

due to the bacterial action which is caused by the food souring. Although the body of a fowl should never be placed in contact with water, the housewife is justified in washing the carcass of a bird, that has not been starved, with soda-water in order to sweeten the meat.

It is policy to starve all fowls for twenty-four hours before killing them. At about the twelfth hour of fasting, one should give them a drink of water, to wash out the digestive system.

KILLING AND PLUCKING.

If poultry is to be used soon after killing, there will not be much danger of disintegration set up by the blood which lodges at the base of the brain from dislocating the neck. Some believe that the bird does not bleed properly unless it has quite a long neck, on account of the fact that all the flowing blood has only this small crevice to run into.



Bleeding. Note the way knife is held in right hand and blood-cup attached by hook through nostril.

If the stock is to be held for a certain length of time before marketing, it is advisable to use a method of killing which will rid the body of the blood, as it is in circulation, when death occurs. To meet this demand, the following method, with diagrams, is given after the experimental work conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture* as to the best methods with best results obtainable. This method is endorsed by commercial poultrymen, colleges, experimental stations, and many experts. When killing, the bird should be suspended from the ceiling or rafters by a stout cord attached to its legs, to the height of the picker's chest, as shown in cut. A blood-cup is usually hooked through the nostril of the bird, in order to catch the blood. By this practice the blood is kept from the feathers, which may be used as a by-product. Almost any kind of a knife will

work well, but it is better to have a knife which is about 2 inches long and a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide, with a thin, flat, but strong handle, and a blade which may be sharpened on both sides, with a very sharp point. Having it sharpened on both sides, one does not need to turn the knife when braining the bird after it is bled. The fowl's head is held lengthwise in the killer's hand, in an inverted position, and the knife is run in just beyond the bony surface of the head, then the jugular vein is cut on the left side when the bird's head is upside down in the hand, as shown in the illustration.



A good killing-knife. Exactly half-size.

If the cut is made properly, the bird bleeds profusely. After this the knife is centred in the groove located in the centre of the roof of the mouth. The knife is placed downward in the groove, and then pushed backward into the bony structure of the head to the distance that might be explained as between the eye and the ear of the

* Circular No. 61, United States Department of Agriculture.