

the table or market purposes only," says, "Spanish or Canadian ganders may be used for crossing with other varieties, and such crosses are generally very successful." This mention of the "Spanish" goose is the only reference he makes to the English relative of our African goose. As before stated, 1845 is the first record we find of the use of the name African, although under numerous other names the goose had long been bred, probably to about the same type. Felch, in a personal letter writes: "The African goose, I believe, has been credited to Africa—the region near Zanzibar. It is a goose as heavy as the Embden or Toulouse, has a shorter, thicker neck, and darker gray color than the Brown China; knob and bill are black, with a prominent dewlap—a kind of feathered throat wattle; and a voice harsher and heavier than all others. My own belief is that it is a species indigenous to Africa. We cannot say it is like the brown Chinas or the domestic goose of India, all of which have longer and more swan-like necks, while the African weighs all of six pounds more than the Chinas. I think that they were imported to this country long before the white and brown Chinas were received."

A breeder of this variety, with more than thirty years' experience, writes that he first knew of them in 1859, when some were landed at Essex, Mass. What he learned from persons who had them led him to believe that they came from Hindostan, and he called them India geese, and all pure bred ones were known by that name. He next found geese landed by a Providence (Mass.) vessel, and said to have come from Africa. These birds were scattered about the section west of Boston, and were called Africans, and exhibited by that name. In 1879 they were exhibited under both names, but the name African being adopted about that time in the American Standard of Perfection, the breed has been known by that name ever since. He finds very few pure bred Africans in Rhode Island, many specimens showing admixture of brown China blood. He has, since 1859, known the African or India goose to be a distinct variety, with a fixed type and breeding, without particular variation.

The American Standard of Perfection requires that the adult African gander shall weigh at least 20 pounds, the goose, 18 pounds; the young gander, 16

pounds, and goose, 14 pounds. This is exactly 4 pounds heavier in each instance than is required by the standard for either brown or white China geese. As to their laying qualities, doubtless considerable difference exists between different families of the breed. At this Station the average egg production has been less than in the case of either of the other four breeds. For three successive seasons—care and feeding being the same in each case—Mr. William Rankin, however, who has bred African geese for many years, kept careful records of the production of eggs by the individuals of his flock, and always preserved for breeding purposes the best specimens from his most prolific geese whenever any birds were required to replenish his flock, has found them better layers than either Toulouse or Embdens. Under date of February 17th, 1898, he writes in reply to an inquiry: "In 1888 I kept 12 African geese, and the flock averaged 37.42 eggs each. I also kept, the same year, 6 Toulouse geese which averaged 30.68 eggs each, while 10 Embdens, kept the same season, averaged 28.12 eggs per goose. I have since done better with the Embden; I think one goose laid 68 eggs in the season of 1895. The product of geese depends largely upon their liberty and food. My African average has always been the largest." In regard to the development of special qualities by breeding, Mr. Rankin says, "Thirty years ago I rarely had a bird that would lay over thirty eggs; now they often lay sixty, and occasionally more. \* \* \* When I was a boy my father used to say, 'If you raise ten goslings from a goose you are all right.' Now we feel that we ought to raise from twenty-five to thirty." African geese averaged larger and heavier than those of any other breed kept at the Experiment Station. The goslings are a dark yellowish green color, and usually strong and active. They lay on flesh rapidly and make excellent green geese, although the dark feathers are objectionable in the shape of "pin feathers." They have a quiet, mild disposition when well treated, and feed well when put in the fattening pen, being less liable to rush wildly about, and waste flesh by excitement, than some kinds of geese. This variety is the general favorite for mating with the Canada goose in breeding mongrels.

#### THE BROWN AND WHITE CHINAS.

These two varieties of geese are smaller than either