

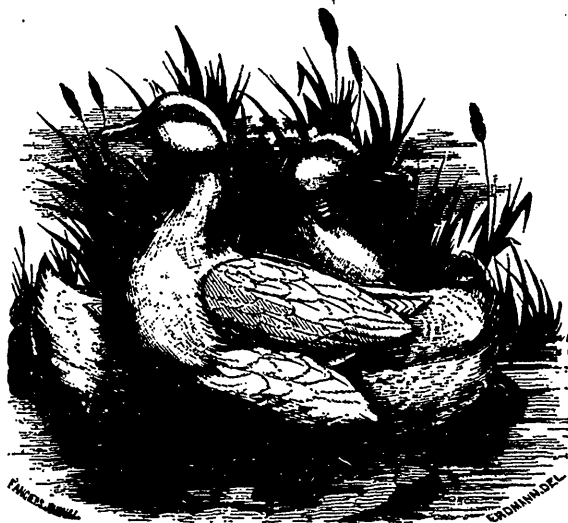
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PEKIN DUCKS.

The above cut represents Pekin ducks, as bred by A. McLaren, of Meadville, Pa., to whom we are indebted for the following notes. The Pekin is of Chinese origin, and only reached the shores of America a few years ago. In color it is a white or creamy-white, as the *Standard of Excellence* describes it. They are large—larger than any other variety; drakes will run ten to eleven pounds, and ducks eight to nine pounds. They are extremely hardy. As an evidence of this, one writer says:—"The present winter has been a very severe one—the thermometer often standing below zero for a week at a time—yet my Pekin Ducks could not be induced to stay inside their house, which was well sheltered and warm, but would prefer to spend the greater part of the winter lying out of doors in the snow." Another writer, in referring to their hardiness, says: "During the early part of the winter I thought I had lost my flock of Pekin Ducks, as the river had hardly frozen over when they disappeared. A few weeks after I was surprised to see them about half a mile from my place, near a water-shute from a grist mill. They seemed to be

doing well and I left them there all winter. They lived on what they found in the water, I presume, as I did not feed them one handful of grain during the entire winter. They began laying March 10th and have laid steadily ever since."

They are a large, fluffy duck; they look even larger than they really are, owing to their immense coat of fine, soft feathers. For their feathers alone they are very valuable. They average about as many eggs as the common ducks; and ducks will lay more eggs than most varieties of fowls. The eggs are large, but not too large to be hatched by a hen of moderate size. The young are easily raised on the diet usually prescribed for ducklings, and their growth is simply wonderful; at three months old and possibly sooner, it is difficult to tell which are the young duck when running in the same flock.

Disease is unknown among them so far as I have learned; and where undisturbed by vermin, and with the advantage of a good water-course, must be a source of great revenue to any one, making no allowance for their beautiful and grace-