the top of the face and the base of the comb should not be touched. The faces of exhibition birds require considerable care, and the rules laid down in the chapter on "Preparing for Exhibition" with regard to white-lobed fowls may be noted. It is important, however, to prevent the faces from getting into a bad state by protecting the birds from exposure.

Perhaps the most important point in breeding is to stick to birds of the same strain, for this variety has now been so in-bred that an outcross invariably brings disaster. The same pen will breed both sexes, and the male should have a good upright comb with a face as smooth as possible, perfectly sound, free from blue or red, and without folds or creases, even if the size has to be sacrificed. With such a bird, hens with large and coarser faces may be mated, though it is desirable when possible to avoid all semblance of coarseness and creases in either sex.

Minorcas.

The Minorca is one of the most popular breeds both among fanciers and utilitarian poultry-keepers. Some of the first importations appear to have come from the island of Minorca, and for a number of years it enjoyed considerable local popularity in Devonshire and the South-West of England before it attracted general notice. It differs from the Spanish somewhat, in that it is more compact in body and not so long in the limbs. The comb, too, is rather larger and coarser in texture, and the face is red, with large white lobes of almond shape. The cock's comb is, of course, upright, firmly set on the head, and should have several deep and even serrations, whilst that of the hen droops gracefully over to one side with similar deep and even serrations. The combs of this, as of all single-combed varieties, should be free from side sprigs and other excrescences. The plumage is glossy black, and the legs very dark slate, but there is also a pure *white* variety, in which the beak is white, the eye red, and the shanks pinky-white. A *rose-combed* variety has for some time been popular in America, and birds have been exported at high prices to some parts of Europe, but up to the present very few English breeders have welcomed the innovation.

In breeding Minorcas a modified plan of double-mating may be followed. There is no necessity to go to the length of separate strains for cockerels and pullets, but in many cases it has come to this. The beginner must, therefore, be largely guided by the conditions under which the strain whence he gets his breeding-stock has been bred. For producing the best cockerels a good male bird, with strongly-built comb and about five deep serrations, large, shapely, and smooth lobes, and perfectly red face, should be mated with pullets rather taller than usual

and with particularly good comb serrations. If their combs are firmly set on the head and droop over without actually "flopping," so much the better. In breeding pullets good heavy-combed hens may be used, and a cock whose comb falls over to one side is preferable to one whose comb is very firmly set on the head. Such a bird will be better dubbed; indeed, in the case of large-combed poultry dubbing is often a merciful process and prevents losses, as the large combs are liable to be frost-bitten in cold weather or otherwise injured, in which cases a bird is rendered unfit for breeding.

A serious fault in Minorcas and in other white-lobed breeds is the tendency to white in face, and among a large section of Minorca breeders this is reckoned a fatal defect. Breeding-stock should therefore be perfectly sound in face, without a speck of white, the red extending well under the lobes. Frequently a sound-faced young bird develops white in face later in life, but such a bird should not be bred from, as the tendency will certainly be inherited. The lobes of breeding-stock should be of good almond shape, fitting closely, and quite distinct from but coming over part of the face, without fold or crease and of sound texture.

Minorcas are hardy and excellent layers of large white eggs. They are non-sitters, and up to the present their general qualities have not been affected to any serious extent by breeding for exhibition points, though it is significant that strains in which comb and lobe are highly developed lack the degree of vigour and general usefulness found in utility strains.

Andalusians.

The Andalusian is more slender and reachy than the Minorca. The comb is scarcely as large, though nowadays it is bred to much the same pattern, with the excep-

Spanish Breeds.—127

tion that it does not come down behind so close to the neck. The lobes are almond-shaped, white, and of fine texture, but not so large as those of the Minorca. The cock has rich velvety black hackle, back, saddle, shoulders, and wing-bows, with a purplish-black tail, the breast,



BREAST OF COCK.



WING OF HEN.

Figs. 56 and 57. Feathers of Andalusians.

thighs, and wing-bars being clear slate-blue, with a distinct black lacing round each feather. The hen has a velvety-black hackle, and the rest of the body is laced with black on a clear slate-blue ground, as clearly and evenly as possible. The beak is dark slate or horn, the eye dark red

or reddish-brown, and the legs dark slate. Feathers of this breed are shown in Figs. 56 and 57.

Being a composition of black and white, a somewhat large proportion of black and white chickens are bred from Andalusians, even with the most careful mating. The best plan in breeding is to compromise by mating dark- and light-coloured birds together, and provided the birds in the breeding-pen are of the same strain some good quality should result from matings of this kind. A very dark cockerel with heavy lacing should be put with hens of a light but even shade of blue, with rather fine lacing, and a light-coloured male bird should go with darker and heavily-laced hens. This will produce a desirable medium shade of colour and clear lacing. Head-points should, of course, be remembered, and what has been said of the Minorca applies again in this case. There is much room for improvement in the ground-colour and lacing of Andalusians, and in particular the lacing up the breast and throat is invariably lacking in clearness, though even this point is to be gained by careful selection of breeding-stock. The presence of the black and white mismarked chickens is actually desirable, for these colours are the foundation of the breed, and when either became bred out the richness of colouring would inevitably vanish. The breed is hardy and a good layer, and enjoys a moderate share of popularity.



Chapter XVI.

French Breeds.

THE French races of poultry are chiefly remarkable for table qualities, but several have become moderately popular among English exhibitors, and among these the Houdan and the Faverolles are the most conspicuous at the present time. Some years ago La Flèche and Crève-cœurs had a comparatively good following, but since the commencement of the present century they have become more and more scarce, and are now only occasionally seen at some of the larger shows in the "variety" classes. The La Bresse variety has recently been taken up by some breeders, but chiefly for utility purposes, whilst such breeds as the Du Mans, Courtes-Pattes, Barbezieux, and others are practically unknown in this country, and are in most cases only to be considered from the utilitarian standpoint.

Houdans

The Houdan may be considered the most popular breed in France, and in this country it has been extensively kept for a number of years. It is of good size, cocks weighing about 9lb., cockerels about 8lb., hens about 7lb., and pullets about 6lb., though this may be exceeded.

In shape the Houdan is somewhat after the Dorking type, with a deep body, long and straight breast-bone, and

broad and moderately long back. But its distinguishing characteristics are in the head points, the variety being descended from the Polish race, in which a large and rounded crest is a prominent feature. In the Houdan cock this crest is large and compact, the feathers inclining slightly backward so as to show the comb, whilst the hen's crest is large and globular. The comb resembles a butterfly set in the centre of the head, the wings spreading on each side, and, of course, is larger in the cock than in the hen. The wattles are very small. In addition to the crest the head should be adorned with whiskers or muffling on each side of the face, and a bib or beard hanging beneath the beak. The cock has a very full tail, with plenty of sickles, whilst that of the hen is of fair size and carried at a graceful slant. Like the Dorking, the Houdan has five toes, the legs being pinky-white mottled with blue or black, though in old birds it is not unusual to see grey-coloured legs without much mottling. The plumage is black and white, the mottling effect being produced by white tips to the green-black feathers. Even mottling is desirable, and large patches of white or any excess of white in the tail and flights must be considered a fault. The beak is light horn-colour, and the small lobes are white, these latter being hidden by the muffling.

Houdans of both sexes may be bred on the single-mating system, and in spite of the numerous points to be sought for, a properly-mated pen will produce a fair number of exhibition chickens. The male should possess exceptional merits as regards the points of crest and comb, the latter being of good size but not loose and ragged. The hens should also have compact globular crests, and as regards colour we prefer to have the hens rather on the dark side, in which case it is safe policy to mate with them a cock rather heavily mottled but not necessarily showing patches of white. It will be found that dark-coloured

French Breeds.—131

birds usually have dark legs, but if the cock is right in this respect there is every chance of striking a happy medium in the progeny.

Crève-cœurs.

The Crève-cœur is another crested breed, of very similar shape to the Houdan, but rather more cobby in type. The plumage is rich green-black throughout, the beak dark horn, and the legs and feet black or dark slate. The distinctive feature is the comb, which is in the form of two horns, pointing about midway between the horizontal and the perpendicular, and free from side sprigs. This is a very handsome variety, and breeds very true to type, so that it is a pity it is not more generally kept. Provided the breeding-pen have good colour, shapely crests, and properly-formed combs, the progeny will come very true and the birds are easily shown.

La Flèche.

The La Flèche is another black variety, and also possesses a horned comb, though the horns are shorter and stand nearly upright. It is bred without a crest, and with white lobes of medium size. It is not so well known as the Crève, and is at the present time very scarce in this country.

Faverolles.

The Faverolles is a comparatively new composite breed, having been produced from crosses among Brahmas, Cochins, Dorkings, and Houdans. As a general-purpose fowl it has come to be known as perhaps the best of the French varieties, whilst its exhibition qualities have been recognised by many breeders. Three colour-varieties are bred: Salmon, Ermine, and Black; and of these the first-named is by far the most popular.

The Faverolles is a large breed, the weight running to about $8\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in cocks, 7lb. in cockerels, 7lb. in hens, and 6lb. in pullets. The body is thick, deep, and cloddy, the breast being deep and the breast-bone long, whilst

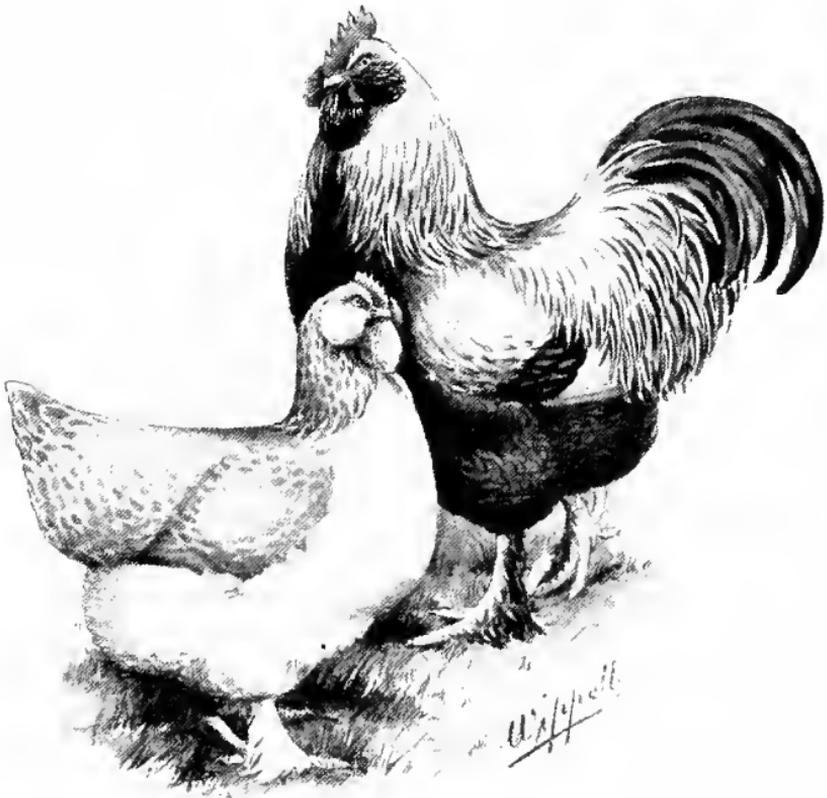


Fig. 58. Pair of Salmon Faverolles.

the back is broad and long, the general shape being somewhat after the style of the Dorking. The comb is single and of medium size, the lobes and wattles small, and the face should be furnished with plenty of muffling or

French Breeds.—133

whiskers and a short beard. The legs are short, stout, and sparsely feathered down to the outer toe, the feet having five toes.

The Salmon variety (Fig. 58) has horn or white beak, white legs and feet, grey or hazel eye, and red face, which is partially concealed by the muffling. The cock has straw-coloured hackles, a mixture of white, black, and brown on back and shoulders, black breast, straw-coloured wing-bows, and black wing-bars, tail, and fluff, whilst his muffling and beard are black ticked with white. The hen's hackle is wheaten-brown of a light shade, striped with a darker shade of the same colour, the back and shoulders, flight feathers, and tail are wheaten-brown, the wings or sides are of a slightly lighter shade, and the breast, thighs, and fluff, as well as the beard and muffling, are creamy-white. Whilst it is not absolutely necessary to keep separate strains to breed each sex, it is certainly desirable to mate separately for cockerels and pullets, owing to the difference in colour between the sexes. In each case the male bird should carry plenty of muffling, and a cock-breeder should have a perfectly sound black breast, whilst for pullet-breeding some brown mottling on the breast is not objectionable, and we like to see plenty of brown about the back, tail, and wings. A bird showing much white is, however, to be avoided, as he is certain to throw an excess of light-coloured chickens. In choosing hens one requires birds of good size, and for breeding pullets they should be quite free from black in hackle, wings, tail, and under-colour, but the brown should be of a good rich colour.

The Ermine variety has the same colour as the Light Brahma. It is very seldom seen in this country, and in breeding it one has only to follow the rules laid down for guidance in breeding Light Brahmas, whilst bearing in mind the general characteristics of the Faverolles. The

Black variety is as yet in an imperfect state, and is kept by only two or three breeders.

La Bresse.

This breed has earned for itself some measure of popularity among utilitarians. In France it is recognised as the best breed for the table, and this in spite of the fact that it is distinctly Mediterranean in type, being very

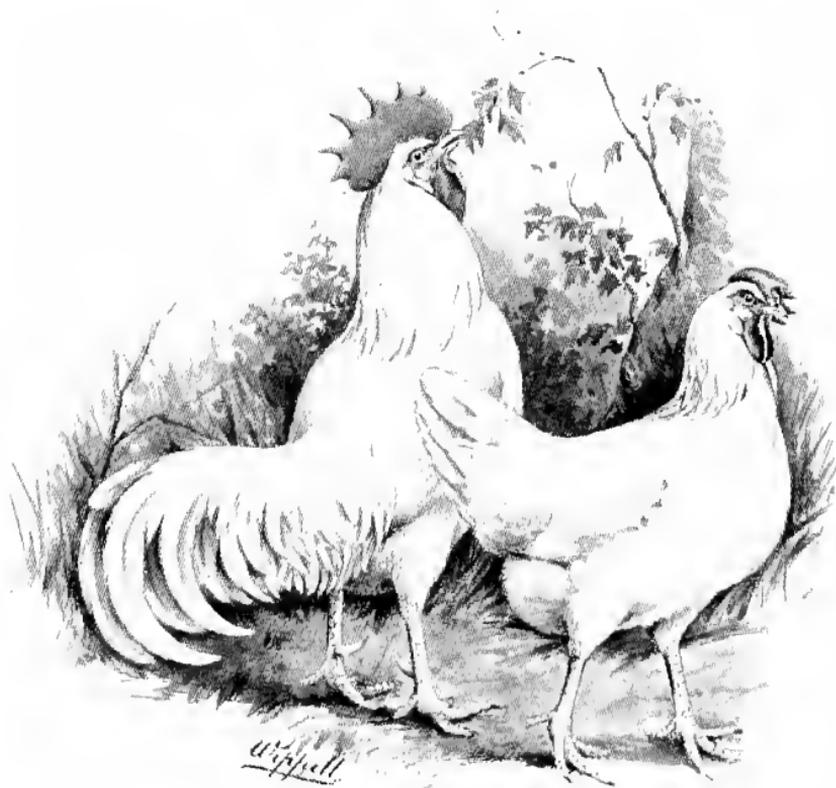


Fig. 59. Pair of White La Bresse.

French Breeds.—135

similar to the Leghorn, and though the body is rather longer it is still on the small side from our own point of view. But the La Bresse carries very little offal; the bone is fine, and what there is of it is good, so that even in England it has been found a profitable variety for breeding early spring table chickens. Add to this the fact that it is an excellent layer of large white eggs, having won prizes in the laying competitions, and a moderate sitter, it will be seen that the La Bresse fully deserves a place among the standard breeds.

Three colour-varieties are bred, viz., *Grey* (in which the plumage is white pencilled with grey), *Black*, and *White*; but up to the present English breeders have confined their attention almost entirely to the *White* (Fig. 59). The comb is single, erect in the cock and falling over in the hen, the ear-lobes are white, and the legs slate-grey. As an exhibition bird the La Bresse has not yet been seriously considered, and it is solely on account of its undoubted value from the utilitarian standpoint that it can be recommended.

Other French Breeds.

The *Bourbourg* has recently been strongly recommended for utility purposes in this country; it is of moderate size, has black and white plumage, a single comb, red lobes, and white legs. Although a non-sitter it lays brown eggs, and its fine bone and good-coloured flesh make it a very useful breed for producing table chickens of high quality. The *Du Mans* is a black-plumaged fowl with a rose comb and cobby shape; the *Courtes-Pattes* is a single-combed black variety; and the *Barbezieux* is very similar to our *Minorca*. But none of these has as yet been exhibited in this country.

Chapter XVII.

Other Continental Breeds.

IN all European countries there are several more or less distinctive varieties peculiar to certain localities, and the most meritorious of these have come under the notice of English breeders, with the result that our collections of poultry have received valuable additions from other countries.

Polish.

One of the most distinctive among the Continental races is the Polish, and though of late years it has lost much of the popularity that it once enjoyed in this country, there are few more striking and handsome varieties of poultry. Polish fowls are still bred in large numbers on the Continent, and at many shows in France, Belgium, and Holland well-filled classes and excellent quality will be found. The distinctive point about the Polish is the formation of the skull, which has a spherical protuberance on the top, and the size of this is a sure indication of the size of the crest, so that the largest-crested birds can be picked out as chickens. The crest should be as large as possible, circular, free from split or parting, that of the cock falling from the centre with long feathers that reach well down the neck, whilst that of the hen has stiffer feathers well arranged in globular

Other Continental Breeds.—137

formation. The comb is small, consisting merely of two small horns, generally hidden by the crest, while in some varieties it is practically non-existent. The spangled varieties have muffling about the face and a long bib or beard, the others having smooth faces and long pendulous wattles. The carriage is erect and strutting, with

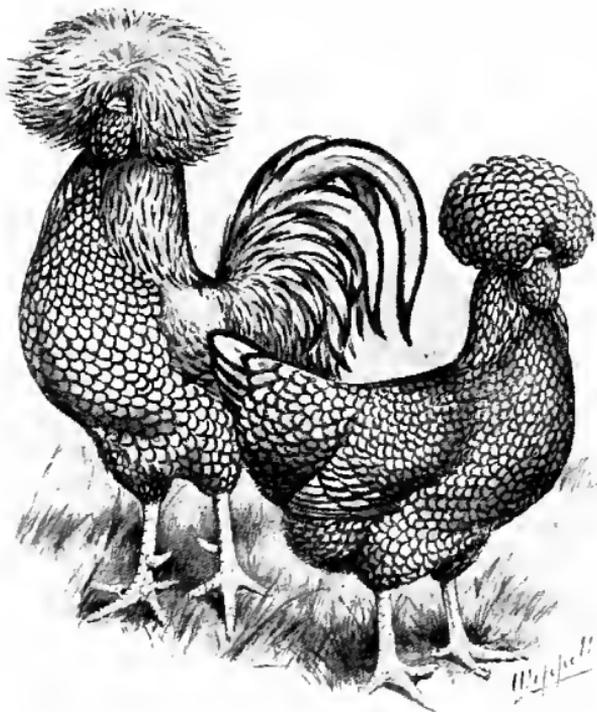


Fig. 60. Pair of Silver-Spangled Polish.

slim, sprightly bodies and large tails, and the weight runs to about $6\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in cocks, $5\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in cockerels, 5 lb. in hens, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in pullets. There are numerous colour-varieties, some of which are nowadays seldom seen. Those for which standards have been drawn up are Silver- and Gold-Spangled, White-crested Blacks, White-crested Blues,

Whites, and Chamois or Buff-Laced. Other varieties that have at times been bred and exhibited include Blacks, Black-crested Whites, Buffs, and Cuckoos.

The Silver- and Gold-Spangled varieties somewhat resemble the Silver and Gold Wyandottes. The crest-feathers of the *Silver-Spangled* cock are black at the roots, silver at the centre, and tipped at the edge with black. The neck- and saddle-hackles are silver tipped with black, the back and shoulders are spangled, and the wing-bars, breast and under-parts, and beard are silver laced with black, the lacing being rather heavier at the tip than in the Wyandottes. The tail is also silver laced with black, the sickles having a good spangle at the tip. In the hen the entire plumage is white or silver laced with black, the lacing being clear and distinct, coarser than in the Wyandottes, but leaving a good white centre in each feather. The beak is dark blue or horn-colour, eye red, ear-lobes (which are small, circular, and almost invisible behind the muffling) bluish-white, and legs dark blue. Fig. 60 shows a typical pair of Silver-Spangled Polish. In the *Gold-Spangled* variety the markings are the same, golden-bay ground-colour being substituted for silver or white.

The *White-crested Blacks* are perhaps the most strikingly handsome of all, the body-plumage being rich metallic black and the crest pure white. There is no bib or muffling, and the lobes are white, other points being the same as in the aforementioned varieties. The *White-crested Blues* also have the pure white crest, the body-colour being solid dark blue without any lacing. The *Chamois* or *Buff-Laced* is a particularly pleasing variety, having white lacing round a rich buff feather, and resembling a Buff-Laced Wyandotte. The markings are the same as in the Gold- and Silver-Spangled, and, like them, the Chamois has a muffled face and beard. In the *White* variety the plumage is pure white throughout.

Other Continental Breeds.—139

In breeding all varieties of Polish, particular attention must, of course, be paid to the crest; and size and shape are the main points. The cock in particular should have a very good crest, and both sexes will breed better if the crests are clipped during the breeding season, owing to the birds being unable to see one another if the crests are large. In the Gold- and Silver-Spangled varieties the lacing or spangling has been neglected for the sake of better crests, but breeders will in the future do well to cultivate this point by selecting breeding-stock in which the lacing is sound and goes all round the feather. Both sexes may be bred from one pen, but in the Silvers we require purity of the white, and in the Golds ground-colour of a rather richer shade than usual, especially in the cock. Breeding-stock in White-crested Blacks and White-crested Blues should have perfectly sound colours, the crests being large and shapely and free from black feathers or ticking. In the Chamois the great thing is to strike the happy medium in ground-colour, and it will be found that a somewhat rich but level-coloured cock will do best when mated with hens of a moderate shade, but both sexes should have clear and pure white lacing throughout.

Polish have been so persistently bred for show points that they cannot be classed as a hardy race. They lay a fair number of white eggs in spring and summer, and very seldom go broody; but the chickens are delicate, and the adults frequently give trouble on account of the size of their crests interfering with their sight.

Campines.

This variety was brought very prominently to the front some few years ago, and if it has not altogether borne out early promise it still enjoys a fair share of popularity, and is generally considered an excellent layer. The breed comes from Belgium, where a similar variety is also

kept under the name of *Braekel*. This latter is larger than the Campine, but it is certain that the two are very closely allied, and that the different types have been developed in two different localities. The Campine (the name is pronounced Kampeen) is a small, active fowl, a non-sitter, but with a long breast which makes it useful for

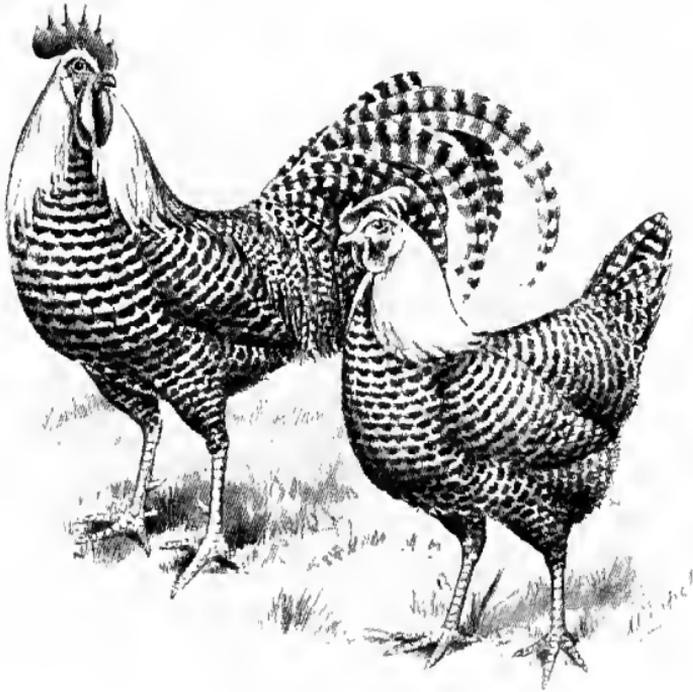


Fig. 61. Pair of Silver Campines.

table purposes. It has a single comb of moderate size, well serrated, upright in the cock and falling over in the hen, and white ear-lobes of almond shape, whilst the eye is dark brown and the legs are slate colour.

There are two varieties, Silver and Gold, but the latter enjoys a very small share of popularity. The *Silvers* (Fig. 61) have silvery-white hackles, the remainder of the

Other Continental Breeds.—141

plumage being barred with black on a silvery-white ground.

The coarseness of the barring is an important point, for it should not resemble the fine pencilling of a Hamburgh, but rather the barring of a Plymouth Rock, with the bars and spaces between of equal extent, as shown in the illustrations (Figs. 62 to 66). With regard to the back and saddle of the cock, there has been some difference of



SADDLE HACKLE.



BREAST.

Figs. 62 and 63. Feathers of Silver Campine Cock.



BACK OF HEN.



BREAST OF HEN.



BACK OF COCK.

Figs. 64 to 68. Feathers of Silver Campines.

Other Continental Breeds.—143

opinion. At first a silvery-white top was favoured, but the standard of the present day goes for barring all over the body, and this makes it possible to produce good specimens of both sexes from one mating, which is a great consideration, and also creates further distinction between the Campine and the Hamburg. The barring or mackerel-marking is also valued in the cock's sickle-feathers. The *Golden* variety should be identical in marking, rich golden-bay being substituted as the ground-colour for silvery-white.

Considering that the Campines of the present day are very far from perfection, breeding is a matter of considerable difficulty. We believe, however, that a very great deal depends upon the barring of the cock. If this is bold and clear up to the throat, down the thighs, and also on the wings and back, the tail being also marked, he cannot fail to produce well-barred birds of both sexes when mated with good-sized hens of the same strain that have plenty of space between the bars. Colour should be good, and head-points should be looked after as well as plumage, whilst a red eye must be avoided as an indication of Hamburg blood. Campines are hardy, and easy to keep under any circumstances.

Lakenfelder.

This breed (see Frontispiece) is kept in Germany, Holland, and Belgium, but authorities differ as to where it had its origin. The name, as we spell it, is German, and signifies "linen-field," having reference to the white body and the black neck and tail. This combination appears to be popular in some Continental countries, as there is a breed of cattle with black forequarters and hindquarters that we have heard described as Dutch sheeted cattle. The *Lakenfelder* is a small variety, with graceful and fairly upright carriage, single comb of moderate size,

evenly serrated, and carried upright in both sexes, white lobes, and slate-grey legs. The hackle, saddle, and tail of the cock, as well as the hackle and tail of the hen should be dense black, and all other parts of the body pure white. There is much room for improvement yet, and many hackles run light near the head. Both sexes can be bred from one mating, and in breeding it is important to have a cock with as sound hackle, saddle, and tail as possible, the hens being pure in their white. The variety is fairly hardy, and a useful layer of white eggs. Though it has not attained much popularity in this country, it is to be seen at the leading shows.

Coucous de Malines.

This is a Belgian variety, valuable for table purposes, but little known in this country. It is large, with upright carriage, pinky-white legs, and barred plumage resembling that of the Plymouth Rock. A white sport has also been bred.

Ramalslobers.

A German variety, kept by a few breeders in England, though not for show purposes. It is a fowl of the Minorca type, with single comb, white ear-lobes, and blue legs, and is bred in either white or buff. It is considered an excellent layer and a good table fowl.

Orloffs.

This variety comes from Russia, and specimens were exhibited at the Birmingham Show some years ago, but they did not attract much attention. The birds are very large, and of similar type to Indian Game, with large heads and very thick necks, and with beard and muffling, but no crests. Three colour-varieties are bred—*Mahogany*, *Speckled*, and *White*. This breed was known many years

Other Continental Breeds.—145

ago as the *Russian*, or *Cossack*, and it is hardy, a good layer, and a useful table fowl.

Minor Continental Breeds.

Gueldres, or Bredas.—A variety found in Belgium, Holland, and some parts of France, having a small crest and a curious formation of comb in the shape of a hollow depression. A Barred or Cuckoo variety is the commonest, but the breed is seldom met with nowadays.

Combattants de Bruges and *Combattants de Liège* are allied races of Belgian Game fowls, somewhat resembling a cross between our Indian Game and Malays, though they are bred more for table purposes than for fighting.

Barbus d'Anvers are Belgian Bantams with black plumage, but lacking in distinctive characteristics.

There are a number of other varieties known on the Continent, but none has so far been kept in England, and they can be of no interest to English breeders, especially as most of them are merely bred for general purposes and lack distinctive qualities.



Chapter XVIII.

Other Distinct Varieties.

UNDER this heading we group several varieties not hitherto mentioned. Many of these are obliged to take refuge in the "Any Other Variety" classes at shows, for want of separate classification.

Sussex.

For many years the poultry-keepers of Sussex have been famed for their excellent table poultry, and in course of time certain distinct composite varieties have been produced, primarily for table purposes only, but these have within the last few years been recognised and standardised as exhibition varieties, and have been embraced under the general title of Sussex Fowls. Certain utilitarians have urged that this will result in the spoliation of the breed's table properties, but if some strains are bred solely for show purposes it does not necessarily follow that the strains which will still remain among the numerous utility breeders will also be affected.

The exact origin of the Sussex varieties is merely conjectural, but it may be considered certain that the Dorking has played a prominent part in their composition. Although Sussex have only four toes, they more resemble the Dorking in shape than anything else. They have broad and flat backs, long and deep breast-bones, short thighs



White Pullet and Cock.
YOKOHAMAS.

Other Distinct Varieties.--149

and shanks, tight plumage, and medium-sized tails. The combs are moderate-sized, single, upright, and evenly serrated, and the weight runs to about 9lb. in cocks, $7\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in cockerels, 7lb. in hens, and 6lb. in pullets. Shanks and feet are white and free from feathers, flesh and skin

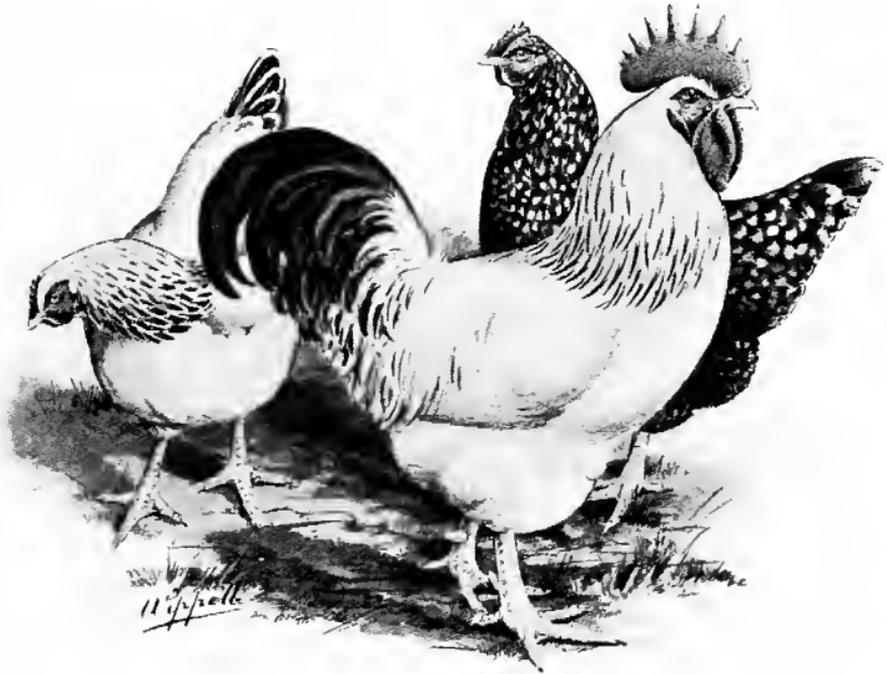


Fig. 67. Pair of Light Sussex and Speckled Sussex Hen.

white and of fine texture, and the beak is white or horn colour.

There are three standard varieties—Light, Red, and Speckled. The *Light* is similar to the Light Brahma, the plumage being white, with black striping in the hackle, black tail, and some black in flights. The *Red* variety has

rich red or chestnut-brown plumage, with black striping in the hackle, black tail, and black in flights. The colour should be as level as possible, allowing for greater lustre on the top and shoulders of the cock, and it should be distinctly red and not merely dark buff. The *Speckled* variety is practically similar in plumage to the Diamond Jubilee Orpington, and the only distinction is in the shape. This should always be a great barrier between the two breeds, but unfortunately some judges have little regard for shape, and so it has been possible for the same birds to win occasionally either as Speckled Sussex or Jubilee Orpingtons.

In breeding Sussex of all varieties, attention should be paid to shape, and any failing in this respect should not be perpetuated. Good legs and fine texture of skin and flesh are also desirable. In Lights, the chief point is to get pure snow-white plumage with clear black hackle striping, and the best specimens will be produced from a cock with good bold striping, whilst both sexes should have good colour. In Reds, a good dark-coloured cock makes the best breeder, but both he and the hens should be as level as possible. In the Speckled variety a well-spangled cock is desirable, and if he carries a good deal of white we should prefer to mate him with hens in which this colour is not very prominent. A well-spangled hackle is a point somewhat difficult to obtain.

Both sexes may be bred from a single mating in all three varieties, which is much in the breed's favour. Up to the present, Sussex are little known outside the county, and have only been seen at a few of the important shows. The breed has many local patrons, however, and it is one in which fancy points and general usefulness are judiciously combined, so that it deserves to be far better known among those who require a first-class general purpose variety.

Rhode Island Reds.

This variety of poultry is one of the latest productions from America, and, having achieved much success in the States, has recently been introduced into this country. Like all American breeds, it has yellow shanks and skin, and is highly valued for table and general purposes in its own country. It has a long and deep body, not carried so upright as that of the Wyandotte, and the thighs and shanks are comparatively short, the latter being free from feathers. Either single or rose combs are permitted, and the lobes are red and, like the wattles, of medium size. The beak is reddish horn colour, and the plumage of the cock is described as cherry-red, with a darker cast on the back and shoulders, the tail being black, as well as some of the flight-feathers. The hen is rather lighter in colour, described as rich golden-red, having also black tail and black in flights, as well as some black ticking in the hackle, which may, and does often, appear in the cocks. The under-colour of both sexes should be lighter in colour, but not grey or black; and it is very important to avoid the latter defect, since it is impossible to breed good-coloured birds from specimens possessing it. Thanks to the framing of the standard, cockerels and pullets of high quality may be bred from one mating, and a good-coloured cock of standard type, free from ticking in hackle or black in any but the specified parts, and with good under-colour, may be mated with level-coloured exhibition hens of good size and shape to produce good chickens of either sex. The weights range upwards from 7½lb. in cocks, 6½lb. in cockerels, 6lb. in hens, and 5lb. in pullets, and, besides being distinctly attractive, Rhode Island Reds are exceedingly hardy and very useful fowls for the farm, they having earned a high reputation in America.

Scotch Greys.

Popular as this breed is in Scotland, it has never attracted any considerable notice in England, and specimens are only occasionally seen in the "variety" classes at the large shows. In shape and carriage it has been described as a blend of the Dorking and the Old English Game, having a body of medium length, carried erect and gracefully, with long flowing tail-sickles in the cock (see Frontispiece). The weight ranges from 9lb. to 11lb. in males, and from 7lb. to 9lb. in females. The comb is single, of moderate size, fine in texture, evenly serrated, standing upright in the cock but frequently falling over in the hen; the lobes are red, the eye red, the beak white or streaked with black, and the shanks either white or white clearly mottled with black spots. The plumage is barred, like that of the Plymouth Rock, though the barring is finer and the colours are brighter and more distinct, the ground-colour being pale greyish-blue and the barring dark metallic blue. This barring should be clear and the colour pure all over the body, and rusty colour on the cock's back should be avoided. In breeding, the best plan is to use a cock whose colours are very clear and barring distinct, free from foreign colour or white in tail or flights, together with large hens of a rather darker shade, but with plenty of clear barring, and good legs. Scotch Greys are hardy, excellent layers, and are fit to rank with the best of table fowl. Indeed, the breed is one well worthy of more attention than it gets in England.

Scotch Dumpies.

These birds, sometimes called *Bakies*, are distinguished by very short legs, the shanks being not more than 1½ in. in length, which gives them a short and stumpy appearance and a waddling gait, although the weight runs to 7½ lb. in cocks, 6½ lb. in cockerels, 6 lb. in hens, and 5 lb. in

Other Distinct Varieties.—153

pullets. They usually have single combs, erect and well serrated, but a rose comb is permitted. The body is broad and deep, and the tail of the cock has fairly long, flowing sickles. With regard to colour the standard is very indefinite. The usual colours seen are *Black*, *Cuckoo*, *Silver-Grey*, and *Dark Dorking*. In the first case the legs are black, in the Cuckoo white or mottled, and in the others white, the beak in each case matching the legs. It is therefore obvious that in breeding the shape is the main point, and exhibition birds of good type, when mated together, breed the right stamp of chickens. This variety is hardy, very useful for general purposes, and the hens are particularly valuable as sitters and mothers.

Frizzles.

This is a very peculiar variety, in which all the smaller feathers are curled back (see Frontispiece), giving the plumage the appearance of having been ruffled the wrong way. This is practically the only distinctive characteristic, as both single and rose combs are seen, and the colours include *White*, *Black*, and *Partridge* or *Brown*. The birds are rather small, cocks weighing about 5lb., cockerels 4lb., hens 4lb., and pullets 3½lb., but of late years many strains have been reduced, and we nowadays find the majority of Frizzles among the Bantams. The large birds are moderately hardy, considering their loose plumage, and very fair layers. In breeding for exhibition the curling of the plumage is the most important point to observe. A straight or ordinary feather should detract from the value of a stock bird, and the best-curved parents will invariably produce the best chickens.

Silkies.

The Silkie has for some considerable time been a favourite among exhibitors, and more especially among

ladies. It would be difficult to find a breed with more distinctive features, which makes it clear that they belong to an old race. As bred at present, they are a compromise between a large fowl and a Bantam, the cocks weighing about 3lb., cockerels $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb., hens 2lb., and pullets $1\frac{3}{4}$ lb. In shape and carriage they somewhat resemble miniature Cochins (see Frontispiece), having short backs and pronounced cushions. The comb of the cock is circular, carried well forward on the beak, and like a cushion with a number of protuberances, that of the hen being smaller, whilst the colour of comb, face, and wattles is purple-black or mulberry, and the lobes should be bright turquoise-blue, or, failing that, mulberry, like the rest of the face. The cock has a small crest that flows backward from the head, whilst that of the hen more resembles a powder-puff, the feathers being soft and not split in the centre. The plumage should be as silky and fluffy as possible, the stem of each feather being very fine and having a number of silky fibrils branching from it. Hard feathers about the body are not tolerated, and even the flights and tail-feathers are ragged and with a distinct tendency to silkiness. Another peculiarity is the skin, which is of rich violet colour. The beak is slaty-blue, the legs and feet leaden-blue with bluish-white toe-nails, and the plumage should be snow-white. The legs are feathered to a moderate extent on the outside, and the toes should be five in number.

There is no great difficulty in breeding Silkies, provided one has stock of good quality and crossings of strains are avoided. The male bird should be as silky and fluffy as possible, without any hard feathers, and if both sexes have good colour, shapely crests, and good-coloured shapely combs they should produce chickens fit for the show-pen. There is more difficulty in getting birds fit for show, for washing has to be done very carefully

Other Distinct Varieties.—155

in order to prevent the fine feathers from being damaged or pulled out altogether. Silkies are quite hardy; they are good layers, and quite a delicacy on the table, in spite of the unpleasant appearance due to the violet-blue skin. But they are chiefly valued for sitting and brooding, and no other breed enjoys such a reputation for the successful hatching and rearing of Bantams and pheasants. Although white is the only standardised colour in Silkies, blacks and other colours have been produced by crossing, but have never become popular.

Sultans.

This variety in some respects resembles the Polish, from which its origin may be traced. It has the same crest, bib, and muffling, the comb comprising two small horns, but it has five toes, the legs are heavily feathered, and it has stiff feathers on the hock, being therefore usually described as "vulture-hocked." The colour is pure white, and the weight about 6lb. in cocks, 5lb. in cockerels, $4\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in hens, and 4lb. in pullets. Sultans are very seldom seen nowadays, although decidedly attractive, hardy, and very fair layers of white eggs.

Yokohamas.

This breed, which is sometimes called the *Phœnix*, or *Japanese Longtail*, is one of the wonderful products of Japan, in which country cocks are bred with tails to the length of 20ft. No such length has ever been seen in this country, and 3ft. or 4ft. is considered above the average. It may easily be imagined that these birds do not show themselves off well in an exhibition-pen, and in Japan they spend the greater part of their time on high perches, the tail trailing to the ground. These tails are only moulted once in three years, and in the first season they do not grow more than about 2ft. in this country.

A standard has recently been drawn up for the breed, which gives the comb as either single or pea, but small, and even in both sexes. The neck and body are rather long, whilst the saddle-hackle and tail-coverts of the cock are also of considerable length. The standard recognises four colour-varieties, viz., *Gold* and *Silver Duckwings* (Fig. 68), similar to the Game varieties of those



Fig. 68. Silver Duckwing Yokohama Cock.

colours; *Spangles*, a mixture of black and white; and *Whites* (the last-named are illustrated on p. 147). In selecting breeding-stock it is desirable to choose an adult cock with lengthy tail, carried gracefully with a good sweep and not in a slovenly manner, and colour is quite

Other Distinct Varieties.—157

a minor point. Many will prefer to treat this breed as an ornamental one, and not for show purposes. The birds are hardy and good layers.

Javas.

About a score of years ago *Black Javas* were introduced into this country from America, and appeared likely to become popular, though later on other black fowls took the place they might have held. There is no doubt, however, that this is the most useful variety that has ever come among us and been rejected, for the Java possesses practically all the good qualities that are found in the Langshan. It is large and handsome, with deep body, brilliant green-black plumage that fits very close, black legs, which usually become willow with age, a single, upright comb, the front part being free from serrations, and large brown eyes. *White* and *Mottled* varieties are also bred, but neither has any vogue in this country at the present day.

Naked-Necks.

This variety has occasionally been bred and exhibited in England. Its peculiarity is that the whole of the neck from below the head to the shoulders is absolutely devoid of feathers, the skin being red, and having an unpleasant, raw appearance. When and how this extraordinary freak was evolved it is impossible to state with any degree of correctness, but the breed is supposed to have come from Austria. All colours are bred, and we have seen blue, white, and brown birds in the same pen, the combs usually being single.

Rosecomb Blues.

For a number of years classes have been provided at many shows in the North of England for "Likeliest

Hen for Laying Purposes," and in course of time it has become customary for judges to award the prizes to large birds with rose combs and Andalusian-blue plumage. These birds were no doubt originally produced by means of crossing actually to produce good layers, but the type has now been fixed so well that the variety has recently been standardised as the Rosecomb Blue, and in future it must compete as a pure breed, and not as a cross-bred or "Likeliest Hen for Laying." The birds are large, cocks weighing about 9lb., cockerels 8lb., hens 8lb., and pullets 7lb.; low on the leg, but not so short in body as an Orpington, with a shapely rose comb (the leader of which should stand out behind), dark beak, slate-black legs, red face and lobes, and plumage similar to the Andalusian's. They may be bred for colour in much the same way. The variety is a good layer, and possesses general qualities of usefulness which may enable it to achieve some success, though at present its patrons are not numerous, and classes are provided at only a few shows. It is significant, however, that good prices are already being paid for show specimens.

Rumpless Fowls.

The distinguishing peculiarity of this breed is the absence of the appendage commonly called the "parson's nose." They are not bred to any particular colour, but usually have single combs, and are rather small, cocks weighing about 5lb., cockerels and hens 4lb., and pullets 3½lb. They are hardy and good layers, but for show purposes Rumpless Bantams are more popular than the large birds.

Sherwoods.

There is an American variety known as the Sherwood, which has white plumage, single comb, red lobes, and

Other Distinct Varieties.—159

yellow legs, slightly feathered to the outer toe. Except for the slight leg-feathering it would be very similar to the White Plymouth Rock, but is rather larger, cocks weighing up to 10lb., cockerels to 9lb., hens to 8lb., and pullets to 7lb. It has been kept by a few breeders in this country, and has been found a very hardy layer, and well fleshed for table purposes. Another variety, called the *White Wonder*, has a rose comb, and would pass muster as a feather-legged White Wyandotte. Both are very useful, but they have no claims to exhibition qualities.

Klondykes.

An American production, which was bred and shown in England for one season. It appears to be a cross between the Silkie and the White Leghorn, and has inherited some of the silkiness of the former breed. It met with no success in England, and is now seldom heard of in America.

Dominiques.

An old American breed, with rose comb, yellow legs, and barred plumage like the Plymouth Rock's, though the birds are not as large as that breed. The variety is never seen in England nowadays, though when Cuckoo Wyandottes came into vogue for a time Dominique blood was largely employed.

Occasionally breeders have introduced composite types with more or less distinctive features, and have given them names, but none of these is worthy of notice as exhibition poultry

Chapter XIX.

Bantams.

DURING recent years the breeding of Bantams for show purposes has been largely on the increase, and at the present time the midget breeds are well represented at every show. They appeal particularly to those fanciers who have not sufficient accommodation for large poultry, for a pen of Bantams can be kept in the smallest space, and if proper care is taken the chickens can be reared on a small piece of ground. They suffer, however, like all other fowls, from overcrowding, and when kept on the same spot year after year without anything being done to remove the fouled surface, disease is bound to follow sooner or later. Another advantage with regard to Bantams is that the travelling expenses of show birds amount to comparatively little, and when compartment hampers, holding two, three, four, or six birds, are used, half-a-dozen specimens can be sent almost for the cost of one large fowl. As the prizes for Bantams are usually the same as for large poultry, the exhibitor reaps the advantage. When ample space can be devoted to the stock, it is desirable to accommodate the breeding-stock in a fair-sized grass-run, with the fences boarded up 2ft. high for shelter, whilst it is an excellent plan to plant some shrubs and cabbages in the run. A suitable Bantam house is about 6ft. long over all, and 2ft. 6in. wide, part being partitioned off for roosting,



Black-Tailed White Japanese Cocks.
 Buff Pekia Cocks.

Black Rosecomb Hen.

Silver Sebright Cock.

Black-Tailed White Japanese Hen.

White Pekia Hen.

Black Rosecomb Cock.

Silver Sebright Hen.

VARIETY BANTAMS.

whilst the remainder is used as a scratching-shed in rough weather. A structure of this kind will be found in "Poultry for Profit." When space is limited, a small breeding-pen may be kept entirely in such a building, which should, however, be moved about on to fresh ground occasionally.

In some respects the management of Bantams differs from that of large exhibition poultry. Not more than four or five hens should be run with a cock, and it will be found difficult to get fertile eggs from most varieties until about March or April; the latter is perhaps the best month of all for hatching these small birds. Hatching is frequently attended by failure when conducted by inexperienced people, on account of unsuitable hens being used for sitting. A large hen is too heavy and clumsy. Silkies are the best mothers obtainable, though a cross between Silkies and Pekin Bantams is preferred by many breeders, and we have known good results from a Silkie-Wyandotte cross. A Silkie hen will cover from thirteen to fifteen Bantam eggs, but it is not advisable to give her too many in the early part of the season. Bantam chickens are somewhat delicate, and require a good deal of attention. Close-breeding has affected the constitution, and the continual desire to reduce size has sapped the vigour of exhibition strains, so that breeders have to put up with a consequent lack of robustness. Modern Game varieties in particular are very shy layers, and the pullets are somewhat prone to suffer from egg-binding, especially those of the smallest and finest strains. Whenever a pullet is noticed trying to eject an egg or going on the nest a good deal, she should be held over a steaming-kettle and the vent should be anointed with sweet oil, which treatment will in most cases give her relief, though care should be taken to avoid breaking the egg and thereby causing peritonitis.

In all breeds of Bantams it is desirable to breed birds that are symmetrical but as small as possible, and therefore they should have but a small quantity of animal food, which in large poultry promotes growth. Soft food has the same effect, and it will be found that hard corn gives the most satisfactory results. In rearing the chickens, nothing is better than coarse oatmeal, and at this stage some soft food may be given in the form of prepared chicken meal. A little later we recommend oatmeal, groats, wheat, canary-seed, millet, and buckwheat, and these grains may be used with profit as the staple food, with the addition of a very little cooked meat every day, and some hempseed to promote the growth and glossiness of the plumage.

Game Bantams.

In this section we find reproduced in miniature all the large breeds of Game fowls, and it is unnecessary to go into minute descriptive detail, because the type, colour, and markings of the Bantams should be the same as in the large breeds. The only difference is in the size and fineness, which present the chief difficulty in breeding. Among the *Modern Game Bantams* we must look for ample reach, but with this there must be no semblance of coarseness. Bone must be light, bodies finely drawn, and feather short. In the *Old English Game* varieties also we require the true type without coarseness. The standard weight for Moderns is 24 oz. for cocks, 20 oz. for cockerels, 20 oz. for hens, and 18 oz. for pullets; and for Old English 22 oz. for cocks, 18 oz. for cockerels, 20 oz. for hens, and 16 oz. for pullets.

Among *Modern Game Bantams*, Black-Reds are most popular, and are bred to the highest degree of excellence. Duckwings and Piles have many advocates, and are also bred to good type, whilst Birchens are exceedingly attrac-

Bantams.—165

tive, but Brown-Reds are seldom seen with the same degree of reach as the others. With regard to breeding for colour the same rules may be followed as have been laid down for Modern Game, but in breeding Bantams it is desirable to use the smallest hens obtainable that can be relied upon to lay fertile eggs. They should have the true shape, with lengthy limbs, fine body, and short tail and feather, whilst the cock should also be a reachy bird and as small as possible in accordance with his age. Among the *Old English*, Spangles are the favourites, but Black-Reds and Blue-Reds are largely bred. The main point in breeding is to select small but shapely and well-developed parents, and it is most important, as in all Bantam breeds, to avoid birds that show any sign of weakness or disease. Close-breeding is absolutely necessary, as it is only possible to produce small and fine specimens by this means, so that it is all-important to use the hardiest and most vigorous stock obtainable.

Rosecomb Bantams.

Among the variety Bantams there are none that enjoy greater popularity than the Black and White Rosecombs. These beautiful little birds resemble the *Hamburgh* in shape and head-points, having a small, graceful body, good flow of tail-feather in the cock, neat, well-carunculated combs of the rose shape, with the spike or leader standing straight out behind, and large round white lobes of kid-glove texture. The face should be coral-red, and the weight should be about 20 oz. in cocks, 18 oz. in cockerels, 16 oz. in hens, and 14 oz. in pullets.

The plumage of the Blacks should have a rich green sheen, and the legs should be black, whilst the Whites should have white or pinky-white legs. In breeding Rosecombs it is desirable to choose a male bird as near perfection as possible. He should have a medium-sized comb,

square in front, with even carunculations on top and a straight leader; large lobes, spotlessly white, smooth and of fine texture, a good flow of tail-feather, good shape, small size, and sprightly carriage, with wings carried low. He should be mated with the smallest possible hens, possessed of good shape, neat heads, large lobes, and rich colour. In Whites a pure-coloured cock is necessary, and as lobes are not produced to the same degree of excellence as in Blacks it is desirable to choose a cock as good as possible in this respect, and showing no semblance of red in the lobes. Rosecombs are good layers of white eggs, but the one objection to them is that certain experienced breeders have in the past used artificial means in producing good combs to such an extent that a novice not versed in the doubtful art of trimming would find himself severely handicapped in competing against such exhibitors.

Sebright Bantams.

These little fowls belong to an interesting race that was introduced by the late Sir John Sebright. Their most noteworthy feature is the plumage of the cock, in which the rich hackles and sickle-feathers are absent, the birds being generally described as hen-feathered. The breed probably owes its origin in a large degree to the Polish, and two varieties are bred, Gold and Silver. Sebrights have compact bodies, short backs, wings carried low, tail high, and very proud and jaunty carriage; weight about 22 oz. in cocks, 20 oz. in cockerels, 18 oz. in hens, and 16 oz. in pullets. The comb is rose-shaped, well worked on the top, with spike or leader of moderate length that turns up slightly. The face and lobes should be of a dark purple or dark red shade, the eye black or very dark, and the legs slaty-blue. In Silvers the ground-colour is white, each feather being finely, evenly, and distinctly laced with sound black (as is well shown in the



BREAST OR FRONT
OF COCK.



NECK-HACKLE OF COCK.



SADDLE OF COCK.



WING OR SHOULDER
OF COCK.



CUSHION OF HEN.



BREAST OR FRONT
OF HEN.

Figs. 69 to 74. Feathers of Silver Sebright Baatams.

Bantams.—169

illustrations, Figs. 69 to 76), and the only difference in the Gold variety is that the ground-colour is of a level shade of golden-bay. Silvers are much more popular than the Golds, and are bred to a higher standard, the Golds generally failing in ground-colour, which is often very washy, whilst the black lacing is not so fine or so sound. The lacing should be very fine, of the same character all round the feather, and dense, rich black.



WING OR SHOULDER.



NECK-HACKLE.

Figs. 75 and 76. Feathers of Silver Sebright Bantam Hen.

A well-laced Sebright is among the most beautiful of all the Bantam breeds, and the Silvers deservedly enjoy considerable popularity. The most successful breeders have found double-mating the most profitable method of producing exhibition birds, and the usual plan is to mate a good-coloured, good-headed cock, with rather heavy but sound and even lacing, with some small, shapely, and lightly-laced hens in order to breed cockerels; and a lightly-laced cock with heavier-laced hens to produce pullets. If the parent stock have been

bred in the right way this is a more reliable plan to breed winners than mating together birds with fine and sharp lacing. Sebrights are good layers, but sterility is common among them, and the chickens are delicate, which is the result of the in-breeding to which they have been subjected, and a natural consequence of breeding cocks without the usual sexual characteristics of plumage.

Pekin Bantams.

These might be, and are in America, described as *Cochin Bantams*, for they are in reality miniature reproductions of the great Cochin family, being bred in Buff, Partridge, Black, and White varieties, and also Cuckoo and Mottled, though the last-named are comparatively scarce. Like the Cochins, Pekin Bantams have single combs, plump and rounded bodies, with rather forward carriage, the head being carried only a little higher than the tail, which should be small, whilst the cushion should be very pronounced. Legs and feet are heavily feathered, and the weight runs to about 32 oz. in cocks, 30 oz. in cockerels, 28 oz. in hens, and 26 oz. in pullets. In all respects the Buff, Partridge, Black, and White varieties resemble the Cochins of those species in colour and markings, whilst the Cuckoo has barred plumage of Plymouth Rock type, and the Mottled variety has white mottling on a black ground.

In breeding Pekins it is desirable to bear in mind the rules that have been laid down for producing the same colours in Cochins, and, in addition, we must select breeding-stock, especially hens, that are as small as possible. The male bird should have plenty of fluff and feather, but as there is difficulty in getting fertile eggs from heavily-feathered stock, it is advisable to clip the leg-feather of the cock and also the heavy fluff about the vent of the hen when the birds go into the breeding-pen. Pekins are

Bantams.—171

the hardest of all Bantams ; they lay a number of tinted eggs, and are excellent sitters. But as they develop slowly they are seldom fit for the show-pen in their first season, and the usual plan is to hatch late in the summer for showing the following year. The foot-feathers may cause the beginner some trouble, but if birds are kept on short grass, or on some such litter as chaff or peat-moss, the feathers can be kept good and unbroken.

Japanese Bantams.

Although not nearly so popular as they were some years ago, Japanese Bantams are a handsome and striking race. They have very short legs, the body almost touching the ground, whilst the tail is carried at a very high angle, and, as the carriage is very erect, head and tail almost meet. The weight runs from about 22 oz. to 24 oz. in males, and from 20 oz. to 22 oz. in females, according to age. The variety generally seen is the White with black tail, but Black and Grey varieties are also bred. The comb of all varieties is single, and the legs and beak are yellow. Japanese are not standardised, but they invariably breed so true to type that one has only to select small stock to produce high-class specimens.

Cuckoo or Scotch Grey Bantams.

This variety is, as the name implies, a midget Scotch Grey fowl, and as the breed has already been described, it is only necessary to add that the standard weight for males is 16 oz. to 20 oz., and for females 14 oz. to 17 oz., according to age. Some difficulty is experienced in breeding Cuckoos true to type, and a number of mismarked chickens result. Breeding-stock should be free from white in flights or tail, and also from wholly black feathers. The hen lays a good number of eggs, and both young and old birds are hardy.

Booted Bantams.

This is a very attractive variety and once enjoyed considerable popularity; but now, alas! it is very seldom seen at our exhibitions. The Booted differs from the Pekin in that it is taller and longer in limb, has a more pronounced tail, and carries its wings lower, whilst it has stiff feathers in the hocks and very heavy feathering on the feet. The weight is about 24 oz. in cocks, 22 oz. in cockerels, 20 oz. in hens, and 18 oz. in pullets. Some varieties are also whiskered, and all have single combs. The two colours bred are Black and White, whilst a mottled variety has been produced. Being so heavily feathered, Booted Bantams are unable to scratch, and so may be kept in a garden where other varieties would do damage.

Brahma Bantams.

This breed, which has been produced from the Brahma fowl, is rapidly coming to the front, and though still rather large, it is bred to very good type. The midgets should resemble the large fowls, and may be bred in the same way, bearing in mind the reduction of size, the standard weight being about 38 oz. in cocks, 32 oz. in cockerels, 32 oz. in hens, and 28 oz. in pullets. Both Light and Dark varieties are bred, the latter being the more popular at present.

Indian Game and Malay Bantams.

Both Indian Game and Malays have been bantamised with considerable success, and though still large, excellent type has been preserved, especially in the former. The weight in each case should be from 28 oz. to 32 oz. in males, and from 22 oz. to 24 oz. in females, according to age, but very few birds have as yet been got as fine as this.

Other Varieties.

Many others among the large breeds of poultry have been bantamised with more or less success, and in each case the midget form should resemble the large original. *Frizzles*, and more particularly the White variety, are bred to a high degree of excellence, and are seen at most important shows, whilst *Minorca*, *Spanish*, *Andalusian*, *Leghorn*, and *Hamburgh Bantams* have at times been bred and exhibited. *Polish* are frequently seen, the Whites being most common, and *Rumpless Bantams* are less rare than the large fowls. *Nankins* were popular some years ago, but are now never seen. The latest breed to be reduced in size is the *Wyandotte*, and some very good Partridge and Silver-Pencilled have been seen, some of the former having already been greatly reduced in size, though the hens, having apparently been produced from the same pen as the cocks, are consequently lacking in pencilling. Some very nice Whites and Columbians have also been exhibited. *Orpingtons* and *Plymouth Rocks* are in process of manufacture, and probably in the course of a few years every large breed will have its Bantam counterpart.



Chapter XX.

Waterfowl and Turkeys.

NEITHER waterfowl nor turkeys have ever attained the same degree of popularity for exhibition as ordinary fowls and Bantams, and this is no doubt to be attributed to the fact that they require more accommodation and attention when in the show-pen. Among the smaller shows held during the autumn and winter, many provide one or two classes for ducks, in which all varieties compete together, but very rarely is classification given for geese and turkeys. At the summer shows, more especially those promoted by agricultural societies, this class of stock is generally catered for, but it is left to some of the large shows in the later months of the year, notably the Dairy, International (Crystal Palace), Birmingham, York, Manchester, Norwich, and a few others, to provide complete classification for the many distinct varieties embraced under this heading.

Fancy stock of this particular class can only appeal to those who have ample and suitable accommodation. The ideal place for ducks, for instance, would be a wide grass range with a good running stream having gravel bottom, together with plenty of shade, but many good specimens are bred where the conditions are less perfect. Geese require a wide range on grass and plenty of water, whilst turkeys should have the run of a farm. Suffice it to



Indian Runner Duck and Drake.

Rouen Drake.

Muscovy Duck.

Rouen Duck.

Cayuga Duck.

Cayuga Drake.

DUCKS.

say that such bulky stock as geese and turkeys cannot be bred successfully in a confined area, and ducks only when the conditions are suitable.

Ducks.

Among the breeds of domestic ducks, those standardised by the Poultry Club and the Waterfowl Club are Aylesburies, Pekins, Rouens, Indian Runners, and Cayugas. Muscovies and Black East Indians are occasionally seen, and there are one or two other varieties deserving of brief notice.

Aylesburies are the largest of domestic ducks, and the breed has attained notoriety on account of its valuable table properties. They are massive, square-bodied birds, with horizontal carriage and very pronounced keel, which should be quite straight and extend from the breast to behind the legs. The plumage should be pure white, the bill pinky-white, and the legs and feet bright orange. The drake is distinguished by greater size, and, as in all domestic breeds, by two or three curled feathers in the tail, the weight running from 9lb. in young drakes and 8lb. in young ducks to 11lb. and upwards in old birds of both sexes.

In breeding Aylesbury ducks one must select birds of good size, the females especially being as large framed as possible, with good shape and deep keels. The colour should be pure, and the bills as pinky-white as possible, unless they have been discoloured by the sun or dirt. A good-billed drake mated with three or four large, shapely ducks should breed good quality. The bills of Aylesburies easily become discoloured, and to prevent this the birds should be encouraged to grub about in a pan of water with three or four inches of gravel, or in a gravel-bottomed stream. Show specimens should be shaded from the sun, and a pan of water and fine gravel should

always be provided. A bill may also be improved by the application of fine sandpaper before the bird is sent to a show.

Pekins.—This breed differs from the Aylesbury mainly in carriage and colour both of plumage and bill. Instead of the body being balanced horizontally, it is carried very upright, with the tail turned up, the legs being set further back, whilst the feathers on the stern almost touch the ground. The head is large, the neck long, and the plumage profuse, which makes the birds look larger than they actually are, drakes weighing about 8lb. to 9lb. and ducks 7lb. to 8lb. The colour of the plumage is deep creamy-white, the eye dark leaden-blue, and both the bill and legs are bright orange. In breeding Pekins it is necessary to bear these points in mind, as many Pekins are sent out with semi-horizontal carriage, almost white plumage, and pale bills, indicating, of course, a cross with the Aylesbury. Choose large ducks of penguin carriage, and as good as possible in colour, and mate them with a drake with plumage almost as deep as that of a canary. If the blood is right such a mating should breed show-stock, but, as in poultry-breeding, it is necessary to in-breed in order to produce first-class specimens with any degree of certainty.

Rouens.—This beautiful breed is the domestic counterpart of the Wild Mallard. It is shorter in body than the Aylesbury, with deep keel and horizontal carriage. The drake weighs, according to age, 9lb. to 11lb., and the duck 8lb. to 10lb. The bill of the drake is bright green-yellow, with a black bean at the tip. The head and neck are rich iridescent green, with a clean-cut white ring about an inch above the shoulder, but not quite meeting at the back. Below this is a rich claret breast, whilst on the back and rump the colour is rich greenish-black. The flanks and sides are blue French grey, with very fine and distinct

pencilling, the wing-bars are purple-blue, black, and white, the three colours being clear and distinct, whilst the wings are grey, the small coverts being finely pencilled. The tail is slaty-black with a brownish tinge, the curled feathers glossy black, and the legs bright red. The duck has a bright orange bill, with black bean at the tip and a black mark down the centre of the upper mandible. Her general colour is chestnut-brown, with bold black pencilling following the form of the feather, the wing-bars being similar to those of the drake, and the legs dull orange-brown. The drake assumes his full plumage when about three months old, but every summer he moults into a temporary garb of sombre hue, and does not again resume his full male attire until the autumn. Although differing in colour, both sexes may be bred from one pen, but, as a rule, it will be found that the best ducks are bred from rather light-coloured females with bold pencilling, and the best drakes from the darker females mated with a good typical male of rich deep colour.

Indian Runners are of quite a different type, being small, racy birds, with no claim to table qualities, but prolific layers compared with any of the aforementioned breeds. The distinguishing characteristics of the Indian Runner are the flat head, wedge-shaped bill without any concavity, long thin neck and long slim body, with legs set well behind, giving very upright carriage. The plumage is hard and close, and the weight about 4½lb. in males and 4lb. in females. There are two recognised colour varieties—*Fawn* and *Grey*—but the former appears to have been the colour of the original stock brought from India to the North of England many years ago, and greys are seldom seen. The markings of the face and head are important. On the head of the *Fawn* is a cap of fawn colour, divided by a narrow line of white from fawn markings on the cheek; these again are divided by

another line of white from the base of the bill, which is green, with a black bean at the tip, though whilst a bird is young it remains of a yellowish colour. The neck is white, the fawn breast commencing about an inch and a half above the base of the neck, and extending about half-way down the breast-bone, where it is cut off evenly, the remainder of the under-parts being white. On the top there is a patch of fawn covering the back, the top part of the wings and the tail, taking the shape of a heart, the flights of the wings being white, whilst the legs are rich yellow. The *Grey* variety is marked in the same way, substituting grey for fawn, and in either case the colour should be even all over the body, the tail of the drake alone being darker. In breeding Indian Runners it is important to obtain stock of a reliable strain and free from traits denoting crosses with other breeds. Select birds of good shape and carriage, and with markings as accurate as possible, whilst the fawn colour should be fairly rich, especially in the male, but quite level. These birds are great foragers, and on a good range will find the greater part of their food.

Cayugas.—This is an American breed that has never gained a very high place in this country. It has undergone a good deal of improvement by means of crosses, and the modern Cayuga is a large bird of shape similar to that of the Aylesbury, the drake weighing 7lb. and upwards and the duck 6lb. and upwards. The colour is lustrous green-black, the lustre being an important point, whilst the bill is slaty-black with a solid black stripe down the centre, not touching the sides, and coming to within about an inch of the tip. The eye is black and the legs are orange-brown. In breeding, choose large, shapely ducks, and mate with the richest-coloured drake obtainable, providing the stock on each side have been bred correctly.

Other Varieties.—*Muscovies* are only occasionally exhibited. They belong to a distinct race, the wild birds perching and nesting in trees. The drake is very large, but the duck is generally from 3lb. to 5lb. smaller. The drake has a very large head, and both sexes have curious red carunculations about the face. Other distinctive features are the large loose feathers and the absence of curled feathers in the drake's tail, whilst the eggs hatch in about five weeks instead of four weeks. The colours are White, Black, and Black-and-White, the last being most common. The *Black East Indian* is a small duck with brilliant green-black plumage, but should rather be classed with the ornamental breeds. *Campbell Ducks* were originated by Mrs. Campbell, of Uley, Glos.; they are small birds and very good layers, but have met with no favour in the show-pen. The most popular colour is Buff or Khaki. Another buff or fawn-coloured duck, known as the *Coaley Fawn*, of very similar type, has been brought out by Miss Edwards, of Coaley, whilst Messrs. W. Cook and Sons have introduced a breed called the *Buff Orpington Duck*, the colour of which is an even rich shade of fawn-buff throughout, the head and upper portion of the neck of the drake being at least two shades darker than the rest of the body. The body is long and deep, and the weight about 7lb. to 9lb. in drakes and 6lb. to 8lb. in ducks. These birds are excellent layers, and, though introduced in England, appear to be better known in the colonies, and particularly in Australia, up to the present. The above-named firm have also been responsible for a *Blue Orpington Duck*, and the same colour is found in the *Blue Swedish* breed, which enjoys some popularity in America. There are many varieties of ornamental ducks, but though they are occasionally exhibited, they appear out of place in a show-pen, and scarcely come within the scope of this work.

Geese.

The only two varieties of geese that regularly appear in the show-pen are *Embdens* and *Toulouse*. The former is a large white variety, with orange bill, light-blue eye, and orange legs and feet, whilst the plumage of the Toulouse is grey, with a white edging round each feather, the eye being dark, and the bill and legs orange. The Toulouse has a gulletted throat and heavy keel, whilst the Embden has a longer neck, no gullet, freedom from keel, harder feather, and higher carriage. In breeding, it is important to mark the characteristics of each breed, for a good deal of crossing has taken place, and occasionally one sees mongrels winning as pure-breds. Plenty of size is required, Embden ganders weighing about 30lb. and geese 22lb., and Toulouse ganders 28lb. and geese 20lb.

Chinese geese are occasionally exhibited, but are more generally kept for ornamental purposes. They are not as domesticated as the breeds mentioned above, though they are prolific layers, make good eating, and are very hardy, doing best when they have a large sheet of water. They have a black knob at the base of the dark orange or dark brown bill, and a black stripe down the back of the neck. The body-colour is brownish-grey on the back and lighter grey underneath, with a yellowish cast on the breast. The legs are orange.

A good deal of care must be exercised in exhibiting geese, as they must be trained before going into a show-pen, and must at the same time be kept clean.

Turkeys.

The *American Bronze* almost monopolises turkey classes nowadays, though at Birmingham Show it is customary to see some good classes of *Whites*. The

Turkeys.—183

old *Norfolk Blacks* are unknown to many of the present generation, although they are standardised. *Fawn turkeys* are also bred, but are seldom seen. The American Bronze should be very large, cockerels reaching 22lb., cocks 34lb., pullets 14lb., and hens 18lb., and they should have a well-carunculated head and stout thighs and shanks. The beak should be dark horn at the base and lighter at the tip, the eye dark hazel, the face and head red, and the legs brown in young birds and flesh-colour in adults. The plumage should have a brilliant sheen. Turkeys do not mature until their second season, so that it is desirable to breed only from adults, mating a good cock of brilliant colour with very large hens. A vigorous cock may run with ten or a dozen hens. Instruction on the general management of this class of stock will be found in "Poultry for Profit."



Index.

Index.

A.

- Accommodation, 14, 160
- American Bronze Turkeys, 182
- Anconas, 117, 122
 - Rosecombed, 120
- Andalusians, 122, 126
 - Bantam, 173
- Aseel, 95
- Asiatic Game, 94
- Aylesbury ducks, 177

B.

- Bantams, 160
 - accommodation for, 160
 - Andalusian, 173
 - Booted, 172
 - Brahma, 172
 - Cochin, 170
 - Cuckoo, 171
 - egg-bound, 163
 - feeding, 164
 - Frizzled, 173
 - Game, 164
 - Hamburgh, 173
 - hatching, 163
 - Indian Game, 172
 - Japanese, 161, 171
 - Leghorn, 173
 - Malay, 172
 - management of, 163
 - minor breeds of, 173
 - Minorca, 173

- Bantams, Modern Game, 164
 - Nankin, 173
 - Old English Game, 164
 - Orpington, 173
 - Pekin, 161, 170
 - Plymouth Rock, 173
 - Polish, 173
 - Rosecomb, 161, 165
 - Rumpless, 173
 - Scotch Grey, 171
 - Sebright, 161, 166
 - Spanish, 173
 - Variety, 161
 - Wyandotte, 173
- Barbezieux, 135
- Barbus d'Anvers, 145
- Baskets, 23
- Black East Indian ducks, 181
 - Sumatra Game, 99
- Blue Madras Game, 100
 - Swedish ducks, 181
- Blues, Rosecomb, 157
- Booted Bantams, 172
- Bourbourgs, 135
- Brahmas, 32, 33
 - Dark, 33, 35
 - Light, 33, 37
- Brahma Bantams, 172
- Bredas, or Gueldres, 145
- Breeding, laws of, 5
- Breeding-stock :
 - accommodation for, 14
 - exhibiting, 13
 - feeding, 14
 - forcing, 15

Breeding-stock :
 selecting, 14
 shelter for, 12
 Bruges, Combattants de, 145
 Buying stock, 5
 .
 C.
 Campbell ducks, 181
 Campines, 140
 Golden, 143
 Silver, 140
 Cayuga ducks, 175, 180
 Chinese geese, 182
 Close breeding, 6
 breeding, evils of excessive,
 7
 Coaley Fawn ducks, 181
 Cochins, 33, 38
 Black, 41
 Buff, 33, 39
 Partridge, 33, 40
 White, 41
 Cock-breeders, 8, 9
 Cocks, old, unreliability of, 13
 Combattants de Bruges, 145
 de Liège, 145
 Comb-erectors, 20
 Combs, increasing size of, 15
 preparing for exhibition, 19
 Commencing, 5
 Condition, 16
 Coucous de Malines, 144
 Courtes-Pattes, 135
 Crève-cœurs, 131
 Cuckoo or Scotch Grey Bantams,
 171
 D.
 Degeneracy through in-breed-
 ing, 7
 Diamond Jubilee Orpingtons,
 55
 Dominiques, 159
 Dorkings, 42
 Cuckoo, 45
 Dark, 43
 Red, 42
 Silver-grey, 43, 44

Dorkings, White, 45
 Double mating, 8
 Ducks, 174, 175
 Aylesbury, 177
 Black East Indian, 181
 Blue Orpington, 181
 Blue Swedish, 181
 Buff Orpington, 181
 Campbell, 181
 Cayuga, 175, 180
 Coaley Fawn, 181
 for exhibition, 174
 Indian Runner, 175, 179
 Muscovy, 175, 181
 Orpington, 181
 Pekin, 178
 Rouen, 175, 178
 Swedish, 181
 Du Mans, 135
 Dumpies, Scotch, 152

E.

Early hatching, 11
 Embden geese, 182
 English Game, 82, 87 (*See*
 Game)
 Exhibiting, 22
 Exhibition breeding :
 attractions of, 3
 chances in, 9
 failures in, 2
 profit from, 2
 Exhibition poultry :
 baskets for, 23
 early hatching of, 11
 faking, 21
 hampers for, 23
 keeping pedigrees of, 10
 overshowing, 24
 preparing, 16
 preparing combs of, 19
 preparing lobes of, 19
 purchasing, 5
 returning from shows, 23
 sheltering, 16
 strains of, 5
 training, 21
 washing, 17

F.

- Failures, causes of, 3
- Faking, 21
- Fancy v. utility properties, 3, 4
- Faverolles, 131
 - Ermine, 133
 - Salmon, 133
- Features of a fowl, 25
- Feeding, 14
- French breeds, 129
- Frizzles, 153 and Frontispiece
- Frizzled Bantams, 173

G.

- Game, Asiatic, 94 :
 - Black Sumatra, 99
 - Blue Madras, 100
 - dubbing, 92
 - English, 82, 83
 - Madras, 100
 - Indian, 96
 - Sumatra, 99
- Game, Modern, 87 :
 - Birchen, 90
 - Black, 90
 - Black-Red, 82, 88
 - Brown-Red, 89
 - Duckwing, 89
 - Pile, 82, 89
 - White, 90
- Game, Old English, 84 :
 - Birchen, 84
 - Black-Red, 82, 85
 - Blue, 86
 - Bright Red, 85
 - Brown-Red, 86
 - Duckwing, 82, 85
 - Dun, 86
 - Henny, 86
 - Muffs, 87
 - Pile, 85
 - Spangled, 86
 - Tassels, 87
- Game Bantams :
 - Modern, 164
 - Old English, 164

- Geese, 182
 - Chinese, 182
 - Emden, 182
 - Toulouse, 182
- Growth, period of, 11
- Gueldres, or Bredas, 145

H.

- Hamburghs, 101
 - Bantam, 173
 - Black, 102
 - Buff, 109
 - Buff-pencilled, 109
 - Gold-pencilled, 105
 - Gold-spangled, 105
 - Silver-pencilled, 105
 - Silver-spangled, 103
 - White, 109
- Hampers, 23
- Hatching, early, 11
- Hen-breeders, 8, 9
- Hobby, poultry-keeping as a, 1
- Houdans, 129

I.

- In-breeding, 6
 - evils of excessive, 7
- Incubators, pedigree trays for, 10
- Indian Game, 96
 - Game Bantams, 172
 - Runner ducks, 175, 179
- Industry, poultry-keeping as an, 1

J.

- Japanese Bantams, 161, 171
- Javas, 157
- Jubilee Orpingtons, 55
- Judges, 22

K.

- Klondykes, 159

L.

- La Bresse, 135
- La Flèche, 131
- Lakenfelder, 143 and Frontis-
piece
- Langshans, 46
 - Croad, 47, 50
 - Modern Black, 47
 - Modern Blue, 49
 - Modern White, 49
- Laws of breeding, 5
- Leghorns, 111
 - Bantam, 173
 - Black, 114
 - Blue, 117
 - Brown, 113
 - Buff, 114
 - Cuckoo, 116
 - Duckwing, 116
 - Partridge, 117
 - Pile, 115
 - Rosecombed, 117
 - White, 112
- Legs of fowls, cleaning, 19
- Liège, Combattants de, 145
- Lists of shows, 22
- Lobes, preparing for exhibition,
19

M.

- Madras Game, 100
- Malays, 94
- Malay Bantams, 172
- Management of exhibition
stock, 11
- Marking chickens, 10
- Marking-rings, 10
- Mediterranean breeds, 111
- Minorcas, 122, 125
 - Bantam, 173
- Modern Game, 87
 - Game Bantams, 164
- Muscovy ducks, 175, 179

N.

- Naked-necks, 157
- Nankin Bantams, 173
- Norfolk Black Turkeys, 183

O.

- Old cocks, unreliability of, 13
 - English Game, 84
 - English Game Bantams,
164
- Orloffs, 144
- Orpingtons, 51
 - Bantam, 173
 - Black, 52
 - Buff, 53
 - Cuckoo, 59
 - Diamond Jubilee, 55
 - Spangled, 59
 - White, 55
- Orpington ducks :
 - Blue, 181
 - Buff, 181
- Overshowing, 24

P.

- Pedigree breeding, 10
- Pekin Bantams, 161, 170
 - ducks, 178
- Period of growth, 11
- Physical fitness in breeding
stock, 7
- Plymouth Rocks, 75 :
 - Bantam, 173
 - Barred, 75
 - Black, 80
 - Buff, 79
 - Rosecombed, 80
 - White, 76, 79
- Points of a fowl, 25
- Polish, 137
 - Bantams, 173
 - Chamois, 138
 - Gold-spangled, 138
 - Silver-spangled, 138
 - White, 138
 - White-crested Black, 138
 - White-crested Blue, 138
- Preparing for show, 16
 - combs, 19
 - lobes, 20
- Prizes at shows, 21
- Professional fanciers, 2

Index.—191

Profit from exhibition breeding,
2

Proportion of females to males,
13

Pullet-breeders, 8, 9

Purchasing stock, 5

R.

Ramalslohers, 144

Redcaps, 109 and Frontispiece

Rhode Island Reds, 151

Ringling chickens, 10

Rosecomb Bantams, 161, 165

Blues, 157

Rouen ducks, 175, 178

Rumpless Bantams, 173
fowls, 158

S.

Scotch Dumpies, 152

Greys, 152 and Frontispiece

Grey Bantams, 171

Sebright Bantams, 161, 166

Selecting breeding stock, 14

Sexes, proportion of, 13

Shelter for stock, 12, 16

Sherwoods, 158

Show-baskets, 23

Showing, 22

Shows (*See* Exhibition Poultry)

for early chickens, 12

judges at, 22

lists of, 22

prizes at, 21

Silkies, 153 and Frontispiece

Spanish, 122, 123

Bantams, 173

Spanish and Mediterranean
breeds, 122

Stamina in breeding stock, 7

Stock, buying, 5

Strain, meaning of, 5

Sultans, 155

Sumatra Game, 99

Sussex fowls, 146:

Light, 149, 150

Red, 149

Speckled, 150

Swedish ducks, 181

T.

Toulouse geese, 182

Training show-birds, 21

Trap-nests, 9

Turkeys, 182

American Bronze, 182

Black, 183

breeding, 183

Fawn, 183

U.

Uncommon breeds of poultry,
Frontispiece

Utilitarian v. fancy qualities,
3, 4

V.

Variety Bantams, 161

W.

Washing exhibition poultry, 17

Waterfowl, 174

Wyandottes, 60

Bantam, 173

Black, 74

Blue-laced, 73

Buff, 71

Buff-laced, 72

Columbian, 73

Cuckoo, 74

Gold-laced, 65

Partridge, 67, 68

Pile, 75

Silver-laced, 61

Silver-pencilled, 71

White, 65

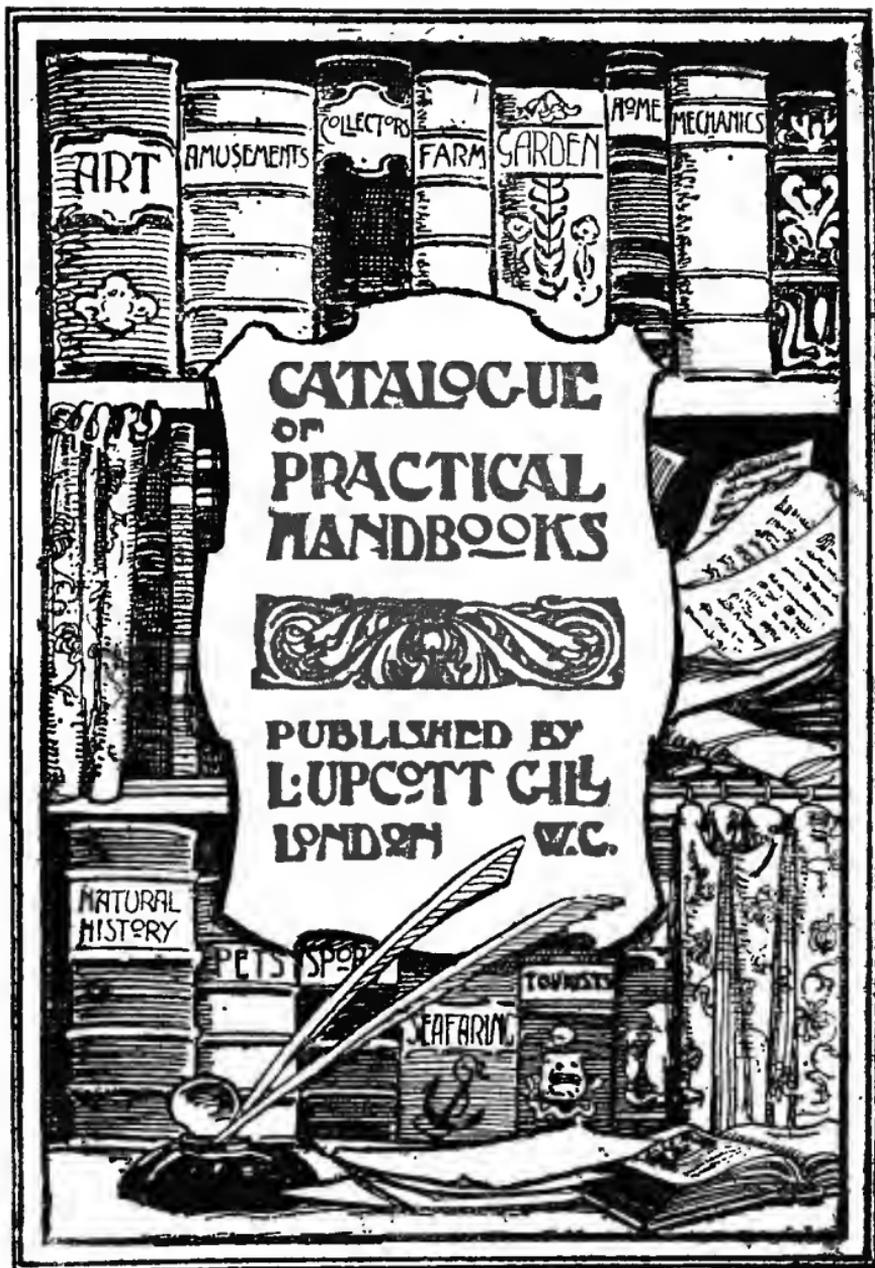
Y.

Yokohamas, 147, 155

Duckwing, 156

Spangled, 156

White, 147, 156



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INDEX

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ART.	PAGE	PAGE	PAGE
ANTIQUITIES, ENGLISH	3	CARNATIONS	5
CHURCHES, OLD ENGLISH	6	CHRYSANTHEMUMS	6
CHURCH DECORATIONS	6	CUCUMBERS	7
DESIGNING, HARMONIC	7	DICTIONARY OF GARDENING	8
HERALDRY	9	FERNS	8
LACE, HAND-MADE	10	FRUIT	8
PAINTING	10	GRAPES	9
PAINTING, DECORATIVE	11	GREENHOUSE CONSTRUCTION AND HEATING	9
PAPER WORK, ORNAMENTAL	11	GREENHOUSE MANAGEMENT	9
POKER WORK	12	HARDY PERENNIALS	9
VIOLINS	15	HOME GARDENING	8
AMUSEMENTS.		MUSHROOMS	11
CARD GAMES	4, 5, 6, 11, 14, 15, 16	OPEN-AIR GARDENING	8
CONJURING	5, 6	ORCHIDS	11
DIABOLO	7	ROSES	13
ENTERTAINMENTS	5, 7, 14, 15	TOMATOES	15
FORTUNE TELLING	8	VEGETABLES	15
HANDWRITING	9	HOME.	
MAGIC LANTERNS	10	COOKERY	3, 6, 7, 8
PALMISTRY	11	MEDICINE	10
PAPER WORK	11	NEEDLEWORK	11
PHOTOGRAPHY	12	SHAVING	14
PIANOFORTE	12, 15	LIBRARY.	
POOL	12	JOURNALISM, PRACTICAL	10
VAMPING	15	LIBRARY MANUAL, THE	10
COLLECTING.		PRESS WORK FOR WOMEN	13
AUTOGRAPHS	3	SPORTING BOOKS, ILLUSTRATED	14
BOOKS	10, 14	MECHANICS.	
COINS	6	BOOKBINDING	4
ENGRAVINGS	7	CABINET MAKING	5
FURNITURE	8	CANE BASKET WORK	5
POSTAGE STAMPS	12	CHIP CARVING	6
POSTMARKS	12, 13	CHUCKS AND CHUCKING	6
POTTERY & PORCELAIN	13	FORGE WORK	8
FARMING.		FRETWORK	8
BEEES	4	GLUES AND CEMENTS	9
DAIRY FARMING	7	MARQUETERIE	8, 10
GGATS	9	METAL WORKING	4, 13, 14, 16
HORSES	9	MODEL YACHTS	10
PIGS	12	PICTURE FRAME MAKING	12
POULTRY	7, 9, 10, 13	POKER WORK	12
STOCK RECORDS	4, 12, 14	POLISHES AND STAINS FOR WOODS	12
GARDENING.		REPOUSSÉ WORK	13
ALPINE PLANTS	3	TICKET WRITING	16
BEGONIAS	4	VIOLINS, REPAIRING	15
BULBS	5	WOODWORKING	6, 10, 12, 16
CACTUS	5	WORKSHOP MAKE-SHIFTS	16
NATURAL HISTORY.			
AQUARIA		3	
BIRDS' EGGS		4	
BUTTERFLIES		5	
DRAGONFLIES		7	
HAWK MOTHS		9	
MOTHS		5, 9	
NATURALISTS' DIRECTORY		11	
RUBBER		13	
TAXIDERMV		15	
VIVARIUM		10, 15	
PET-KEEPING.			
BIRDS		4, 5, 7, 8, 11	
CATS		6	
DGS		6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15	
GUINEA PIGS		9	
MICE		10	
MONREYS		10	
PIGEONS		12	
RABBITS		13	
SPORTING.			
ANGLING		3, 14	
CYCLING		11	
FERRETING		8	
GAME PRESERVING		8	
LAWN TENNIS		10, 15	
MOTORING		11	
OTTER-HUNTING		11	
SAILING		4, 8, 10, 14	
SHOOTING		3	
SKATING		14	
SWIMMING		15	
TRAPPING		15	
WILD SPORTS		16	
WILDPOWLING		16	
WRESTLING		10, 16	
SEAFARING.			
BOAT BUILDING		4	
BOAT SAILING		4	
SAILING TOURS		14	
SEA LIFE		14	
SEA TERMS		14	
YACHTING YARNS		9	
TOURING.			
CARAVANING		5	
FRIESLAND MERES		8	
ROUTE MAP		11	
SEASIDE WATERING PLACES		14	
WELSH MOUNTAINEERING		11	

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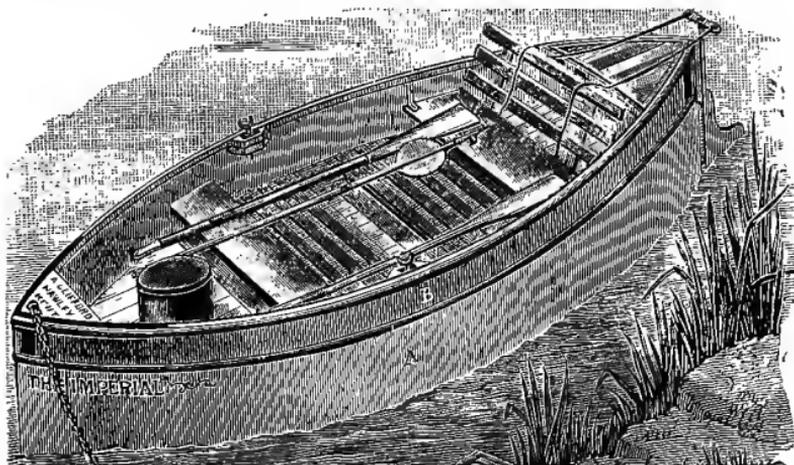
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