

BUSINESS ONLY.

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WINTER LAYERS.

The experience of the past four winters proves that the breeds which are often stated to be the most unsuited to cold climates lay the best. It is often said by the inexperienced that fowls with large combs are not suited for winter layers because their combs will freeze. If any one wishes to make revenue from his winter eggs he must not keep his layers where their combs will freeze. There is reason and intelligence to be exercised in the treatment of winter layers as there is in the winter caring for other stock. Of the hens with the large combs such as Leghorns, Minorcas, and Andalusians no better winter layers or hardier fowls will be found elsewhere. The Andalusians and Minorcas are excellent winter layers but require to be kept active as do all the Spanish class. Plymouth Rocks and Wyandottes are well known winter layers. Members of the Asiatic family, viz:—Brahmas, Buff Cochins and Langshans require to be hatched out early in the season to make early layers. They require to be skilfully handled during the close confinement of winter to prevent their becoming too fat. A farmer will not make a mistake by choosing his winter layers from the Leghorns, Plymouth

Rocks, or Wyandottes. The Wyandottes, perhaps, come as near filling the bill as possible having little or no comb and are good layers. The Houdans do not seem to stand the confinement to winter quarters as well as other breeds. The following classification may serve as a guide in making a choice from the best known breeds:—

Breeds with large combs,—Leghorn, Minorcas, Andalusians, Black Spanish.

Breeds with small combs,—Wyandottes, Brahmas, Cochins, Houdans.

Breeds with medium size combs,—Plymouth Rocks, Dorkings, Black Javas, Langshans.

Breeds with rose combs,—Leghorns, Hamburgs, Red Caps, White Dorkings.—*Experimental Farms Report, 1891.*

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THE LANGSHAN FOWL.

The history of the Langshan fowl in this country is one of a succession of victories over prejudice, self interest and ignorance. Prejudice existed against its color of plumage and skin; self interest attacked it in the form of breeders of rival varieties and breeds; ignorance opposed its claims of excellence. But despite this multiplied opposition, an opposition which would have buried beyond the hope of resurrection a less meritorious breed, the Langshan has won a wide spread popularity which shows no sign of decrease. To-day it stands in the front rank of popular fowls and has the unique honor of being the only black fowl that has won a national and international popularity.

What were the causes of its popularity?

The first cause was unquestionably its excellent laying qualities. Among the Asiatics there is no better layer than the Langshan and but one that can be regarded as a near rival. Its large and beautifully tinted eggs are produced in abundance throughout the year, in winter as well as in summer. No single quality can more recommend a fowl to the American public than this. The first question that is asked, the first answer desired, is in reference to the production of eggs. If a fowl is a good layer it has a future before it. Prolificacy in fowls, like charity in humankind, will cover a multitude of sins.

The second cause was its table qualities. It had a well-developed body, a thin white skin, and meat of a savory character. People who have once eaten a well roasted Langshan need no urging to repeat the operation. It is true

that its legs and its skin were not of the color that is the favorite in American markets, that here it had to contend with a strong prejudice, but its qualities were such that it was able to come out of the contest with honor.

The third was its size. The Langshan is a large fowl, not the largest among the Asiatics and yet large enough to be ranked among the heavy breeds. The American people like large fowls and any attempt to diminish the size of a breed is an attempt aimed at the popularity of the breed. If the weight of the Asiatics could be reduced so that the fowls were no larger than Leghorns and no diminution of their good qualities resulted, there would be a loss and a decided loss in their popularity. Size should not be sought at the expense of coarseness, but the present weights can be maintained with no risk of deterioration in symmetry and beauty. The movement which is on foot in some quarters to reduce the weights of this breed can be viewed only with apprehension by those who wish to see it maintain its present popularity.

The fourth cause of its popularity was the unquestioned hardiness of the fowls. Hardiness is a quality that is closely connected with both pleasure and profit, and pleasure and profit appeal with great force to the American breeder; and it is right that they should, for one ought to derive profit from his labors and his labors ought to be heightened by pleasure. When one's heart unites with his hand, his work will be done more quickly, more easily and better. There is nothing more discouraging than the attempt to rear fine fowls and to lose them just as one begins to see the fruits of his labor. But the Langshan from the day it chips the egg until the natural or unnatural end of its life is as strong and healthy and hearty as any fowl can be expected to be.

The fifth cause is the great beauty of the fowl. Despite the prejudice against black plumage that exists in many quarters, there is no solid color that is richer and more beautiful than a lustrous green black. And the black of the Langshan is of this lustrous quality. It shines and shimmers in the sunlight like the richest of silks and satins. It delights and dazzles the eye. It is black, but a black that has varied effects in different lights and all the effects beautiful. And the shape and proportion of the bird are such as to heighten the beauty of its plumage. The plump breast, the neat head, the solid body,