



TWELVE BANTAMS.

VIII.

THE BUFF COCHIN.

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ONE of the most attractive of the feather-footed Bantams, and certainly one of the best known and most popular, is the buff Cochin, formerly known as Pekin, from the city where it was first discovered by English speaking men. I am exceedingly glad that we have dropped the term Pekin and for this we have labored in season and out of season for several years. It was not a matter of so much importance at first when there was but one variety of Cochin Bantam, though even then there was a confusion when one spoke of his Pekins, for it was not known whether ducks or Bantams were intended, but with the multiplication of varieties of the Cochin Bantam, with whites and blacks and partridge colored specimens, Cochin was the more desirable and better descriptive term. The buff Cochin Bantam should be, as its name implies, a true buff Cochin with all the characteristics of the large fowl except size, the same shape, color, fullness of cushion and feather, and the same internal characteristics, docility, amiability and motherly propensities.

But what ought to be and what is are not always obtained in this imperfect world of ours, and it need not surprise us if often the buff Cochin Bantam differs somewhat from the large buff Cochin in other points than size. Still the large fowl should furnish the ideal for the little one, and that ideal should be as nearly realized as possible. The chief points of difference between the large fowl and the Bantam will be found in the tails of both sexes and the cushion of the females. Very rarely, indeed, does one find a buff Cochin Bantam cock with as small a tail as is desired; very rarely has the little hen as full a cushion or as soft a tail as the large hen. And yet once in a great while such a specimen does appear and the frequency of such specimens is, it seems to me, increasing. The comb of the Bantam is, also, a point of difference with the larger fowl, for it is almost always much larger in proportion, to the size of the body, in the Bantam than in the mammoth fowl. Smallness and softness of tail, fullness of cushion, and smallness of comb are points that breeders of the buff Cochin Bantam ought to cultivate with great care.

There has been a decided improvement in color since the first appearance of this Bantam. The early specimens were much poorer in color than those which are now bred. The cocks used to be a deep red, rather than buff, and the hens were very pale in color. There was a wide difference in the color of the sexes, neither of which were good buff. But now one can find males and females of nearly the same shade, and that shade a rich golden buff, exquisitely beauti-