

Bantam Department

BANTLINGS.

MR. BABCOCK places his views on hatching, which are sound and to the point, before our readers in his usual lucid and instructive manner.

Japanese and other white breeds of Bantams need particular care during the moulting season to see that they are not allowed to wander under the scorching rays of the midday-sun. The new plumage soon turns yellowish or "brassy" in cast, and of course it will thus remain until the next shedding of the feathers.

We have found a good plan to adopt is to house them during the day-time, during the great heat, in cool well-ventilated apartments allowing them an hour or two in the evening when the sun has gone down to run around and scratch. Permit them at this time free access to green food of some kind, a grass and clover patch preferred, it much assists them in moulting. A little more meat than usual may be advantageously given.

These remarks may also be applied to buff Cochin Bantam females whose plumage very often bad, or rather, very seldom good, in under-color, fades very quickly, except, sometimes, in the case of pullets.

Begin early to prepare your birds for the show room, they cannot be rushed into good condition.

The early hatched Bantams which often win at the fall shows, frequently

grow too large or develop some defect which prevents them from winning from their younger competitors at the winter shows.

Begin as soon as the cockerels become precocious, to separate the sexes as far as possible.

HATCHING BANTAMS.

BY H. S. BABCOCK, PROVIDENCE, R. I.

ONE of the mooted points in Bantam breeding is the best time to hatch the birds. This is not written to settle the question, but to call attention to a little personal experience.

My practice is to hatch Bantams when I have the eggs and have suitable sitting hens to cover them. Some of them are, therefore, hatched quite early and some very late. My Bantams are hatched from April to September.

I find that with very delicate varieties early hatching pays best. The chickens which are hatched from the middle of April to the middle of May are the most easily reared. Fewer die hatched at this season. Bantams which have a tendency to over-weight, such as the Cochins, are best hatched late in the season. Those which come out the latter part of August and the early part of September, will grow rapidly until cold weather and then their growth is checked and the size of course, reduced. It is true that these late broods require special attention through the winter, and some of the chicks are liable to die, but a few good ones, which survive, will pay for the loss of those which do not winter successfully.

Chickens hatched in July are the most difficult of all to rear. The extreme heat to which they are subjected

and the abundance of vermin at this season, decimate the broods, aye and frequently much more than that, for often times, unless extra care is given, few are left in the brood to tell the tale of their privations.

Game Bantams, I am inclined to think, get better station if hatched early, and as Game Bantams are not likely to make overweight, early hatching seems advisable. On the other hand, Bantams which should be short in limb, as Cochins and Japanese, are in this respect, benefitted by late hatching.

To sum up the whole matter, I am inclined to believe that the following are safe rules to follow:

1st. Very delicate Bantams should be hatched early.

2nd. Bantams inclined to overweight should be hatched late.

3rd. Early hatched Bantams get greater reach, and Game Bantams are better for early hatching.

4th. Late hatched Bantams are shorter in the leg and more compact in build, and Cochin Bantams, especially, should be hatched late.

5th. Late in June, through July, and during the early part of August are the poorest times to hatch Bantams, as the weather is apt to be too hot and vermin too numerous to enable them to be raised successfully.

6th. The latter part of April, the month of May and the first half of June, the latter part of August and the first half of September are the months best suitable for Bantam breeding. This is stated, not as a positive but as a probable conclusion.

The above six conclusions are to be taken generally. As seasons vary, it may happen that a cool July will be a better time to hatch Bantams than a hot May, but in general conclusions such variations can not be taken into consideration. The whole point of the matter is that Bantams should be