

Twenty-five Days in Hatching.

On the 9th of April we put two settings of eggs under two hens at the same hour. On the morning of the twenty-first day thereafter there were nine lively chickens under one hen, but no signs of hatching under the other. The eggs were tried in a pan of water at blood heat, and life was found in three. These were returned to the hen, and on the 4th of May two strong chickens came out, and one smothered in the shell. The difference in the temperature of the two hens was very perceptible. The one that brought out the nine chickens was in best condition when set, and much warmer than the other. Both attended closely to the eggs. There was no difference in the eggs in the two nests, as both sittings were received in the same basket from the same yards, and were not in any way selected when set. The nests were exactly the same, and placed side by side. In every respect the conditions were the same in both cases, except so far as the hens differed.

This teaches two lessons: First, that the failure to hatch is not always caused by want of vitality in the eggs, nor close attention to duty by the hen, but may be caused by physical incapacity on her part; and second, that we should not give up hope if chickens do not appear on the twenty-first day, but test the eggs and make sure that there is no life before they are given up. Eggs that have been kept long before being given to the hen will seldom hatch on time. After the eggs have been under the hen twenty-one days, if there is a particle of life in them it will appear if they are allowed to swim in a pan of water heated to 102 degrees.

Ostrich Farming in California.

Editor Review.

In accordance with my promise I will now endeavor to give you a few points on ostrich farming, as conducted in this State, on the first ostrich farm established on this continent. As many of your readers know, I have nearly all my life been a breeder of the diminutive Game Bantams, and about them the most of my previous writing have been. It is quite a transition from these to the largest of the feathered tribe; however, I will do my best.

Leaving the dust and noise of Los Angeles, I with three friends, after a drive of twenty-five miles through a country which is beautifully laid out, and being improved and beautified every year, past vineyards, orange and lemon groves, at last arrived at Anaheim. After having our horses taken care of, and our hungry appetites appeased, we took a walk over to the experimental ostrich farm, where I gleaned the following information

from Mr. Charles Sketchly, the gentlemanly superintendent:

Twenty-two ostriches were brought here last year from South Africa. One of the number was accidentally killed, but the others have thriven well, and are to all appearances thoroughly acclimated. Five of the hens did not produce eggs during the year, while the other six laid in all 302. Experiments were made with different incubators, but in no instance was a chicken hatched from the shell. This fact is thus explained: A hen ostrich lays her first egg when she is four years old, but these eggs never hatch, as they are undersized and lack fertility. The first year eggs weigh from 1½ to 2½ pounds, while the fully developed eggs of the fifth and later years weigh from 3½ to 4 pounds. The birds live to a great age, so great that their limit of life has not yet been determined, and several well authenticated instances are known where they are still breeding, although more than one hundred years old. Strange to say no distinctive marks have been discovered by which their age can be decided, and there is no apparent difference in the appearance of birds that are four or forty years of age. The company claim that to this fact is due the unexpectedly poor result of their first year's experiment. The ostrich farmer, from whom they bought their birds, guaranteed all of them to be eight years or over, while it is now clearly proven that not one of the hens exceeded four years, while nearly half of them were only three year olds. The latter have just commenced to lay their first eggs, while their older sisters have produced during the past month a number of eggs, from which a crop of chicks is confidently expected. Hens average sixty eggs apiece per annum, and the officers of the company are confident that by the close of the season there will be a brood of not less than 300 chicks on the Anaheim farm. About one third of the chickens will be sold to meet running expenses, and orders for all that can be spared are already in the hands of the superintendent. Almost all these orders are from farmers in the southern part of the State. All of the chickens would be kept on the home farm, were it not for the fact that the company desires to avoid anything in the shape of an assessment. The present status of the concern is as follows: No one has been drawn upon for funds since the original \$30,000 was paid in, and it is claimed that the institution will be, from this time on, self-sustaining.

The farm includes 200 acres, upon which suitable buildings have been erected and other necessary improvements made, and 100 acres of which are planted in alfalfa. It is asserted that on the produce of this hundred acres in alfalfa not less than 1,000 ostriches can be kept, which round