

grand pair of fowls it is intended to portray. They were awarded 1st at Chicago and Buffalo in 1877; the cock scoring 93 and the hen 99 points. Mr. Todd is proud of his Buffs, and well he may, as no fancier on the continent has had greater success in breeding them,—getting a larger percentage of exhibition birds from a given number raised than any of his competitors.

Buff Cochins are only rivalled in weight by Light Brahmas; are fair winter layers, and Pullets will commence to lay at as early an age as any of the Asiatics.

Many splendid yards are now owned in Canada, and grand birds appear in force at all our shows. The interest in this variety is decidedly on the increase.

For the Canadian Poultry Review.

On In-Breeding.

My attention having been called to an article in the January No. of the REVIEW on In-Breeding by "X Roads," I venture the following by way of encouragement to one who seems to be somewhat original in thought, and free and independent in expressing it. I do this, because the opposite and positive views entertained by experienced persons on all subjects in which humanity is interested, suggests to the student of human nature the necessity of being charitable toward those whose convictions are opposite to, and are positively expressed, in conflict with our own. In poultry matters, so many persons are convinced by experience when their convictions are certainly opposed, on subjects in which either are really interested and evidently honest, and that too, when the question is of vital importance, that we wish to sustain those who, in respectful language, can venture to express what may be very unpopular, but containing experimental truths or useful suggestions. "X Roads" has maintained the proper disposition of an inquirer after truth while putting his convictions clearly before his readers, therefore, with the hope that others will have their say on this interesting question, I will now give mine.

I do not believe with unwavering confidence the assumptions of those, who, in their theories, follow in the beaten track of others without testing by *continued* experiment, the truth of their positions; nor is my confidence increased, when I find the leaders in the chase resorting to the courses they condemn as wrong in attempts to reach the winning post. I admit that the majority of poultry men are opposed to "X Roads" in both theory and practice. I also know that many scientists, and many poultry men who are considered eminent as breeders, do in-breed for years together and constantly improve their stock. The

truth is, that none but experienced breeders can do this, because novices do not know how to balance the varying qualities of fowls that are of no one variety, but an admixture of several, as are the best so-called varieties of the present day—the Brown Leghorn, the Plymouth Rock, the Dark Brahma, and in many cases the Light Brahma even. When an experienced breeder has a well-established strain, he does not hesitate to in-breed for several generations, avoiding only *brother* and *sister*, and uses even these occasionally. Probably more than half of the birds of the varieties mentioned are raised where there is but one flock, and these from the same parents, and sold as breeders in twos, or as pens, and their progeny bred and sold in the same way. I remember seeing an article in the *New England Farmer*, in which the editor stated that in former years he considered it necessary to procure a male bird from some distant flock, so as to keep his own flock in good breeding condition, but that of late he had selected the most vigorous of his own, and had done just as well as with those brought from another yard. I also remember conversing with Mark Pitman, of Mass., on the safety of in-breeding, and he said he should not hesitate to in-breed for *six successive years* rather than introduce new blood. I suppose no man is better authority than he is, nor has any person had better success than he has in in-breeding to color with Plymouth Rocks. I have personal knowledge of the method pursued by most of the prominent breeders of Light Brahmas in this State, and I am satisfied that, with one exception, they constantly introduce new blood, some of them using males, others females, and most of them either. The person excepted above, keeps pens enough of all the types he needs to combine to produce his own ideal of form and color, and thereby to produce uniformity. It takes money to do this, but having the many pens he can select without choosing nearness of relationship.

A great deal can be said on either side of this question of in-breeding from family blood, but I forbear as I am writing my first paper for the REVIEW, and will close my remarks for the present by saying that until 1865 I bred without any system; at that time I cleared my fowl-house, and began anew, with stock I purchased with the intention of building up a type to suit my own ideal of a "standard" fowl, and I have succeeded much better than I expected to. I considered that one man's good fowls were as good as any other man's, provided their health, form and color were equal. The ideal of all breeders may be formed, as they think, by consulting the "standard" of excellence, yet experience proves that the standard was never yet reached, as each man's fowl in some points will always be short of standard requirements; at