

by the fact that Dark Brahmas are very difficult to breed up to a high standard of excellence, and many of them who placed them in their yards had not the time and patience to acquire that knowledge of the breed which is necessary to secure success; after a couple of seasons trial, finding the stock deteriorating, they were given up.

It is generally considered that two yards are necessary to breed exhibition birds. The mating that will produce good males will seldom produce good females, and *vice versa*. To secure the solid black breast, so greatly desired, a sire with solid black breast must be used, mated with hens of clear plumage; while it is necessary to use a cock with mottled breast to secure the beautiful penciling on the hens, which constitute their greatest beauty. Birds having yellow or brassy tinge should be excluded from the breeding pens.

There is no class of fowls that require greater care in mating, and the infusion of new blood is a matter of great risk when the stock is of a high standard, and one which calls for the greatest care from even the oldest breeder. To those who wish to have this variety we would say, procure stock from a reliable breeder, and have him mate them for breeding purposes.

The following is the description in the *American Standard of Excellence* :—

#### DISQUALIFICATIONS.

Birds not matching in the show-pen; comb falling over to either side; crooked backs; wry tails; twisted feathers in wings; legs not feathered on the outside and to the extremities of the outer toes; vulture hocks; cocks not weighing nine pounds; hens not weighing seven and a half; cockerels not weighing seven and a half pounds, pullets not weighing six pounds.

#### THE COCK

**HEAD:** BROAD, of medium length and slightly projecting over the eyes;—color of plumage, silvery-white:—Beak very stout and curved, and, in color, dark horn, the sides being yellow:—Eyes large and bright.

**COMB:** Bright red, pea, small, lower in front and rear than in centre; firm on the head, without falling over to either side, and distinctly divided, having the appearance of three small combs joined together, the largest and highest in the middle, and each part slightly and evenly serrated.

**WATTLES AND EAR-LOBES:** Wattles, brilliant red, of medium length and well rounded:—Ear-lobes, brilliant red, somewhat pendent, and equal in length with the wattles.

**NECK:** Of medium length and well arched—the, hackle-feathers, silvery white and abundant, with a distinct black stripe down the centre, which

tapers to a point at the extremity of each feather, and flow well over the shoulders.

**BACK:** Broad, and flat between the shoulders, the length to be in harmony with the size and symmetry of the bird,—color silvery-white,—saddle-feathers, abundant and long, and, in color, silvery-white, with a black stripe down the centre, similar to that of the neck-hackle.

**BREAST AND BODY:** Breast, full, broad, and deep, and carried well forward,—in color, either black, or black, slightly and evenly mottled with white: Body, broad and deep, and the plumage of the underpart black.

**WINGS:** Small, the primaries well folded under the secondaries, and the points well covered by the saddle feathers: color of shoulder-coverts and wing-bows, silvery-white; color of wing-coverts, a metallic or greenish-black, forming a broad and well defined bar across the wings: the primaries black, or black with a narrow edging of white on the outer web; secondaries, white on the outer web, and black on the inner web, with a large greenish-black spot on the end of each feather.

**TAIL:** Small, carried tolerably upright and well spread, the two sickle-feathers spreading out laterally, and in length not greatly exceeding the main tail-feathers: color black,—the greater coverts, a rich greenish-black, or black edged with white.

**FLUFF:** Abundant and soft, giving the bird a broad and deep appearance behind—color, black, or black slightly frosted with white.

**LEGS AND TOES:** Thighs large and strong, and abundantly covered with soft feathers: color, black, or black slightly frosted with white:—Shanks, strong, and rather large, and standing well apart; of medium length and well feathered on the outside, and to the extremities of the outer toes:—color, scales yellow, the inside of the shanks a rich reddish yellow; the feathering black, or black slightly mottled with white:—Toes, straight and strong, the outer and middle toes being feathered: color of feathers, black, or black mottled with white.

**CARRIAGE:** Bold and attractive.

#### THE HEN.

**HEAD:** Broad, of medium length, and slightly projecting over the eyes—color, silvery-gray:—Beak curved and very stout,—color, horn:—eyes, full and bright.

**COMB:** Very small and low, placed well in front on the head, and having the appearance of three very small combs pressed together, the largest in the middle, and delicately serrated:—color, rich, brilliant red.