

THE AYLESBURY DUCK.

Wright, the well known writer on poultry subjects, writes as follows concerning the Aylesbury Duck. — "It is," he states, "nothing unusual to see around one cottage two thousand ducklings, and it is estimated that the annual income of the town from their sale amounts to \$100,000, it not being uncommon for a ton of ducks to be sent to the London market in a single night. A former very successful breeder of this variety, with reference to the flesh-colored bills so perfect in the Aylesbury duck, at its native place, says that 'the beautiful tint is obtained by giving the ducks in their troughs of water a peculiar kind of white gravel, found only in the neighborhood of Aylesbury, in appearance resembling pumice stone. In this gravel they constantly shove their bills, and this keeps them white. Birds intended for exhibition are seldom allowed out in the sun, as this tans their bills.'"

CONDIMENTS FOR POULTRY.

Poultry Yard.

Any sort of food for man or beast is unsuitable for digestion if flavorless and insipid, no matter how much nutritive material a chemical analysis may reveal in it. Therefore you should season regularly and uniformly all the meal, dough, or other soft feed you give to your fowls, and the seasoning will help to make what you give them food in a very essential sense. The proper condiments for poultry are salt, cayenne pepper, ginger and mustard. Change from one of these to the other. Salt and cayenne are the staples. This does not make the diet an artificial one, properly speaking, but it is coming back to food resembling the natural sustenance such as they would get at large in their primitive wild life in the spicy aromatic buds and berries of the forest. Supplying them in these concentrated forms, great care must be exercised in the matter of condiments, not to overdo, and thus spoil what we have undertaken in good faith. A good rule in the use of salt, pepper and other condiments for poultry, is to season just about the same as food is seasoned for table use. We should not seek a pampered, unnatural condition for fowls, but strive to get them just the proportion of aromatic substances in their feed that gallinaceous birds of all species are accustomed to in a wild state.

GEESE.

Breeder and Sportsman.

Every woman that wants to get out of poultry all there is in it, should by all means have a nice flock of geese. Now, don't condemn the goose unheard. Ever since we could remember, men, from some cause or other, have been down on geese. We wonder if they know why. It is true, the horse may not like to drink after them, but when we consider the profit that can be made on geese, it will pay to fix a watering place for horses where geese cannot reach. Geese do not need as much water as is generally supposed. One or each day at the pond or brook is enough, and if necessary, they can then be turned away, and the most fastidious horse be none the wiser. They are easy and cheaply kept, never unhealthy, need no elaborate house, and little, if any, grain feed, except when snow is on the ground. Toulouse geese are the largest, and in our opinion, the handsomest, but the other varieties have their good points and admirers. Figures won't lie, and here are some of them: A Toulouse goose, if given a good grass run, will, without any other feed except what she finds in the creek or pond, lay thirty or forty eggs. We must not count our goslings before they are hatched, but half these eggs ought to hatch anyway, and this will give us fifteen goslings.

With proper attention, or even half as much as it takes to raise chickens, eight of them can be raised. This is a very low estimate. Good feed and care will make those goslings weigh twenty pounds apiece by Christmas, and at the same price as pork—and it is always about twice as high—we have a pretty good summer's work for one goose. Figure it yourself. Besides she and the gander, if picked at regular intervals, have turned off four pounds of feathers and the eight goslings four more, thus all paying for their keep, and we have the old pair left. It seems to us if there is anything of "eating one's cake and keeping it too," it is in raising geese.

BLACK JAVAS.

National Poultry Monitor.

Very little is known of the early history of the Black Java breed only what comes through one source, namely, their originator. We do not know that the origin of the breed was ever questioned, simply for the reason that their history is given in a plain, straightforward and unvarnished shape; and there is no attempt to disguise any of the most important facts bearing upon their incipency and early development up to their present standing as a first-class standard fowl.

It is conceded that the Black and Mottled Javas are "home made" fowls, or in other words distinctively American breeds. And much praise is due those fanciers, who by their skill and perseverance have produced these splendid breeds which are now attracting the attention of fanciers.

It matters little to us now after the lapse of twenty years or more how a certain coachman filched from his eccentric employer (a M. D. of Missouri) a few eggs of this rare breed, which he could not procure for love or money—the result is the same, for we have every reason to believe they fell into more enterprising hands, judging by the interval of years spent in improving them before they were brought forward for recognition and favor.

It is claimed for the Black Javas that no fresh blood was introduced by crossing except what had been obtained by different matings of the same family for twenty years. This of itself is no commendation, although it proves the vitality, hardiness, stamina and quick maturing qualities of the breed, in spite of the degenerating influence of incestuous breeding.

The Black Javas possess many characteristic points wholly or in part differing from other known breeds, though the type may somewhat resemble the Plymouth Rock with the length, depth and ample tail of the Dorking. We say many of their splendid qualities are due more to their original composition than to relative mating.

The color of the breed is a rich lustrous black, with that beautiful green shading so desirable in black fowls. The comb is single and of a moderate size, ear lobes red, beak black, legs black and free from feathers, bottom of feet yellow, full flowing tail, with abundant and nicely curved sickle feathers. They are good-sized fowl and make good layers, setters and mothers.

The flesh of the Black Java is unlike that of most black fowls, being yellow, fine-grained and compact. It is tender and savory, more like that of the Dorking than any of the Asiatic breeds. They are well adapted to the farmer who gives his fowls ample range, and to the cottager who desires a combination of utility and beauty.

DUCKS AS A SOURCE OF PROFIT.

Mr. Jas. Rankin, of South Easton, Mass., in Farm and Garden.

Mr. Rankin is enthusiastic over his results with ducks during the past year, and gives his experience as follows:—

His adult ducks number 35, from which he hatched 3,000 ducklings in his incubator, making \$45 profit from each adult. He received from 18 to 30 cents per pound for the ducklings when they were about eight or nine weeks old, and at that age they weighed from eight to ten pounds per pair, growing nearly twice as fast as chicks. They were sold dressed, the feathers paying for the killing and picking. Each young duck yielded about two ounces of feathers, which sold at 50 cents per pound. Occasionally some of the young ducks would increase at the rate of a pound a week. On weighing them at six weeks old, they have averaged $2\frac{1}{2}$ pounds and in one week more would attain $3\frac{1}{2}$ pounds. They are fed in the same manner as young chicks, but require a little more animal food. Soft food is better for them than grain. When first hatched hard-boiled egg, with stale bread soaked in milk, answers well. When three or four days old a mixture of scalded meal and middlings, to which mashed potatoes are added, makes an excellent food. Green food and meat, however, must not be omitted. The best months for selling (Boston market) are May and June, the average price per pound, wholesale, being 22 cents. They come in at a time when chicks are depressed in price. The average cost for each duck is two cents a week for nine weeks, or about five cents a pound.

Mr. Rankin's ducks begin to lay near the 1st of February, and lay about 140 eggs each per annum, commencing when five months old. They are of the Pekin variety, the yellow legs and skin and pure white feathers being desirable. The old ducks can be kept with only a large trough for bathing purposes. As to the raising of young ducks he uses no water at all, except for drinking purposes. They are kept in little yards the same as chicks, being subject to fewer diseases, and are hardy, and grow fast. Mr. Rankin uses incubators entirely, being very successful, and literally astonished the visitors of the State Fair with his exhibit by bringing his eggs from Boston to Philadelphia, keeping them 18 hours out of the incubator, and hatching nearly all of them; although they were well shaken on the journey, many of them hatching out during transit. The figures given, as well as the fact that no water is required, solves the problem as to the profit to be expected from ducks, but, as Mr. Rankin states, the secret is in a good incubator, a good breed, and good attention during the time of incubation and up to the period of marketing the ducklings.

There is a profit in ducks, for they possess many good qualities not to be overlooked. In the first place they grow faster than chicks, and are ready for market when three months old. They are subject to fewer diseases, and need less care and attention. They usually lay early in the morning, and are regular in their habits. Ducks are gross feeders, and consume anything that may be offered. A pot of boiled turnips, thickened with meal and middlings, furnishes them with a delicacy, while the tops of vegetables are greedily devoured. They thrive best when they have access to a pond, but may be kept without water, except what is required for drinking, if desired, but in such case they should be supplied with a ration of meat every day. A large trough will serve them for bathing purposes, and if supplied with all they require will give good returns. Ducks are voracious and greedy, and unless fed judiciously, will run up an expense nearly equal to the receipts, but a large portion of their food may consist of grass and other bulky material, which is better for them than too much concentrated food. They do not scratch, and should therefore have as much room for exercise as can be allowed. The Pekins and Rouens are the largest breeds, but the Aylesburies are claimed to be the best layers.