



HAMBURGH BANTAMS.

IN concluding the Variety Bantam articles with *Hamburgh Bantams*, I bethought myself that I could not do better (seeing I had never bred these beautiful varieties than write to Mr. J. W. Farnsworth, whom I knew had made a speciality of silver spangled *Hamburgh Bantams* for many years, not only breeding them, but also exhibiting them successfully at a few shows where the classification was at all suitable.

To my request for information for the readers of *The Feathered World* as to how he started and eventually perfected the silver spangled *Hamburgh Bantam*, Mr. Farnsworth wrote me a thorough Fancier-like reply, which I cannot do better than give in his own words.

"The following I do not say is the right way to go about the work, but it is the line pursued in producing my birds.

"My accommodation has always been limited, hence anything but *Bantams* in the fowl line was out of the question. Born with the hen-fever of a permanent character, a general liking for anything small, and a great admirer of the 'black and white' combination, the silver spangled *Hamburgh Bantam*, although only existing in my mind's eye, stamped itself at once to be the very thing. A really good but undersized silver spangled *Hamburgh cockerel* of notable descent, having been mated to a couple of rather large silver *Sebright* hens, resulted in my being, the following year, in possession of a fairly good *Mooney cross cockerel*, which was mated to a somewhat large blue-legged white *rosecomb* hen, a black *rosecomb* hen and his sister, a *Mooney cross pullet*. Another similar pullet was bred to a pure white *rosecomb* cock.

"The remaining *Mooney cross pullet*, the smallest of the three, was put back to her sire, the *Hamburgh cock*, the services of the *Sebright* hens being at once and forever dispensed with.

"These three pens produced a number of odd-looking chickens, of various markings, but a very good selection was obtainable therefrom, some of which were bred together, others were mated with white *rosecombs* and black *rosecombs* to improve size and spangling. By continual perseverance I produced some grand little birds in every respect but tail, which I could not get satisfactory. Eventually I bought a silver spangled *Hamburgh cock* with a perfect tail and but three and a half pounds in weight (of the same strain as the original *Hamburgh cock*), which, mated to a couple of my largest spangled hens, gave me some chickens with the desired tail, but, of course, oversized.

"These, bred together, with care in selection, for a few seasons, enabled me to pen three birds at *Basingstoke Show* under Mr. W. M. Leach, a club judge of the *Variety Bantam Club*, which supported the show; and I was awarded first prize in the A.O.V. cock class, and second and third prizes in the corresponding hen class, a, to me, very gratifying result. Since then I have but once missed the money when exhibiting them, and that at the *Midland Counties Bantam Show*, at *West Bromwich*, where in seventeen entries I got h.c.

"I have, of course, had the usual amount of trouble, expense, and disappointment in bringing them into form, but I consider them without doubt one of the handsomest *Variety Bantams* out at present, and the *Feathered World* and other Fanciers' papers have all spoken most favorably of them."

Such is Mr. Farnsworth's method of producing silver spangled *Hamburgh Bantams*, which are without doubt one of the prettiest of all *Variety Bantams*, and the production of which presents no difficulties whatever.

With ordinary luck and careful selection each year, by in-breeding after having obtained the desired color, and by breeding as late as June to reduce the size, there is no reason why exhibition specimens should not be produced in about four years. The only difficulty I can see would be in keeping the length and flow of tail feather which to a certain extent would be lost in breeding very late.

Color and length of feather should be your guide in mating up your breeding pens, rather than size, as size can always be remedied, and very materially so, by feeding and in-breeding.

Gold spangles could easily be bred in the same way by using a gold *Sebright* hen, but they are not nearly so beautiful as the silvers, and I don't think for one moment that these would ever become popular, or pay for the time and labor.

I should think it would be quite possible to breed silver and gold pencilled *Bantams* by using small silver and gold pencilled *Hamburgh cocks*, preference being given to those birds which excel in length of tail feather, and mating these to rather large *Sebrights* of their respective color. To get the proper and even pencilling would take four or five years, as it would be difficult to get rid of the lacing on flights, but the time would be fully repaid in the long run. Unless the young fancier is prepared to devote both time and patience, and to persevere for a few years at an uphill game, he cannot possibly expect to perfect any new breed, and more especially *Hamburgh Bantams*.—P. Proud, in *Feathered World*.

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