

THE CANADIAN POULTRY REVIEW

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF POULTRY, IN ALL ITS BRANCHES

For the FANCIER, the FARMER, and the SMALL BREEDER.

VOL. XXI.

124 VICTORIA STREET, TORONTO, DECEMBER, 1898.

No. 12

STAMINA IN FOWLS.

BY H. S. BABCOCK, PROVIDENCE, R.I.

THERE are many valuable qualities in fowls which deserve careful consideration in breeding, but there is none of greater importance than stamina. It is to fowls what a good foundation is to a building. It does not matter how elegant the superstructure may be, if it lacks a solid foundation the building is destined to fall into a heap of ruins. We may breed in our fowls the greatest perfection of form and color, we may produce the highest type of productiveness, but if stamina be lacking our labor will have been in vain, for disaster awaits us, and is only just around the corner.

Stamina results from the methods of breeding and the methods of raising.

If our fowls are closely in-bred—whether in-breeding itself works the injury or whether it simply intensifies natural weaknesses makes no difference—there is danger of a lack of stamina.

The temptation to in-breed is specially strong to the fancier. He has, perhaps after years of striving, succeeded in impressing upon his fowls a desirable type, to perpetuate which in-breeding affords the readiest means. If he never carries this beyond the point where weakness begins he is safe. But that point is not always visible, and, unless he is a close observer, he may pass it unobserved, and at last realize that he is "improving his fowls off the face of the earth." Some in-breeding is permissible, but one should realize that this way danger lies. Out-breeding, crossing of strains, will bring vigor and stamina, and sooner or later this out crossing must be resorted to.

But methods of rearing also have a decided influence upon stamina. A child born of healthy parents but

reared in unsanitary quarters is liable to have its vitality sapped, and though nature intended it for a strong man, it grows up a weakling. And just so with our fowls. Howsoever strong the chickens when hatched, if the conditions for rearing are imperfect, the stamina will be to a greater or less extent undermined. Chickens, to grow into vigorous fowls, need fresh air—plenty of it—abundant exercise, and proper food. Given these, if hatched with strong constitutions, stamina will not be lacking; wanting these, parentage will not amount for much and stamina will be a minus quantity.

If we would have fowls with stamina we need to observe the following rules.

Avoid continuous in-breeding.

Use only mature stock for breeding.

Hatch chickens under the best of conditions.

Give them plenty of fresh air.

Provide for abundant exercise.

Feed sensibly sound healthful food stuffs.

Nature will do the rest.

Silkie are now having quite a revival in popular favor in England, where for a time they dropped out of sight. The general opinion there appears to be that they should be classed with Bantams and that too great a size is a grave fault. Some years ago we know this question gave rise to discussion there as in some cases they were shown and won in the Bantam A.O.V. class and again in the regular A.O.V. class. This of course is incorrect on the face of it.

Mr. T. F. McGrew, New York, has bought all the buff Cochins Bantams lately owned by Mr. Richard A. Homemeyer, Middle Village, N.Y., and who has been a most successful breeder and exhibitor of this variety.