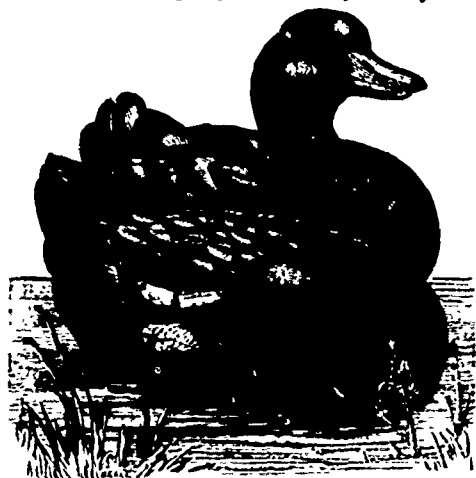


## Poultry Yard.

### The Black East Indian Ducks.

This variety of the duck breed is known by many other names—Buenos Ayren, Labrador, and sometimes Black Brazilian, all of which are inappropriate, as they are not known in a wild state in any part of the world. In Canada there are but few, if indeed any specimens at the present time, neither are there many in the United States, although several poultry societies there include them in their premium list. In England they are bred pretty extensively, and are to be met with at all their principal poultry exhibitions, they are supposed to be the result of a cross between the wild Mallard and some variety of the domestic duck, and stand as it were midway between the useful and purely ornamental varieties. Some fanciers assign to them the same place amongst water fowl that Bantams hold amongst other fowls, but their best admirers are not willing to accept of this distinction, arguing that not only do they stand



as truly fancy ducks, but also very useful, producing the greatest quantity of meat with the smallest proportion of bone of any demizen of the poultry yards, good layers of fertile eggs, if not more than two ducks are allowed to run with one drake. In breeding for successful exhibition, the chief points sought to be obtained are small size—the smaller the better—and neat shape, round heads, with short bills and short bodies. When first hatched the ducklings have black bodies with a shade of yellow on the breast, the feet, legs and bill being jet black. They require care for the first few days, feeding them on chopped eggs and afterwards on bread and milk, taking care not to overfeed nor allow them to go to the water too early, as they are subject to cramps. They do not bear confinement well in a yard or other small enclosure, and should therefore be allowed their liberty and as much exercise as possible, otherwise they will rarely come to perfection. Like the Cayugas, the Black East Indians are liable to throw white feathers in their second and subsequent moults, not unfrequently becoming almost pure white in the course of years. The drakes are very pugnacious, and on that account it is impossible to keep two of them in the same enclosure.

### Poultry Notes—No. 23.

Scientific Principles of Mating—Cochins, Brahmas, Dorkings and Spanish.

There are scientific principles connected with poultry breeding, which must be understood and practised by the fancier who would be successful in producing high class fowls. He must be acquainted with the knowledge of such colors as are readily interchanged, and to choose birds, the imperfections of the one to be counterbalanced by the perfections of the other. Artists are aware that the infinitely

various tints exhibited in coloring are the result of a combination of the three primitive or primary colors, red, blue and yellow; and poultry fanciers know that in fowls black and white is readily interchanged, and that where birds of these colors are crossed, the chickens may be either black or white, or even a cuckoo in their markings. Black crossed with black of different races, or even white with white, has produced birds ranging in color from a pale dun to a deep slaty blue. In this way have new breeds been established, and new varieties of the same breed perfected. Few if any of the fancy poultry now so much admired but originated in this way, and many more may yet be produced as we obtain a more perfect knowledge of the science of breeding. We shall now endeavor to show how the different breeds and the different varieties of the same breed may be improved and perfected by scientifically mating in color and marking, as well as by counteracting imperfections, bearing in mind always that in breeding the first consideration should be the reproduction in the chickens of the most essential characteristics of the breed.

**BUFF COCHINS.**—The essential in this breed is purity of color, be the shade buff, lemon buff or cinnamon; the cock of the shade required should therefore possess the same feature in his breast and lower parts, while his upper parts should be a rich, sound and rather deep color, much deeper than the color intended to be bred. The principle in mating to produce good buff chickens, then, would be that the hens be a rich buff, not too light, without admixture of shades of color of feathers, but a decided color throughout, mated with a cock of a rich buff, and good sound color throughout, taking particular care that the under flight feathers of wing be not white or mealy.

**PARTRIDGE COCHINS.**—In this variety good breeders usually make up two pens, known as a cockerel and pullet pen—a course pursued with several other breeds as well. There are different shades of color in partridge as well as buff, the desired shade having been agreed upon, to make up a COCKEREL PEN, the cock bird, possessing the other Cochin characters, ought to have a really black breast, fluff and leg feather, with hackles a rich red, striped with dense black; the neck hackle may approach to orange red, dark towards the throat in front, and saddle feathers of nearly same color, but not quite so dark, while the web of hackles should be jet black up to the stem or shaft. Hens to mate with such a cock ought to show a very deep rich brown ground color, almost the color of roasted coffee, with rich reddish orange hackles; the markings on feathers a minute pencilling, almost black in color and close together. After a few years' mating birds in this manner, exhibition cockerels will no doubt be bred. To make up a PULLET PEN, the hackle of the cock should be reddish orange rather than red, densely striped with black; mated to hens whose feathers must show very accurate markings, particularly the breast feathers, which must be solidly and accurately pencilled with several perfect semicircles or crescentic markings, the other feathers showing much the same character, the whole marking to be rather large and broad, and very intense in color.

**LIGHT BRAHMAS.**—The object sought to be obtained by the breeder is a sufficient amount of black markings in the hackle, without producing color where not wanted, and purity of white. Two pens are mated for this purpose, a cockerel and pullet pen, and the scientific principles adopted are as follows:—**To breed pullets.**—In the cock's hackle the stripes should be narrow and tolerably distinct, the saddle feathers quite clear, and the leg feathering nearly white; this bird put to hens darkly striped in the neck, and if they can be got so dark, entirely black even in the very fringe, such a cross ought to produce pullets with hackles fit for the show-pen. To

breed cockerels.—The cock's hackle stripes should be of a very solid character, and well defined stripes in the saddle also. This bird, mated with hens too light and cloudy in the hackle for the show-pen, but free from any color but white in the hackle (none but birds with a pure white should be chosen for breeding purposes, the raw color so frequently seen being sure to reappear in the chickens), will produce well-marked cockerels, which may be exhibited with every prospect of success.

**DARK BRAHMAS.**—There are in this variety different shades of color, and in mating, of course the same agreed upon will have to be considered. The essentials are,—purity of markings in feather, and proper distribution of color from a scientific point of view; and the general characteristics which should guide in the selection of the cock are, whether he be mottled or black; in the breast he should be darker, or at least fully as dark as the thighs, the hackle well striped, and that the hens mated to him have good dark breasts. But to be more particular, and breed the favored varieties known as the silver grey or blue grey pullets, the cock should be entirely free from brown even in wing bar, the tail a very bright greenish black without purple reflections, the bar of wing positively green, while the hackle and saddle feathers ought to be solidly and distinctly striped, breast black, with fluff also black or slightly mottled, in the latter case the middle of every feather quite black; mated with hens that have good dark breasts, as already stated, will produce chickens of the above shades of color.

**COLOR DORKINGS.**—With this variety of dorking care in choosing stock birds must be exercised, and therefore it is desirable that the cock and hen should be descended from the same stock birds, otherwise the result may be of a very undesirable kind. Being a composite fowl, any sudden cross would produce "reversion," and hence the necessity of having both parents descended from the same stock; dark feathered are preferable, but to show a bright shaft nearly the whole length of feather. The hen's breast to be salmon red, each feather tipped with dark grey or black; the wing feather black round edges, with a rich brown centre pencilled or shaded with black, and the back and saddle almost black. The cock mated to hens of this color, in order to breed the dark color above described, should have very black hackles, and all white in the tail avoided. In a former note we made some remarks in reference to mating this variety, silver greys. In all sub-varieties, let it be understood, purity of blood is only a question of degree, and hence the necessity of treating all such cases on purely scientific principles, inasmuch as there is always danger of "breeding back." The same remark, therefore, will apply to this variety as to the colored as regards the descent of the parents being from the same stock birds. To breed silver greys a cock should be procured as silvery as possible but with pure black breast, and mated with hens of medium color, not too pale, else many of the cockerels will have grizzled breasts. Large birds, if possible, should be procured, but if size has to be dispensed with on one side, let it be that of the male bird.

**BLACK SPANISH.**—The two essential and important features to be produced in this breed are the comb and white face. The plumage being black, it requires no knowledge of the proper mating colors as in other breeds, although there are different shades, some much more preferable than others. Although comb does not come within the scientific matching for colors to which these notes are confined, yet it being one of the prominent characteristics, we cannot pass it over unnoticed. The character of future combs may be influenced by selecting a cock of moderate sized comb, the base as thick as possible, but tapering off to a fine thin edge, and mating him with hens possessing same points in combs; such birds will produce chickens with desirable combs. White faces are of two kinds, the rough or cauliflower, and the soft smooth face. The most satisfactory results will usually be found to follow by putting the smooth faced cockerels to the larger rough-faced hens, instead of adopting the contrary plan. Crossing strains of very alien blood should be avoided, as it often produces great deterioration of face, which however may be removed in the second generation by re-crossing back to one of the parent strains.