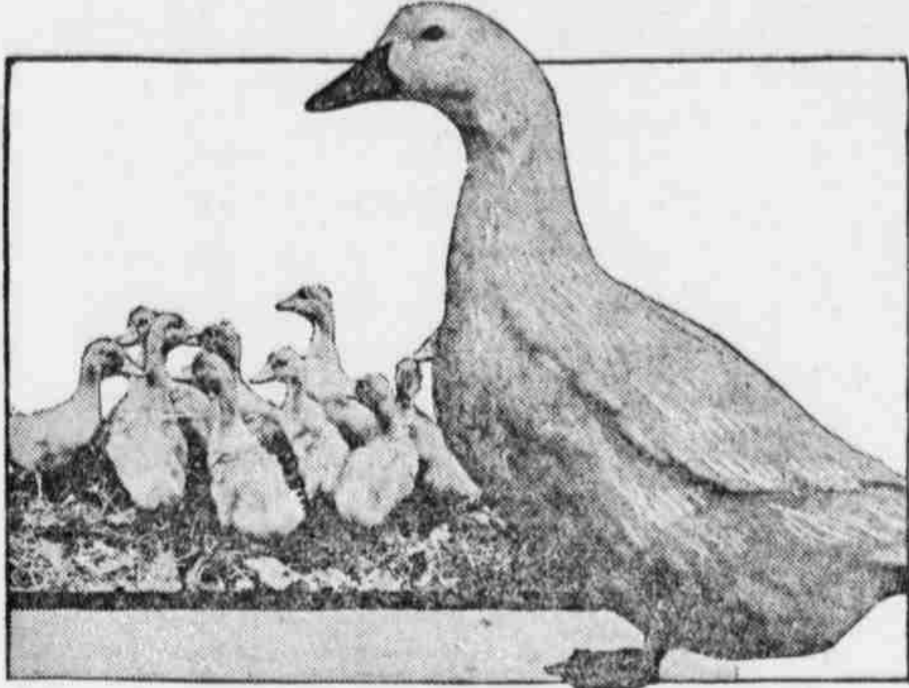


**INTENSIVE DUCK RAISING ON LARGE SCALE**



Pekin Duck and Ducklings.

(From Weekly Letter, United States Department of Agriculture.)

The number of commercial duck farms in the country is increasing somewhat, it is said, but the production of ducks on general farms is decreasing, especially in the middle West. The last census reports show that ducks were kept on only 7.9 per cent of the farms in the country. The demand for table ducks at good prices is, to a great extent, confined to the large cities and is not nearly as general as the demand for chickens or fowls. For this reason it is advisable to study the market conditions before making any large investment in ducks.

On the other hand, in a new publication of the United States department of agriculture, Farmers' Bulletin 697, it is said that intensive duck farming on a large scale has been more successful than intensive chicken raising. The Pekin ducks, which are kept extensively by commercial growers, are less subject to disease than chickens, and artificial methods of hatching and rearing have been used very successfully with them. On general farms ducks can be raised with success and at a profit, though as a source of income they do not appear to be as well adapted to average farm conditions as other fowls. Hitherto farmers have rarely given the necessary care to the feeding and marketing of their ducklings to secure any large share of the trade in fancy green ducks.

It is this trade which attracts the commercial duck farmer. A green duck is a duckling which is grown rapidly and marketed when from eight to twelve weeks old, weighing at that time from 4 1/2 to 6 pounds. This rapid growth is made possible by an abundance of care and good feeding. The highest prices are paid early in the spring, but, as has already been said, the demand is chiefly from the large cities in the East and on the Pacific coast. As a matter of fact, many farmers market their ducks in the fall at a lower price per bird than green ducks bring in the spring.

The Pekin breed of duck is kept almost exclusively by producers of green ducks. It is estimated that the cost of raising a ten-week-old Pekin duck is from five to six cents a pound. In the wholesale market, when marketed from April to November, they bring



Indian Runner Ducks.

between 12 and 30 cents a pound. The cost of picking them is placed at from five to six cents each, but this is practically covered by the value of the feathers, which bring from 40 to 50 cents a pound when cured. Each duck yields about two ounces of marketable feathers.

Ducks may be fed on the rations recommended for fowl and chickens, but better results are usually secured by feeding more green and vegetable feeds and a larger proportion of mash. Ducklings do not need feed until they are from twenty-four to thirty-six hours old. After this they should be fed for the first week five times a day; after that, four times a day until they are two or three weeks old, and thereafter three times daily until they are marketed. The first ration should consist of a mixture which contains equal parts by measure of rolled oats and bread crumbs, with 3 per cent of sharp sand mixed in the feed. When about three days old this feed is changed to equal parts of bread, rolled oats, bran, and cornmeal. After the first week the ration should be changed again to three parts of bran, one part each of low-grade wheat flour and cornmeal, 10 per cent of green feed, and 5 per cent of beef scrap, with about 3 per cent of sand or grit. The amount of beef scrap is gradually increased until it reaches 15 per cent by the end of

the third week. The proportion of cornmeal is increased for the ducklings to be marketed and the bran decreased as the time for marketing the ducklings approaches.

The fattening ration, which should be used for two weeks before killing consists of three parts, by weight, of cornmeal, two parts of low-grade flour or middlings, one part of bran, one-half part of beef scrap, 10 per cent green feed, and 3 per cent grit. This mash is fed three times daily. The green feed is sometimes left out of the ration during the last week of fattening, as it tends to color the meat, but it is easier to keep the ducklings in good feeding condition if it is included. Boiled fish is sometimes used in place of the beef scrap, but this should be discontinued two weeks before the ducklings are killed, in order not to impart a fishy taste. Where milk is available at a sufficiently low price the rations recommended for milk-fattened chickens would produce a well-bleached milk-fed green duck. Celery seed is also used, as this is said to flavor the flesh.

For the general farmer who is more interested in obtaining eggs than in producing green ducks for the market, the Indian Runner is a good breed. This duck holds the same relative position in the duck family that the Leghorn does in the chicken family. It lays a good-sized white egg, considerably larger than a hen's egg, and is declared to be a small eater, a good forager, and hardy.

At the present time the keeping of ducks for eggs is an industry which appears to be growing more rapidly in the South than elsewhere. A good demand for these eggs exists at Easter time, when the prices are usually several cents a dozen higher than for hens' eggs, but during the balance of the year the average price for the two has been about the same. Recently, however, the introduction of the Indian Runner has helped in building up a trade in first-class ducks' eggs. These eggs should be marketed frequently, as they depreciate in quality more rapidly than hens' eggs. The possibilities of securing a market, moreover, should be carefully investigated, for it is only in certain places that good prices can be secured for fancy ducks' eggs.

On commercial duck farms most of the hatching is done in incubators, for the Pekin and Indian Runner rarely sit. On farms where no incubator is available, the eggs are usually hatched under hens. The period of incubation is a week longer than that of hens' eggs, and, for this reason, the hen must be well cared for. While ducks are easier to brood artificially than chickens, they may also be raised successfully under hens. In the latter case, it is better to confine the hens and to allow the ducklings free range. Birds that are intended for sale as green ducks, however, are not usually allowed much range, but are fed heavily and forced for rapid growth. The brooders and brooding systems used for chickens give good results in rearing ducklings, although the latter do not require as high a temperature.

**CATCHING HOOK IS VALUABLE**

Device is Almost Indispensable in Poultry Yard—Especially Good to Capture Sick Fowl.

The problem of how to catch a hen has at last been solved by the University of California. "It is, as a rule, very difficult," writes Professor Dougherty and his collaborator, W. E. Lloyd, "to get close enough to a fowl, especially one of the more active and nervous breeds, to pick her up with one's hands. It generally happens that when one really wants to catch a certain fowl she simply won't let one get within arm's length. With the catching hook one can slip up close enough with much less wear and tear on both attendant and fowl."

He declares that where used with normal care not to close the hook too tightly nor to jerk the fowl too suddenly, such a catching hook is almost indispensable in a poultry yard and particularly valuable for removing promptly from a pen any sick fowl which might soon spread disease through the flock.

**Poultryman That Succeeds.**

The poultry breeder who studies the condition of his fowls and gives them comfortable surroundings is the man who succeeds and has very few sick fowls.

**When the Valentine Saint Remembered**

**D**ORCAS dreaded Valentine's day the most of all. Pink celluloid hearts and blue-ribbed gewgaws that other little girls received with blushes and giggles from the boys across the aisle were not in her line.

Dorcas did not take after her mother, Mrs. Carter always explained when apologizing for her daughter's wall-flower tendencies.

Dorcas was like her father—thin, brown, serious-eyed and sensitive. Her father's side of the house also was to blame for her name, which the school children derisively shortened to "Dorky." The name belonged to Mr. Carter's aunt, a klutzy sort of a person, who sent Dorcas union suits and mittens at Christmas time.

Although Dorcas, being eleven years old, had undergone five ordeals of the Valentine box, Mrs. Carter never was able to understand why her daughter came home each time without any trophies of masculine adoration.

Sometimes Dorcas fancied her mother had been like Clara Jane, a freckled, tomboy girl. When Clara Jane was winked at she immediately waved her hand in the air indignantly and blurted out, "That old Happy Finnegan's winkin' at me, and if you don't make him stop I'll slap his face—"

Miss Stanton interrupted, sentencing the impetuous Clara Jane to fifteen minutes' stay after school for her rudeness.

But at 4:15 Clara Jane found the same freckled urchin who had winked his blue eyes at her waiting outside to carry home her books.

And so it came February 13. Mrs. Carter made the discovery at the dinner table.

"Why, honey," she exclaimed delightedly to Dorcas, and speaking in the confidential tone of one girl to another, "honey, tomorrow's Valentine day. Have you laid in yours yet for the box?"

"I got them this afternoon," the child replied, trying to speak naturally.

"You did? Why didn't you tell me? Who are you going to send them to?"

Dorcas replied with her eyes still on her plate:

"Miss Stanton, Aby Morgan, Genevieve, and I've got a little one for Mose, the janitor. He never gets any



"If I Could Just Get One Valentine From a Boy."

and he always fixes our box up in the morning and—"

"Oh, but dearie," interrupted her mother, "What about the boys? I was hoping they'd send you some this year and if they do you'd feel cheap not remembering them. Why don't you send Happy Finnegan one, anyway? Why, when I was in school—"

"My dear, would you mind getting me another cup of coffee?"

Mr. Carter had seen Dorcas suddenly cram bread between her quivering lips and a vision of his own sensitive, bashful boyhood came before him.

As quickly as she safely could, Dorcas slipped away to bed.

"If I could just get one valentine from a boy," she pleaded in her prayers, "I wouldn't ask for anything else for a long, long time. It's not for myself, but for mother. I can't disappoint her again tomorrow."

Below in the sitting room Mr. Carter suddenly lost interest in the embroidery club.

"I believe I'll go down to the drug store and get a cigar," he told his wife, handing her the evening paper, its pages neatly turned to the dry goods advertisements.

How long it took to get the cigar, Mrs. Carter did not know. She was asleep when her husband came home, and he never explained to her that he had visited five drug stores and ended up with a call at the back door of the little shanty belonging to Mose, the school janitor.

A spirit of Santa Claus anticipation filled Miss Stanton's room the next morning. Little girls with bobbed hair took little girls with braids and big bows in corners and showed them

fancy creations of lace and tissue paper, and pert round-faced little girls tittered whenever one of the boys across the aisle tramped in smiling consciously with a queer-shaped package under his coat.

The arrival of Happy Finnegan, his coat having a mysterious square effect in front, was the climax of the morning. Coradell and Clara Jane, their arms about each other, smiled knowingly, each confident in her own mind that his smile, his blush and his square-shaped box were for her. Happy hadn't decided yet himself.

At last, finding that Billy Everett was sending an expensive winged Cupid to Coradell, he sent his gem to the same shrine.

The dread of the box opening had grown upon Dorcas all day. It was bad enough to sit for forty-five minutes while everybody was being showered with valentines. But facing her mother afterwards—her blonde, dimpling mother who would come running to meet her and whose face would fall like that of a disappointed child when



"I Got the Beautifullest Valentine of Anybody in School."

she saw only the little tokens from "Miss Stanton and the girls."

As the distribution began, Dorcas sat, resignedly, her brown hands folded, trying to figure how many minutes until it would be tomorrow.

"To him that hath shall be given" is always the rule of a school valentine box, and even Miss Stanton's tactful care in providing hand-painted cards with quotations for the less popular ones couldn't even things up.

For Dorcas luck went a little better this year than usual. Genevieve, her seatmate, gave her a star-shaped missive in a big box like the boys sent, and Abby, whom she had helped for two years in arithmetic, sent her a string of red hearts, each one pierced with a silver arrow.

The box was nearly empty now.

"Miss Dorcas Carter," Tim was calling the last valentine in the box. Then he pulled and tugged and, tearing away part of the tissue paper draperies, drew forth—a big white box, almost as wide and long as the valentine box itself and which would have made two of the one containing Coradell's pink violin.

Back at her seat she undid the knotted string with trembling fingers. Then she lifted the lid. The children crowding about her desk were silent at first in amazement and then, Miss Stanton joining them, they burst into a chorus of "ohs" and "ahs."

In a bed of cotton lay a sparkling heart-shaped affair. Billows of pink chiffon were draped about it and outside of this were paper lace ruffles. At one side was a sheath of celluloid arrows tipped with gold and, attached to these, a small card bearing in gold letters, "To one I love." On the back of this was printed in a half-easy, half-labored masculine hand, "From your secret admirer."

Dorcas wondered how she ever got started home that night. Long after the dismissal bell rang children crowded about her desk pleading for "just one more look," and "only a weeny touch." A half dozen at least, boys as well as girls, begged for the privilege of carrying it home for her, and just as she stood hesitatingly trying to decide, Happy picked up the box and, marching resolutely away with it, commanded Dorcas to "hurry up and come on."

"I'm goin' to cut out the fellow that sent it," he announced.

Mrs. Carter waited expectantly at the sitting-room window. She saw them as they turned the corner and was out to meet them. Dorcas, with one glad rush was at her mother's side, her arms outstretched, her shyness vanished.

"I got the beautifullest valentine of anybody in school," she cried out, "and now, mamma, you'll be happy, it's from a boy."

Happy, grinning with both pride and embarrassment, followed with the box.

"It's some valentine, Mis' Carter," he said. "Dorky's sure got some guy going. But he was too bashful to see her home."

Mrs. Carter dimpled. It was the big event of her life. She was receiving her daughter's first admirer.

In the kitchen Mrs. Carter urged cookies on Happy until he declared he "was ready to burst."

Later, with Dorcas on her lap, she congratulated her little daughter on her beautiful valentine.

"It's just like a valentine I got when I was a girl," she said.—Ellen Thompson in the Kansas City Star.

**New Party Dresses for Little Girls**



Pretty dresses for little girls are made of the finest of cotton materials and occasionally chiffon taffeta is figured in as available for their dressiest frocks. But the beautiful refinement of sheer white wash fabrics, coupled with the daintiness of lace and the elegance of handstitching makes dresses like those shown above always a happy choice.

The party frock shown on the pleated little maid at the left is made of fine white net flouncing. Its lower edge is finished with small scallops and sprays of little embroidered flowers. A narrow ruffle of the edging is set on to the plain net underskirt and the full "slipover" with baby waist is worn over it. The sleeves are merely short ruffles of the edging.

A plain slip of pink chiffon taffeta is worn under the net, and a pink sash of satin messaline ribbon ends in a butterfly bow at the back. Of course a pink hair bow reminds one of a blossom, in the flaxed curls of its proud and happy wearer.

For the older girl a dress of white organdie is shown in which narrow val lace and hand embroidery appear to best advantage. This little frock is in two pieces, consisting of a short skirt made of two founces set on to a long plain underbodice, and a straight-hanging blouse finished with hand embroidery at the bottom, which falls

over the sash. The blouse and the underbodice both fasten in the back.

The blouse is made with a small square yoke of val insertion, edged with lace, set into a deeper yoke of the organdie, which is covered with fine tucks. The body of the blouse is fulled into this yoke at the back and front and hangs in even length all round. Large uneven scallops follow the outline of the lower motifs which are embroidered at the bottom edge.

Two founces on the underbodice which form the short skirt are edged with narrow val insertion and edging in fine quality. The insertion is let into the full, three-quarter length sleeves, as shown in the picture, and they are finished with a band made of the val insertion and edging.

This dress is worn over a slip of white organdie, with ruffle of fine embroidery at the bottom. The sash of taffeta ribbon is tacked to the under-skirt and fastened with a flat bow having short ends at the back. An ambitious bow, like it in color—but edged with a narrow border of black, redeems the braided hair from its plain and staid appearance. It is large enough to flaunt a happy frivolity as the keynote of the toilette.

Since the American occupation of Hawaii, the leper population has been about halved.

**Diversity of Style in Bodices**



Just as a suggestion, and by way of a reminder of the great diversity of styles which have been accepted during the present season, one of the straight bodices is shown above. It is made of satin, except the sleeves, which are of lace, and is worn with a skirt of net and lace. Although the skirt is made separate the effect of the frock, with this bodice, is of a one-piece garment.

There is a panel at the back of this bodice which extends almost in a straight line from the neck to a point six inches or more below the waist line. At the front a vestee, narrow at the top, widens as it extends downward and merges into a wide girdle of the satin. The girdle is also graduated in width, growing narrower as it becomes a sash, knotted, with hanging ends, at the back.

The sides of the bodice are set on to the panel at the back and the vest at the front, with a little fullness gathered into the seams. A deep collar of net is narrowed over the shoulders and becomes a little cascade of net at

each side of the V-shaped neck in the front.

The sleeves are merely flounces of lace over short foundation sleeves of net, and reach not quite to the elbow. Even thus abbreviated they provide really more sleeve than falls to the lot of evening gowns. A mere cape over the shoulder, of tulle or wisps of tulle supported by slender straps, simply suggests sleeves in these. They are worn for no purpose other than to enhance the beauty of the arm.

Gowns designed on lines that are straight from the bust to a point below the hips are to be found among those made for afternoon as well as for evening wear. And it happens that this idea is found in garments of such distinction. For remodeling a frock of net or lace, or for providing an extra bodice by way of change, the model shown in the picture will prove its worth.

Julia Bottomley