



### GAME BANTAMS.

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ALL varieties of Game Bantams should have the same typical shape, a shape characterized by "reachiness." The head should be even and long, the neck even and slim, with as close a hackle as possible; the back rather short and with a downward slope; the tail short, carried but a little above the horizontal line, closely folded, and in the male furnished with very narrow sickles; the shoulders should be broad and the wing fronts prominent; the breast not protuberant but almost even with the wing fronts; the body compact and the fluff close; and the legs should be long in thigh and shank, and should make a broad angle at the hock and be straight to avoid the fault of being "cow-hocked." This gives us a bird that looks racy in all his lines, and yet, despite this racy look will appear to have great strength and vigor—a combination of airiness with power. Given such a bird, and whatever the color, it cannot fail to be a very "catchy" one.

This is the shape Game Bantam breeders seek to obtain, and considerable success meets their efforts, for in nearly all varieties a fair approximation to perfection of shape can be found. Yet no bird is absolutely perfect. There is always

something left to be desired. Fortunate that it is so. It we could reach absolute perfection, if all our ends were attained, the charm of breeding would disappear. It is the hope of attaining that spurs us on. Was it Jean Paul Richter, or some one else, who said, "If I were offered truth or the search for truth I would unhesitatingly choose the latter?" And similarly a Bantam fancier might say, "If I were offered perfection in my fowls or the attempt to attain perfection, the latter would be my voluntary choice, for the former would pall with possession, but the latter has never-ending charms." We sometimes almost despair when matings go wrong, and when the labor seems wasted through the tendency towards variation, but if variation did not exist, then all hope of improvement would cease, and breeding Game Bantams would have less charms than raising white beans, for white beans do vary. All skill would die with this permanent condition. Mating would be nothing more than placing a male with a number of females. A boy of ten would equal a veteran of seventy, for in neither case would skill count. Such a state of affairs would destroy the poultry show and the poultry fancy. Fowls might still be kept, because they would lay eggs and furnish palatable flesh, because they are a source of pecuniary profit. Even Bantams might be kept because they are really profitable fowls. But the interest would be gone—the glory would have gone out of the day, the charm of poultry-breeding would be dead.