

with a great big tail, especially if it is a fantail. I remember some years ago giving £15 for a buff cock without a tail; when it grew it was like a fan; this is a nasty fault, in my opinion, either in a cock or hen. The breast should be broad and full, with great depth, and carried well forward. Wings should be free from black or white flight feathers, a most difficult thing to get in a cock. One of our most noted Cochin breeders told me that he scarcely ever got a buff cock absolutely pure in the flights. The wings should be free from twisted feathers, and well tucked underneath the saddle feathers. Thighs should be powerful and well covered with fluff. The lower part of the breast should cover the thighs in front. The fluff should be as profuse as possible, and standing out well behind the thighs, and the same colour as the breast. Now as regards the hock:—I think in a great measure the vulture hock has gone out, although some of our judges don't seem to object to it, providing there is abundance of leg and foot feather, which should come down to the extremity of all the toes, and be pure in colour. For my own part, I must say I do not like to see a stiff hock. I like the soft rounded hock free from quill feathers, providing the bird has an abundance of leg feather, which should be full down the shank. Many people have an idea that it is impossible to breed Cochins as heavy in foot feather without this vulture hock, but it is a mistake, as it can be done. I do not like to see the legs of a Cochin too short—it often makes a bird look smaller than it really is—and the legs should be wide apart, and yellow. The toes should be straight, and spreading out well. Just a word as to colour. There are several colours in the buff Cochin. There is the dark cinnamon, very much admired by some of

our breeders. Then there is the medium shade and the lemon buff. The latter, I must say, I prefer. I have many times been very successful in breeding this colour. I find fanciers like them, but they are more difficult to breed (in my opinion) than any other shade of buff. You invariably get them mealy in the wings, tail and feet, especially the cock. An adult cock will weigh 12 lb., or more.

Now as to the buff hen. Many of the points I have referred to in the cock are applicable to the hen also. I am not an advocate for such immense birds if they lack colour; of course, if you can get the two combined so much the better. Some of our judges seem to me to go in more for size than anything else. They seem to ignore the beautiful golden buff, which seems to me so essential in a buff hen or pullet. I could show you a pullet perfectly even in colour from head to tail, without showing the white shaft in the feather, and a beautiful golden buff. Of course, this is difficult to get in a hen after she has moulted. They sometimes come out patchy and show white shaft, a fault I should not despise a bird for, for the breeding pen. The hen should have an abundance of fluff, the more the better, with the soft-rounded hock, and the leg-feathering pure in colour, and coming right down to the extremity of the toes, as in the male bird. You will notice this hen fails a little on the shank, and I think this is her worst fault. I might say that the wings should be as tightly tucked as possible underneath the cushion feathers; the chest broad and deep, covering the front of the thighs, as in the cock; legs are rather short in proportion to the size of the bird. A good hen will weigh ten pounds.

As regards their laying qualities, opinions differ. Many people have an idea that they lay very few eggs,

and are always wanting to sit. My answer is: "I do not find them such bad layers. I have had an abundance of eggs this year until recently, and from about two dozen stock hens, not one was broody; and if I had not gone to the trouble of procuring cross-bred hens for sitting purposes, I don't know where I should have been for chickens, not having an incubator." When they do go broody, they will sit for weeks without eggs, and it is a good plan to moulit before the cold weather comes on. Some people say they are bad mothers. I don't think so, if properly managed; they are certainly clumsy, but if handled quietly, they are very careful with their chickens, and it depends a good deal as to what sort of a coop you put the hen in as to whether she kills her chickens or not. I will say more about the coop presently.

They lay a fair number of eggs, not large, generally brown. I have had some remarkable specimens in eggs at different times; I have had them no larger than pigeons', I have had them as large as a goose's—double-yolked, of course—I have had them flat-sided, and also as round as a ball; but these are not the most remarkable. I remember, some years ago, having a very good pullet, and she appeared to be unwell; I took her away from the other birds, put her in a pen by herself. The next day I went to look at her, and found in the pen a large substance, very much larger than an ordinary tumbler I examined it, and found it was an enormous egg, enveloped in a very thick skin almost as thick as wash leather. After removing the outside covering I found a perfect egg, which I broke, and found that contained another broken egg and a small perfect one. Of course she died soon after, without laying another.