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**EXHIBITION CIRCULAR No. 1.****DOMINION OF CANADA.****DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.****EXPERIMENTAL FARMS.****J. H. GRISDALE, B.Agr.,**  
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BY

**F. C. ELFORD.****PERIODS OF INCUBATION.**

The approximate periods of incubation of several of the species of domestic fowl are: Hen 21 days, Partridge 24 days, Guinea Fowl and Pheasant 25 days, Duck, Pea Fowl and Turkey 28 days, Goose 30 days, and Ostrich 42.

**ACTUAL TIME VARIES.**

The average time for the hen to incubate her eggs is 21 days though this period may be shortened or lengthened by influences that increase or decrease the average heat at which the eggs are kept throughout the period of incubation. Close sitting hens will usually hatch the chicks a few hours earlier than hens that do not sit so close or are often off the eggs. In warm weather eggs may hatch earlier than in cold weather. Fresh eggs hatch quicker than stale eggs, and other things being equal, white shelled eggs may hatch a few hours before dark shelled eggs.

Not only in natural incubation is this variation found but in artificial incubation the same thing occurs, and at times to so great an extent, that while some hatches come off on the 19th or 20th day others may not hatch until the 22nd day or even later. It is better to have the chicks pip the shell on the night of the 19th or morning of the 20th day and the hatch all cleaned up by the morning of the 21st. Chicks so hatched are usually better than if hatched earlier or later, but should there be no sign of chicks on the 21st day do not become impatient and destroy the eggs. Fair hatches have been known to come off as late as the 24th day.

**NATURAL OR ARTIFICIAL.**

Hens or incubators, which? If you have a small flock of hens and do not intend to increase the number the incubator is not advisable. In fact if no more than 100 chicks are to be hatched it would not pay to buy an incubator, especially if the variety of hens kept contains good sitters and mothers. If many more than this number of chicks are aimed at the purchase of an incubator might be considered or even advised, but an incubator should not be purchased if the purchaser is not interested enough to give it the care and attention it requires. The incubator will give, as a rule, earlier and more uniform chicks, though there are individual hens that will hatch every fertile egg and rear almost every chick, but as a rule 10 hens set on 120 eggs will not bring out more chicks than a good incubator set with the same number of similar eggs. In small numbers the hen may rear more chicks than