

## Raise Your Own Furs

### Interesting Experiments by the United States Government in Domesticating Wild Fur-Bearing Animals to Save Whole Species Now Being Exterminated for Women's Wardrobe



be judged from the fact that since 1890 the mink has taken the place previously held by the fur seal as the greatest fur producer in the world, reckoned in terms of value. Few furs surpass that of this little amphibious animal (two feet long, dark above and white underneath), in richness of coloring, quality and durability.

The Biological Survey gives the following directions for breeding and rearing minks:

"There should be only one male to five or six females, and each of the latter should have a separate pen at breeding time. If this precaution be not taken, the females are liable to kill each other's young. The male would also kill them if he had a chance. Hence the male should be kept by himself except at mating time. The breeding season begins about the middle of February, and the young are born about the middle of April.

"The minks should be fed on bread and sweet milk, or corn mush with bits of meat in it, supplemented by meat or fish twice a week. Feed once a day; but females suckling young should have two meals daily. Do not salt the food; keep the pens clean, and provide plenty of fresh water.

"Pens should be five or six feet square, the sides of smooth, wide boards cut four feet long and set up with the lower end resting on a footing of stone or concrete. Heavy wire netting may be used instead of boards, but in that case the top must be netted to prevent the animals from climbing out. The floor of the pen should be bare ground.

"Boxes two feet square should be provided for nests, with hinged lids to allow their being opened and examined. They should be three or four inches above the ground, and as dark as possible, with a hole four inches in diameter for entrance. Fine straw or hay should be furnished."

Meanwhile the production of superior grades of a kind of fur known as "astrakhan" is to be soon established as an industry in this country by the Bureau of Animal Industry, which has already acquired for the purpose a number of superior animals to serve as breeding stock. As a result, we shall have before long astrakhan much more beautiful than any now on the market, by crossing the Arabi sheep with other varieties possessing fleeces with a high lustre.

The principal difficulty in this case was to get hold of pure-bred Arabi rams. This is a kind of sheep found only in Bokhara (Central Asia), and the natives of that region are so reluctant to permit their

exportation that it is almost impossible to secure a specimen. They have enormous tails, sometimes weighing as much as fifty pounds.

At birth, the lambs are intensely black, with a brilliant lustre, their wool being distributed over their bodies in tight little curls. Before long, however, the wool turns gray. But the pure-bred Arabi lambs are never killed, because they are too valuable. The rams are crossed with common native sheep, the offspring being invariably black. Lest the fur turn gray, these half-bred lambs are killed when they are less than five days old.

Such is the source of the familiar "Persian lamb" of the fur market—which does not come from Persia at all. Astrakhan is merely another name for it. The quarter-bred lambs (one-fourth Arabi) furnish the gray astrakhan of commerce, which is very pretty, though less highly esteemed than the black. It ought to be said here, by the way, that the popular notion that this kind of fur is derived from unborn lambs is incorrect. Indeed, the idea is an absurdity, inasmuch as it im-

plies the killing of the mothers, which are much more valuable than their young.

The fur of pure-bred Arabi lambs is so costly that articles made of it are owned only by a few royal personages, in Russia and elsewhere. A few of the rams have been smuggled from time to time into Afghanistan, and there crossed with common native sheep. It is from Afghanistan that practically all of the astrakhan which comes to the United States is derived. But in that country there is little knowledge of the art of scientific breeding, and the consequence is that the fur we get is inferior. What the Bureau of Animal Industry proposes to do is to cross the pure-bred Arabi with selected Shropshire ewes. The Shropshire has long and beautiful wool, almost equalling that of the Angora goat in lustre.

The Arabi rams used as sires were obtained from Dr. C. C. Young, of Belen, Tex., who imported them. He was able to secure possession of fifteen, in Bokhara by the help of a letter from Colonel Roosevelt, then President of the United States.

It is believed by the Government experts that the silver fox can be successfully farmed for its fur in this country—the only difficulty being to obtain the requisite breeding stock. This obstacle will doubtless be overcome. At the present time the bulk of the small market supply of this kind of fur comes from Prince Edward Island, off the Canadian coast, which is the only place in the world where silver foxes are reared under conditions of partial domestication—the business being so profitable that up to now its very existence has been kept carefully secret by the few persons engaged in it.

Already a very profitable kind of fur farming is being conducted over extensive areas of marshes in the region of the Chesapeake, which yield actually a greater annual profit than the best farming land, in the shape of muskrat skins. Before very long, it is believed, this business will be prosecuted much more systematically than at present, by giving protection to the animals during certain seasons.

The muskrat is nearly as big as

a fair sized cat, and breeds at so rapid a rate that it promises easily to outlast all other wild fur-bearing animals on the earth. How important it is from a market standpoint may be judged from the fact that (as estimated by Dr. Charles H. Stevenson, of the United States Fisheries Bureau) if all the muskrat skins taken last year were sewn together in one piece they would equal in area all other kinds of furs put together. Muskrats contributed to the world's fur supply about 8,000,000 skins in 1912, and four-fifths of these came from the United States. Not only is muskrat fur handsome and durable, but it is used on a vast scale to imitate more valuable furs.

When it is known that the fur-bearing animals all over the world, especially those most highly valued, are being so greatly reduced in numbers by persistent hunting, it is rather surprising to find that the fur market is always well stocked with all kinds of furs, including even the rarest; and anybody who wants any sort of skin is sure to be able to get it, if willing to pay the price.

#### A Set of White Raccoon Furs from Animals Grown in Captivity.

By RENE BACHE.

WITH the rapid extinction of so many of the fur-bearing animals to supply the constantly increasing demands of the market, the problem of domesticating as many species as possible has been taken up by the United States Government.

The plan of the Government Biological Survey for establishing a fur farming industry in this coun-

#### HOUSEHOLD SUGGESTIONS

Many otherwise good housekeepers are very indifferent about labelling. They trust to their memories as to what is in each jar or package, and sometimes with disastrous results. All stores should be plainly labeled.

Box springs may be protected from insects by opening the ticking at one end and pouring inside a handful of naphtha mothballs. When the ticking is replaced little or no odor will escape from the mothballs.

When doing washing, before you go out in the cold to hang up your clothes, wipe your hands dry and rub them well with cornstarch. Your hands will not suffer with the cold.

One and one-half teaspoonfuls of baking powder to one pint of sifted flour is a good rule to follow for biscuits and shortcakes.

Do not throw away candle ends which are no longer fit for burning, but collect them all and put in a jar. Stand it on the side of the stove till melted, then mix a little paraffin oil with it, becomes the thickness of cream. Applied to olefinths, etc., it will make an excellent polish, being bright, but not dangerous and slippery for children.



Sheep Being Used in Breeding Experiments by the Government to Offset the Decrease in Wild Fur-Bearing Animals.

try contemplates, to begin with, the rearing of that valuable animal, the mink, under conditions of semi-domestication. Mink skins of good quality are worth from \$3 to \$5, according to size and condition, in the market to-day.

With this idea in view, the Government experts are starting in to make a series of experiments, in co-operation with the National Zoological Park at Washington, for the purpose of finding out what kind of pens are best, and what methods of feeding the animals and rearing the young may be adopted to greatest advantage.

Later on, the results of the experiment will be embodied in a bulletin on mink farming, to be published for the information of everybody who is interested in the subject. The Biological Survey is of the opinion that mink farming on a considerable scale in the United States is entirely practicable, though certain questions in relation to it remain to be studied out, how important the matter is may



The Lamb from Which We Get the Astrakhan Wool—Now Being Bred by the United States Government.

## No. 215--The Battle with the Air

By Mme. Lina Cavalieri.

NO, my dear readers, this is not to be an essay on aviation, though the women of France are intensely interested in the subject. The battle is one of beauty, and it is against its enemies of the air.

You had thought that air is an ally of beauty, and so it is in so far as sweeping the lungs and intensifies with generous draughts of it is concerned. But air is a furtive thing, a robber that should be watched. His sins are to rob the skin and hair of its beauty-making oils.

Permit me to explain—and I can best explain by first telling a story. Since I have returned to your country I met a most interesting woman, one reared in your big, grand West.

"She looks so young to have done all that she has accomplished. She is famous," I mused a little sadly, "at twenty-five."

The woman from the West heard me, and with the fine fascinating spontaneity of her part of the country she came to me and said:

"Dearest Madame, thank you. But I am quite twelve years older than you think. I am thirty-seven!"

I looked at the vivid face, smooth skinned as a child's, and was silent. She laughed, the bubbling laughter of freedom from restraint. "You do not believe me," she said. "I will call upon my husband to prove it!"

He came, a thin-stooped, scholarly-looking man, who looked forty-five years old. "We are the same age, aren't we, dear?" she asked, and he confirmed her story.

"Amazing," said I, my journalistic thirst for information tormenting me. "Will you tell me how?"

"With pleasure," she answered. "I can answer in one word—'rust.' I lived on the plains and was always in the saddle. The hot Summer sun and the cold Winter wind of the West would have blistered my skin in one instance and shrivelled it into innumerable wrinkles in the other had it not been for my dear, wise mother. She never washed my face with soap. She cleaned it always with suet. And as I grew up I kept on feeding and washing the skin of my face with suet."

"There you have it. That wise mother of the Western plains knew that the air, especially when it is moving in the form of cold wind, robs the face of its oils. It burrows its way into the pores and steals the oil that softens and freshens the skin. It leaves it dry and withered and in the preparatory stage for wrinkles. When the skin is much exposed, the more you wash with hot air we must make good these thefts of the air. The more it is exposed to such air the more oil or oily substance we must feed the empty, hungry pores. Remember the suet story and keep your skin well fed."

The hair also grows dry in cold weather. The cold winds draw the oil from the scalp and the hair grows brittle. The scalp, too, needs at such times to be fed. But be sure to rub the scalp food well into

the roots of the hair. Do not carelessly smear it upon the hair.

Lanoline is a good scalp food. Vaseline has many advocates. Crude oil ranks high in the class. Coconut oil and olive oil are good scalp providers. There is no better safeguard against the skin and scalp robbers I have described than a can of olive oil on your toilet shelf.



"The oil mask to supply what the air has stolen."

## Beauty Questions Answered

By Mme. Lina Cavalieri.

S. N. writes: "I am a young girl and am very large and tall for my age, fifteen, but I am also very thin. Would you advise me to try to make my figure rounder? Also, what can I do to make my hair long, thick and wavy? My hair is quite thick, but is short and straight."

No, do not force the growth of the figure at fifteen. Since you are so tall nature has done her best for you in that way. In time the rounding of the figure will follow. Brushing the hair a hundred strokes a day, massaging the scalp, should promote the growth of the hair. Applying lanoline or vaseline at the roots twice a week will aid its growth if the hair be dry.

"I am thirty-nine," writes B. M. K., "and have quite a few wrinkles under my eyes. My skin is loose and flabby. Do you think the lines under the eyes can be removed by a face specialist?"

I have known wrinkles to be removed by injections of vaseline, but while some operations are successful, others have left the face mottled, with lumps beneath it. I advise a general upbuilding of the system by great care in nourishing diet, more sleep and more exercise out of doors. This regimen should cause the muscles to grow larger and firmer and fill the space left by the loose skin.

M. A. F. sends a budget of questions. Will I recommend a tonic, will I tell her what to eat to make her plump, will I tell her how to develop the bust and plumpen the cheeks? And what should be done for light hair that is turning dark at the roots?

The first four questions can be answered in one name—olive oil. I know a thin woman who, with rest and olive oil taken freely, internally and externally, made herself look like her own younger and healthier sister in three months. You can do nothing for the hair that is turning dark at the roots except bleach it, and I do not recommend that.



Mme. Lina Cavalieri.