The INDIAN RUNNER
DUCK BOOK

C. S. Valentine

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WHITE QUEEN QUALITY IN INFANT RUNNERS

The Indian Runner Duck Book

The One Authoritative American
Book about this
Marvelous Egg Machine

Text and Photographs
by
C. S. VALENTINE

"They say she did!"
"Who did?"
"The Indian Runner Duck."
"Did what?"
"Laid 320 eggs in one year."

Third Edition
Revised and Enlarged
Price in Paper 75 cents post paid Cloth Edition \$1.00, postage 5 cents

RIDGEWOOD, N.J.
F. H. VALENTINE
1913

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The Runner a-running did trippingly run
To help out the farmer and lads;
The mortgage wiped out and the College bills paid;
Who says she shall rank 'mongst the fads?

Press of
ERNEST FAIRMAN DOW
West Newton, Massachusetts

THE INDIAN RUNNER DUCK BOOK

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Early Breeders, Origin of Indian Runners

CHAPTER I

I think it was about 1904 or 1905 that the first important literature concerning the Indian Runner Ducks was published in this country. At about this time, good articles, dealing with the wonderful qualities of this new breed were published in at least three of our poultry periodicals. Soon, breeders, here and there, began to try the Runners in a somewhat gingerly way, as though rather expecting a gold brick. The great service which this early literature did the breed was to call public attention strongly to it, through what then seemed the exorbitant claims made for these birds as layers.

After a few years, Mr. Irving Cook took up this breed, advertising continuously and rather strikingly. As he began the work when young and enthusiastic, and, later, gave his entire strength to his Indian Runner business, the Runners soon found themselves in the midst of a "boom." But even before him several men who still breed the Runners were at work with this breed.

As soon as the breed began to attract keen attention, some breeders who wished to improve it in every possible way began to make inquiries as to its origin. One early American breeder who made every effort to get the true history about this time reports that *even then* "it seemed to be a matter of surmise. All the writers' ideas on the subject seemed to be vague, and *many conflicting statements were made.*" Some of the causes for this haziness and conflict of statement I have been able to run down.

Much misconception arose through an accident. The first two detailed descriptions of the breed which I noted in American

publications were from writers across the big waters, one in New Zealand, the other in Ireland. Birds in these countries would naturally have come from England, and be of English type. H. DeCourcy's article was so straightforward and sensible, yet so conservative that it seemed to give the public good ground for confidence in the breed. Unfortunately this early article gave the West Indies as the original home of the Indian Runner. This statement has been copied by many, while others have given a widely different origin. In a recent circular, the matter was disposed of in this way: "Coming originally from the West Indies, they are a cross of Rouen and Wild Mallard." Of the three supposed facts given here (West Indian origin, Rouen blood, Mallard blood,) probably not one could be proven, though the last might have some credibility through the fact that most breeds of ducks are descended from the Mallard.

I have long suspected that the DeCourcy statement, as printed in this country, was an office, or "proof" error. Trying to get at the facts, I wrote to Mr. DeCourcy in October, 1910. inquiring if this were not the case. The reply was directly to the point: "If my article says 'West' it was a misprint,—or perhaps, a clerical error of mine." As the real, native home of the Indian Runner has long been believed to be the EAST Indies, it is quite easy to see how such an error could arise through the misplacement of a letter or two. At no other period except when the breed was just being introduced could such an error have worked so much mischief to the facts.

Among the early breeders here were Mr. Cook, Mr. Fay Davis, M. V. Decker and, in 1900, A. J. Hallock. Mr. W. Delano's name has also been given me as an early breeder, but I have been unable to get any information from this source. It will be admitted without question, I think, that our one reliance for the early history of the breed IN THIS COUNTRY must be the statements of the earliest breeders.

While the "West Indies story" was going the rounds, with no one contradicting it, and gaining strength through repetition, the British birds were being quietly bred for some time, before the public began to awaken to the value of the Runners. The Davids brothers, of Kansas, began about 1902, Davis in 1897, Hallock in 1900. These three, I know, had their birds from Great Britain. I think there is no room for doubt that all the other early breeders had stock from the same source, either direct or through contemporary breeders.

During the season of 1912 not less than 1000 breeders advertising Indian Runners were listed. There may have been others, and many new ones have since entered the field. Eight years ago *Reliable Poultry Journal*—for years a favorite medium with the duck breeders—carried only two Indian Runner advertisements in May in the Classified lists.

One of the two who were thus advertising in 1903 was Cook. In 1906 he blossomed out as the breeder of "the only true fawn and white colors, and the world's heaviest laying strain." Remembering that this was only seven years ago, we may well be amazed at the advance which the Runners have so recently made in public favor. According to these figures, the fawn and white type became "the only true" just about seven years ago. It may be remembered, also, that this was the year the Standard which breeders have followed since, up to 1910, began to be followed.

It would seem that, even in Great Britain, the Runners were not well and widely known so very much longer than they have been known here. In 1893, four years before Mr. Davis received his first birds, a book on poultry for profit was put out by a Britisher who had previously written another poultry book, and who might have been thought to be fairly well posted. He mentions only three breeds of ducks, but takes occasion to remark: "It is much to be regretted that no steps have been taken to breed laying strains of ducks."

The history of the Runner in England, however, is easily to be followed back for twenty-five years. If it becomes hazy as we go farther back, this need not surprise the Yankees who have managed so to conceal their tracks in about sixteen years that in a new book advertised as the best in America, and giving SIXTEEN LINES to the Runners, it is plainly stated that the origin of these ducks cannot be traced authentically. But a Rouen cross is there admitted. Was that Rouen cross a Yankee contribution?

If, as no one really doubts, the Indian Runner Ducks came to us from England, it would seem, indeed, the part of common-sense, and of courtesy no less, to accept the story of their origin as presented by the best and oldest English breeders. American shrewdness, however, professes to have discovered that the British, no matter how decent people they be, are presumably equivocating about the origin of the Indian Runner Duck.

Soon after 1900 a new story, to the effect that the British did not get their Runners from East India or any other old place whence old sea-captains come out of obscurity, but just across the channel in Belgium, appeared! But its authors carelessly omitted to tell us how it happened that when those Belgian ducks flew (?) across the channel, they chanced to light in County Cumberland, away off to the north-west, as far as possible from Belgium. Frankly, I think this story very far-fetched. For, the English certainly could not be ignorant of the existence of these thousands of Belgian ducks. If they were really the same thing as the Indian Runners it would be well known on both sides of the channel; in which case the only possible conclusion would be that the English breeders have deliberately clouded their origin, then lied about it for these scores of years. Certainly no fair-minded Americans wish to support this unworthy view.

The inevitable "old sea captain" (another one!) figured in another story as the source from whence the ducks came. But the one point needing special notice is that the Virginian lady who

told it stated she, herself, "sent eggs and the breed all over the world, some very early to Belgium and Holland, France and Germany." She also affirmed: "There are no Runners in India, only what went from England to a Maharajah, sent by Mr. J. H. Wilson, a great poultry enthusiast, who was also a breeder and exhibitor and judge, and was instrumental in getting the Indian Runner Club formed."

Mr. Wilson was an early Sec'y of the Club in England. We may call him as witness that at least one inference which has been drawn from this story is not valid. Fortunately, a letter from him is in existence in America, dating back some years, in which Mr. Wilson stated that to his own knowledge, his strain had not *then* been crossed for *fifty* years. It can be only the name that is but thirty years old, in any event. The lady who named them about thirty years ago (?) was utterly behind the times.

It comes back to the conclusion which I have more than once suggested: viz., that the question is, in essence, simply one of whom we elect to believe, when those who "know" tell stories of such opposite tenor.

One wonders greatly about the Holland, Belgian and German claimants to the name "Indian Runner" Mr. L. Van der Snickt, stated that "the same duck" has been "selected for centuries" in Holland, Belgium and France. Strangely enough, (if these statements were true) the Belgian Runner Club has asked permission to use the Standard of the British Indian Runner Duck Club. To most people, this fact would seem evidence enough that the Belgians' ducks were, at the best, not more than near-Runners.

Every week throughout the year come inquiries as to the various types of Indian Runner, or recitals of experience with the breed in one type or the other. As to the birds themselves, I have had little difficulty in replying to questions. As to origin, history, etc., the people who had the facts have varied in their willingness to let the public have them—at least through this medium; and it

has had them through no other medium thus far. The public wants these facts and it wants them badly.

Several of the earlier breeders gave me all the help I asked. For this they have my hearty thanks, and I know that they will have that of the public which is interested in Indian Runners, as well. Others ignored my request, or answered far afield. To one breeder, I wrote thus: "Davis, of Michigan, tells me that you were one of the original breeders of Indian Runners. I want to find out just when they came into the United States and who imported them. Do you know who was the first, and whether or not the birds came from England? Also, how long ago? I see McGrew says little is known about them. I know what English breeders say, but it seems to me it ought to be possible to find out where United States breeders got them, and when the first were imported. It has been given out here that they came from the West Indies, which I do not at all believe, unless the two types which we are breeding at present in this country had a different origin entirely. Reply would very greatly assist," etc. All but one of these questions was ignored in the answer.

I had two ideas in mind in speaking of origin. The West Indian story, which I have refuted elsewhere, had gone all over the United States, and, having been credited to a reputable writer, who was a breeder of the Indian Runners before most of us had heard of them, it was quite generally accepted as fact; especially by those who did not know much about the duck in England, and what the best English breeders had to say about it. Moreover, England and the West Indies have had many dealings, throughout many years, and it was not an incredible story, in the light of possibilities, that our Indian Runners should have come to us, in part, at least, through the West Indies.

Aside from this, there was the possibility of different origins of different strains. In 1910, at the New York show, a man prominent in affecting the fate of Indian Runners in this country

by his public acts, said, in my hearing, that it would be very easy indeed to reproduce the Indian Runners by the use of two or three of our earlier breeds,—at least as far as the solid fawn marking, on white was concerned. All breeders of fancy fowls know, after they have a little experience with breeding and exhibiting, that no man dare say what blood is in any one strain of birds of any breed, when it has been long out of the originator's hands. That "foreign" blood has been put into the Indian Runner of some strains, no breeder of experience and observation can fail to see. Indeed, it is usually admitted, in a general way, although no one confesses to having introduced such blood.

English History, Views and Standard

CHAPTER II

After we trace back to a certain period, or, possibly, forty years or so, the history of the Indian Runner in England becomes more and more hazy. English breeders say that the earliest literature on the breed—or, at least, that which goes farthest back, is a little treatise by John Donald, of County Cumberland, where the breed was first known. In this book, Mr. Donald states that the Indian Runners were brought to England by a sea captain, about sixty years before his book was written. Certainly anything brought to an insular country, before men flew as birds, *must have* been brought by a sea-captain. H. DeCourcy, of Ireland, a writer whom we know quite well in America—thinks it is now over twenty years since he first saw this (undated) book. This would make it eighty years since the breed first made any history in England that is now remembered—a period so remote that none would now be alive who had personal knowledge of the facts and of its introduction and earliest history. Mr. Donald still breeds Runners, especially the new found “native” type.

One of the English treatises, “The Indian Runner,” was written by Jacob Thomlinson, who first knew this duck in County Cumberland. He refers to Mr. Donald’s (earlier) work, and also to a brief treatise by Mr. Henry Digby, giving credit to these men for all items not within his own, personal knowledge. The illustrations in the Thomlinson pamphlet are from drawings by Mr. J. W. Walton. “They give,” says Mr. Thomlinson, “a clear insight of what a TRUE Runner SHOULD and SHOULD NOT be.”

This shows that Mr. Walton has long been a trusted authority on Runners, having intimate personal knowledge, both of correct type and of history.

The models from which these pictures were drawn were intended to be used as "a guide to both old and new fanciers, to obtain a more uniform idea of type and standard." This shows how English breeders regard Mr. Walton's drawings, and how they defer to his knowledge of the breed.

Mr. Thomlinson's own knowledge of the breed reached back thirty years, but his treatise was also undated. However, he gives us a point to rest on by saying that he first took "particular notice" of these birds in 1884, when one duck made for him a record of 180 eggs. As this "completely overshadowed" other breeds, it was the foundation of Mr. Thomlinson's vital interest in the Indian Runner.

From the fact that Mr. Donald was a resident of County Cumberland, the original seat of Indian Runner culture in England, it seemed to follow that he was most likely to be right as to their origin, and it was to him that the earlier English breeders looked very largely for information.

The power of the true Indian Runner to stamp its color and marking, in the case of a cross, is taken as evidence of very long fixation of its characteristics in the native state. Eighty per cent of such progeny, it is said, will favor the Runner, especially in characteristic color. This varies considerably above the proportion given by Mendel's law.

English breeders seem willing to allow that the long neglect has made it almost certain that many types would appear in various parts of the Island; for, the original blood must have been largely tainted during the slowness of the nation to recognize the peculiar value of the breed, and to place it early under the care of some organization which would watch out for the preservation of its most valuable and vital characteristics. Like the Rhode Island Red in this country, the breed had a sadly neglected youth.

Quite a number of importations have in later years, been made into this country from the flocks of Mr. J. W. Walton,

"Honorable Secretary" of the Indian Runner Duck Club of England. Mr. Walton says that the best birds have always been in a very few hands. He wrote me, personally, that even in England "breeders, exhibitors and judges fell into nearly every possible trouble with Indian Runners and reduced them from an outstanding and most distinctive bird to a common type, small, cross-bred duck with fairly even markings. That was the Exhibition Runner (?) of ten or eleven years ago. 100 per cent of American (Standard-bred) Runners and 99 per cent of English are wrong in shape, and position of legs. Color without type is of no value."

Mr. Walton has also said that it was quite certain that many earlier judges of Indian Runners "had no acquaintance with the genuine Runner." It was under this strained situation that the Indian Runner Duck Club in England took up the work, and formed a Standard calculated to preserve the distinctiveness of this most remarkable breed. The birds illustrated in English poultry journals at about this time, according to Mr. Walton, "showed strong evidence of Mallard blood."

It was within the decade before the English breeders found their bearings that most of our earlier importations were made. This shows how strong was the probability that many of these earlier importations into the United States were of mixed blood. The British Indian Runner Duck Club intervened to save the Runners from extinction as to their most distinctive characteristics. It superseded the Standard formed by Mr. Donald and Mr. Digby, (with which there had been dissatisfaction for some time) by one better designed "to retain the valuable utility and artistic qualities" of the breed. A part of its object, as stated, was to keep the exhibition of the Runner "free from dishonorable and fraudulent practices."

In order to get at the English ideal of shape, it may be well to give a word to "the old, cod, soda-water bottle." This bottle,

whose form is given as a general model to work toward, was round, and tapered toward each end. The taper is gradual, in the bird, from the thighs back. Mention is made of the funnel-like expansion where neck passes into body. The accepted angle of carriage is up to sixty-five degrees when the bird is traveling, and from this to seventy-five degrees when alert. The neck is a strong feature, the head and neck together carrying thirty points. LENGTH, THINNESS, and FINENESS are especially demanded. In these points, the great majority of American Runners have failed breeders seeming to overlook the added beauty and grace given by a slender neck. The color demanded in contrast with the white is a fawn, rather warm and soft, sometimes expressed also as of "ginger color," a term which the American breeders have adopted, but which I have not seen in the American shows. Many males shown here were decidedly of a pinkish, rather than ginger tone, a shade which carries directly toward the claret disqualified by the American Standard. The color is required to be uniform, from surface to skin. Mr. Walton has used the happy term "Sunny fawn."

Two tones of fawn are required. These seem to blend into a warm fawn of the true shade desired, when seen from a short distance away. The trick in getting color on the English-bred Runner, is to get one tone a good ginger, and the other as near it as is possible, the outer portion being the lighter. As this is the portion most visible on the breast and body, it gives the appearance of evenness, as soon as the new coat loses a little in strength of color. If too weak in color when the new coat is first donned, it will be washy in the extreme after a few months, and will well justify the term so often applied to the lighter birds bred to American Standard, "a dirty white."

The English Standard lays emphasis on the point that type must receive greater consideration than color or markings. Short, thick necks, squat specimens, smallness at the expense of the long

shape, are decided defects. Slate and dark red in drakes are not favored.

It should be perfectly plain to any normal mind that the English type of Indian Runner, being so much older than anything made in America, justly lays claim to the title of "The True Indian Runner." Up to 1910, (so convinced were many of our judges, even, that the American Standard was not requiring the true type) the English-bred birds were able to get, in some instances, very good prizes, though not often the best. In Jan., 1910, such a male bird took second at Madison Square Garden.

For months before the 1910 revision of the American Standard of Perfection, a sustained fight was made to educate the public, and incidentally, the Revision Committee, up to a knowledge of the real type of the genuine Indian Runners, and of the injury the proposed discrediting of Penciled Runners would be to the breeders of the English type, and to the breed. Perhaps a dozen breeders took part in this, one being a poultry judge. But the Standard had called for an entirely different type for so many years, that the Revisers were simply afraid to give any recognition to the breeders of the genuine Indian Runners.

The extreme Standard weight in this country is four pounds for females and four and one-half pounds for matured males. I have seen English males weighing five and one-half pounds, but this is not common. Five pounds is reasonably common.

The preferred weights mentioned in the (present) English Standard are three and one-half to four pounds for ducks, four to five pounds for drakes. Head, bill, eyes and neck take nearly one-third the points in the English Standard; body, shape and carriage together comprise 45 points—nearly one-half the exhibition value—while color, markings and condition receive the other 25 points. That is, color, even with marking and condition added, counts only one-fourth the show value.

I have never noted in the ranks of the breeders of the orig-

inal variety, any feeling of enmity toward the favored American type, in itself. But the feeling is very general—I think I may say, fairly universal—that the breed name belongs of right to the original type. The plain fawn with white should have come in if come it must, as a second variety, with a variety name. It is precisely as though the Silver Penciled Wyandotte should attempt to push aside the original Silver Wyandotte, and make insistent claim to being “the only true Wyandotte.” Surely “SHAPE makes the breed; color (only) the variety.” Is it not so, breeders?

In November, 1910, after the first edition of this book had gone to the printers, English interest in Indian Runners was keyed up by a sensational exhibit at the Crystal Palace Show. This exhibit was made in the name of Mr. J. W. Walton, and consisted of a team of amazing Indian Runner ducks shown there. Mr. Walton gained all *five prizes in each class*. The authoritative report in “The Feathered World,” London, said, concerning this sweeping victory: “And well he might, if an upright carriage has anything to do with the qualifications of a Runner. There’s an old saying, ‘Like water off a duck’s back’, but I fail to see how it could be applied to, say, the second prize drake, for he stood so absolutely perpendicular, I doubt if any water could possibly get there in order to run off again; if it did, the process would be a decidedly rapid one.”

The females were described as of “a soft, sweet shade, *between* a fawn and a buff, with exquisite lacing throughout.” (Those who contend for the greater beauty of the solid fawn, should note how admiringly our English fellow-breeders regard the lacing, or penciling.) The especially upright carriage characterized all the birds of this “wonderful” team, the best specimen being described thus: “This bird, when the least disturbed or excited, stood perfectly erect, tail down between legs, a level line down back from head to tip of tail.” The reporter spoke of

meeting one onlooker who said jokingly that he "should always dread the danger of the bird falling backward."

Mr. Walton has been somewhat reticent about these *mysterious* Runners. He has felt so strongly the danger to the breed from a certain attitude in England which led nearly to its ruin, some years ago, that he resolved to keep full control over the new "wonder" ducks, in his own hands and those of one or two friends, who have worked with him, till their characteristics were well impressed on the best of the earlier stock. None of the birds was offered for sale at the Palace Show, the prohibitive price of a thousand guineas each being catalogued.

I have considered it necessary to mention and to stress these facts and these proofs, since Belgian "authorities" have persisted in claiming that the English Indian Runners were only an inferior type of a common Belgian Duck.

A certain critic came out plump with the statement that Mr. Donald, through his booklet, "was strongly active in *clouding the real cradle* of the Runners, by claiming that they were first imported into England in an India ship. The critic is also father to the statement that Rouen blood was used in getting larger size, thus necessitating the disqualification for claret breast. Concerning the remark about Mr. Donald, Mr. Walton says: "So far from Donald's pamphlet clouding their origin, *if it had not been for that pamphlet the new birds might never have been located and secured. Donald's pamphlet is vindicated and his facts in the main substantiated.* The early birds, *without a doubt, came by an India ship*; and the assertion that Donald clouded the cradle of the Runners is absolutely unwarranted and untrue. The reverse is the fact. X—(the critic) by his own writings proves that he, for one, knows nothing about the Indian Runner. From first to last, his article is wrong, and how any one with such ignorance of Indian Runners could profess to correct others is beyond my comprehension."

The above facts go to show that the modern English Indian Runner, beautifully penciled (or laced, as the words have come to be almost interchangeably used) very erect in carriage, and racy in type, is immovably fixed as the real distinctive and charming correct model of Indian Runner type. To it *belongs* the breed name; to it, the first place. *Others must follow it*, as variations upon its excellent characteristics, and must come in purely as varieties. If to say this be "partisan," surely it is the only logical partisanship, and precisely in line with our American Standard rulings concerning breeds and varieties, *that type shall be considered first*.

There is one point in especial about the carriage of the Indian Runners, to which I want to direct attention. The most distinctive, characteristic Runner pose may be compared to that of a pointer dog. When the bird is quickened to alertness by eagerness or by danger, the back stiffens and becomes almost a straight line from head to stern. Only the best ducks in America show this pose. A very large number have an angle at base of neck, which makes the bird appear ungainly. Many do not apprehend this as a defect, if the head is held high. But the head may be very high, yet the bird may not show more than 45 degrees of erectness in the body, and when this is the case, the angle at base of neck is very unpleasantly prominent. Sometimes the head will be carried high, while the body is held less than at an angle of 45 degrees. The lower the body, in proportion with a high head, the more prominent the angle. I have discarded birds elegant in shape and otherwise, because of this one fault. It will be a long time before all our birds show the straight line of back, but it is what we ought to work toward. When a bird can "point" nearly vertical in pose, then we have what I consider a bird of good carriage. For some reason, this pose does not seem to come as naturally to the males as to the females. At least, many more of the females which I have seen show it, when excited.

The Present Show Quality of American Standard Runners

CHAPTER III

The American Standard type of Indian Runners, as seen in the best shows, is not only a different type of bird from the English Runner, but it is in the main decidedly different from the ideal which has, up to the present date of writing, been pictured and described in the American Standard of Perfection. The ideals of the breeders have been gradually changing, as to color, and the birds that win now are quite different in color from those that won a few years ago. The allowance of gray for so many years, as well as the preferred fawn, while possibly it seemed necessary at the beginning, did not work to the good of the breed. A far larger proportion of males still come with gray breasts than would have been the case could the Standard have demanded, from the first, that fawn should be the one color, without the gray as an alternate.

Amazingly enough, a breeder has recently appeared in the public prints, claiming that a gray sheen characterizes the best ducks! Considering the years of bitter battle for pure, solid fawn in American Standard Runners, this might well be named the height of inconsistency and folly.

I have studied much over the peculiar demands at some points of the American Standard of Perfection, in its dealing with Indian Runners. Its ideal pictures in the 1905 American Standard are near the demands for good Runners, as laid down by the English Standard. At two points in the text, however, the American demand swings quite away from the English Standard just

WINNING AMERICAN STANDARD INDIAN RUNNERS OF THE BEST
PRODUCED BEFORE 1911. TYPE IS BETTER NOW

revised. Where the latter calls for legs placed well back, and makes legs placed too wide apart a defect, the American Standard demands legs "set well apart." And whereas the English Standard calls for bronzy green on the head and rump of male the American Standard has demanded as the ideal, for the 5 years previous to 1910 a "light fawn" color, which must be even throughout the entire plumage, except where the white markings should be seen.

The American demand for "light fawn" was modified to "fawn" in 1910, but many breeders advertise "golden fawn." The birds show, without doubt, a beautiful color, when really solid and even, pure and unblotched with white; and it is then rightly very much admired.

In November, 1910, I went to the earlier show held in New York, chiefly to study the Indian Runners. These picked birds were mainly very good in the even color then preferred for both sexes. Only a few were good in carriage; scarcely one had a fine neck; and fully thirty per cent were notably splashed with white in the fawn of the back. Every female in one of the winning pens as late as 1912-13 showed these white blotches, also. Others had a white line down the breast. These are bad faults to be seen year after year in show birds making special claims on color. If type were placed first, this point would not count so strongly.

The present foolish insistence on fawn heads and rumps has resulted in what might be called chaos. I find one of the first prize American Standard birds thus described in my notes of the Madison Square Garden show in 1912-13: "Head, good in type; nasty mottling on neck, below white; *gray* rump; whole bird *grayish* fawn; nice slim neck." A bird scarcely grayer than this was sold by Irving Cook two years earlier as a winner for this Garden show, and it did not get a place. The reason given was the tendency to gray. A very large number of the American Standard birds shown at New York for two years past, at least, have had

rumps either gray or mixed with gray. Where this can be considered an advance on the natural bronzy color, who can see? In the 1912-13 show, very many of the heads showed mottling of two shades of yellowish brown. A third prize bird showed a "badly mottled head and gray rump." Is this a gain over the natural bronze? Is it not rather a great loss? One experienced breeder who will increase very largely in the Penciled birds in the near future, and who has bred both the penciled and the solid fawn birds, tells me that he will give up the solid fawn *because the standard calls for head and rump of fawn*.

The illustrations of Runners in the poultry publications generally, up to 1909, were not of a sort to furnish much of an ideal to breeders in general. There were few birds of typical carriage in this country; indeed, even in 1913 they are comparatively few. I mean those which will hold the high carriage practically all the time. The photographs from life commonly published in 1909 and 1910 gave little hint of the Runner which the "ideal" in the American Standard showed.

The American Standard type birds have been generally claimed to be "sports" from birds imported from England. Recently comes one who says they are merely selections from the lighter English birds. If so, the original selection must have been of unfortunate quality. Inasmuch as English breeders in the earlier years, before they learned wisdom, flirted with the solid color will-o'-the wisp, it would not be strange if the earlier importations did throw some sports of this kind. But the British breeders have long regretted their waste of time and the detriment they worked the breed in trying to get this solid color.

To one who knows Runners and "the ropes", many illustrations published during the past year have been a pure source of fun. The most extreme have been a ludicrously exaggerated neck and head shown looking almost like a serpent's head, and one professing to be the imported "head" of a certain wonderful

pen, the body being about one-fourth as thick as its length, and the head nearly one-fourth as long as the entire body, besides. *In the longest bird I have seen* in the imported stock, in life, the head while longer than the average of Runners, is about one-seventh as long as the body, by actual measurement.

A large number of breeders are using a laughable artificial cut, apparently crayon work, in various sizes. One firm is using a photograph showing a bird posed at about 80 degrees, looking almost perpendicular. One is strongly reminded of a pair of birds of similar pose, as photographed, shown here last year as illustrations in one of the poultry prints. Mr. Walton said of this "pair", that the pictures were both of the same bird and that it was stuffed and set up at the required pose. He pronounced it absurd and impossible.

Another most absurd one is of a group of birds "bred and owned" by So-and-so, every one of which looks as if stamped out by a die, every marking division being mathematically sharp and even; just woodeny studies in what the retoucher's pencil can make the birds *appear to be*. Imagine the disappointment of a customer who buys from such a fake photograph,—not "from life," but from the brain and fingers of the office man! Beautiful photographs of Runners, in their best poses, but unretouched, are now obtainable. The best, however, are of the white Runners and the English Penciled type. Good photographs demand good birds as originals.

Judging from the birds which appear in the New York shows, the American Standard Runner has improved very rapidly in type during the last two years. It is significant that it has not improved in color but rather the reverse. This is significant for three reasons, viz.: (a) it is just about two years since the "new native" blood became available for crossing; (b) the color has grown worse while the type improved; and (c) a breeder of the American Standard birds who is posing as an authority on the

importation of Walton stock, (even to the extent of denying Mr. Walton's own statements about the matter), has recently come out in defense of the green egg. All these things point to the use of the "new native" blood to improve the American Standard birds. In the 1912-13 show I saw for the first time a bird in the American Standard class almost as good in all-around type as many of the English Penciled birds.

However, since the American Standard continues to call for legs wide apart and penguin form, and breeders are beginning to defend the requirement for "legs well apart", which I think they have never done before, it will be impossible for the American Standard birds ever to equal the English birds in type so long as they breed to the demands of the American Standard and judge by it. If judges favor the round bird despite the American Standard demand for "penguin form", breeders will breed for the round bird in spite of what the Standard says. Even an ex-president of the American Poultry Association has been heard to say, recently, from a University platform, that birds are judged here by a fashion-standard set by judges in the big shows, and not really by the strict words of the American Standard of Perfection.

The demand for "penguin form" is one of the things no one can explain. The best English breeders do not seem to know why it was used. "Penguin carriage"—had it been demanded, one could understand: but penguin form? Consider! the penguin, as described and illustrated in our authoritative works, is a short, thick bird with a very short, thick neck, which sits on its stern, with its back at an angle of possibly seventy degrees. It is notably *thick and broad* at the middle, and its wings are "flippers," without quills, held pointing downward and forward. Imagine a Runner of that *form*! And, imagine the American Standard of "Perfection" *gravely demanding that form for ten years!* "Long, narrow, racy-looking," and "resembling the penguin in

form." It would take a Barnum, a Bailey and a superintendent of several North American zoos to fill that double requirement! Does any reader want to breed a so-called Runner of that description?

A certain garrulous breeder has written publicly of buying eggs from prominent breeders of Penciled Runners and getting "birds scarcely decent for market." This breeder seems ignorant of the fact that if the birds thus raised were so poor in market quality, it was because they were not properly fed! This same breeder says that the white-egg goal was reached "long ago," by breeders of American Standard type; yet in 1910, almost no one mentioned white eggs. According to advertising put out, a "white-egg strain" of "light fawn" ducks distinguished this breeder's stock for a full year after the Standard repudiated "light fawn" color. This same breeder, who has been claiming nothing but white eggs since 1910 (!) is now reported to me to have very recently sold Runners 100% of which laid green eggs. Three reputable judges saw these birds, it is said. This seems rather effectually to dispose of one of the loudest claims to a white-egg strain in American Standard Runners. Possibly the better breeders have such strains.

It has persistently been made to appear that some strains of American Standard Runners lay white eggs. Perhaps this may be true, in time, if not now. But, letters continue to come to me complaining bitterly that these same breeders, despite these claims, continue to send out stock which produces green eggs.

A letter written Feb., 1913 says: "Last spring I bought four ducks and a drake, said to be genuine fawn and white American Standard, and layers of white eggs. We always got one green egg from the bunch. We set only pure white eggs. Saved but five ducks making nine in present bunch, and always get some green eggs. Will a penciled drake help us, and to what extent?"

Here we find American Standard Runners giving more than

25% of green eggs, which is as high as the new Cumberland-Fairy Fawns of the diluted blood have ever laid under my care. Since the American Standard blood is thus proved even now no better than the "*Cumberland-Fairy Fawn*," in this respect, the hue and cry about the green egg blood of the latter, is plainly shown to be for effect. Breeders of this new stock have plainly told customers *what to expect*, and *others have not*; that is the real vital difference. A breeder of Penciled stock writes, as late as May 31, 1913: "One correspondent says he gets three-fourths (75%!) green eggs, from his American Standard birds." Far more than the Cumberland-Fairy Fawns have ever given here.

Another letter received the same month of 1913 tells a hard luck story: "I have been breeding American Standard Runners for the past three years. I now have 24 show birds, some that carried away the blue at our state shows the past season. As far as color, I believe there are none in Ala., that can beat me; yet they do not lay the pure white egg exclusively, nor lay as persistently as some I have heard of. I have eagerly obtained and read all the literature I could find regarding them, but until I received your book from the—Poultry Journal I had found nothing and no one who seemed to know what the trouble was or even gave any details regarding them. I feel very much indebted to you, as I have no desire to mislead the public nor take no pride in producing that which is inferior to the best. My ducks are beauties as far as color, and they also have long slim necks and good head points, but they lack carriage and even the gait I have looked for in running; yet by being given first and by comparison I could see I had *good ones as per the American Standard*. I personally know six breeders who have discarded them (American) because they would not lay as they expected, neither would they lay white eggs and they had trouble in selling them for market purposes. The Runner has been given a black eye around here; for all the ex-breeders don't fail to knock them. But I believe that if the right

type is introduced and the people shown, this can be overcome. I am not down and out, for I like the duck and intend to get on the right track *now*. At present there are two or three flocks of White Runners here, but I am afraid of them, as all have the Pekin type very much pronounced."

Another letter, received in February, 1913, says: "Last year I bought from one of the largest and most noted Fawn and White breeder's best eggs, and *got just one-half penciled* birds—not a bird from the eggs was even average good. I saw the owner in person, and he said *probably the manager sent me from his utility pens instead of his best!* This is only one of the many times I have been treated most shamefully. This breeder you know very well, either personally, or by reputation. In both stock and eggs I have seldom gotten more than scrubs, for first price goods." The writer of the letter says of the seller: "He *has* wonderful birds. I have seen them several times."

This brings up a fact with regard to the American Standard birds which is the greatest count against them. Breeders of this stock are continually charging that the penciled birds do not breed true to color; actually, however, it is in the American Standard birds that the most culls appear. This is strictly and logically what would be expected, since they have always been bred away from a natural color which is known to be very persistent, just because the American Standard frowned upon that color. Then, in order to get better type, more of the original blood had to be put in, when at once the throw-back to this original penciled color became more pronounced, making more "culls," from the American Standard point of view, even to "one-half penciled birds."

Straws proverbially show the way of the wind. One of the straws is found in the 1912 literature of a breeder who claims to breed and offers for sale right along, birds of both types, while publicly crying down the penciled birds in page after page of deceptive stuff. Despite the fact that this breeder talks so constant-

ly of breeding both kinds, and of sales of the Penciled stock at low prices, the literature sent out direct to customers says there *has not been a dark fawn male on this place in several years*. Curiously enough breeders of the American Standard type always use the term "dark fawn" to describe the English birds; thus this fact of having no English males, on the place is proof as positive as any buyer needs that the "English Penciled" or "dark fawn" birds *offered year after year* by this breeder are nothing but culls from the American Standard birds.

Performance of English Standard Runners

CHAPTER IV

Many breeders of the Indian Runner have been calling attention to the proud fact that Indian Runners won the Australian Contest prize with a marvelous record, as announced a year ago. But the majority of them have not a shadow of right to use this as a talking point for their birds, since it was not the American Standard Runner which made these records.

Believing that this was the fact, I wrote to Mr. Dunncliffe, Organizing Secretary, in connection with the Hawkesbury contests, asking him what kind of Runners were in these Australian contests. He very kindly wrote me the facts, which supported my belief. These are his exact words: "The Indian Runners kept in Australia have been bred from stock imported from England. The English Standard is followed by all our poultry clubs and shows. As is the case elsewhere, there are people here who breed Rouen blood into them to improve the size, but any trace of this blood in them would knock them out in the shows. In the matter of laying, we find that any infusion of Rouen blood depreciates them, and the best laying records have been put up by birds of pure, English blood, selected here for many years for their laying capacity."

If I have not, on the other pages of this book, made it sufficiently clear that I have no wish to coerce the fancier who likes the solid fawn and white birds into raising anything else, I want to do so now. But, I have seen his birds where he shows his best. I know them to have been often inferior to the original type in

several respects, because he has too far ignored true type, in a craze for a certain color. In doing this, as all know, he breaks, like many other breeders, a fundamental rule of the law-giving Association. But what of that? Is he not a fancier, and may he not do *as he fancies*?

Neither, for any cause, would I put a handsome bird out of existence; but I certainly would oppose her shoving aside the real claimant to honors. I first took up this breed to test it for the benefit of the thousands of readers of a great farm paper, whose consulting expert on poultry I was for ten years. I found it better than I expected, and I found many more people interested than I had looked to see. It is because of these people, and many others like them, who will in the future want to know as much as possible about the Indian Runners, that I have ventured to try to preserve the true history and to inform the public as to the actual value of these birds, in the best type. A Runner breeder who first saw the new type, Cumberland-Fairy Fawn, in May, 1913, said 30 of them would be worth \$3000 regardless of color of eggs, and that a yardstick would touch all the way from the top of skull to point of bills of every one of them!

There is one specific point, viz., length—about the genuine Runner, aside from the carriage, which up to 1910 was scarcely referred to in periodicals in this country, although the Standard does say that the birds shall be long and narrow. The long birds are frequently downed at New York in favor of those showing the light, even fawn, evenness of color seeming to have been the chief item in a good Runner, from the American point of view, in addition to good carriage.

The English Standard just revised gave something definite to go on, in stating what should be considered “fairly good weights and lengths”; though it cautioned that these must not count alone, but must be in connection with well balanced type. It also recommended that judges *see the birds on the run* before

A WALTON PAIR OF 1911. FEMALE, BEING IN FOREGROUND,
LOOKS RATHER TOO LARGE

HALF WALTONS OF 1910 HATCH. ANCESTRY: "WALTON" STOCK,
BRED WITH THE BEST EARLIER PENCILED BLOOD IN AMERICA

making awards. But I think these "fair" lengths will open the eyes of our breeders. They are: 25 to 30 inches for ducks, and 28 to 36 inches for the drakes. Runners, *by the yard*, as one might say!

At the mammoth Crystal Palace show in London, late in 1912, Mr. J. W. Walton, Honorable Secretary of the British Indian Runner Club, in connection with Mr. Dodd, judged the Runners. A portion of the floor was wired off, and every bird was put on the floor to show its paces, those of each class competing thus together. The result was an entire reversal of the order of precedence from what would have seemed proper when the birds were in the coops. No Runner can be fairly judged without being seen both near at hand and on the move.

The stern should be very different from the Pekin type so often seen here. Birds that have laid for a considerable time do get heavier at the rear, but the true shape is rather light at the stern, tapering from the thighs to the tail. This, with length and carriage, gives a bird whose distinctiveness differentiates it from all other types the minute the eye falls on it. This, to my mind, is what we want, especially as this is the heavy laying type in this breed, according to testimony.

Mr. Scott, of New Zealand, calls the I. R. the "Queen of Layers," and states that his best bird gave him nearly \$10.00 worth of eggs in one year. The average price was about 37½¢ per dozen, according to his report of his "World's Record." Of course, he does not breed the American Runner.

It was certainly not *more* than 13 years after Mr. Thomlinson's first "particular attention" that the first birds were imported into this country. This makes it very probable indeed that the earlier birds imported into America, were very poor birds, from the present point of view of the English Indian Runner Duck Club. In Mr. Thomlinson's book appears a portrait of a Canadian duck, "never beaten in Canada," sketched—

as a warning— by the Secretary of the English I. R. Club. The faults especially named are bad carriage, and “wide on legs.” The width between legs, and the solid fawn which the *American ideal demands*, are regarded by the English as decidedly detrimental to the breed. “If the legs are placed wide apart, you are certain to get a waddler instead of a Runner, and if not placed well back you get horizontal carriage,” says Mr. Thomlinson. It is true that the English Standard demands an *appearance* of uniformity of the darker markings in the body color of the female, but it states with equal distinctness that these feathers may carry two tones, one described as “soft fawn,” the other as penciling which is “brighter and warmer in tint,” (Another shade of fawn, in fact). It avers that the overlapping of the feathers makes the females *appear* almost solid fawn, quite even in tone. This question does not come up with regard to the drakes, as they do not show penciling, in either the American or the English type.

Some of those in America who do not breed the penciled type of Runner are pushing strongly to make the strongly penciled type favored, in order to put it farther from the American Standard type. At least one bird of extreme penciling received a blue ribbon at New York in 1912-13. This is in strongest opposition to the English Standard up to the present time, which has called clearly for indistinct penciling. Fine, typical birds selected to this Standard demand were compelled to go without a place in this show, sharply-penciled birds wrongly ranking them in the favor of the judge. Unless the new British Standard makes a change in this demand, breeders will need to watch this point.

Numbers of breeders who have had both types affirm that the English Standard-bred Runners are better layers; laying earlier, more in numbers, larger eggs, and eggs of better color. The Indian Runners of the best English type lay eggs of a trans-

parent whiteness not seen, so far as I know, in any other eggs offered for table use in the regular markets. They should average three ounces, when the birds are well kept and matured. And, they are superior to hens' eggs for nearly all sorts of cooking.

Calling attention again to the fact that the ducks in the Australian competition—vide Mr. Dunncliffe's letter—were English Standard-bred Indian Runners, I will note a few statements that have been made as to laying capacity of the Indian Runners—the *English* Indian Runners, I mean. For, I do not think there is a certified record published for the American type. A large proportion of all the figures given have come from across the water. One big record came from New Zealand. I have several official records made in public work; also, one, made by English bred ducks of an American breeder; one, made in England by Mr. Thomlinson's ducks. The last-named record is 180, made in 1884. Mr. Thomlinson states that he has had a few exceed this in later years. The half-Walton's have a genuine record of above 200, made on a northern American farm. The Australian Competition, a public, official record from birds handled at an Agricultural College, was for three successive years reported as an average of 200-217 without meat, and last made by two pens. Also, from one pen, 199 in ten months.

Private claims, for which, so far as I know, no proof is shown, run winningly from 204 and 209 to 240, 260, 280 and 288. Several breeders claim ducks having a record above 200; one states that his birds lay all winter, and one refers modestly to one of his ducks with a record of 200 eggs in nine and one-half months. This is only 21 a month; many Runners are fully equal to this, during the favorable months. The rub is to get it during December and the moulting period. The 288 record hails from England, and I do not know that proofs have been given as to its authenticity.

During 1910, I tried for many months to find some verification of a record, reported here in 1909, of 320 eggs from one Indian Runner Duck in a single year. At first, it was reported here that this record was made in Australia. It was thought to be a public record. Late in 1910, an English writer and traveller wrote me that he had seen this duck, about which all the Runner world was agog. He wrote: "I had the pleasure of seeing the record duck while I was in New Zealand, as I went to see the plant of its owner. * * * It is his 'Wonder' strain and laid 320 eggs in 365 days, and 512 eggs in 23 months, going through two complete moults. He had six 'Little Wonders,' bred from this one, entered in the Cambridge Laying Competition, which were only four and one-half to five and one-half months old when entered, and had gone through a complete moult. When I left, had put up the good total of 900 eggs in seven months, notwithstanding these obstacles; the last twelve weeks' totals averaging over thirty-nine."

I have not seen any of Mr. Scott's ducks, but the photographs show them to be fair to good in carriage, but rather heavy in type. Naturally, a record so far beyond what we have been accustomed to think possible raises many eyebrows among us. Mr. Scott claims to have five strains, each of which has made a record of above 200 eggs average, "equal to and over the 300-egg record." He tells of a bird which laid 202 when from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ years old; and of three which laid 200 eggs each in eight and one-half months.

It could not be expected that birds placed in competition many miles away from home, in strange hands, could do as well as they would do at home, under the owner's careful eye and hand. But the Cambridge Duck Egg-Laying Test reports through its Secretary, that six Scott birds from four and one-half to five and one-half months old when entering the tests, and moulting twice during the year, made a total of 1301 eggs for

the year, average 217, "and for 12 weeks averaged over 39 eggs per week." This is the pen mentioned above by my correspondent. This average means thirteen eggs per duck in each two weeks, for twelve weeks in succession. It is the Indian Runner Ducks' strongest bid for universal notice!

Personally, I would rather rest the case of the Indian Runner on this record, and the more than 200-egg record of the Australian Agricultural College *tests for three years in succession*.

It seems, however, that there is no limit that can be set to the claims. One "testimonial," used year after year by a prominent foreign firm, tells of a Runner which laid "240 eggs in 240 days." This report comes from a burg in Spain, not to be found on the maps available! One photograph which I have seen purports to be of a Runner "from a gentleman that guaranteed that she laid 339 eggs in 365 days during her first season's laying." Most of her eggs were reported infertile. Perhaps this is the real "limit."

The public always looks askance at phenomenally high claimed records. When the highest records come from those who are known to have been somewhat "shady" in business transactions, people are even less inclined to believe in these records. Add to this that the record of the American Standard Runner in the Missouri competition was only 130 or thereabout, and the case looks bad. But, few breeders of Runners will lay this low record up against the Runner (even of the American type), (it is virtually double the average record of American hens); because they know the Runner *has averaged* 150 in private hands in large flocks under farm handling.

Mr. Scott is a great believer in strain and stamina, and in bringing birds to maturity before permitting them to begin laying. In connection with the chapter on feeding, I give his method and kinds of feed used.

Doubtless, the majority of people are unaware that our

veteran, Mr. I. K. Felch, furnished a sworn record, some years ago, of a Light Brahma hen having laid 313 eggs in one year. I am certain that the average Indian Runner duck will come nearer her "Wonder" average than will any breed of hens to the "wonder" record for hens. I know of one published record for an American hen, higher than the 320-egg duck record; but it was not a sworn record, as far as I know.

From the far west, a man of convictions writes: "Throwing out the penciled type is an injustice to all its breeders as well as to the true breed; it is tearing down what we have been building up for years. Our own ducks have won over all kinds of so-called Indian Runners, scoring to ninety-six and a half and ninety-six and three-fourths at state shows. We have been breeding this English type for eight years, *and find no fault in them*, while the fawn and white proved worthless under the same conditions. Why should the Revision Committee wipe *either* the English type or the American type off the face of the American soil?" Please note that this letter was neither written for publication, nor for advertising, but is the outspoken expression of a man's belief, which he supports by his practice. After the 1910 revision, the whole prestige of the fancy was brought to bear against the penciled ducks, until no visitor at a show would cast a glance at them. It was only the belief of their breeders that they were decidedly superior to the American Standard type in actual intrinsic value that kept the breeders of the English type from throwing up the game. A few dollars and a year's work might easily place any one of them on the popular side, at half the cost in wear and tear of holding to the English type. Yet they did hold to it, tenaciously.

The matter of color is still a bone of contention. But, *the English duck was described as "fawn" in color long before there were any American Standard birds of the present color in existence.* The matter of the name belonging especially to the

first in the field, namely, the English type of Runner, is thus so plainly one of common-sense and fair dealing that I think no one can candidly consider it without admitting the justice of the claims of the English type. In the ranks of the breeders of American Standard Runners, no one seems to have been satisfied with the 1910 revision. And, although arguing strenuously for the American Standard bird as the "only" Runner, breeders and judges constantly ignore some of this Standard's demands.

The way the color question was working out before the last revision was shown very clearly in an exhibit at the Syracuse, N. Y., Fair, the year of the last revision. The Standard then called for "*light fawn*." Criticisms without number were made on the rating of a certain bird, practically white, which, because of superior type, was given the blue. During the same Fair, in 1911, I stood before the Runner coops, and saw a beautiful bird, as far as type went, with no prize. The bird was almost white. I asked a man who was demonstrating Runners, (evidently the leader in the winnings) why this bird was neglected, when at another time a bird of the same sort received first under the same judge. My supposed ignorance was not much enlightened, for the smiling reply was: "Oh! that was a *mistake*." Later, I was told that it was this same bird that won the blue the previous year. Now, they begin to talk of *going back* to this Standard.

As the initiated know, it was the loss of the word "light" from the Standard description that made the difference. Yet the columns of the poultry periodicals are still dotted with advertisements describing the birds of rabid fighters for the American Standard bird, which advertisements claim the owners to have the acme of the American Standard type; yet, they are described as "*light fawn throughout*." And the Standard calls for "*light fawn*" *in tail of duck only*! One breeder has declared in print that the American Indian Runner Standard is a *joke*,

and that the bird it demands has never been bred and cannot be bred.

Despite many such statements, the *new* Standard does *not* call for *light* fawn and white, and it does *not* disqualify the penciled birds. The American Standard disqualifications refer to the dark breast known as "*claret*" and to the blue bars on wing, which are generally taken as showing foreign blood; beyond this, absence of feathers in the wings and twists in wings, back or tail, complete the list of special disqualifications, and I find nothing in the general disqualifications which applies to Indian Runners.

The American Standard *everywhere* stands firmly for shape as *making the breed—any breed*. For instance, under Plymouth Rocks, it says: "The six varieties are *identical*, except in color." When it comes to the Indian Runner, the Standard allows 25 points out of one hundred for color, and 41 for shape. Yet, with only 25 points on color, and 61 for shape and carriage, how is it that the light fawn breeders, who show by their advertising that they haven't even the color demanded by the American Standard, can claim to have a *good* Runner? Sixty-one points for shape and carriage, and every judge considering color first!

Now, listen: There *must* be more than one shade of fawn: because even *the American Standard* calls for *darker fawn* in head of drake than in other parts. Fawn color is a light, yellowish-brown; so says Webster. And if the Standard has no specific definition, it must accept the usual meaning of a word. Therefore, the English duck *known as a "fawn" duck long before the American Standard style was in existence*, has double claim to use the word "fawn," if its breeders so desire, because it has two shades of fawn!

Those breeders of the American type who, apparently, were not willing to give the English ducks any chance, have persistently denied the purity of the penciled type, although the great

British show, the Crystal Palace, was giving them the leading prizes year after year, and the most prominent English breeders asserted their superiority as a distinctive and pure type.

One man here states that he does not know whether the tinted-egg layers are better than the others or not, because he has ducks that lay tinted eggs early in the season and mostly white eggs later on. This man has bred ducks many years. Any one who has bred them but a single season knows that ducks, at the beginning of the lay, often give eggs covered with a coating or "veil" which does not belong to the shell, and which washes off! A simple coating which can be removed is quite different from a shell filled with green coloring matter. I have, indeed, known a duck which had laid strictly white eggs for an entire season, to lay blue eggs five or six days in succession, once during the next season. But this does not stamp her as anything but a white-egg duck; for there was evidently something temporarily wrong, either with her digestive or her laying functions, and she was, normally, strictly a white-egg bird.

All the strength of the American Standard contingent, and that of one of the clubs is thrown against the Cumberland-Fairy-Fawns; which are the union of two penciled Runner bloods of the highest type known: one strictly white-egg, the other laying some green eggs. Yet facts are made public, week by week, which show that the broad claims for white egg strains now made by nearly all American Standard breeders, must be taken with *much salt*.

A breeder who says that he has tried both parti-colored varieties, and would prefer the American Standard ducks if they were as good egg producers as the penciled, gives his experience in very vivid language, almost extravagant. I do not know him personally, but he has all the prestige of the American Poultry Association behind him; since he is a licensed judge and no judge can be licensed without other good judges to

vouch for his work and his integrity, if my memory is correct with regard to A. P. A. law. He says the ducks of the English penciled type are "the greatest layers of the age." He admits that there are a few strains of the American Standard birds that are "really great layers," but says, in general, that fanciers have given their strength to getting color till many strains are "worthless" for egg production.

Mr. T. F. McGrew, whose judgment is considered very good said this, under date of October 4, 1911, in a letter to me: "*The proper solution of the problem would be to have two varieties and not to try to push out the fawn and white with the other variety. I am at a loss to understand why it is that people who are interested in Indian Runner Ducks cannot see that the laced (or penciled, as you prefer) should be classed as a separate variety of Indian Runner Ducks.*"

I am indeed glad to have such a deliverance from a man standing so high as Mr. McGrew, on this question. But I trust that Mr. McGrew and all others will remember that *it was the sustained and determined effort to discredit the Penciled variety utterly in this country which set its advocates upon the up-hill work of saving it to the United States farmers.*

Mr. Walton says that, leaving color entirely out of the question, either as to eggs or the feathers, "the most erect, quick-running type of Indian Runner is the best foraging and laying duck in existence." The level-bodied varieties, he states, "can't touch it; but, it does not lay 240 eggs in 240 days, nor does it usually lay 320 in a year, and what is more, it doesn't tell lies, and it doesn't ask any one to tell them for it."

During the past two years, the general attitude toward the English Penciled Runner has become more and more favorable, as the performance and the facts about Standard, color, history, etc., have become better known. A goodly number of the best judges, and constantly increasing numbers of breeders now stand

WHITE RUNNERS. PUREST SPORTS FROM ENGLISH PENCILLED
STOCK. ALL PALACE BLUE RIBBON WINNERS

for the Penciled type, as bred to the English Standard. Franklane Sewell, long admitted to be our best poultry artist, has pronounced a recent exhibit of Walton Penciled Runners the best in type of any Runners that he had ever seen. The American Standard of Perfection stands everywhere for best type. *Consistency demands that it should recognize the English birds as the breed type*, because the best judges pronounce them the best in type. *No getting around that!*

The Worst About the Indian Runner

CHAPTER V

If we are to tell the best about a breed, it is only fair defense of those who cannot exercise sound judgment as to their own chances, to tell the worst, also. Let us plunge in, therefore, and have the worst over!

"The Worst", please note, falls under two heads: that brought out by experience, and that brought forth by guesses, or on general principles, or in fear that this natty little duck is going to hurt the sales of hens, or even in order to attract attention and rush in where the experienced "angels" fear to tread.

In my own correspondence, one person wrote as follows, speaking of "enthusiastic" correspondents: "I know the breed. Ours is a land of liars. No sooner does a man tell a good story than his neighbor considers it a duty to go him one (I should rather say three) better. Just now, Runners are on the run, and Leghorns are getting a rest. My 21 produced eleven eggs yesterday (a banner day); to-day, three. Be amiable in spite of this. You see, I love them in spite of all." This was written in March. Also in March, he said: "I think the Indian Runner an over-estimated bird. From 23 ducks, I am getting only eight eggs a day." Later, this correspondent was himself enthusiastic about the Runners.

Recently, a Runner breeder wrote to this effect: "Did you see how Rigg is hammering Indian Runners? What's he butting in for?" Mr. Rigg is a dignified, experienced journalist and poultry writer, whose honesty of intent no one questions. When asked to explain what he meant by his "warning in regard to the Indian Runner Duck boom," he said:

"The Indian Runner Duck boom has taken on large proportions, and many people have been led to believe that this duck is more profitable to the egg farm than any breed or variety of fowls. We wanted to warn our friends that the merits of this duck as an egg-producer have been over-stated. It is a very prolific egg-producer, to be sure. But there is not the market for duck eggs that there is for eggs of *fowls*." He goes on to say that duck raising requires a special location, while "most any piece of good land" is suitable for *fowls*, and that the good duck location "is an exceptional one." Mr. Rigg then repeats: "Again we advise our friends to be careful how they go into this new breed."

As to "over-statement," I wonder if Mr. Rigg knows of a single breed of hens whose merits as egg-producers have not been over-stated! *Probably no such breed or variety exists.* As to "most any good land" being suitable for fowls, Mr. Rigg most certainly does not score there, for the very specialness about the duck location is that *it doesn't need good land*; the waste places being especially suited to it. I saw, in a dinky little stream in New York state,—a stream with a dozen turns and twists, possibly,—to every few rods, and widely bordered by swale, a flock of fifty most beautiful Runners: the thriftiest, happiest lot of birds one could ask to see. As to productiveness, these were not yet of laying age; but their immediate ancestors, a small lot, had laid 100 per cent for the flock, 83 times—that is on 83 different days—in less than eight months. If my friend, Mr. Rigg, thinks this is exaggeration, I can give him dates and figures from the daily memorandum. These were strictly half-Walton birds.

A letter from another doubter—out on the west coast—reads as follows: "About the Runners, perhaps they will be mortgage-lifters, as long as their eggs can be sold for hatching; but, as market eggs, I can't see it. What I'd like to find out is the truth

of that assertion about Indian Runner eggs bringing as high as 20 per cent premium over hen eggs for market. They don't do it here. I asked my grocer, who keeps rather a fancy line of goods and pays me above quotations for 'extras', for my White Leghorn eggs, about the sale of duck eggs. He said they never took the duck eggs; there were few who would buy duck eggs. So, there you are."

So far as the 20 per cent premium on duck eggs is concerned, I may say that I have personally seen commission receipts where *not only 20 per cent, but 50 per cent above the price for hen eggs was received. But this is not a customary difference.* The peculiarity of the market for duck eggs is explained in the chapter devoted especially to this part of the question.

Another instance from the ranks of "the Opposition" may serve to fortify readers against the enthusiasm of admiring breeders quoted, or a blind reliance on the words of the present writer. This is noted from the only unfavorable review on the first edition of this book which has come to my notice (the editors being otherwise uniformly kind in their reviews, and recognizing the value of having a book on the Indian Runner giving facts straight from the yards of many breeders). The one opposing editor says: "This is another partisan book, professedly written to boom the Indian Runner Duck. It is unfortunate that all the information one can obtain about these ducks is furnished by partisan breeders of them, and probably needs to be taken with the proverbial grain of salt! That they are great layers is undoubtedly true [*Hope Mr. Rigg saw that!*], but that one of them laid 320 eggs in one year may well be doubted until we can have some reasonable proof of it other than just a mere say-so. [Do readers know that most published "records" for all breeds are "mere say-sos." Mr. Hunter published the 196-egg White Leghorn "say-so," some years ago! V]. The Indian Runner is a very small duck. What little meat there is on them is

of excellent quality. Poultry keepers who cater to the duck-egg trade will probably do well to take up Indian Runners for egg production, but growers of duck meat will doubtless continue to breed the Pekin." In my view, the above contains the following points which might render it, too, wisely taken "with the proverbial grain of salt": item, one error of judgment; item, one misstatement; item, one prophecy already discredited by the facts; item, one declaration showing that the book had not been carefully read.

It seems to me that it is an error of judgment to seek to give the impression that outsiders, be they editors, or what not, can know better about any breed than its breeders. It is a misstatement to say that this book was written "professedly" to boom the Indian Runner. The prophecy that duck meat growers would hold to the Pekin is proved false in one large plant during 1911, as shown in another chapter. The assumption that this book carried the idea that 320 eggs a year was easily possible could not have been made, had the reviewer read the pages given to discussing this and several other abnormally high records.

One or two adverse opinions from people *who have bred them* are, it will be noticed far milder in their criticism. One correspondent of "Gleanings," the well-known bee magazine, writes: "For a person who has unlimited green feed and range, perhaps they are all right; but where all feed has to be bought and no clover or Alfalfa available, I do not think them a great money-maker. I have had them nearly a year, and cannot recommend them to any town person, or one who has not the above necessities to enable him to make a good portion of their feed inexpensive."

Referring to the prejudice against duck eggs, the same writer says: "No matter how groundless it is, it is there, and the public will have to be educated up to the value of the white egg of the Indian Runner before there is an unlimited market for them.

Personally, I think them as good as hens' eggs; but the average person, in this part of the world, anyway, does not think so, and I have met this prejudice when disposing of those I had for sale."

One other says: "I do not think that ducks will replace hens to any extent, on our chicken farms. It takes almost twice as much to keep a duck as it does a hen." This, let it be noted is a general statement, tacked on to a discussion of Runners in such a way that it appears to include the Runners. As some ducks weigh four pounds, others more than twice this, and as there is even more difference among hens, the folly of such a general statement is apparent. One of the worst points about the Runners is that the mature males are often troublesome and somewhat brutal. They must not be allowed where the young are kept, as they may "scalp" them. Other breeds of fowls, however, are sometimes as bad in this respect.

One man wrote me that the Runners were no birds for the farm, simply because the average farmer would not give them the care necessary to success. But, is *that* really against the Runner?

Out of the many hundreds of breeders who are advertising the Indian Runners as fancy stock and marvelous layers, I have heard from two since the second edition was brought out, who no longer favor the Runners as utility layers. Both these men were originally enthusiastic; both keep White Leghorns; both now put the Leghorn ahead of the Runner as a money-making egg-for-market proposition.

In one case, I can see just where the difficulty lies. Feed often costs nearly double at this breeder's place what it does even in the east, the locality of general high prices for feed. He has not been able to make his birds lay in winter since the first season, although he reported marvelous laying for a time. He thinks he gives the best of care. Yet why should birds do tremendously well when first from another person's handling, and never do.

well again, either themselves or their descendants? I cannot puzzle it out. This breeder has laid it in part to the cold climate, yet I know of breeders in Canada, much farther north, who report that their ducks lay satisfactorily in winter. However, all the experience of the thousand and more other breeders counts not one iota with this exception, beside his own single trial; he no longer believes in the Runner, and says so frankly.

This man's Runners do not lay in the winter, he says. Of course birds which make no returns when feed bills are running very high, must be disappointing. The breeder knows of birds the other side of the mountains which lay in winter, but attributes it to the warmer temperature, and utterly condemns the Runner as a layer for cold localities. As a matter of fact, the Runner, like the hen, requires comfort in order to egg production. If this cannot be had, one would better not keep Runners for winter layers. However, I have never known them not to begin in February; and, as the high prices for duck eggs always come *after this* period, I cannot see that lack of December and January laying should count so strongly against the Runner as it does against the hen. I do think, however, that it is not wise to push the Runner as a strictly land duck, for this may lead to deterioration in vigor.

A Canadian physician, a director in the Cumberland Club, having bred the Indian Runners for years in that very cold climate, where his birds have to be housed practically half the year, has found them thoroughly satisfactory there. So much so that he is planning to take on a large farm in order to go into the Runners far more extensively than at present. Breeders do not plan to increase largely in a breed not meeting expectations! This is, therefore, the best of proof that the Runner makes good, even great claims. Modified open front houses give this breeder good results in eggs, throughout the winters.

The Best About the Indian Runner

CHAPTER VI

I cannot, of course, vouch for the accuracy of the statements, any more than I can vouch to you my own accuracy and truthfulness. You must judge from your knowledge of human nature and the probabilities. Most of these letters have come to me in the regular line of acquaintanceship or of business; some of them because I was the author of the book. I know no reason to doubt any one of them, other than that it is human to question that which exceeds the normal, or that which we have believed normal. But there is so much of this "Best" testimony, and it is so strong, that I can only defend you from getting over-enthusiastic by urging that you read "the best" and "the worst" always at the same sitting!

We might begin with the personal testimony of the editor of "Gleanings" before referred to. I do not think there is a man in the United States whose unsupported word would be taken quicker and by more people than "Brother Root's" In one issue, Mr. Root says: "Today is April 6, and my one Indian Runner duck I have several times mentioned is still laying her egg a day, and she has done this now for almost if not quite 100 days without a break. I have read stories like this, but I fear I shall have to confess I never expected to own a fowl of any sort that could give a big, white egg (or perhaps I should say, rather, a bluish-green egg) for over three months, without a skip." In the next issue, appearing two weeks later, Mr. Root refers to "that Indian Runner duck that laid *over* 100 eggs without a miss." The following issue contained a story of another

Indian Runner Duck, the report, supported by a signed affidavit, stating that one of its writer's Indian Runners had laid 98 eggs in 96 days. "Eggs are large and white," the report continued.

Turning now to my private correspondence, the first letter I pick up says: "All lay white eggs; 49 ducks laid from Feb. 15 to July 15, 150 days, 5316 eggs; up to Aug. 15, 180 days, 6000. Note that this is for a business flock, and that the average is 20 eggs a month for each duck, all through, or 120 each in six months." This is not high, *but it is one-half higher* than the *average* record for hens *in a full year*, with six full months yet to hear from. This report is from California.

The next report is virtually the same, viz., 20 eggs a month from the middle of Feb. to the middle of July. It continues: "They are now laying right along (over 50 per cent) and show signs of moulting. Seven-eighths of the feed I have given them has been cracked corn. They have had no wet mash. Since the ice broke up they have had the run of the mill pond across the road. They have also laid eggs around the farm which I have not counted, though I often come across one or more. They have not offered to sit. Their pen is an old cow shed on north side of barn. About 25 rats also occupy this pen. (I caught eight once last week.) They may get some of the eggs before I get up in the morning."

A letter which came from the far south says: "I now have seven ducklings which will be seven weeks old to-morrow. I also have a lot of Barred Rock chicks which are just three days younger. This morning, I concluded to weigh some of each, and compare them. All my ducks weighed more than two pounds each, two of them tipping the scales at two and one-half pounds each. My largest chick weighed about three-quarters of a pound. When I first set my eggs poultrymen advised against it, on the ground that they would eat me out of house and home. They do

eat more than a chicken, but they can be raised on bran and chopped alfalfa or oats, with a little meat thrown in, and this is the cheapest kind of feed. Even if they ate twice as much as a chicken, they would still be just as profitable, for they will grow more than twice as fast as a chicken during the first ten weeks."

It will be noticed that *those who say the ducks eat more are speaking of the growing ducks*. The last clause, "they will grow more than twice as fast as a chicken during the first ten weeks," explains this. Fowls *must* eat for growth; *rapid growth must mean good appetites*. The letter continues: "You don't have to talk to convert a poultryman to the Indian Runner, if he can see them occasionally and watch them grow."

The next correspondent has also a word to say about feed and feeding. He advertised that his ducks laid all winter, and I wrote to ask about it. He replied: "Will say that my ducks *do* lay all winter, but of course I feed them good, as nothing will lay without feed. I feed a soft feed of bran and corn meal and clover and oyster shells. Yes, they lay a much larger egg than chickens and the eggs sell for more a dozen. One flock of 60 have a record of 212 in ten months."

On the question of feed, another says, incidentally, "my mill-man made a mess of feed order, and my ducks, that were laying some twenty eggs the fifteenth of Jan. (a 36 per cent yield) went down to zero, and I have just hunted out the cause and found it and started them again."

To-day's mail (Nov. 12, 1911) brought in an Institute Worker's report from a flock which I visited during the summer, and which was then making, I thought, a very creditable record, indeed. These were strictly "half-Waltons," and the owner was a beginner with Runners, who had bought eggs and had raised a small flock in 1910, just as any farmer would. The letter says: "The old ducks are still laying; at just nine months from beginning, they had averaged 185 eggs per bird. To date, the record

is 196. I can scarcely possess my soul in patience until they lay the few required to make a 200-egg record*

"I read in the last 'Reliable,'" the letter continued, "that they make a better record the second year than the first; if so, they certainly are profitable from the stand-point of egg production alone. The young sprouts have begun to lay a little." This report is from the Middle States district, the ducks being kept on farm, free-range conditions. It is on this class of reports that I rely most to give us an idea of what "the Leghorn duck" will do with good handling under conditions available to every farmer, with watered land and without. These particular ducks had a stream to which to resort at will daily.

You will be glad to learn, I think, that Mother L. (the wife's elderly but high-spirited mother) takes practically all the care of these birds. They had no special extra care in the winter. No green stuff was available till May, and no meat till early April. Mash of bran and middlings, with corn and buckwheat for grain, completed this simplest of rations. But I will whisper to you that the lady in charge is a liberal feeder. I am sure her interest and care make at least a part of the reason for good returns.

And as to the record,—if you could see, as I did, the little thin book with its daily "number laid," such as you may see on any farm, you would know it was all straight. As for myself, I would sooner distrust my own record, or that of any one of the Experiment Stations!

At that time my own birds had been doing better than I should have the face to ask them. Nearly 43 per cent of the old ducks still on hand were laying the third week in October; the earliest of the young were not hatched till April 21st. They had been laying some time, and by the second week in October, about 40 per cent of the ducks from the first three broods were laying.

*Later, this average was increased to 200 plus with 40 days yet to make out the year.

One correspondent wrote that he had not believed he would like Runners and so killed all his drakes the first fall. A year from the following December, he wrote me saying that the ducks had begun laying in February and "I still get some eggs." This letter came Dec. 8, from New York state.

One man stated that 115 ducks had, one morning, produced 117 eggs. This can come, of course, only through some duck maturing two eggs in less than 24 hours. It is very exceptional, but I have seen similar reports published in several instances. One, with affidavit, was of 98 eggs from 96 ducks. But, of course, no one expects or asks for such results. Such reports come at the height of the season, and *probably under forced feeding*. Mr. Scott, the man claiming the 320-egg record, states that he did not force this duck, except at the last, when he feared she would just miss a 300-egg record.

I do not think it either wise, or just, to *insist* that people believe a private record which far transcends any average experience even with birds well-cared for. I do not know Mr. Scott, except through his circular and correspondence. I have sometimes prided myself on my knowledge of human nature, however, and Mr. Scott seems to me to be a man of honest intention. He has furnished me with his feeding formula, which will be found in another chapter. I *bought* this information for the benefit of the farm contingent of Runner breeders. It does not differ so much from average practice as one might expect. Mr. Scott believes especially that birds expected to lay heavily should be well matured before beginning their work.

The New Hampshire farmer who wrote of the 117 eggs from 115 ducks also wrote that they averaged 112 eggs a day for nearly a month. But he added: "I don't dare tell this to those who have had no experience with the Indian Runners, but I know those who have will believe 'most anything of them.'"

The fact that the Runners are non-sitters helps out the records. An occasional "freak" will try to sit, as with Leghorns.

The bane of the poultry beginner is that he expects always the best results he has seen noted. If he could form a habit of expecting an *average of the good and the bad*, to begin with, there would often be more chance of his continuing a poultry raiser long enough to get the better results. There are too many things to learn, for every one to succeed, off-hand. "The 'Failures' in the poultry ranks are nearly always found among those who expect too much," says a recent writer.

One breeder, in his circular, says that the Runners are practically grown at eight weeks, continuing: "Last year, we had ducks laying at fifteen weeks of age."

Another breeder says that 60 per cent of the ducks' feed is *water!* Some modern doctors say that this is literally true. Let the statement make us careful to supply water constantly; *not omitting* to give enough nutritious feed, despite the "60%."

I have been in touch for some years with Mr. D. W. Ferrier, a breeder in my own state. Mr. Ferrier recently put out a little booklet just as a help to his customers. He says: "My experience covers eight years as a breeder. I have traveled over the entire route. Produced eggs for New York market for four years before I ever sold breeding stock or eggs for hatching. Have raised them by the hundreds for market, when few dealers knew what an Indian Runner was. There were so few who could give a greenhorn a lift that we certainly got our experience straight from the birds. Yet, withal, they are one of the most profitable things any one can take up."

Regarding selling the eggs, Mr. Ferrier says: "The aim should be to have 75 or 100 layers at least. Winter and summer you can keep your eggs going, always fresh. Even in slack periods, and when your production is highest, you will find it much easier to ship every few days than it is to sell your eggs at store

prices in slack times and ship at other times." He tells of a customer, who, following his advice, filled one side of a crate with hen eggs, the other with duck eggs, and received 16 cents for the former and 32 cents for the duck eggs. He adds: "That was five years ago, and she don't bother much with hens since, but is still keeping ducks."

Mr. Ferrier has worked out many things for himself. He boards up his yards near the houses for a wind-break; puts the sand in the water-pans instead of the feed; trains his birds to come when called, instead of running away from him. On the white-egg question he says: "We never bought or hatched a tinted egg; we get new blood by purchasing white eggs, yet once in a while we raise a bird that will lay a tinted egg. We sell you a white egg. Yet once in a while there may be a tinted egg and it's beyond us." He also says that if a bird is worth keeping, she is worth two dollars as a utility layer or market egg producer.

OLD CUMBERLAND DUCK, WINNER OF 1ST AT MADISON SQUARE
GARDEN, 1912
A KEEN YOUNG DRAKE OF 1912, CAPABLE OF MUCH BETTER POSE;
NOT BALANCING WELL

The Indian Runner and the Farm

CHAPTER VII

Because I see no future before the Indian Runner, eventually, except as a farm duck, I am especially glad to get the farm point of view.

There are already many modifications of the types of Indian Runners in the country, entirely aside from the two very distinct and opposing types to which so much reference has already been made. It is almost impossible for any breeder to put his hand to a breed without transforming it to some extent. This is abundantly shown even in the references to the "strains" of different breeders, and to the differing claims made by advertisers. How are these changes made? Often—very often—by "hocus-pocus." That is, by putting in a dash of ANY blood which a breeder may think will bring the birds nearer to his ideal—usually an ideal as to feathers and form, rather than as to production. Production cannot be ignored, to be sure, but it is made to take at least third place; for color comes first with the average fancier, then form, then, if he has no other hobby to work out, production, possibly. On most farms production must count above all else. But what when production depends on type?

It is wholly true that no two breeders can take even the same strain, with birds very similar, and, working entirely apart, show the same type of birds at the end of five years. Each puts his own stamp upon the breed, or variety. It may be that all the change has been made by selection of eggs. It may be that it has been made only in the selection of birds to carry on his work. The fact remains that each worker is practically certain to put his

own special stamp, "his mark," upon the birds which he will soon call his "strain." There is a farm stamp, too.

A breeder of fawns who was especially anxious to preserve and continue a certain type, wrote another—a farmer—for birds of that type, to be descended from birds sent out from the yards of the first, some years earlier. It was made plain that only such birds were wanted. The testimony of the first breeder to the outcome is as follows: "I asked, before ordering, if they were just as had of me, and in return the breeder wrote that they were my strain, PURE (with the words underlined). When they came and I examined them, I could see that other blood had been used; the penciling was different, not so distinct, of a prettier shade of fawn, if anything; but they were hardly as good in shape and style, and I was in a panic. I thought I would return them, but finally sold most of them, telling the customers just what they were. The remaining suspects I shall put in a yard by themselves and observe them." Eventually, it came out that the breeder from whom these ducks came had had one male from a third breeder running with the females of the first breeder's stock. There was no suspicion of intentional error, as far as I know, for breeder number two was considered honest; but the incident shows both how soon change of strain is seen in the progeny, and how difficult it is to get just what one wants and definitely orders.

Being a very honest man, the writer of a certain letter was anxious to know about the tendency to flying BECAUSE he had told customers that a two-foot fence would confine these ducks. I chanced to have a personal word to add to the solution of this problem, because I had bred for some time the very strain he reported as being such flyers, and had never used anything but a two-foot fence to confine them, nor ever known them to fly over it. But it is perfectly easy to train these birds, or any others, to be breachy, by using fences too low or too weak when the birds are

young and most active. The size of yards, too, may have an influence on this especial characteristic. Small yards, which offer no good starting point for strong flight, will often confine the bird—any birds—much better than larger yards. That is, not such high fences will be demanded. It is in the daily and yearly learning of such things as these as they come along, that any poultry raiser gets “knack” and accumulates a store of wisdom on innumerable points which it is simply impossible to pass on in entirety to any other worker. It is one point at a time usually.

I think it was late in 1910, though I am not quite certain as to the date, that a breeder in the east sent a trio of English-bred Indian Runners to the Government Experiment Station of Porto Rico, for experimental purposes. It is quite time some one in authority was doing something with these ducks, on this side of the Atlantic ocean. For, if the things which Indian Runner breeders have been saying have been untrue, they would result in uncounted waste of money for the thousands of farmers who will try them. Whereas, if they can be proved true by some of those in whom the farming contingent have confidence, it will mean hundreds of thousands of dollars for the farmer's pockets. We know positively that breeders in this country, even women on the farms, are making hundreds of dollars from their Indian Runners each year. On the date of January 26, 1911, I received a circular from one such woman, claiming that her ducks were made to average over ten dollars each in eight months. It is not likely that this was from market eggs, however. But with a yield of 180, and a price of 35c, the gross income would be more than half this amount. The need at present is for some Experiment Station here to make an exhaustive test of both types of Indian Runners for the benefit of the American farmer, on the market egg basis.

A farmer who believes thoroughly in Penciled Runners, sent a pen to the Missouri Station, for entry in the National Competi-

tion, under Mr. Quisenberry. Unfortunately, most of the birds were smothered *en route*. The Texas Station and one of the sub-stations have put in the English Penciled, (Cumberland) white-egg Runners, and the main station is also trying out the whites.

As an interesting commentary on Runner color, a disgusted word from one who has bred Indian Runners for years fits in as nothing else could. He was engaged in the practical job of catching birds to fill a shipment and for his own breeding pens. Color study was, of course, a main feature in O. K.-ing, or discarding specimens, and, as is always the case, many birds that looked well on their feet had to be rated as seconds on account of fawn in the flight feathers. I happened to be looking on, and heard his dictum: "Color in Indian Runners is nothing but a humbug anyway, for they change color every two months. How are you going to describe the color fairly when that is the case? It is out of the question! And who is going to say which is the right color, that of December, or of March or of June?" It struck me that this was as pungent a comment on the folly of ruining the distinctiveness of the Indian Runner for color's sake (because some one happened to think fawn in solid color was more desirable than any two shades of fawn penciled together might be) as could possibly be made. The question must always be, Which of the varying shades of fawn is Standard fawn, and when shall the bird be judged on color,—in winter or in summer? If in summer, or spring, it must be far too dark in December; if in December it is to be just right, it will be nothing but dirty white in June. And this every breeder knows.

I saw two breeders selecting a bird to fill an order that called for a high class specimen. The choice lay between two birds, one of which was nearly perfect in color, but was only moderately long in body and neck. The other was of beautiful shape and carriage, but had a flaw in the wing flight. "Which

would you send? Which would you rather have if you were choosing for your own yard?" said one to the other. "The slim, long bird, every time," was the reply. "What,—sure! even with the flawed wing, and remembering that it will affect the whole flock?" Yes; even at that. I stand for type first." "But what about shipping it to a customer? Would you decide on that one to fill the order?" "No—o, I'm afraid not," was the hesitant reply. "The customer will be better satisfied with the bird that is better in color." But the farm wants the upstanding bird.

Standard law, as generally applied, theoretically puts shape above color; in actual practice, color, (when at all hard to get) virtually takes precedence of type, as the birds are judged in competition. And this is what every breeder of Standard birds has to meet. He dares not send what he believes to be the better bird, many times, because custom has over-ridden Standard Law. The very simple reason is, doubtless, that color appeals far more quickly to the average eye, than does shape. Many a breeder of years' standing, cannot select the birds typical in shape and style. And the public, which sees the shows and which buys stock, is more easily satisfied with the better colored bird, when it becomes a choice between color and shape, unless the shape is inexcusably bad.

I have known the American farm and the American farmer ever since I opened my eyes on one of these farms for the first time—my father's farm. On this farm, there was a pond, and ducks were always kept and prized, but there was nothing like the Indian Runner. I feel that I am in a position to know something of the farm attitude toward most things. Numbers have had me out to rejoice with them over their Runners, or to help them make selections. And more farmers are taking them up, every week.

Here I have a farm story. The man who tells it is at least as honest as I am, and of course readers cannot expect me to say

anything much stronger than this! He lives in Virginia. He says:

"I have 55 ducks and 15 drakes all together at night. and on range in day. Have not separated those not needed as had no good place to put them, and many other things to look after. I got some 25 eggs (a day) about the 16th of Jan. My output then steadily decreased to zero, started again and went up to 19. To-day I got 13. Please tell me how many you would let roost together, or would you separate into small bunches? I recall absolutely no article covering all this." Later, I had a letter saying there was trouble with the feed which made this drop in eggs. 45 per cent by the middle of January is not so bad, in a farm flock on range, and gives a pretty fair start toward 200 for the year.

This man had twice as many males as he should. But, on another farm in another state, I saw between 125 and 150 running together, because it was difficult to separate and give all equally good conditions. I think it safe to say that only the fact of good water privilege and range saved the young of this flock from being spoiled, and preserved any kind of a record for eggs. We must admit that farm conditions must be fairly met, without too much fussiness. But, we may as well apprehend first as last that old and young in very large lots all together cannot thrive and give the highest records. I do not like to put *any* young birds with old until at least a year old. And ducks often injure each other by crowding, because they go into panics so easily, when frightened.

Mr. Robinson has said in his book of general reference: "A flock of grown ducks will not eat more than an equal number of average chickens, NOR DOES IT REQUIRE MORE FOOD TO GROW A DUCK THAN IT DOES TO GROW A CHICKEN OF THE SAME WEIGHT." He also says: "In most places, poultrymen growing both chickens and ducks *will usually*

find the latter more profitable as long as their home market is not overstocked."

This was written of ducks in general, before the Indian Runner Duck had attracted any attention to speak of in this country. If true of other ducks, much more is it true of the Indian Runner. I will ask readers to note again the phrase "of the same weight." It is because ducks get size so very quickly that they eat so much while growing. And the reason so many fail to find ducks profitable is that their own bad management cheats them out of the profit the ducks made for them in ten weeks, by keeping them on to eat for weeks or months longer, after their period of most rapid growth is over! Please note this, as *it is the vital point for those who would sell duck meat.*

A young duck does gobble large quantities of food; but it grows in proportion, so fast that we may say, on occasion, that we "can see it grow." That is, day after to-morrow, it will look almost twice as large as it does to-day. A grower of Runners writes: "I never in all my experience with poultry saw anything grow like an Indian Runner Duckling. My ducklings are the curiosity of the neighborhood. At the age of five weeks, I haven't a duckling that weighs less than a pound and a half. I have investigated rather exhaustively, and I can well afford to take the chance on making a market."

This letter was written the middle of June. A letter of later date said that certain ducklings of this worker were seven weeks old, and a lot of Barred Rock chicks three days younger. On weighing and comparing, he found every duck weighing above two pounds, some a half pound above. The largest chick in the lot of about equal age weighed about three-quarters of a pound. His comment was: "I wish I had 700 ducklings at the present time; they would be good money, even as market fowls."

In order to be able to speak from personal knowledge, I myself weighed Runner ducklings, Columbian Wyandottes and

Embden geese. At 26 days old the White Runners weighed one pound each; the Columbians of similar age weighed four ounces, (one-fourth as much, notice!). Runners 60 days old weighed three pounds each; Columbians 41 days old, the nearest in age on hand, weighed less than a pound. The Embden weighed tipped the scales at five pounds, when just about one month old. I know of nothing else in the fowl line which grows so fast, especially considering that they are rather light eaters.

Water fowl will eat cheaper foods than will hens, so that the food question may, so to speak, be "dodged." There really isn't any food question, as between growing chicks and growing ducklings, when we consider the rapid gains made by the ducklings. If there were, it would be in favor of the ducks. The three vital companion questions, to the farm, are the feed question, the laying and the market. *The Runner will settle the first two if the farmer is good for the last. His salesmanship is the one thing to be called in question, in the case of the Indian Runners.*

W. W. Henry, a Virginia farmer, says: "I can give my testimony as to its being entirely practical to handle a few ducks with hens, where all are on good range, and to feed all alike on a grain ration and get good results. I have seen Indian Runner ducks up at night to feed with hens, and gone in the morning before they were fed, yet lay splendidly from the middle of January to August; but, there was fine range and only about six ducks. My birds commenced to lay on oats alone in October of this year (1911). I have always had them with hens and now have some 46 ducks and about 200 hens and pullets. I get about 35 eggs a day, and half of their feed is grain (oats and corn). The authorities say the duck is not adapted to grain feeding, but I never feed anything else in the November laying season. After I have fed mash to young birds till they have good size, I then feed grain.

alone. I have done this because it was convenient and not because I thought it best, yet my birds do well in open weather.

"This ought to be a good thing for average farmers to know. I have only some seventy ducks, young and old (not counting drakes). I could not raise what I wished on account of the great demand for eggs." Mr. Henry is a general farmer, without help, and handles his ducks so that they may be as little trouble as possible, consistent with thrift and profit. He handles the penciled birds, and refused more egg orders than he filled in 1911, if I remember correctly the words of a previous letter.

Of one young farmer, the beloved T. B. Terry wrote publicly: "I know him to be straight and true, a pusher, too." Speaking of the young man's selling \$1000 worth of eggs during a year, shipping under lock and key, Mr. Terry added, "And our friend cannot begin to supply the demand," referred to the incredible price received, and went on to tell of his putting in Indian Runners (the penciled kind, as I chance to know). The first season, he hatched 89 ducklings from 120 eggs, by machine, and raised all but three. "All this was the result of extreme care, of course," adds Mr. Terry. The name of the young man is C. K. Vanderbilt. I visited his place in 1911, saw his fine large flock of Penciled Runners, his commission receipts, etc. I do not think he has had any exceptional opportunity, *except what clever business forecasting and systematic work may give*. Mr. Vanderbilt sent two dozen of his eggs from the Penciled Runners to the publishers of "Poultry Success." After testing these, they reported: "In eating the Indian Runner Duck eggs one cannot find any difference in flavor from hens' eggs. The duck eggs do not have that strong flavor and taste, like the Pekin eggs do. The yolk is fine-grained and smoother; the albumen is firmer in texture than hens' eggs, and it really takes an expert to tell the difference when eating them."

Mr. Vanderbilt says: "In all my experience with poultry

(some 18 years), I have enjoyed the work most during the past two years, as I have been raising the Indian Runner ducks. They have turned out to be the Farmers' Best Egg Machine. They can stand more real hardship than any other fowls, requiring only a good dry place to stay in at night, and in winter weather. Our Runners are the English-bred, dark fawn and white type, or as some term them, the Penciled Runners; but they lay the large pearly white eggs, and that is what suits the average farmer of today. I have given my neighbor farmers the eggs to test for eating, and they all went wild over them. What was the result? Why they have them on their farms today producing such eggs as I showed them. One farmer's wife drove nine miles to our place. After seeing the fine large white eggs from our Penciled Runners she took home 100 eggs to put in an incubator.

"I find that the eggs hatch well in incubators, but if you want to get real big hatches, use Plymouth Rock hens. We keep quite a number for that purpose. When our ducks began to lay a year ago in January, we sent what accumulated, with our hens' eggs, to the New York City market, and received several cents more per dozen than for the hens' eggs. But when the breeding season commenced, we did some advertising, and could not keep up with the orders that came in for the eggs. Later in the season, we sold all the baby ducklings we could hatch till September. We sent them west as far as Illinois, and south as far as Virginia.

"My experience in raising them is that they do not require the feed and labor that hens need. The best method of brooding them is with hens; I put 10 to 15 ducklings with each hen in a common slatted box like a southern berry crate without a bottom, and put a piece of prepared roofing over the top, back and ends to keep out wind and rain. I move this every other day, putting up a board in front of them at night to keep out skunks, weasels or other animals that might molest them. In this way, I can

raise 90 per cent of all I hatch. Brooders are all right, but for the average farmer, the hens are best. I have raised them both ways and know. The simplest and best feed for the ducklings is bread soaked in milk, squeezed quite dry and crumbled on a clean board by the coops, for the first week; then I feed four parts by measure of bran, one part of corn meal, one part of middlings, with a little sand mixed in. Feed this mixture moistened for about a week, then add 5 per cent of beef scraps, and continue this for six or eight weeks, giving them a grass pasture.

"For water fountains, I use the inverted gallon cans on saucers; they are simple and easy to keep clean. It is not necessary to have running water. A sunken basin made of cement in the ground makes an excellent place for them to take a bath, for they do enjoy it.

"Much has been said about care and feeding of the Indian Runner ducks, but let me say right here that it is the product from the Runners that gives them value to the open-eyed farmer. Their eggs are larger than and just as white as the Leghorn eggs, and a basketful of Runner eggs taken into a city or country town will more than take the eyes of people who are lovers of eggs. My own experience proved this true, for my wife took several dozen to have a photo made from them, and they were all sold before she was out of the photo gallery, at an advanced price over the highest market price of hens' eggs, and orders followed her home for more of the eggs.

"Every good sound-minded farmer knows that anything fancy is out of the farmers' line; what they want is practical results. They want something in return for their money. My advice, as a farmer, to all farmer friends when buying eggs or stock is to get the real true Indian Runner, and not mere 'fancy stock,' unless you want to attend the shows and take in 50-cent premiums. Compare this with a basketful of nice large white eggs that will put smiles on all that see them and want them.

"Now to give real facts concerning the Runners. Although breeders advertise them as 'Great Money Makers,' don't for a minute think that the Runners are going to do it all themselves. You may think just buying some, taking them home, letting them out and giving them the run that they are going to have, will make you rich. Not a bit of it! Any more than a good Jersey cow will on poor pasture! You must feed that cow first before you expect to get much returns; so with the Runner duck. Give her half a chance! She is built to produce something. She will hold her end as a forager and make her own living anyway; but just give her *real feed, and she will keep you carrying baskets of eggs every morning almost the year 'round* if you have a large flock. Our correspondence shows that all are satisfied who have tried the white-egg strain of Runners, English type.

"We grow Alfalfa by the ton, and have equipped the feeding room in our poultry house with a gasoline engine and Alfalfa cutter that cuts the hay into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch lengths. We mix this in all our mash for the poultry and we *know that it saves 40 per cent of our feed bills with the Runners*. Too much cannot be said concerning Alfalfa for ducks and poultry. The Cornell University people sent me their feeding ration for breeding stock, and I tried it, thoroughly, for months. It is a good one: 70 pounds corn meal, 15 pounds bran, 10 pounds middlings, 15 pounds whole oats, 25 pounds wheat and 15 pounds meat scrap. Give them a moist mash of this in the morning, and let them run on grass range or the Alfalfa field. Give them a little corn and wheat at night. I never failed to get lots of eggs, and hatchable eggs, too."

On a New Hampshire farm, one clever grower with initiative to find new ways of making the Runners profitable to him, wrote me of this "dodge": "I find ducks valuable for two reasons not mentioned in the papers. I use the Cornell (Agricultural College) 'A' brooder, 8x8 feet, *without the heat*, and I put

in a few young ducks with my chicks. The houses are as free from lice as a parlor, with no more attention from me, and the chicks are the best I ever raised, none naked or droopy. Before having ducks, I lost many by hawks. Now, I keep all in a covered run until the first ducks get their voices, then I let them all go, and hawks are seen no more." ~|

Manifestly, this is intended to show that the noise of the ducks keeps the hawks off. Some may put this with the stories of the Indian Runners being so very quiet, and wonder whether "two and two make four," as of old! They do, even as of old. The ducks *are very quiet, unless there is reason to make a noise*, in which case, they can "raise the roof." For this, I am often devoutly thankful, as is many another living in or near town and factory conditions. If the ducks go to bed hungry look out for your slumber! You won't be allowed to take it. And if there is danger, shown by noise and commotion generally, take your cue and find out why—and, do it quickly!

One letter, from an inquirer not at all familiar with the Indian Runner, asks, "Are they hardy?" The descriptive adjective "hardy," usually appears in any recital of the virtues of these ducks, but no one has enlarged upon it, to my knowledge. When people ask such a question as this, I immediately wonder what they mean by "hardy." Able to endure shameful neglect? Able to withstand snow? Cutting winds? Dampness? Extreme cold? What is "extreme"? We have the light winters of the south, and the 40-degrees-below-zero of the northwest. Which of these is the fair test? Or is it a point in between? I can testify to the limit of six below zero. I have seen Indian Runners, just maturing, running in the open, in December's bitter days, with not a bit of shelter but some small coops, which they ignored. The yards were strongly wind-swept, and the birds were out all night as well as all day. They sat on their feet, and hid their heads in their ruffs, when it was coldest, and

especially during cutting winds. No one with any experience with fowls would expect eggs under such conditions, of course. But the ducks were doing well enough otherwise, and happy as larks, even on the snow, as soon as it began to thaw. I judge them to be hardier in some respects than any breed of hens I have had experience with—and that is a **great many**. “They do not require any shelter after they are grown,” is the testimony of another breeder. Nevertheless, all who expect to get eggs at the north in the colder months must provide shelter, and see that the birds do not stay much in cutting wind. *Too close* shelter is not desirable, especially for breeding stock.

All poultry yards, whether for hens or other birds, should have shelter on the sides toward the prevailing winds; this is only common-sense. Hedging, shrubbery, low-branching trees, farm buildings—any of these may afford the shelter needed. I think there is no doubt that the Runners would prefer a shelter consisting only of a roof, with thickly-branched shrubs for one or two sides; for they are very suspicious, and are ~~much~~ wilder when enclosed than when free to go about. Whether this would be warm enough to permit laying, I am not sure; think it doubtful, at least in the three worst months. The breeders who report that their birds lay “remarkably well” during the winter do not house them on the hither side of an iceberg; though even that would be more comfortable, it may be, than an open sweep of cutting winds. Think a minute! Even in your dwellings, unless very warmly built, a keen gale will make 40 degrees difference, next the windward side. How much more bitter will it be outside!

One needs to handle Runners for some time, and learn their typical carriage and their habits of behavior at different periods of growth not only, but at different stages, in order to criticise them fairly. Probably it has occurred to very few that it is almost impossible for a laying bird to hold her typical carriage and form.

There is abundant reason for this, with the Runners. A single I. Runner egg ready for exclusion, is likely to weigh three ounces, and the ducks are quite reasonably likely to lay six days out of seven, during at least a portion of the year. Prof. James E. Rice, by experiment, found that a color-fed hen deposited some fourteen layers in the formation of an egg, showing that *this* egg had been fourteen days in growing from the pin-head ovule to the two-ounce product of average exclusion. If we might suppose a duck to be 14 days in growing an egg, from the beginning to its readiness for exclusion and laying six eggs in a week, she must be carrying within her narrow body, at one time, twelve eggs, of diminishing sizes from the three-ounce finished product, to the tiny, but enlarging ovule of the egg cluster. It is, of course, impossible to conceive that such a weight of eggs, as Runners actually carry should not change both the shape and the carriage of the female for the time being. Thus it comes about that we have to speak of these birds as in "exhibition form" and "laying form," while there is still another period of nearly half a year, during which they eat so much that they appear rather logy and loose feathered, and assume the carriage of maturity only at intervals. This is during their growth toward maturity, and we need for this period a third term, such as "growing form," to describe them then.

In my experience, no fowl ever sent out has given such good, general satisfaction as the type of penciled Runners now bred in this country. Nearly all the letters of acknowledgement which I receive, as well as those which other breeders have shown me, express the greatest satisfaction with the average birds. A short time ago, I saw one which read thus: "I have never received anything by express which gave me so much satisfaction and delight as the coop of Indian Runners you sent me." These were the average run of low priced birds. I have never

known any breed which seemed to possess so much of interest for its breeders, whether they were, or were not, finished fanciers.

But, there is much more to the question of true type in Indian Runners than has yet appeared in our survey. More and more, as the years pass, are fanciers falling into line on the declaration that no breed can survive long and prosper, even as a fancy fowl, unless it is first a capital utility or farm fowl. This may be called, I think, a foundation tenet of The Fancy at the present time. Few advertisers permit themselves to put forth any claims to trade without supporting them strongly with testimony and assertion as to the superior utility value of their breed, and especially of their particular strain of that breed.

It goes without saying, almost, that the Indian Runner, being a champion layer and a prolific breeder, will soon cease to be of much use to The Fancy, through sheer over-production, unless the farmers awake very widely to its value. The Indian Runner must become—and that very soon—the farmer's duck.

ABOVE, "PRIDE"; Middle, CUMBERLAND FAIRY FAWNS; BELOW, WHITE RUNNERS OF 1912 HATCH, PHOTOGRAPHED JUNE 1913.

UPPER GROUP, WHITE RUNNERS OF 1912, AT EIGHT WEEKS; LOWER GROUP, AT SEVEN WEEKS; MIDDLE, THE PEN WHICH PRODUCED THEM.

New Farm Experiences With Runners

CHAPTER VIII.

Since the farm experiences with the Runner will settle, in the end, the fate of the Runner Duck, I have been especially on the watch for the work of the Runners on the farms of the country. Most of the letters I get come from strangers, in one or two cases those given are from farm workers whose experience I have been watching with interest. I have spoken in another place of the farmer who raised them for four years simply as layers, and who later added the fancy egg line to his business, and who still swears by the Runner as an especially good farm money-maker. He urges the keeping of not less than 75 layers, after the experimenter has learned the handling.

I was interested in the experience of a writer for one of the most luxurious country life periodicals in America. He told me that the publishers wanted to run the literature especially along the fancy line; while he could not quite agree. He said emphatically that for the average worker, there was more money in raising either hens or ducks as utility layers than as fancy stock to be sold through advertising. He has raised both hens and ducks for years, and this is his word from experience. He argues that low priced fancy eggs sold through advertising cannot pay expenses; hence a man needs either to be a "high-brow fancier" or else to stick to the table egg proposition. Many a farmer who has taken a fly on eggs-for-hatching as a money-making business for a side line, can echo this most emphatically.

I copy a letter received in late summer, 1912, for the sake of showing just what the beginner runs into, unless he is a good

salesman. "I bought eggs last June of —— as she claimed to have a 240-egg laying strain of ducks. I got three ducks and a good many drakes from the hatch. Since the three started to lay, they have laid up to 331 eggs, [showing that this "240-egg strain" of American Standard ducks did not equal the good work of average English Penciled, at least in one instance. V.] In regard to the eggs, I find that the grocers do not care to buy them here. What do you think is the best way to dispose of the eggs? Spring ducks are bringing 12 cents a pound here. I will have a good many young drakes on my hands pretty soon. I don't think I have enough to pay to advertise this year, so will have to sell them as spring ducks. I have thought it would pay me to have a copy of your book; that is, if I continue in the business, but if I don't find a sale for my stock and eggs, I would be to an expense for nothing. I advertised my eggs for setting in the spring, but people don't seem to be interested here, as I only sold three settings at \$2.00 per."

This letter is rather characteristic. Seventy-five cents is too much to pay for all the information needed, so the writer *asks it* of a busy stranger after he has bought his eggs from another! He is not satisfied to get his money back the first year, and considers utility sales not worth his while. This raiser lives in the mid-west, right next door to the women who are telling how many thousands of dollars a year they make from these same Runners. He can raise his ducks to selling age as green or "spring" ducks for less than twenty cents each. It hardly costs 25 cents even in the east, where the price of feed is greatly increased because of transportation. If his spring market ducks weighed $3\frac{1}{2}$ pounds, they would bring him 42 cents each; if four pounds, 48 cents each. There isn't a legitimate business in New York or Chicago or any other big city, that would not be ready to shout for joy if it could turn its money over in four months at 100% to 140% profit, even including cost of labor; which is, on

most farms, worth almost nothing in money, unless operations grow large enough to take the time of a man. Yet my correspondent is so dissatisfied that he considers going out of ducks because *only this profit* will be open to him if he does not make a success of the fancy eggs-for-hatching line!

A letter sent to the Secretary of the Cumberland Club reads in part as follows: "I am now living on a small place just outside of the city, but am going to move on to a 50-acre farm that I own, and expect to raise these ducks on a large scale, and shall then advertise. There is a large demand for ducks' eggs in the market here at a good price. I am now (Jan., 1913) getting 45 cents a dozen for them. I believe there is a great future for these ducks, and that they will be money-makers for anyone that understands the raising and care of ducks: They are so easily raised and so hardy. And I find that after they get their growth they are small eaters—not much like the Pekins.

"I am going to try and raise 500 layers for another year, and shall set what eggs I have this year except what I have sale for here. My ducks are doing fine: I have one pen of 17 that was hatched out June 5th that commenced to lay the first of November and I am now getting from 11 to 15 eggs from them every day. Another pen of 25 that was hatched out July 20th, I get from eight to twelve eggs from. One of these laid when she was four months and 14 days old. I think that was pretty good." This letter is from the state of Delaware. It was not written for effect, but speaks the man's own winter experience and plans.

A letter received by me from a stranger in August, 1912, says: "Rest assured I appreciate the manner in which you uphold the original Standard bird in preference to the new-made white and fawn so-called Indian Runner. I had these and they were a failure with me, not alone in the quantity of eggs they gave me as against an equal number of pencils, but also in the quality of the product, as my fawn and white [American Stand-

ard] were always going back to the green egg and did not lay within 10 per cent of the amount of eggs as my pencils; the latter giving me daily exclusively pure white eggs. Need I tell you how quickly I made away with the fawn and white and now breed my pencils only; and never again any other kind!

"I have thirty laying ducks now and in June last they gave me 752 eggs; July 746, and so far this month—23 days—414 eggs but it must be taken into consideration that they are now in their heavy moult. I can sell all my penciled eggs I can get, so much so that I have raised this summer only 72 birds. Give me as a standard the duck that produces and not the one that has plumage and that is all." This letter is from Georgia.

A farmer-fancier farther north wrote me in July, 1912: "Last spring a man had a drake given him, then he wanted some of my ducks. I would only spare one, a yearling. He writes that in the 92 days he has had her, she laid 93 eggs, laying two eggs June 10. All her eggs hatched but three infertiles and two dead in shell. He liked her so well he went to — and paid \$5.00 each for a few, sold enough hatching eggs to pay for them and some over, and has 195 youngsters growing well and is perfectly delighted with them. How is that for a beginner?" This was in the middle states, with the penciled ducks.

In 1910 a Virginia farmer bought birds of me, regular Cumberland or English Penciled stock; he having then had the fawn and white some years, but wishing to throw them out on account of the green eggs. I have tried to keep a little tab on what he was doing each year since. He has had a trade in eggs for hatching which hardly left him enough eggs for himself. In order to get an idea of how the ducks were doing year after year in the hands of a general farmer treating them as a side issue, I wrote him early in January, 1913. His reply was: "As to records, I don't keep very careful ones, but have a pretty accurate one for the past fall months. My 60 old ducks (seven of them

bought of you) commenced to lay about middle of September. About that time, I left for a three weeks' trip, and for want of beef scrap, in my absence they quit. I got them going again about the end of October, my first recorded sale being 24th Oct., and by Jan. 1, they laid a little over 2100 eggs, or say 35 apiece. These eggs sold practically in Washington market for same price as hens' eggs, and I received just about \$1.00 per duck. At this date (Jan. 17) I get some 10 eggs from 60 old ducks. My 30 young ducks started about a month ago, and I get now some 18 eggs a day. Now, mind you, I don't feed as I should for winter eggs. My young ducks are in about an acre lot and get only the green food there along the stream. I have supplied none in their feed and sowed none for them, such as rye, etc. The old flock is supposed to be on range, but as a matter of fact don't range much and they too only get what they find, in green food. I have had the Runners since summer of 1907. They have always laid for me until stopped by very severe weather in winter, say up to 15th of Jan., and start again about 15th Feb. And then too, when their eggs freeze and green food gets scarce I don't trouble myself to encourage laying, as I fear if they laid too well in winter I would not get eggs for my trade. You see, I have kept hens and ducks together for now some six years, and expect I have more experience than almost any one you could find in handling, in what you might call a farmer's way, the Indian Runner. *There is absolutely no question that she is a farmers' bird.* As far as eggs go, a dozen Leghorns and as many Runners would give the average family more than they could use, and they settle the problem of fall eggs. They certainly will lay most of the winter in this section."

While this report is not so surprising in numbers produced as some have been, it is the one report which I value most among all that have come to me. Its writer is a man of unusual integrity of conscience and of performance, and he has kept hens and

ducks together for a sustained period under conditions available to the average person. I think the sixty old ducks include most of the 45 which the owner reported having in 1911. Seven of them I know are at least four years old. I submit that no fairer report on what the good Runner will do in average hands and on the farm can be made. I have had much higher reports: a recent letter from Tenn. says: "I have 50 thoroughbred ducks. Last winter they averaged 48 eggs a day the winter through and all the loveliest pure white eggs. I had but one American-bred duck, and she laid a pale green egg." This duck was bought at a good price, from one of the most prominent breeders of American Standard birds. An exceptional report like this is of nowhere near the value of the other, *just because it is exceptional*.

Mr. Ferrier says: "I have raised them [the Runner] for market when few dealers knew what an Indian Runner was. My experience covers eight years." With this experience behind him, he writes: "Most farms could keep 200 or more ducks and they would bring in more real money than many of the cows kept, with less labor and cheaper outfit, but like any other business it must be learned. It requires the brains and business methods that are essential to the success of any enterprise, but grow in, don't jump in." Concerning his own place he says it is a natural home for the breeding of ducks, but "We have no fancy place for them; no expensive buildings." Yet the birds are fine and thrive, very greatly to the benefit of the owner's pocket.

While preparing this edition, I wrote Mr. Ferrier asking him to write to a breeder mentioned in "The Worst", who, because he cannot get eggs in winter, believes that no one does. Mr. Ferrier's reply to my letter was received a day before going to press. He said, in part: "That man on the coast has either a great strain of Leghorns or a lot of misfit Runners. I was in Canada last winter and had duck eggs (to eat) all the time I was there. I had shipped the eggs in April, 6 were broken, 21

hatched, 19 were raised, all from 30 eggs. They told me there that they had been getting eggs all winter; some days only one or two, but the 11 ducks gave them more eggs than 40 hens, from November up to time of my visit. Maybe Runners aren't getting a boom there!

"A man in Maine wrote me last week that his ducks started in November and kept at it fairly well all the time. Things like this, that come straight, prove that the Runners *will make good anywhere*. I am sending stock this fall to Alta, Canadian N. W. This man heard of some of my stock at Western Harbor, Maine, and the report must have been favorable or he would not risk paying express all that distance and then drive 55 miles to get them.

"Twenty-two cents per dozen is the lowest I ever got for duck eggs in New York; that happened in July, 1910, and last week. Price has been pretty steady 27 cents and 28 cents since Easter till now (May). Thirty cents is a safe average, but if production is good from Oct. 15 to Dec. this average can be raised. My accounts have showed a little less than two dollars for feed, but am safe in saying that on most farms, with a good strain and proper feed and care, they can be so handled that eggs will cost only one cent each to produce, on a basis of fifteen dozen a year. Eighteen or twenty dozen reduces even this. At the present time, I am feeding 65 birds for less than 45 cents per day, and buy all feed. You cannot produce as many eggs as I am getting, for the same feed costs, with hens, as you would require so many more hens. This point seems to be overlooked by most writers. It costs as much to keep any of the larger breeds of hens as it does a duck. It seems to me the only fair way is to figure on egg-cost. How many eggs are produced for 1 cent each? Not many."

Speaking of the latest claim to an extreme record, he says: "I think it's foolish to tell such yarns, even if true. It's poor bus-

iness to disappoint people who express their faith in you by trusting their money and hope to you. She will never *sell* a kind that will do that, and she knows it! Last year, I intended to buy some ducklings from Mrs.——. When I got her circular telling about some of her ducks laying two eggs a day, that spoiled her chance to get my order. Poor thing! She knew no better. I know that if you feed so much meat they will do it, but not long; nor will the eggs hatch well. It's like whipping a free horse."

Mr. Ferrier makes one point which I have not seen brought out. He says: "I know, as any breeder ought to know, that to breed to fawn heads means deterioration. Sow-headed boars are no good; any old farmer knows that. A cow with a male head is never a good cow. Sex should always be distinctive. A drake that looks like a duck cannot be and is not as good a bird as one that shows his sex in color markings and movements."

Speaking of the Walton Cumberland stock, he says: "They don't mature quite so quick, but will weigh better for market, especially the drakes. I do like the drakes—I have one 33 inches long. I like the long bodies and general shape. When my son gets out of the navy, we propose to keep 2000 layers. He is an expert and likes ducks, but I felt he was too young to settle down, so he went in the navy. He was home the other day, and said he liked it, but I was taking off a hatch and he said they made him homesick. There is nothing so pretty as a nice bunch of baby Runners—nothing! I feel we are all in the kindergarten class yet. These birds have a great future. Exaggeration and the exploiters may check their progress some, but cannot stop them."

Wm. H. Hammond, Mass., tells of experiences of himself and a neighbor to whom he gave a sitting of eggs. The neighbor had a duck beginning to lay August 18, laying 127 eggs before severest weather, 70 of them in 70 days. With her, later were

placed others, to make nine. These began laying for spring in February. From then till Aug. 22 they laid 920, an average of 102 plus in about six months. He comments: "You see, if this first duck did her part, she has rubbed the 250 mark pretty close." Again, he says: "As I have not seen our way of feeding in any book, it may interest you. Mrs. D and myself have always fed everything dry. I take, when first hatched, 2 quarts shorts, 2 corn meal, 2 flour middlings, 2 Dow's chick feed, 1 of sand. Mix well, put in a dish and let them help themselves at all times. In two or three weeks I drop out the chick feed and add 1 of beef scrap or bone meal. Later, I drop out the corn meal and put in about 4 of cracked corn. For layers, I put two of beef scrap or bone meal, and add cut clover, fed dry, with plenty of water close by. I think it a great improvement over wet mash as it will not sour or freeze.

"My last hatch was 76. I put them all in one brooder and it has been very hot and dry since they were hatched, until three weeks ago. When they were five weeks old, I caught ten and the weight was 1 1-4 pound each. I think there was 40 that would go 1 1-4 pound each. They are seven weeks old today and I have 73 of them. Not bad, is it?" Such is Mr. Hammond's faith in the Runner and desire to have the best that he says: "I intend to have the three varieties until I find out which do the best with me, and then I want only white eggs. I think the green just as good, but as long as the trade think different, we must bend to their whims." Here is a plain man who is thinking things out for himself and we do not find him complaining about the Runners not doing their part.

The two objections I have heard to dry mash are that much is likely to be wasted, and that the ducks are more inclined to get choked. With water privilege, I think the last might not count. Personally, I do not urge those who have not range and water privilege to rush into Runners; although they thrive splendidly

with only supplied water, under the right handling. But to supply water adds greatly to the necessary work, and the yards are fouled much more than when there is a stream to carry everything foul away.

Feeding Methods Safe for All

CHAPTER IX

There is a knack about the handling of ducks which has to be learned. It is fortunate that it can be learned quite readily from the literature. Much of it lies in knowing just where ducks differ from hens, in their requirements. The love of ducks for the water is well known, and the very fact that they fall in the "Water Fowl" class affirms it.

Still, it is very difficult to some to realize that ducks always need drinking water before they need feed; and, on the other hand, it is difficult to realize that ducks can be raised virtually as land birds, with no water but that which a tub may hold; and that, if they have good grass range, they will not seem to suffer material *immediate* deterioration. It is, of course, much harder work to raise yarded ducks without running water, since they love to play in water, will waste much that is provided for them, and cannot be neglected in this matter. If they are without drinking water a single half hour, they become uneasy, noisy, and obtrusive of their sufferings. In small quarters, ducks are said to be, in general, the most easily managed of all domestic fowls; (some say, the most profitable, also.) I saw an instance of this. as far as it relates to housing, which was a revelation as to the easy adaptability of ducks to the conditions which they must needs meet. The duck shelter to which I refer was just a one-room, dirt-floor, double-pitch arrangement, the upper half of the usual siding being replaced by wire netting. The floor measurement may have been ten by twelve feet. Through the center, lengthwise, nearly the whole length, ran an alley. At one

end and on the sides of this alley, were, I think, seven pens for ducks. The cat was not there to be "swung," but I am sure there was not room in any one of these divisions. Yet, the ducks seemed to be doing well enough. The matter that saved the situation was that the shelter stood at the head of a steep slope, and there was running water at the bottom to which the mature birds had continual access. Such confined quarters ("sevenths," rather) are not to be advised; but the story shows how especial good conditions in one direction may offset, when necessary, some neglect or lack in another.

Duck houses are of the simplest construction, and about the only need is a roof with three or four walls, and some rather deep, clean litter. Many times, they prefer to sit out, entirely exposed to the weather. But this is a matter which affects their breeding value much, in some seasons. A valuable breeding bird requires comfort, and if she have not a comfortable shelter and warm litter, many of her eggs will be wasted through chilling, during the early part of the year. One should not forget that, although ducks are water fowl, they need dry shelters and drained soil, at least near their sleeping place. I have seen ordinary puddle ducks, probably once kin to the Rouen aristocracy, sit all night in the dead of winter on a pond, just where it was fed from a living spring. But these ducks were not expected to lay until March.

The foregoing remarks indicate the general handling which goes to the making of a vigorous breeder, or a vigorous layer. The market duck is handled differently while growing, especially in the matter of feed. The very sweeping statement has been made that there is only one duck for profit, as that one is so far superior to all the others. But this statement was penned a dozen years ago, when the very name of Indian Runner was practically unknown in this country. More recently, an extensive grower of the big, market ducks has told me that, in his opinion,

there would never be any market for the Indian Runner. Fortunately growers of Indian Runners are disproving this to some extent, although at the present writing, these ducks are unknown to the majority, probably, of city commission men. Indeed, in New York City itself, I have found few firms familiar with the Indian Runner by name. The author of "Poultry Craft" says that *exclusive* duck farming can be made profitable only near a large city, where there is a good demand for ducks; a few ducks, he admits, can be grown profitably almost anywhere. The same author says that, on large plants, the estimated cost of growing is up to eight cents a pound, and that special duck farmers would soon have to go out of business through the very fouling of the soil, and its consequent unhealthfulness, did they not use the latter part of the summer season in making it sanitary through the use of growing crops.

Fortunately, the Indian Runner can make good so fully in a single, special line,—that of egg production the year around,—that we scarcely need to listen to the market men, no matter what they have to say about real, market ducks. The Runner breeders will have only to dispose of their worn-out layers. And, the Runners lay well until several years old, according to testimony.

The feed, then, will not usually be that of the market duck, but that of the breeder and layer. One part green food to two parts grain mixture largely in mash is the general rule to produce a well-framed duck. All will be fed on this basis till, possibly eight weeks old. After this, the market duck needs more corn in some form. The stock to be grown on is kept on about the same ration right along till it is time for laying to begin. It is understood that meat is always fed after the ducklings are a few days or a week old, the amount being increased as the birds get larger. Ten per cent is about the average given to the ducks well started, which is sometimes increased to twelve per cent just before fattening time, if they are to go to market.

As to substituting milk for meat, a very successful feeder tells me that he regards bone as more essential than meat. Milk is safer than meat, because meat is so uneven in quality and often poor, but he would use bone in connection with milk. I regard this as an extremely valuable suggestion.

If a single article of food were to be mentioned as of more value to duck breeders than any other, doubtless it would be bran. Bran, however, differs, in these times, from the older mill product, and modern brans are not all alike. I wish to impress especially the need of securing a good grade of feeding stuffs for ducks. Tainted meat, or moldy ground stuff will work quick havoc with ducklings, at almost any age. Some time ago, a correspondent wrote to inquire what could be done for the ducklings, which had suddenly begun to die by the score and almost by the hundred. Every possible point of failure was canvassed, but handling seemed to be correct upon all, till we came to the question of spoiled food. Then it came out that a mill which had been relied upon, was putting out a product made from grains that had virtually become rotted in the fields.

Ducks have a desirable quality in the fact that they will not eat when really sick, and thus they have some chance to recover. The universal testimony is that a duck well-hatched is as good as raised, after one gets the knack, and the chief difficulty in raising ducks inheres in their greedy desire to gorge themselves, combined with neglect, by their owner, to make sure that they always have water to help them at this weak point. Dry feed *and withheld water* are the duck's worst *combination* foe. Considerable can be done to ward off trouble by soaking the cracked corn which is used, for an hour or so before feeding it. (The only point to watch out against is letting it ferment in extreme warm weather.) Being then swollen before it is eaten, it will not make trouble by swelling after being eaten. The duck has no crop proper, like the hen. The feed is passed into the stomach, and thence

through the other organs of digestion. The duckling eats eagerly and often. This is, no doubt, the chief reason why it does not do to use too much hard, dry grain, or to omit water at any time. We have found much satisfaction in feeding stale bread soaked in milk, in connection with bran, for the first few weeks. Cracked corn is used for one meal a day, and clover, cut sweet-corn stalks, grass, rape, weeds, cabbage, beet pulp and other things that may be handy, help out the growers who may not have grass range.

The matter of shade is one which must never be overlooked. I have seen, on farms where there was abundance of delightful shade, both duck and chicken coops located out in the open, under a broiling July or August sun. At the same time, the shallow water dishes were entirely dry, it might be for hours. Such ducks and chickens are pre-destined to die of mysterious (?) causes, and none can ward this off till shade and water become a part of the constant conditions under which they grow. Ducks are very sensitive to the heat of summer suns, and I have seen even the less sensitive chickens thrown into convulsions or limberneck during the awful heat of midsummer conditions without shade. The best of things can, however, be overdone. The *one safe way is to make both shade and sunshine free to the younglings*, and let them choose for themselves which they will take at any one time. It is not necessary, as one breeder did, when told to provide shade, to coop the ducks so that they could not get from under the dense shade of an overhead grape arbor. Even summer days vary much, and summer nights become as cold as autumn, at times. I have worn mittens on the fourth of July, and even then suffered with the cold, in New York state. An exception, of course, but one never knows when an exception may arise. Forethought is one's best defence, and must be a continual part of the poultryman's panoply.

It is altogether better to feed and water outside the shelters, except under very unusual conditions. All who keep ducks un-

der conditions which require yarding, make much use of small grit, and many use charcoal also, at least, occasionally. Charcoal is especially good in the case of trouble with indigestion. But, inasmuch as the old saw about locking the barn after the horse is stolen applies with great force to ducks, the wise duck grower studies his conditions carefully, and so plans as to render impossible, those things which are likely to make trouble in the duck yard.

One careful grower known to me who would by no means be caught napping about anything in the regular preventive line, has lost a large bunch of ducks through hunters; another, through the ducklings having eaten rose beetles.

The sexes are usually about equally represented in the young stock. Occasionally, a freakish hatch may be very unequal. One buyer, in 1910, reported one duck and nine drakes raised from one setting of eggs; while another, more under fortune's care, apparently, reports, on the very morning when I am writing this chapter, three drakes to nine ducks.

One breeder suggests that real beginners could more easily enter upon poultry culture with Indian Runners than with any variety of hens, because they "would meet with but few of the vexing problems and setbacks that would fall to their lot if they tackled chickens." The first requisite in handling, he says, is to get pure-bred Runners, "free from crossing with Pekin and other ducks."

To speak definitely of our own experience, I may say that we have hatched and raised our Runners entirely with hens. Early in the season, I give not more than nine eggs to a hen. This is equal to 13 hens' eggs. A nest with a sod or earth bottom is best. The eggs are supposed to hatch in 28 days, but I have had a brood all out and in the coop before the end of the 28th day. The ducklings require little feed the first day or two. I do not try to feed them till they begin to look for it, for they do not

need it earlier. They should have water in a narrow, shallow dish so that they cannot get wet in it, and this means refilling it often. The first feed is stale bread soaked in sweet milk. If I couldn't get this, I think, from my present knowledge, I might feed Spratt's Duck feed, just at first. After a very few days, I add to the soaked bread a little bran and middlings, a little ground corn and oats with the hulls sifted out, and some clean sand or fine grit. Just as soon as they will eat it, I work in succulent feed in the way of chopped cabbage, lettuce, rape or similar greens. If the green juicy stuff is not available, scalded cut clover is excellent. But something of this character is imperative for ducks, unless they have abundant good pasturage. I feed five times daily for the first few weeks, and mix in a little sand once daily. *At least* one feed is of green stuff for yarded birds. After a few days, I add a little good beef scrap; the less milk the more scrap. Don't use scrap that smells like fertilizer. And be sure all feed is sound and sweet. If the milk sours, I would make it into curds and mix with the other ingredients, and use a little more bran in proportion.

The ducklings are very sensitive to cold and wet for the first few days of their lives. They must have protection from storms till they are feathered. I have found them so nearly drowned by a sudden, hard shower that reviving them seemed hopeless. But quick drying and warming them by the kitchen range put renewed life into the chilled bodies, and they seemed none the worse for the wetting. Their recuperative powers seem to be great. They will reach the point where they do not need the hen sooner than will chicks. But they should always have some shelter to which they can retreat. An open shed seems to suit them admirably.

It was the theory of one member of the family that the ducks would not do well on commercial cut clover or clover meal. During the summer of 1912, in order to test this, we used clover

meal in the mash, for months in succession, with ducklings of all ages from three weeks upward.

These birds were not on range, so that one or two meals a day were always of sprouted oats, best liked when sprouts were about two inches long. Two measures of beet pulp and one and one-half measures of clover meal were placed in the feeding pail immediately after feeding. To these were added three measures of waste bread from a restaurant, and sweet milk enough to cover. When meal time came, four measures of clean bran, two of fine middlings, three of corn meal, or corn and oats ground together and one measure each of meat and clean, sharp sand were added, with sometimes a half measure of linseed meal. Sometimes a little charcoal was added. This was mixed with milk if available. If not, with milk and water, or water only, till it would just hold together well. If at any time the mass seemed too crumbly, more fine middlings would be added.

This feed produced fine fat ducklings which feathered well. They were fed always until the breasts began to round out smartly. No other test of "enough" is as good as this. Under this method of feeding, there was less indigestion than during the previous year when the clover meal had not been used. During the first week, the ducklings got little but bread soaked in sweet milk with sprouted oats. Later, dishes of dry bran were placed about for the benefit of any which might have been cheated of a rightful share of feed. Meat was increased about new-fledging time at ten weeks especially if milk supply were short. With range and milk, not much meat is necessary; none, where insects are plentiful.

A southern breeder starts the ducklings on rolled oats, dry, fed on sand, with water at hand. After a week or so, he puts them on cooked oatmeal and other stuff available, cooking the feed in the fireless cooker. He gives Epsom Salt in water once a week, as the Australian people did to their layers during one competition. Good success is reported.

HATCHING RUNNERS ARTIFICIALLY.

Hatching ducks with incubators has always been more difficult for most workers than the same processes with hens' eggs. At least half the Directors of the Cumberland Club, and probably more use incubators and brooders year after year, in handling the Runners. This indicates that success is possible, with the right care.

Mrs. Geo. W. Church, while admitting that it is a more difficult problem than hatching with hens, says that she gets good hatches and that those to whom she has given directions report excellent results. But she thinks many house cellars are too dark, damp and illy ventilated to give best results. The first move is thorough disinfection with a good modern disinfecting spray, such as zenoleum, after the machine is well warmed. The trays are at once filled and put in place while the machine is yet moist and filled with disinfectant fumes.

Temperature is kept at 103 degrees throughout the hatch. Especially during the first week, this point must not be exceeded. In case it gets too high, the doors are opened, trays pulled out a little, eggs cooled to 100; when the trays are replaced, doors closed and regulator adjusted. After 48 hours, the eggs are turned twice a day till they begin to pip. Each morning after they have been turned they are moistened thoroughly with a brush or cloth dipped in water at 110 degrees, and at once returned to the machine, no further turning or cooling being given. If the machine is in a dry room, the eggs are moistened also at night, after the 18th day.

Dead and infertile eggs are removed when found, tests being made on the 7th, 14th, and 21st days. Any giving off bad odors should be at once removed.

Ventilators are left wide open till the eggs begin to pip, and are then closed to one-fourth inch. With enough moisture, the

walls will be moist and the ducklings will soon be out after they begin to come, though they may be 48 hours from pipping to exclusion. Plenty of moisture and ventilation help to a good hatch. Some machines will not hatch duck eggs, it is said.

ARTIFICIAL BROODING.

Most brooders are a gamble for the handler at first, whether chicks or ducklings are to be raised, because so much good judgment has to be added to any instructions that may be given. To be sure that the heat is not below 100 in some part of the machine, that the birds can get away from the heat if it gets too high, and that there is abundance of fresh air without drafts are the three cardinal points in handling the brooder itself. For the first four or five days, ducklings must be watched closely to see that they do not get cast and chilled. They need something to coax them to exercise after a bit. They do not need urging to eat. They know best on this point, and will eat eagerly when the right time comes. Little and often, and not too liberally, must be the word, because the one difficulty with feeding ducks is indigestion.

The brooder should be located on a grass plot, as ducks need green feed quite as much as young chicks do. When this is scanty, sprouted oats will help out. Dry bread soaked in milk is best for a starter. Some use a chick feed with mostly wheat and corn, with grit. After a week the ducklings become very independent. Water, grit or sand and charcoal are all among the best helps to success. The charcoal is a sort of insurance against indigestion. We do not use it all the time, but if at any time, they get too heavy a meal, charcoal is added to the next one. Some keep charcoal before the birds all the time.

A shed-like house, situated on sloping land, usually open to the sun, but planned to close at night when necessary and having

good litter, about covers the real needs, as to shelter, for the breeding ducks, or the layers. At the south I would board only on the side of the prevailing wind.

Concerning the most deeply interesting point, as to how freely the Indian Runners will lay in the "off" season for hens' eggs, testimony varies so much as to convince me that it is quite a matter of handling.

The H— ducks lay during the moulting season, and on into the extreme cold months. The report is, 75 per cent of them laying by February 1. And that the (large) flock averaged 99 eggs per duck in 108 days; also, that the eggs laid during the five poorer months of the year will "more than pay all expenses of feed, shipping baskets, printing and advertising for the entire year."

Mrs. Brooks's birds lay during the moult (to a lesser extent than in spring, of course) and she ships eggs for hatching in November, the sparsest month of the year for hens' eggs. One breeder, writing in November, says: "Every mail brings reports of ducks from my eggs laying."

Judge Clipp says that he sees duck eggs in the exhibition coops of the Runners at midwinter (even after trying shipments). The early hatched may begin to lay in July, and "anybody's" will lay in February. Mr. Hurt says that the very slender neck, long, thin body and alert carriage characterize *the best layers*. "The White Queen," my original female, may well serve as a model for those who would fix the correct type firmly in mind. Compare her with Walton's ideal sketches, published in this country in May, 1910, and see how little she lacks of meeting them. Is she not, in fact, far more beautiful?

Having a good, laying type, one needs to provide comfortable housing at night, a spot sheltered from winds during the days, and liberal rations, with a goodly proportion of meat. This sums up the matter of the egg harvest.

I must not, however, leave any one with the impression that only one method of feeding will do for Indian Runner Ducks, or other ducks. The methods most commonly recommended in handling ducks have been gleaned chiefly from the handling of the men who raise them commercially, for the sake of the carcass. They are the methods of those who yard their ducks, and push them almost beyond reason when they are to go to market early.

On the farm, especially where there is abundant room and natural water privileges, one may do differently. I am accustomed to a rough mental grouping of feeds which is easily possible to any feeder. It includes the starchy feeds, which are heat and fat makers, (including fats themselves with the fat makers, at a higher value); the muscle and egg makers form my second group; the green feeds, clover meals, vegetables, form the third. If birds are on free, good range, we need not think much about this third class. If not, we must make much of it, and use its members in large proportion. We must remember that grass is not the same as hay, because it is so largely water. Proportions may be roughly in one's mind, something like one part of muscle-makers to two of fat and six or seven of the starchy things (which means, mostly, the grains in their natural state, unground and undivided as to food values). To produce eggs, one adds a larger proportion of the muscle-makers, like peas, beans, meat, etc. This is all that is necessary for a feeder to know, except whether any special feed ranks high as a muscle-maker or a fat maker. This is really the base of that far more elaborate thing called "scientific feeding."

From S. H. Scott, Onehunga, New Zealand: "My Wonder kept on laying till she had laid 200 eggs in 205 days, after which she went into a partial moult. But that did not stop her from shelling out her large eggs each morning. I want readers of this article to understand fully that I did not force her for egg production. All she got was quite plain, viz., brewers'

GENUINE RUNNERS, A FINE GROUP OF PENCILED BIRDS,
1912 HATCH

(Courtesy of MRS. ANDREW BROOKS)

A SIMPLE, SUFFICIENT SMALL DUCK HOUSE

grains, pollard or sharps, bran and chopped green stuff, all mixed up into a mash not too wet. I also gave the same mash twice a day, a real good feed each time, and occasionally a handful of wheat or maize. The mash was made as follows, the same as I feed all my ducks: one-half brewers' grains, the other half composed of pollard and bran (more pollard than bran). The greens are added. I consider a good strain of Runner ducks, allowed to mature, given free range, fed with good, wholesome food such as bran and pollard mixed with greens (one meal a day can be either maize or wheat) ducks treated so must lay well and pay well, and will beat hens hollow, both in the number of eggs laid, also in profit to their owner."

A feeding-point which I want all to notice is that there is virtually little difference in the feeding practices of different handlers. Barring some variations in proportion, nearly all are using the cheap, common feeds: bran, Alfalfa, green or dry, all green stuffs available, and a little corn or wheat for a one-feed per day grain. One has used some buckwheat; one uses some oats, even for the babies, but sifts out the hulls. Sprouted oats are as good for yarded ducks as for hens and chicks.

A very practical difficulty which meets the handlers of laying ducks is that, in mid-winter, the ducks, being largely night layers, must be in reasonably warm quarters, or the eggs will freeze. Breeders of ducks especially noted for laying should, therefore, plan for warmer housing than others find necessary. This does not mean that they must provide close, stuffy houses, for these will not work for the good health and vigor of the stock. The *best thing any one can do* to make his shelters warm for stock of any kind is to locate them where they are sheltered from wind. The closer they are to shelter on the windward side, the warmer they will be. A second good aid toward the needed warmth for laying ducks, is deep, soft litter. If this occupies only such portion of the floor as will accommodate the inmates comfortably,

they will group themselves there; as they are very partial to a nice bed. Thus, their bodies will keep the eggs warm, and early rising on the part of the handler will do the rest.

The one who handles our ducks recently planned some very simple houses, which have been put up experimentally. They are really only deep sheds, being six feet wide and 12 feet deep. The height at the front is six and one-half feet, and at the back it drops to 40 inches. The houses are boarded closely, and covered both on roof and sides with one of the commercial roofings. The front is entirely filled by two curtains which drop against the strip binding the house in front, and which open flat against the roof whenever desirable. The more they are up, the better for the birds.

This house has been planned to meet several difficulties which experience showed. The door is on the side, rather close to the front. It is double, having an outer solid shutter and an inner frame covered with wire netting. The depth of the house is to permit the easy handling of litter which I mentioned; to allow, also, feeding near the front on stormy days, and to protect from inblowing wet and snow. The curtains are of cheap muslin. A man who had used duck, which used to be so much recommended, told me that he thought the muslin much better. The duck does not permit sufficient influx of air, he said. With ducks housed only at night I should use loose bagging, nearly always available on the farm at no cost. We do use it wherever possible.

Ever since I have taken special interest in poultry, Editor Hunter has been trying to drum it into the heads of all whom it may concern that the three points necessary to winter hens' eggs are early hatching, good "growing" and pullets for a standby. In similar way, I might make three points for ducks; early hatching, proper feeding, comfortable housing. Without all these the duck will not often give returns in winter, at least at the

north. The very word, "returns" points to the fact that she must RECEIVE first! Let no breeder forget this.

Even when she has given her returns in eggs, it yet remains for her owner so to educate or to select his market that the cash returns shall be of the best. This matter is one in which our southern people should be especially interested, as they have the best chance, on account of their climate. In March, 1910, a produce reporting paper gave 22½ to 23 cents as the lowest price for hens' eggs, reached up to the date of report, during that season. On the same date it was reported that duck eggs were beginning to move toward the New York market. They were classed as "Baltimore" eggs, though some came from Tennessee "and other western points." Baltimore duck eggs were reported as bringing 42c. at the same time that hens' eggs were bringing a cent or two more than ONE-HALF this price. When we have actual market reports showing what is possible in the line of returns from duck eggs, at least during a portion of the season, we do not need to guess. Prices drop to "almost one-half" on duck eggs, after Easter. But, if this one-half is even then equal to the price of hens' eggs, none need complain very bitterly. The market for duck eggs has to work itself out, but it seems to be doing very well. And I think it may be expected to improve steadily, once the Indian Runner eggs get a hold in city markets. Ignorant old New York will get them after a little, and LEARN SOMETHING TO HER ADVANTAGE!

A mid-west breeder of Runners gives, as an ideal ration for any old ducks: mash made of wheat bran, corn meal, alfalfa meal and beef scraps. *He says that with dry housing and water at night in all cases, the egg output is sure, regardless of climatic or weather conditions.* He likes corn, fed sparingly and intelligently, and says that ducks "do not prefer an abrupt change, preferring a constant 'one-thing' rather." He finds that ducks trained to receive a grain-ration with the bulky food appear to

enjoy it, but places all corn in the water troughs to soak a little. "Otherwise, they may get a rather packed crop of dry, hard grain." This writer says that ducklings will "invariably" grow better and develop much faster when they have a good supply of water, both at night and during meals. He makes mash at least two-thirds the ration, in bulk, in cold weather and for laying, and says that if ducks are well raised and kept warm and comfortable during the winter at all times, they "will lay without faltering." I think this is rather near the secret of getting winter eggs from ducks: a rich and ample ration, with reasonable uniformity of conditions both as to feed and housing. The same man tells of finding a breeder who was complaining of no eggs, plucking his ducks every six weeks! This is sufficient to explain any lack of eggs under even the best conditions, otherwise.

In yard conditions, without natural water supply, the filthy and ill-smelling soil becomes an acute menace, and the ducks are not a matter of pride to the raiser. On heavy land, I would not raise ducks thus, without a sharp slope for drainage of surplus water. But, on light land, one may dodge this issue by excavating a fair-sized hole, laying over it a stiffened wire netting, and setting the water dishes on this netting. In case of bad odors, a covering of fresh earth, or a sprinkling of some safe disinfectant is indicated.

One breeder, who has raised several kinds of ducks, including the Imperial Pekins, says that the Indian Runner is, by far, the most profitable, and that it is much easier to induce the Runners to lay in extreme weather than to get eggs from hens. The methods on this place include a house 16 ft. by 25 ft. and a yard 24 ft. wide and 100 ft. long to each forty ducks. The layers are fed four times a day; a grain and vegetable mash early and at night, with two lighter meals in between. The breeder says: "Twice a week a little raw cut bone or some beef scraps are added to the mash. Cooked vegetables with some milk added

and then thickened with equal parts cornmeal and bran forms a mixture that ducks thrive upon. *Either bran or something green should form a part of every meal in winter. Both are important factors in duck feeding.*" This is quoted from an article in the "American Poultry Advocate." The same breeder mentions cutting rye when it is frozen and storing it for the ducks; also the use of cut clover or Alfalfa scalded, and thinks it much better to provide grit separately, not mixing it with the feed.

On the other hand, Mrs. Mellette tells an inquirer not getting enough eggs, who feeds "mill feed, ground barley and wheat, with grit and charcoal in a hopper and all the grass they want," that this is not a suitable ration for ducks, and that their grit should be mixed with the mash; as should also the green feed. This last is probably the custom of the great majority of breeders of yarded ducks.

Mrs. Mellette also says that the ducks do not seek shelter in heavy California rains. Last winter she had a flock of ducks laying in December that were hatched in July,—the last day of the month. The ducks lay there "steadily during the winter season, when eggs are 60c a dozen," she says; also, that the table birds bring from 85c to a dollar, according to the demand. Answering in detail just what should be fed to grown ducks, she replies: "*First, a duck needs green feed*, then meat in some form, next shell and bone, and after that, a good, rich mash." As ingredients of the mash, she uses rice meal, ground oats, "balanced ration" meal, rolled barley soaked till swelled, and some wheat. This mash is fed three times a day when pushing for eggs. During the rest season she feeds little to ducks on good range.

Although hundreds and doubtless thousands of Runners are raised, both here and abroad, without water for swimming, it is not natural, and we should, I think, consider the natural state

of a bird as much as artificial needs will allow. It looks reasonable to me that the exercise of swimming must strengthen the abdominal parts and legs, and make for better fertility in the eggs, or at least, better hatchability. Also, that the water bath would help to keep down inflammation, in case of straining from laying extra large eggs, or other reason.

It is also true that the sitting duck, in nature, probably moistens her eggs each time she returns to the nest, because her feathers are moist. This points to nests on the ground, or ground at least sprinkled occasionally, to give moist atmosphere. Play in the water gives vigor, delight, and activity, and the ducks often mate while on the water.

You will notice that ducks cannot keep their plumage in good condition unless they can have a water bath, at least in muddy weather. Yet, the water which is their greatest necessity is also one of their gravest dangers. It is not at all safe to allow the young the freedom of ponds, swales or any other place which enemies haunt, until fully grown. Turtles and other vermin make inroads into the flocks and dogs run ducks down much more quickly and surely than they do hens, unless the ducks take to flight. Hunters are even more dangerous and lawless.

A beginner cannot distinguish the sex till the sex feathers come with the second coat—shown by the curl on the drake's tail. With more experience, the size and breadth of bill and general appearance will help some, and the coarser, heavy quack of the duck will distinguish her, some weeks before the sex feathers appear.

Mr. Root says in his journal: "Both of my ducks have blue bills, while the two drakes have yellow bills; this is probably accidental." [!] He thinks the first edition of this book gave too much space to native country, coloring "and ducks that lay only white eggs instead of eggs that are slightly tinted green

or blue." But a little *more* of this class of information would have told him that the Standard demands dull, cucumber-green in bills of ducks and greenish-yellow in drakes, when matured.

One of the large growers of market ducks, who raises from 20,000 upward each season, says of ducks in general that he considers that the average man has as good a chance to succeed with ducks as with any branch of poultry raising, and that some men have the best chance with ducks.

Because he is a man of such wide experience, I will give his method of using machines for hatching, as told in "The Poultry Advocate" in 1910, though not quoting much literally. He believes that ducks hatched during the first two weeks in May make the best breeders. He places his young birds intended for breeders on sod, with access to a stream, at eight weeks of age. Bran, corn-meal and middlings, equal parts, with eight percent of beef scraps, form their entire ration, fed twice daily till mid-November. As his main food for getting eggs, he gives:

"One part bran; one part middlings; one part low grade flour; one part whole corn; two parts whole wheat; two parts cornmeal; four parts cut clover hay; twelve per cent beef scrap, sand, grit and oyster shells, all they will eat; mix with water till crumbly."

Eggs for hatching are washed very lightly and carefully, if they are much soiled. "We set daily, and find we get better results than when we used to set every four days," he says. The (Cyphers) machines are run at 102 the first two weeks, at 102½ for a week more, then a week at 103, running up to 104 and 105 at the hatching period. Eggs are turned once a day till the first test, at end of first week; after this twice daily till they pip. Then all pipped eggs are turned the pipped side up, and the machine closed till hatch is complete. "A 350-egg machine will

accommodate 288 duck eggs, and if you average 150 good ducklings throughout the season, you are doing well."

When dry, the ducklings are removed to brooders with overhead water heat, the temperature held at ninety. Water and coarse sand are given at once. Next morning the first feed, "Spratt's Patent No. 5," is fed, being continued for four days, when they are gradually worked on to mash. This mash consists of six parts bran, two each of corn meal and middlings, one part low grade flour, five parts cut green feed, and ten per cent of beef scrap. This is the ration, up to eight weeks, when the breeders are separated and fed as above noted, and the market ducks get more corn meal, (twice as much) more flour and a little more beef scrap. The cut green feed is lawn clips, cut green clover, corn fodder, Essex rape or wheat. At ten weeks they go to market. They have had water only to drink, and all precautions are taken to keep them out of the water. "A muddy or dirty duck will not thrive." This man says that one cent a pound additional cost of production means one thousand dollars loss to him; he is, therefore, good authority to tie to, because he *knows* what gives best results. He says it is important to have sandy or well-drained soil. "Water in the right place is good, but remember, the day of the puddle duck is past. To get the price to-day, your ducks must be raised under sanitary conditions, and ducklings so raised show the benefit of such treatment."

Warning: Don't write me, asking special questions about "hard luck," if you are doing the things named below; for they are all wrong.

If your stock is weak, or handled under distinctly bad conditions; if you have forced your stock; if your sitters are in a scorching location; if you have filthy runs and foul water pans; if you feed rank meat or spoiled grains, or too much hulls; if you feed too much meat in order to get more eggs; if you neg-

lect abundance of green feed; if you neglect to provide water at all times, day and night; if you use gun-powder or mustard; if you use much salt; or any dangerous stimulants; if you handle in such large groups that they have no fair chance; if you don't provide layers with oyster shell.

In raising the ducklings, if you let them chill, or get cast; if you let hot sun strokes beat them down; if you don't hustle them to shelter during showers; if your brooder has not abundant fresh air; if you don't keep them comfortable; if you bunch them in big lots till they jam and trample each other; if you give them ice-cold water; if you keep them in dense damp shade, where they cannot get sunshine if they need it; if you let them drabble themselves in water while downy; if you let them cry when they complain about wrong conditions; if you feed till the ducklings act sick; if you neglect sand or grit; if you let them get scared often; if you say "it's too much trouble" to watch out for these things. Ducklings are more sensitive to chill and icy water (inducing convulsions) than chicks, perhaps, but any one of these wrong practices may spoil the grower's chances of success, either with chicks or ducks.

System and Forethought in Making a Market

CHAPTER X

Up to the time of the present writing, Indian Runner ducks have been kept so busy in supplying the demand for eggs for hatching, that they have not had time to "bother" with market eggs. The fact that the young grow to mature size in the short period of something like twelve weeks has made it possible to sell hatching eggs freely during two-thirds of the year, even to northern breeders, while those who want eggs to go south will take them at almost any time except in the very hottest months. Some do not even make this exception. A letter received late in November says: "I am filling some orders to southern customers. The half-Waltons are doing a good share of the laying." A note received in late October of this year from a well-known breeder, mentioned just having taken off a fine hatch of ducklings from the incubators, and said that he was still hatching for himself every egg he could hold to. I do not think the later hatched birds ever attain such good size, but they help out while stock is still scarce. Among the early hatched birds, in our own yards, we frequently have males which go a half-pound above Standard weight.

In the future, as the farms work more into raising Indian Runners, there will need to be some systematic effort to make markets which will take all the supply at a satisfactory price. Considering the matter of price from the actual, intrinsic value, since the eggs of the Runner average to weigh one-half more than the standard, market hens' eggs, they should be worth one-half

more. This must be discounted a little by the fact that "an egg's an egg," and, for strictly table use, three hens' eggs will "go farther" than two ducks' eggs (usually serving three persons,); though the eaters will not get the same amount of nutriment. There is also the old prejudice against ducks' eggs to be reckoned with. Judging by intrinsic value alone, when hens' eggs bring forty cents in a firm market, Indian Runner ducks' eggs should be worth sixty cents. Whether we shall ever attain to this as a permanent standard of comparative values. I am unable to prophesy. At Easter, there will be no difficulty in doing it; at other times, until the market is firmly established, we may, perhaps, find it necessary to take a price from five to ten cents above the market price of hens' eggs at any given time, *or less than this at some seasons.*

I know of one case in which in New York market, a breeder sold Indian Runner eggs in crate lots, at 17c and upward *more* than the going price for fine hens' eggs. This was at Easter time, and several years ago, even before all eggs were as high in price all the time as is now the case. I know, too, of a certain physician, practising in a small town, who recommended Indian Runner eggs for his patients, as preferable to hens' eggs. In that city, the Runner eggs have brought at least five cents more than hens' eggs, regularly, through some years and down to the present time. This does not seem enough, *but when we remember that the Runners are more prolific than hens, that they lay during a longer average period, and that they will thrive on coarser feed, with less coddling, and with cheaper housing, the argument in favor of the Runners is pretty strong.*

There is one point about selling which I want to make as emphatic as possible. This is: the sellers must ignore the prejudice against duck eggs—a relic of a careless age, or poorer ducks—except when obliged to meet it through the inquiry of a possi-

ble customer! Talk about the good qualities of the Runner eggs, and especially about their size and their sweetness. They have both, so that your arguments are ready for you in the goods you have to sell, *regardless of the class of goods your grandfathers sold*. If you have eggs enough to warrant it, put an advertisement into your town paper, offering eggs at a stated price, and telling the points in which they are *superior* to hens' eggs. When the people have read it times enough, they will believe it. This is the best way to make a market for any poultry products, if you have enough to make it an object. It costs very little, and it enables you to sell birds when they are ready, instead of holding the good till the backward catch up, which they seldom really do. Besides, if you word your notices to that end, you are educating your possible customers up to your class of product, and when they want stuff, they will seek you.

While I do not, at present, urge that the Indian Runner be grown specifically as a market duck, our recent experience shows that it can be thus grown, and profitably so. We placed, in the village paper, a fifteen-word advertisement offering table ducks, at door, alive, at one dollar each. A single insertion sold all we had to spare, within two weeks. A little earlier, we made an opening into the trade of a high class city club, at the same price, dressed. It makes little difference as to the last, if one have the time for the work, as the feathers will more than pay for it. Inasmuch as ducks, like the commoner fowls, come about half males, there is always a surplus of these. There will also be a proportion of old ducks to work off, each year. I think it would be better, in general, to send these in one lot, to a city market, and always dressed, as live ducks shrink much in weight in shipment.

Selling anything is a psychological experience. Many are good salesmen, because they have some natural keenness which

enables them to go about it right. Experience may add much, also. And, because it is a psychological thing, it may be learned through a general study of psychology, the results of which will apply to every experience in business, social or family life. It sounds fearsome, but it is fascinating and practical.

Educating the Market

CHAPTER XI.

One morning while preparing for the second edition, I invaded the down-town streets of the biggest city, where Commission Houses are thickest. I interviewed men whom I knew to have been selling Indian Runner eggs, and men I had never heard of. I questioned small dealers in produce from the farms, and the oldest and largest firm, I think, in the business in New York. At least, I was told that they were one of the oldest and largest, and knew eggs from A. to Z., and back again!

At this last place, I struck what seems to me the key to the situation, in this as in other matters. And it is along the line of what I said last year. "*We* can't educate the market," said the firm's representative, protestingly; "we aren't near enough to the consumers. We have to take what comes to us, and sell it if we can, and that is the whole of the Commission business. If the market is to be educated to the use of duck eggs, some one else must do it!"

Very few firms would allow that Indian Runner or any other duck eggs were wanted in New York, during the latter part of the year. The market has not been used to them, and a large proportion of the buyers are prejudiced against them. There are some nationalities that like them, however. The Irish, it is said, are so partial to green that they even prefer a green duck egg.

The egg situation in New York in November may be like this: "Very few near-by eggs are arriving, and these, even when from henneries, are often badly mixed with old eggs. New

laid quality has become very scarce and it is hard to get enough fancy whites to supply even the limited demand. Values are quite irregular. Very fancy, large, new laid, hennerly whites could be peddled out up to 43c and 45c, but there are very few such; and jobbers would hardly pay more than 41c and 42c for the best." This was the report of the New York Produce Review, under date of Oct. 18, 1911. At the same time, in another column, fine lots of "strictly fine, full, strong-bodied fresh (western) were rated at 28c for the best." "There are some lots of Western graded and candled eggs which even though showing very little dead loss, *contain too few full fresh* to exceed 22c and 23c. The better grades of regular packed western have had a moderate demand at 24c and 25c, these passing fairly high in the grade of firsts. Occasionally, a lot of ungraded stock shows enough new laid quality to reach 26c, but there are not many as good as that." One other sentence: "There is fair call for *useful* summer eggs at 17c and 18c."

Here, we have what seems to me a situation impossible to hold: a market keen for large, fancy white eggs, reaching in early autumn as high as 45c at the extreme; a perfectly good, sweet large fancy white egg in sight for this market so that it may have a good supply, and the market looking askance at this offered egg because, forsooth, of a "prejudice." "Fresh dirties" and "checks," western ungraded and "useful summer" sorts—all these seem attractive to the buyer, but not the strictly white, translucent, extra large fancy which is knocking at the market door! Does it seem to you that such a condition will hold long? Do you not begin to wonder what is the underlying reason for the unhelpful attitude of the Commission Houses toward the Indian Runner egg?

I put it up to the representative of one of the largest houses: "Is it not reasonable to suppose that a perfectly good food product like the Indian Runner egg will make its own market, in

time, when it begins to come in in quantity?" After some hesitation, the point was admitted. "Yes; it would sell at some price. You can sell anything in New York, if you will sell it cheap enough; but," he concluded, triumphantly, "*that isn't 'New York Market'.*"

At another place, while agreeing that New York did not want duck eggs, the representative of the firm (which is selling them for shippers) told me that if they laid well early (which would add to the average price) they would, *even now, equal the average of the Leghorn eggs* in price. He thought that, in time, as the market found that it must deal with the Runner egg, the average price might rise.

At another very large place, while there was still this inexplicable undertone of opposition, or, at least, of doubt, the representative told me that the yearly average price of duck eggs would figure out 35c a dozen, *as things are now*. He said that they would sell to 45c in the spring. Speaking to my question as to this egg making its own market, eventually, he said that *while it might go slow at first, it would surely sell*. He stated that the Irish and the Germans were good buyers of duck eggs.

On the day I was in the market, "Leghorn" eggs were quoted up to 38c as the extreme fancy price. Duck eggs were then selling at 25c to 30c. In order to understand the varying reports regarding the Indian Runner eggs as compared with hens' eggs, we need to know two things which are hard to realize: one is that, before Easter, *duck eggs sell far above hens' eggs*, sometimes being at a premium of more than 50 per cent; the other is that, later, they bring about the same as hens' eggs; while in midsummer they may sometimes fall below.

This last is anomalous, and I think will be reversed when the Indian Runner egg has had time to prove itself. It does not seem reasonable that any market demanding a large, fancy white egg, should long hold aloof from such an egg when offered.

Commission men say they cannot deal with theories; they must take facts as they are. They have a hard enough time, some of them think, even at that! It remains, then, to change the facts. The facts are already somewhat better than they were a year ago. In 1911, scarcely a commission dealer in New York knew about the Indian Runner—or had so much as heard of it. In 1912, many of them knew more or less about it; many did not.

Meanwhile, this whole matter narrows down to one of individual business ability. Did it ever occur to you that the reason eggs are such a good farm crop is that *they sell themselves*? Extra business ability may greatly enlarge the income from a specified number. But even without that special ability, the egg crop can be sold to reasonable advantage, because the demand is ahead of the supply of the wanted quality, much of the year.

It is still true that very many who have gone into Runners are disposing of their output as fancy eggs at an inflated price. The number of advertisers known to me in 1911 was nearly double the number offering Runner eggs for hatching a year earlier. It is coming to this: a paper that came in from the south early in 1912 carried a big advertisement, the burden of which was Indian Runner Ducks. It said: "Will have, to arrive to-day, 50 fawn and White I. R. Ducks. Drop around and see them. Will sell cheap." You must admit that this isn't so bad for a small southern city, so early in the game! I rather think it distances New York. But there is a distinct reason: one of the dailies of this same city has been acting as a sort of wet nurse to the poultry business for several years. Don't tell me enterprise doesn't count! And that is what the individual grower needs.

One letter said: "If I can only dispose of the product, you need not be greatly surprised to see this farm covered with Indian Runners before many years." This was from a beginner,

who had not yet tried the market. Another of my letters *from the same state* says: "We have 18 pure Indian Runner Ducks to start with. They lay a nice large white egg. We get 50c per dozen the whole year; but yet we know nothing about ducks!"

Another writes: "I am a general farmer and not a poultry-man, but I have a flock of 55 ducks (Runners) and a large and growing southern trade. I can increase ad libitum. Have handled Runners four or five years under range, and know what they should be worth to the farmer as well as any one in the United States. Also, I know the good and the harm the fancier does the farmer in poultry, particularly in Runners, and so thoroughly appreciate your good work in this book (first edition of Runner Duck Book.) If I were not an advertiser, I would write more as simple justice to the duck and to advise the south of what it means to it." Later, this breeder wrote me that he had been obliged to return a large proportion of the orders for eggs through inability to supply the stiff demand.

One beginner, who had products to sell for the first, in the spring of 1911, and from a good-sized flock, sold some of his eggs very early in the New York Commission district at prices above those of hens' eggs. Later, he sold eggs for hatching, and a good many day-old ducklings, getting fifty cents apiece for the best of these.

Mr. Hunter recently took occasion to say: "The Indian Runner is a very small duck, comparable to the Leghorn hen in size, and considerable use has been made of the comparison in the effort to capture public favor." This is exactly the kind of a blunder which might be expected from people who are not breeders of Indian Runners, and who show how little they know about them by just such unnecessary and mistaken flings. As a matter of fact, the *Runner is not as small in proportion to the "mammoth" Pekin as the average Leghorn is in proportion to the huge Brahma*. In the second place, no use whatever has been made of the comparison in size, by Runner breeders.

They compare the Runner to the Leghorn *because* it is an exceptionally active bird, a non-sitter and a phenomenal layer—all of which are claims made decade in and decade out for the Leghorn. They have, heretofore, made no claims for the Indian Runner as a market fowl, because they felt that she could make her record on her laying ability alone.

Now, however, the logic of events makes a record for the Runner as a market duck. Her breeders have not pushed for it; her detractors have gone out of the way to say how small and worth-little she is; and the market shows them all wrong. More might have been claimed than has been claimed! Not even the most rabid commission merchant in New York has said aught but that any duck of reasonable size, well fattened, would sell. And now we see the Indian Runner pushing the Pekin out.

During 1911 (according to the story as published in our most influential poultry publication): On a farm where they handle so much poultry that the feed bill is reported as \$150.00 a day, and the housing capacity for growing ducks is 30,000, the Indian Runner has turned things topsy-turvy. The story goes that the Pekin, 'here, as everywhere in recent years, was the staple market duck. But the proprietors of this farm had a large call for four-pound ducks. To supply this demand, they decided in 1910, to try the Indian Runner. From purchased eggs, they raised 1000 of these ducks. These ducks were reported as reaching the desired four pounds in weight as soon as the Pekin would reach five and one-half pounds, *and doing it on about half the feed*. It is not profitable, these breeders say, to sell the Pekin at four pounds' weight. This is exactly where the Runner gets in its innings. And, whereas all the output formerly went to New York, a local trade has been developed, taking practically all the present product. Hence, it's "a fig for New York," at this plant.

At the time the reporter was at the plant, two young men

from the south were there studying the possibilities. Nor is this the first interest the south has shown in this matter. Early in 1911, I received a letter discussing the Indian Runner for the Southern market. A part of it read as follows:—"At the age of five weeks, I haven't a duckling that weighs less than a pound and a half. I never, in all my experience with poultry, saw anything grow like an Indian Runner duckling. My ducklings are the curiosity of the neighborhood, and I am satisfied that I can dispose of both stock and eggs at good prices just as fast as I can produce them. During the greater part of the winter here the temperature rarely falls below 40 degrees, and anything near zero weather is unheard-of in this country. I can hatch ducks all winter, and by spring will have about all I want for my own use. We have here a city of some 40,000 inhabitants, and from what I can learn, there are not a half dozen men within a radius of 300 miles of here that breed the Indian Runner. In addition to that, we have all Mexico south of us, which is rapidly settling up with small farmers. Just the other day I had an inquiry from away below Mexico City. A local supply man had received a request to put him in touch with some one who had Indian Runners and had referred him to me."

I wrote Park and Pollard, the well-known Boston dealers, who, having both been expert poultry men before going into market handling, are more than usually likely to know their business. They replied: "We have interviewed various egg dealers in the large market in Boston, and find there is a considerable demand all the year around for ducks' eggs. It has been especially good during the later winter and spring, and generally, the supply has not been equal to the demand. The average price for Indian Runner eggs is five cents per dozen less than the top price for hennery eggs. Regarding the Indian Runners as market ducks, they are not in high favor, as all dealers would prefer a duck that weighs five pounds or more at ten or eleven weeks."

Readers must remember that Boston market is, in many respects exactly the opposite of many other large city markets. And, *the average of hens' eggs* in market may bring only around half "the top price for hennerly eggs," mentioned above, the story is rather favorable for the Runner eggs instead of unfavorable, as one might at first glance think.

Poultry history, as well as other history, is in the course of such rapid making that we forget first occurrences and conditions, even though we ourselves were once in the midst of them.

Suppose, for instance, that the poultry public could once more place itself back twenty years or something like this distance, in time, and watch the Pekin duck make its fight for favor as a market duck. I saw this matter referred to editorially in *The American Hen Magazine*. This is what was said: "Odd as it may seem, it was the duck growers who first won the victory on a large scale. We say 'odd,' because *the duck men had to create their market*. There was no demand for green ducks, meaning ten and twelve weeks' old Pekins, weighing four to five pounds each, until James Rankin, Easton, Mass., known as the 'father of the Pekin Duck industry in America,' built up trade in this line by sending pairs of tender, green ducks of his production to friends and acquaintances in and around Boston."

The Indian Runner has no such hard task as this, for she finds a market asking for duck meat, and a market asking for large, white, "full-bodied" eggs. She can supply all these. The one thing she has to do is to convince the people that her claims to egg quality are just claims: that she can,—to use a modern phrase, "deliver the goods."

A most excellent suggestion was made publicly by the late Chauncey E. Anderson, of Pennsylvania. Mr. Anderson urged that duck breeders send in regular consignments of Runner eggs to city markets, "and use every effort in your power to have them regularly quoted in the market columns of the daily papers. You will reap the benefit in **the sale of stock and eggs for hatching.**"

The City Market for Runner Eggs

CHAPTER XII

Although in the year 1912 over 1000 breeders of Indian Runners had been listed as selling eggs for hatching, the interest in these birds as fancy stock has been such that few of them have yet reached the great markets of New York City. I have had it in mind for nearly two years to do a little advertising for the market trade in New York City, not as a private venture, but for the sake of the general producers in the country. It is poor policy, however, to work up a call for which there is no supply ready, and the conditions do not seem even yet ready for this move. When they are, I think the Cumberland White-Egg Indian Runner Club will take it up.

During December 1912 and January 1913, I spent a part of two days in the Commission district of New York City, aiming to find out all that commission men could tell me or were willing to tell me, about present conditions and future prospects for the Runner products, in this ultimate market for large supplies of produce of every sort. I learned a number of most surprising things—many of them things of the sort of which one says, "Wonderful, amazing—IF TRUE." For instance, I learned from these same commission men, that the Runner duck weighs on the average, only two and one-half to three pounds alive! I learned from one very positive informer that the real difficulty in selling Runner ducks in market lay in the fact that they were so much like the Muscovy, the drake being too large for the market! I learned that the Runners were greatly like the Muscovys in appearance, the heads being rough, etc.; also, that the natural

HALF WALTONS ON SNOW
 RUNNER, EMBDEN GOOSE, AND
 HEN EGGS

"QUEEN'S CREDIT"
 "QUEEN'S CONTENT" (Too
 SHORT IN BODY)

ENGLISH STANDARD YOUNGSTERS

feed for them was mostly fish and grass and that they could not stand meat feeding. When one goes to supposed experts--and the man who held the "Muscovy" theory was named to me by one of his neighbors as "the duck king"—and hears such *absolute stuff* as this, one begins to doubt the value of "expert testimony." I have enough background of knowledge both of the ducks and of commission markets, to be able to sift out the good from the bad. But suppose one who had not, had gone to some of these men for information—do you see what a blackened reputation would have been the Runner's?

Possibly the most useful thing I learned, speaking generally, was that commission men are not helpful *as a class*, but are as individual as men of no class (if there are any such). In short, they are courteous or discourteous, clever or ignorant, prejudiced or open-minded, helpful or suspiciously secretive and unhelpful, exactly as other individuals. Naturally, they deduced conclusions from experience. Just as naturally, they deduced some of their conclusions from very insufficient or exceptional experiences.

For example, one commission merchant, a very honest man, of whose dealings I have known for some years, told me that the reason the Runners would never make a market duck was that they were so very small, not weighing more than two and one-half pounds. I put some leading inquiries, and he told me this story: Just before Thanksgiving, in 1912, a man came into the place of business one morning, stated that he had just sent in a shipment from his own place up-country a bit, of birds raised and fed by himself under the best modern conditions, and dressed and packed by an expert. This product was said to be of the very best grade, and the shipper wanted 20 cents a pound for it. It chanced that the market had gone all to pieces at the time, so that all sales of anything but the best were very slow. It also chanced that the shipper's barrel of goods was delivered

while he was in the commission house. When this was discovered, he was invited to step in and see it opened. The shipment proved to be a mixed one, part ducks and part hens, of the poorest sort known to the market, skinny not only, but dark and peculiar looking, as though the birds had been sick before killing and all crops were loaded with grain. "There was not a bird in the lot that weighed over two pounds" said the man who related the story. The firm had paid express on this lot, and the shipper was told that if he would secure the expressage to them he might try to get another firm to handle the shipment, since the dealers felt sure they could not satisfy him on price. He went out and tried to do so, but finally came back and told them to get what they could. They held these birds six days, hoping for a firm market. They were finally sold at 11c, the firm making just 60c on the deal.

This shipper had more birds to market. The firm urged him to send the next lot alive, as they would probably sell better. But next week, he sent another lot (knowing all the conditions) dressed as before, and equally poor with the first lot. I said to the dealer: "Do you wish me to take you literally as to the weight of those birds?" He replied, "It is literally true; not a bird weighed over two pounds, and they were not young, immature stock, but mature birds and even old hens."

Now, although I think this was a just and honest man, his experience with this shipment had been made the basis for the sweeping and unjust statement that the Indian Runner duck was an impossible bird for market, because too small and thin—so much so that nobody wanted it. Another commission dealer told me something similar as to experiences with market Runners.

In another Commission place, I offered a question as to how much knowledge New York market was getting of the Indian Runner Duck, and the egg in particular. The merchant jumped over my limitation and launched out into a vigorous statement

that he had had a certain shipment of Runners sent him that weighed only about a pound and a quarter or a little more, and he had so much trouble to get rid of them that he was ready to "run" whenever he heard any one say "Indian Runner." I quietly asked why they were so small. "Oh!" he said, "they were broilers." "Why did they sell so slowly? Surely you do not expect broilers to weigh as much as mature birds?" "No; but these were sent 'way out of season, besides being smaller birds than the market wants in a broiler duck."

We have no difficulty, in analyzing this story, in seeing that one unusual experience with an exceptional and out of season shipment (apparently the only one this merchant had ever received of Runners) had laid the basis for unreasoning prejudice against a bird scarcely yet in the market at all. But I have had more than this unreasonable prejudice in mind in telling the two stories above. They both point a moral for the producer. They show that it is the producer who is wholly at fault many times, when he thinks it is wholly the Commission merchant. The moral, stated broadly, is: "Send the market *what* the market wants, *when* it wants it!" If you do not, you must either step in and educate the market (which can often be done by a keen worker), or else you must expect to be subject to all the losses caused by the vagaries and the prejudices of that market. It has been said times without number that any fowl put into the hands of the general farmer is bound to deteriorate in size, vigor and quality. The facts have proved this statement too often for it to be seriously questioned, as a general statement. Of course there are many shining exceptions, but not enough to change the general affirmation.

Making this specific, I want to emphasize this matter of size in Runners. The Runner is a small bird, and the greatest range in the Standard bird is from three and one half pounds for the smallest ducks to five pounds for the largest drakes. They run

pretty even, with good handling; but this is all the leeway the English Standard gives, and this is a full pound more leeway than the American Standard gives. Hence, it is difficult, if raising Standard birds, to avoid getting some too small. Moreover, fanciers at least, here, are beginning to discredit what they call "coarse birds," and this means that the fancy Runner is likely to tend toward less weights than it has averaged heretofore. If the Runner is to stand above all as a layer and not make for a place as a market bird, this would not matter quite so much. But the Runner, strangely enough, has been making headway all the time as a market bird, even against the fact that her breeders were making scarcely any claims for her on this line. She has done this solely through the superior quality of her flesh. (An editor recently stated that the Runner flesh was the most delicious of any known fowl).

I think the time has arrived to consider that the farm wants a bird not too small, especially when we remember the tendency to lessen the size, under farm conditions. To me, this seems to point in just one direction: viz., a larger type of Indian Runner, especially for the farm. This can soon be had, as it is easy to get big Runners—those over Standard weight—by hatching them early and feeding them well for frame and meat. Runner breeders believe that if we increase size too much, we shall lose out in laying quality. I believe we can overcome this through keeping close to type in our Runners, even when we increase size. A white Runner "pullet", weighed recently, pulled down the scales at four and three-fourths pounds, much to my surprise, and she was a bird selected for fancy type. With all these things in mind, it seems to me that we need for the farm a Runner that shall tend to weigh in the male well toward six pounds. If the farm cannot keep it up there, the fancier can. And, if the bird is adapted to his uses, the farmer can well afford to pay a fancy price—I do not mean extreme, of

course—for a Runner which will keep his flock up where he can produce a bird which will satisfy the market. It would not take long for shippers to kill any chance for a Runner market, by sending in birds of the weights mentioned by some of our commission friends. There is one more reason for a larger bird for the farm, this is that the egg, also, tends to grow smaller under unfavorable conditions. We want a bird that will hold the Runner egg at three ounces. One man told the public last year that his Runner eggs “averaged” four ounces! I have not yet found anybody whose experience makes them believe this story. And I do not know that a four-ounce egg is wanted, or is worth while. But I do think we should strive to keep an average of three ounces.

At one place where I inquired about the Runner egg market I was told that they were selling at 38 and 40 cents, with very light supply; that they would bring “almost any price” in the weeks near Easter, but that at other times they would not pay much premium over hens’ eggs. This house had received very few Runner eggs as yet.

At one place I got a good deal of quiet fun out of the situation. The man evidently had hardly so much as heard of the Runner, though his sign acclaimed him a dealer in Eggs, Poultry and Game. I started in on the “game” end with him, telling him we had a duck which was said to be gamy in flavor, and to compare with the canvas-back. I also told him that this duck was a good layer, with an accredited Agricultural College record of 199 eggs in ten months, or thereabouts. He immediately said he did not believe it—not that he doubted my word, oh *no*!—but it was too much to believe. Pekin Ducks, he told me, would only lay about 12 to 16 in the spring and a few more in the fall. “Better not tell that to a Pekin breeder”,—I challenged him. However, he insisted that it was impossible; that no duck had ever laid more than a few weeks in spring, and that he would believe no

one but Miss Pennington anyway. *She knew*, and had helped many a man thousands of dollars worth, in his business, showing him where to avoid mistakes. All honor to Miss Pennington, whose worth the U. S. Government knows, for it keeps her at work! But——

As my unbelieving friend was unwilling to admit that any new duck could lay better than older breeds had done, I tried a new tack, asking him directly about game, etc. He affirmed that no tame duck could compete with the wild duck as to real gamy flavor, because the wild ducks were always killed so as to retain the blood, which made the flesh very different. He also stated that the Rouen duck was smothered to death in France, to retain the blood in the carcass. I asked if the Runners could not be killed without bleeding, if that were all that was needful. Then he took a new tack: It could not compete with the canvas-back because fed differently. "On what?" "The canvas-back feeds naturally on celery."

It is easy to see that this man, along with his knowledge and experience, carried much prejudice and many theories. He was evidently an uneducated man, and of foreign birth, rating himself very high, and unwilling to yield his opinions in any way.

At another place I met a man of widely different type, courteous, intelligent, fair-minded, and adding common-sense to his evidently long experience. But even he told me that bakers did not like duck eggs. When I brought out my inevitable "Why?" he replied: "Because the duck egg is too rich and heavy and it has a deep red yolk." Of course this does *not* apply to Indian Runner eggs. This merchant also said that the duck egg did not "stand up" as well as the hens' eggs—a fact which must be admitted, and which affects handlers, *if* they hold them in hot weather. Still, he stated willingly that they were *fine* from April up to the hot weather period, and volunteered the information that they could be held in storage for winter use, being put in before great heat

arrives. He also said that *he had placed these eggs mixed with hens' eggs, in storage, and that they had stood it very well for 6, 7, and 8 months.*

This candid commission merchant told me that he had known duck eggs to go up and up at Easter time till they had on rare occasions touched 75 cents a dozen at wholesale; but that after Easter the price usually dropped very rapidly, till about equalling that of hens' eggs. He said also that the grocery stores have a long demand for them. He seemed thoroughly optimistic as to working up the trade, provided only that we have the supply, saying that no one knew what could be done till trial was made. He also stated his belief, strongly, that it would be impossible to "swamp" New York market with these eggs, saying that as soon as there was danger of this, the eggs would go into cold storage for use when the market really needed them. Thus, it seems that storage is to be one of the important factors in the outworking of the Runner market egg situation. Another point that needs emphasis is that Runner eggs should be shipped direct to commission merchants in the cities where they are to be sold, in order that they shall reach the market while still fresh. Nor should one send stuff to an unknown market. Commission men desire *most, regular shipments*; for it is the unknown and the unexpected which play havoc with the markets. The less they get, the less their commission, and they are glad to advise as to qualities and best times of shipment.

Where either eggs or meat are produced in small quantities, I think it is far better to work up a private trade. The ducks sell to private custom "like hot cakes", and make a demand for more, because of their delicious quality. One dealer explained the scarcity of Runner eggs in New York market by saying that they were probably used largely in private trade. This is well known to be largely true of new-laid hens' eggs, during the winter season—so much so that eggs are rated for quality in the

season of scarcity, not by the freshness of the lot itself, but by the *percentage of fresh eggs* mixed with eggs that have been held.

Admitting that this is true, through the two coldest months, of duck eggs as well as hens' eggs, and knowing that the call from the south, where these birds were slower at first in being introduced, continues till rather late in the fall and that inquiries begin to flow north, for eggs for hatching, as early as January, we may easily account for the fact that New York market does not as yet see much of the Runner eggs.

During the first week in May, I spent a good part of another forenoon in the commission houses, in order to study the situation at that time of the year. Every where I went, the story was the same: no duck eggs wanted after the Easter season. Invariably I asked, "Why?" Was it simply habit, because duck eggs had never been available? Was it prejudice, because the old type of duck egg which our ancestors sold were strong in flavor? Most of the dealers shrugged their shoulders indifferently, or said it was probably prejudice. One man told me it was because they were too heavy and full-bodied, which made them spoil quickly. "But" I said: "all your price-currents on hens' eggs praise as of highest value the firm, full-bodied egg. Why the difference?" The dealer had no answer ready. "They don't stand up as well under heat and holding," seemed to be a general opinion.

Many told me there were virtually no duck eggs in market so late. Six or eight cases, it might be, an occasional dealer would get. One told me again and again of a single case for which he had gotten full market price as for white Leghorn eggs, emphasizing that it was because they were so fine. Pressed for the details of this fine quality, he stated that they were fresh and well graded. Thus, he had received about 22 cents, when the most of those in market brought 16 or 17 cents. Finally, as I probed, it all came out with a rush—the secret of the prejudice against duck eggs in New York market "after Easter;" the

reason why those who, early, were fairly chasing the dealers for duck eggs and paying sometimes up even to three times as much as hens' eggs were bringing—so one dealer said—could not be induced to look at one, a little later.

"There isn't any market, you know, for them. And we don't get very many. What we do get the bakers take. *They are all poor quality*, but of course the bakers *don't have to have good eggs*. So we sell to them at about 16 or 17 cents a dozen." "But Easter was early this year," I persisted, "and we have had no hot weather yet. Why should they be of such uniformly poor quality?" The man hesitated, as others had done. Finally he said: "Well, I'll tell you. Except for a few western eggs, *about all that come in now are from the incubators*, those that are tested out as infertiles." Considerably more than a year I have been after this bit of information, and every mouth shut like a clam when I put my "Why?"

And here it is in a nutshell! After the season for incubating eggs for the green duck trade is fairly open, about all the available eggs go into the incubators. Those that test out go to the market, and bakers pay within a few cents of what the highest grade of eggs is bringing; and yet, they are all of poor quality. Readers should understand that these are seldom Runner eggs, for not enough of them go into the machines in this way to make any available surplus for the city trade. But the mere fact that nearly all the eggs that do come in are of this suspicious grade, makes a poor market and a prejudice for all duck eggs. No wonder they don't stand up well! Ever since I found out this fact (though of course I had long known that a good many of this class of eggs was marketed) applied to duck eggs so generally in the regular season, I have been far more optimistic than ever before about market sales for Runner eggs. When growers get enough ducks to allow shipments, all they have to do is to make good with a good dealer, always furnishing fresh products, and the market is made.

One more experience of the spring of 1913 may serve as a "straw" to show the direction of the wind. Early in March, I received a letter of which the following is a part: "The writer has recently acquired a country place outside of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., and is desirous of getting some ducks, about 25 or 50, to add to his stock of poultry. If you can offer me any suggestions as to the best breed to get, the courtesy will be greatly appreciated indeed.

"I wish to state incidentally that there is a good demand here for duck eggs for consumptive purposes, and to-day fine fresh stock is bringing 35 to 37 cents a dozen. If you are getting any surplus and would care to have them marketed here we should be glad to handle them for you." The point of this story is that the letter was from a New York city Commission dealer. Prices named in this article are all, of course, wholesale prices. With the large number of fanciers now handling Runners, I am rather surprised that none are even yet coming to New York. I had expected that this year would see them coming in noticeably.

Selling and Cooking Value of Indian Runner Eggs

CHAPTER XIII

There are three aspects under which eggs may be considered, viz., as breeding material; as market stock; as a household necessity and luxury. The last is the strong point, if we take numbers into consideration; yet, as the number of eggs produced depends quite largely, in some cases, upon the breeding value, it seems to me rather fitting to consider the eggs as breeding material, before taking up the other two points.

Indian Runner eggs, at their best, hatch better than any other eggs of which I have had personal knowledge, taking the season through. During several hatching seasons, we had them running for a long time, under actual test, at from 95 per cent to 100 per cent fertile. One hundred per cent of fertility does not, necessarily, mean a one hundred per cent hatch. But it is known that duck eggs generally hatch well when all the conditions are favorable, as compared with hens' eggs. They need a little more moisture while under incubation, than do the better-known hens' eggs.

The real value of the Runner eggs, as breeding material, will rest very largely on the conditions under which the ducks are kept. In order to be able to hatch near the one hundred per cent which we take as ideal (and not impossible a part of the time) the conditions of yarding, feeding, etc., must also approach the ideal. There must be fair room, proper proportion of males to females, sufficient shell material and grit, and plenty of fresh, lush green feed, besides the grain and meat, in various forms, which comprise the usual rations, not to mention the indispensable

water to drink. It will not do to neglect any of these points, if one desires or expects good hatches of good ducks.

There is, too, yet another point that needs consideration. I think breeders all through our land have been far too careless, in the past, as to the length of time eggs were kept before shipment. It is hardly fair to blame them harshly, because it has been widely published by the leaders that eggs would keep, with good care, from three weeks to a month, and still hatch reasonably well. Experiments at the Cornell Station show that this is a fallacy; that (hen) eggs hatch without loss from depreciation to any great extent, up to two weeks. After that time, they lose rapidly in value for hatching purposes.

I have known an early shipment of 300 hens' eggs, from one of the most prominent breeders, to give less than twenty chicks. There are two reasons which promptly present themselves, beyond the possibility of infertility: these are, possible chilling of many, and possible holding beyond the age when they were fit to ship. When eggs are scarce, the temptation to hold them longer than one would do later in the season, is strong, and it is buttressed by the known fact that they will keep longer in cold weather than during summer heat. The carriers, too, often put a shipper in the wrong: sometimes by careless handling, against which we are helpless, because we cannot prove it unless there is breakage; sometimes by undue delays on the road. Several times last season, I knew of shipments being twice and three times as long on the road as they should have been. One shipment which, had it been a passenger, would have gone through in 36 hours, was exactly a week on the road. A shipper has a right to calculate on prompt carriage, but the carriers, by a delay like this, may hold his eggs beyond the period of value for hatching purposes. Breeders need to keep these points always in mind, and I think it is wise to err on the safe side, if any, in shipping any kind of duck eggs.

As market stock, the eggs of the Indian Runner have opened up possibilities never before ahead of us, at least, as far as we could know. They not only furnish the large sized product that everybody likes to buy, but, under favorable conditions, they can be produced more cheaply than the smaller hens' eggs. *I do not, by any means, wish to tempt every one to take up ducks.* There are some points about handling all ducks, especially in confinement, that do not commend themselves to the average person. Among these are the filth of their yards, and the work of dressing the carcasses that must, eventually, go to market. The first of these can be overcome by proper management, on the right kind of location. Ducks can be kept, and do thoroughly well in confinement, but this makes more work for the handler, as a matter of course, as it does with all fowls.

We have had Indian Runner ducks, raised wholly in confinement, begin to shell out the eggs while still just less than four and one-half months old. This was without any conscious effort to push them. It is not common to them to lay quite so early as this. *But they do lay earlier than hens, comparatively speaking; they do lay more persistently; they do lay better in the autumn; they do make a higher record, on the average.* When we add these items to the fact that they lay an egg exactly one-half larger than the standard of size for hens' eggs, and that those of the best English type have long been bred to lay white, translucent eggs, it is easy to see that their value as producers of market eggs is abnormally high, as compared with anything yet known.

The eventual value of the green egg type turns entirely on the question as to whether or not a green egg will sell in the market. Possibly some one will have business acumen and push sufficient to popularize the green egg just as some localities have popularized the brown egg of the Asiatics. This is not saying that they will not sell now; I hold that a perfectly good food product in as good general demand as eggs, should always sell, if

the producer has any skill at all in marketing. But I leave it to the good sense of the reader whether the Indian Runner, so prolific and quick maturing; so likely therefore, to increase remarkably fast, would not better think twice before she lays a green egg for the average buyer. For, it is the average buyer to whom we must cater, in all market offerings. We can educate him, but it is slow work, and it takes a skilled market man to do it. Our Irish population, it is said, do not have to be educated; they sweat by green wherever they find it.

When we come to the third point, the consideration of the Indian Runner egg as a household luxury, we can make out a tremendous case. For while this "luxury" delights the producer by selling at special seasons, occasionally, at twice the price of hens' eggs, it usually brings but five to ten cents more a dozen, and late in the season sells on a par with hens' eggs. The eggs are proportionately *cheaper for the consumer than hens' eggs, just as soon as the latter get above twenty cents*. Eggs fall below this figure so seldom nowadays that it is safe to state that the ducks' eggs are always cheaper than hens' eggs, if only ten cents more a dozen. Two of these eggs will, at any time, take the place of three hens' eggs, even when the latter are fully up to the standard, market size, which is two ounces. No eggs were ever more delicately sweet than those of the Indian Runner; so that it may fairly be said that we shall soon have a luxury which is not extravagant, and which, it is hoped, may soon become plentiful on our markets. At the date of this writing, only a few favored buyers can have them, because there are not nearly enough to go around. The cities have hardly heard of the Indian Runner, as yet.

I am fortunate in being able to report a household test, made by Mrs. Grant M. Curtis, the editor of a Table Department in the "Reliable Poultry Journal." A breeder of the white-egg type, in western New York, sent to Mrs. Curtis's office some eggs for

THE WHITE QUEEN, A SPORT FROM ENGLISH PENCILLED STOCK,
WHOSE DESCENDANTS HAVE ALL BEEN STRICTLY WHITE

testing on all cookery points. The breeder's confidence in the English type of Indian Runner as a winner was not misplaced. When the eggs were hard-boiled, or poached, the only fault that was found was that the whites were a little tougher than those of the hens' eggs, cooked in the same ways; but, the yolk was reported as smoother and richer tasting. Soft-boiled, and used as frosting, they were affirmed to be equally good with hens' eggs. In custards, two eggs to a quart of milk took the place of the five eggs the cook was wont to use; and "it was as delicious a custard as we ever tasted."

The lady who made these tests tried the eggs in making sponge cake, also, "believing that sponge cake is one of the most difficult cakes to make. Three eggs were used in the place of five with equally good results." The report closes: "We could not detect any unusual flavor in any of the eggs used, not even in the custard and cake. Having tested them, we should not hesitate to purchase such duck eggs . . . in preference to hens' eggs, which are, alas, oftentimes so far below what should be standard size that we wish, with 'Uncle I. K.' that eggs were sold by the pound." As Mrs. Curtis acknowledged herself to have been, before this test, somewhat prejudiced against duck eggs, this may be regarded as a handsome *amende* to the Indian Runner.

Not enough eggs remained to try omelet making. If the experimenter could have tried it, she would have found that it is in this point that the Indian Runner eggs score most strongly, perhaps. They make a most delicious omelet, will bear more liquid than hens' eggs, for this use, and may be used with water instead of milk, when necessity demands. The firmer white doubtless is an advantage here, as the omelet is not so likely to fall, and some like it better with water than with milk, while the scalded milk is thus avoided in the case of the many invalids to whom milk seems to be poison.

As an involuntary testimony to quality, the following little story of a 1911 happening is significant: Two "cranks on eggs" were about to have their breakfast. It was mid-October, when laying things generally are prone to go on a strike. There were 75 laying (?) hens and 10 laying ducks on the place. The day before, the 75 hens had given seven eggs; the ten ducks, five eggs.

"Here," said one, "if you like hens' eggs best, you can have hens' eggs this morning."

"I imagine I do," naively responded the other, but when they are both fresh, I can't tell the difference. I've tried and tried to find,—as the little girl said about liver,—'something in it that don't taste good,' and I really can't. It's just an old prejudice, as I proved the other morning by eating a duck egg inadvertently, thinking it was a delicious hen's egg."

The Runner egg, even more than other eggs, needs to be cooked at a moderate temperature, to be at its most delicious best. It should be dropped into boiling water, but never boiled. If three or four quarts of boiling water be used for six eggs, the question of having them *exactly right* to suit the epicure, whatever his whim, is simply one of time. They can be cooked *very* soft, soft-medium, hard-medium, or hard to-very-hard, simply by leaving them the proper time in the water. By a few trials, the cook can learn to proportion the water and the timing to suit each particular member of the family.

Since the second edition of this book came out, we have had a very satisfactory test of the Indian Runner eggs during Home Economics week at the University of Texas, held during February, 1913. The State had engaged some of the best lecturers and demonstrators of the country. Mrs. Benigna Kalb, a Director in the Cumberland Club and leader in the co-operative poultry work in Texas, sacrificed a five dollar sitting of Penciled Runner eggs and a valuable bird, in order to get expert opinion. As the demonstrators and most of those witnessing the demonstra-

tions knew nothing previously of the Runners, there could be no possible predilection. Hundreds of women from all over the state and several hundred students from the State University were in attendance. The young drake exhibited, prepared for roasting and later tested, was pronounced excellent. Miss Jessie P. Rich of the University reported informally concerning the eggs because of the limited time that could be devoted. She said: "We poached them, made omelet of them and feel quite certain of at least two points: The Indian Runner duck egg is equal in food value to about one and one-half hen eggs. Also, the Indian Runner duck egg contains more moisture than the hen egg. This last point is illustrated by the fact that it takes longer time to beat the white dry; and also, in the cooking of the eggs, a transparent color rather than an opaque results. The flavor of the egg is a decided improvement on the hen egg." A careful and thorough analysis of the egg and a formal report are promised later.

As some have felt that the desires of the breeders made them think the eggs so especially good, it is exceedingly gratifying to know that the University expert found them *better in flavor than the hen eggs*. This should count one for those who have insisted that the Runner eggs were not "strong" (as other duck eggs have been rated); and must also help very largely to *drive out the prejudice* which exists in some quarters against Runner eggs, simply because other duck eggs were not considered fine eating. This report means practically *that the Runner egg is the best table egg known*.

Some Spurious and Some Genuine Indian Runners

CHAPTER XIV

By Mrs. Andrew Brooks.

[There is no more faithful and ardent worker, and none with stronger convictions of the superior value of the English-bred, Penciled Runner of the white-egg type than Mrs. Andrew Brooks. She raises them largely, has the courage to pay for good stock, and almost literally lives with and for her Runners. It was her courage and persistence which stayed the downfall of the Penciled type when the American Standard threatened to sweep it off the earth. It was she who would not be said nay in her petition that I, who was breeding Runners to the English Standard and not bothering my head about the rest, should use my influence to save this valuable white-egg Runner for the farmers of the country. It was she who sent eggs and ducks to be tested by those whose opinions were worth while; it was she who showed eggs to prove their size and purity of color; it was she who showed ducks where she knew they would be discredited by the judge, in order to learn valuable facts about judging as it is.

In a prominent poultry journal, late in 1911, Mrs. Brooks, by request, told something of her own start. She there said: "Poultry keeping has solved the problem of an income for the women of the farms." One year, quite early in her experience, Mrs. Brooks herself sold almost \$1100.00 worth of products from about 50 Runners and 250 Barred Rocks, mostly at market rates. Now, she does better, still holding to both, while "the ducks have

it." as it were. It will be seen that she knows whereof she speaks.

The remainder of this chapter gives her view of the Indian Runner situation. C. S. V.]

The natural colors of Indian Runners are fawn and white, the female having penciled fawn plumage with white, while the drake has almost a solid shade of fawn with lustrous dark bronzy dull green cap and cheek markings. The rump is of similar hue, this dark color fading when coat is old to a dark brown but it is never the same shade as the body color. The precise shade of fawn is dependent upon the age of the birds and the remoteness from the molt, the feathers of both sexes being penciled in the young and of a dark brown color; but the fawn color is assumed in the adult plumage, usually when about twelve weeks of age. The combination of colors in the drake is most beautiful.

The 1905 American Standard demanded the same color in both sexes, (which is contrary to nature) and specified that the color must be "light fawn, even throughout," which was interpreted by judges to mean unpenciled plumage, when it should have been construed to mean an even penciling, not too pronounced. The English Standard did not mention penciling; the penciling being taken for granted, as it was well understood in England that Runners had penciled plumage. The British Runner Club Standard describes penciling, which is used by judges in placing awards. The English Standard which was taken for a model for our American Standard is now obsolete, but its omissions and defects were perpetuated in our Standard. Our American Standard paved the way to faking and wrongful practices and foreign blood was bred in to secure a light fawn with no penciling and drakes having head and rump markings of the same shade as body color. Runners were a new breed in this country and it was not generally known that these birds were not true Runners and they became the fashion. Thus it will be seen that

a *variety* was standardized while the real Runner was thrust from the Standard and deprived of all its rights as a standard-bred fowl and show bird; deprived of its name, even,—which explains why it is called the English Runner, the penciled, etc. Naturally the wrong aroused its breeders who had the courage to make the situation public, and the controversy was on in earnest. The breeders of the Standard birds have publicly admitted that a cross was made; but recently they are stating that the American made Runners were produced from unpenciled sports thrown by genuine Runners. This statement carries not the least weight with experienced breeders of true Runners for they know too well that the light fawn head and rump markings of the drakes can be obtained only by the addition of alien blood, the penciling of most of the females being inconspicuous when the feathers are old, and almost absent in some specimens, even when they are young or molt is new.

The quarrel about the wrong done by the Standard is not simply a disagreement about color of feathers. *Principle* is at stake; we are struggling to uphold the truth and our rights, as our forefathers would have done. When the light fawn bird was standardized, a monopoly was created for its breeders and some of them have made fortunes, according to their own stories, selling hatching eggs and stock. True Runners had won fame for themselves in other countries and in the Australian egg contests, and this reputation was the stock in trade of the Standard breeders; for the great laying records were made by the English penciled Runners. My co-workers and I could have quickly stocked our yards with the substitute duck, and also more cheaply, for the true Runners have always been scarce and high-priced; we were contending for a principle and we have never been guilty of placing the imitation or “changeling” Runner before the public. It was a matter of conscience with us, money gotten so had no temptation for us, or we could have gained a goodly share of those thous-

ands of dollars. We have tried faithfully to preserve the true Runners for the farmers of the country, for it is on the range of the farms that they are at the best. Here they are exceedingly valuable. The chief value of Runners lies in their capacity to be veritable egg factories of large delicious, marketable eggs and their foraging ability enables them to produce these great numbers of eggs more cheaply. But as foragers and layers the American Standard gave them a deadly blow in *requiring* "legs set well apart" thus destroying the running gait and making poorer foragers of them in injuring the type. Type, foraging ability and egg production are closely associated, each dependent upon the other.

I have had much correspondence with breeders all over the country and their unprejudiced testimony goes to prove the light fawn Standard Runners poorer layers of (usually) smaller eggs. They do not begin to lay so early in the season, nor continue laying so late in the season as the true Runners. Another fault of the light fawn birds is that they lay many green or tinted eggs; at first they laid all, or nearly all, green eggs, and as we had certain knowledge that good strains of true or English Runners laid none but white eggs, we called attention to the green eggs of the Standard birds, as one way of easily showing what had befallen the breed in this country. The light fawn breeders have been trying to breed out the green eggs, but I have evidence that shows that even those most widely advertised as a "white egg strain" produced many green eggs. We support the white egg strains of true Runners as opposed to mongrel breeds, layers of green eggs. As the best and purest strains, descendants of the original importations are layers of only white eggs, we believed that, as regards colors of eggs, green eggs denoted impurity of breed. The belief holds true so far as the descendants of the original Cumberland Runners are concerned, but new knowledge has been gained and it goes to show that **green egg layers exist** among the pure root-type

of the originals; hence it cannot be said that green eggs are always proof of an outcross. Whether the American Standard Runners lay green eggs or white ones, the alien blood is there, and they are not true Runners. They cannot be reliably depended upon to reproduce themselves, as some are light fawn, some dark with penciling and a part of the drakes have dark head and rump markings like the true Runners. Many are almost white and even pure white ones are numerous, from which most of the so-called White Runners in this country have sprung. For proof of this one has only to observe the lack of Runner type and character and to see their Pekin-like appearance and plumage, this being longer and not so close-set as in real Runners. They are poorer layers, not so good foragers and they are lacking in the home instinct; are liable to stay away nights when on free range, being unlike the English Runners in that respect. This is a grave fault.

The only strong talking point of the Standard Runners is that they are already described in the Standard; but no one need hesitate to invest in penciled Runners for they are having classes made in all the important shows, where they win cash prizes and they no doubt will soon be admitted to the Standard. As tastes differ, some may prefer the light solid fawn color to that of the true fawn of the real Runners; but most people do not favor imitations, when they know them to be such and look with disdain upon usurpers, of whatever nature.

American Standard breeders complain that the 1910-1912 edition is unsatisfactory and say breeders must ignore its dictates because the word "light" is omitted and because it calls for darker head and rump markings of drakes. It seems breeders are taking the advice, for they still advertise and sell light fawn birds. Of course if they were breeding strictly to Standard, these light fawn and white birds would be fit only for market purposes. But if it is not to be accepted as an actual guide in breeding, a Standard might as well be used to kindle a fire. The English or Penciled

Runners are far more closely bred to Standard than are the solid fawn American sort; and to a better Standard—one intended especially to preserve the gait, carriage and general type, and made by fanciers who had known this duck many times longer than Americans have known it. This shows the arrant folly of calling it a “non-standard” duck!

In my own experience with English Runners, I found that they far outlay hens and pullets during the fall and they do the heavy laying before Easter when their eggs sell for about a month to the New York commission men for twice the price of hen eggs; for some length of time after Easter these dealers pay more for the Runner eggs than for the hens’ eggs and say they find them much better in quality than eggs of common ducks. In our local market, the eggs sell at a little advance over hen eggs. Runners are so valuable for layers they have not been reared to great extent for a table duck; but as they grow up so quickly, at less cost than Pekins and their flesh is so tender and delicious, there is no reason why they should not be profitable for meat. One of my customers near Boston says she can sell more than she can raise at thirty cents per pound all summer, and finds them much less work in many ways than chickens; indeed, that is the general opinion. In these days of scarcity of help this is an item of importance.

As great producers of eggs in connection with valuable meat for the table, it will be seen that Runners deserve all their popularity. Their laying powers are so well known that I will only briefly tell of a part of their performance in the Australian Egg Laying Competitions: In the eighth annual competition two pens of English Runners averaged above 200 eggs each, the notable thing in this test that no meat was obtainable for the ducks and none was fed them during the entire time. And we know that meat or animal food of some kind is even more necessary for the ducks than for hens. On free range they find much of it for themselves, working away as for dear life, thrusting their bills

deep in the grass, bogs and pools. Nothing escapes their search for food, while they are not so destructive to growing crops as hens.

In the ninth annual test the English Runners again won. Six ducks laid 2464 in two years. This was 95 more eggs than was laid by the winning Leghorns in the same length of time. One pen of Runners was killed by a fox when it had been in the test one week less than nine months; the six ducks had then laid 1195 eggs, or an average of 199.

The "New Native" Type of Indian Runners

CHAPTER XV.

For many years, English breeders have diligently sought to find the original home of the Runners. Some of us have known for quite a period that Mr. J. W. Walton of the British Club was working on some specially imported Runners, supposed to have been found by him in India. After uniting this new blood with that of the best White-egg Cumberland Runners (the best descendants of the early type in England) Mr. Walton began to advertise in the United States "new blood direct from the native Indian source." He showed his original imported birds, in part, at the great Crystal Palace show in 1910, when they created a real sensation, as reported in the best English Poultry prints. These birds are now rather widely known as the "Fairy Fawns." A German editor said that they were *worth going over to England to see, if there had been no other birds at the Palace*. As the Germans prize their own Runners very highly, this is really unexampled praise.

The union of the blood of this stock with the best of the older Cumberland type, which has often been called "Fairy Fawn stock," should more strictly be known as "Cumberland-Fairy Fawn." This shows in the name the union of blood. It is not a cross, but the union of two good Runner blood lines. In type, this Fairy Fawn progeny is in Mr. Walton's view, "the fanciers ideal." But, unfortunately, coming as they doubtless did from wild or semi-wild conditions, they vary somewhat, and give both white and green eggs.

This green egg matter needs but a little attention to be seen with perfect clearness. *Before the new type was found*, the green-egg specimens available were the poorest in fact and the poorest breeders. *For this*, the English fanciers discarded them. The *new* blood, on the contrary when it came, showed the very best specimens in the green-egg type; though both were far ahead of any previously known. As there is no craze against the green egg, as such, in England, fanciers used the best type as a matter of course. They began, however, to dilute the green-egg blood with the White-egg Cumberland blood, expecting at the right stage of dilution, to gain a pure white-egg strain with the fine type of the new birds. They have not yet reached this ideal, but are sending birds here with several generations of white-egg mothers behind them, and themselves layers of white eggs.

Some people have frantically rushed into print and used uncounted pages to express their disgust with Mr. Walton for combining the two lines of blood. They profess not to understand *why* he should have done this, and their good sense does not go far enough to tell them that *the great body of original White-egg Cumberland or English Penciled Runners is still as pure as ever*, and that the union of blood is *only a little side experiment* which has no effect at all on the main body of White egg Cumberland Penciled Runners. This stock is just as fully available to all the world as it ever was. As a matter of fact, it would necessitate only one first-class bird to furnish all the dilution needed. Why should any body think to fool the American public into believing that the originals have been injured?

Does every reader of these lines know that the powerful American Poultry Association, with its thousands of members, the one great authority on breeds in the country, stands firmly for the idea that in *laying breeds, the most typical birds are "the most useful"—that is, the best layers?* Think this over!

Think it over again, and assimilate the idea. If it be true

of other breeds, it is doubly true of so distinctive a breed as the Indian Runner, especially known as an egg breed. And this fact explains Mr. Walton's act very clearly; because, the green-egg birds in the new blood being of the best type, must be the best layers. Thus, in order to get the best egg qualities, it became necessary from the point of view of Mr. Walton (and of the American Poultry Association) as to type, to use the blood of the green-egg birds in sufficient quantity to fix the best type in the birds of union blood.

That the Cumberland-Fairy Fawns, as show stock, are the best Standard Runners ever seen in any country, concerns only the fancier, as long as we consider them as show stock only. But just as soon as we come to consider them as utility birds laying more consistently than any other variety of fowl known, it becomes incumbent on us to get those of best type, *because type means laying capacity*.

That America has been trained to demand only white eggs may seem to many the veriest folly; but it is a hard fact, and it had been a fact for years before the Runner breeders began to demand white eggs. It amazes our English fancier-friends, but as long as our market puts a premium on white eggs, we must recognize it, even if only a fad. This being true, the only thing that remains for us in the United States, if we are to have the best layers in Runners (and also the best stock) is to select out the white-egg layers from the Cumberland-Fairy Fawn stock. To complete this is the task which the officers of the Cumberland Club have set themselves; for which service to this whole big country anger, misrepresentation, threats, etc., have been poured upon them in a great foaming torrent of abuse, by breeders outside the Club.

The Cumberland-Fairy Fawns still lay quite a proportion of green eggs. But it is only necessary to send the ones not wanted to the butcher, where they will bring at least twice what it cost

to raise them. People need not fear to invest in this stock here, because our breeders, so far as I know, send out only the white eggs. This means that the 1913 stock will all have had white-egg mothers, making one more dilution, or, at least, selection. If the few that lay green eggs among these be again thrown out, we ought to be quite near a real white-egg strain, by that time. At all events, this would make at least four generations from the green admixture; while American Standard breeders have virtually advertised that it took them but two or three generations to select out strains which gave "every egg strictly pure white"—and "snow-white" at that! A strange fact is that these very American Standard Runner breeders make the loudest outcry against the Cumberland-Fairy-Fawn stock, on account of a few green eggs, some of them claiming that it can never be selected to white eggs! In using this argument, they condemn themselves more strongly than any one else could, as it is really scarcely more than a year since they began to claim a white-egg strain generally. One who is in some ways the most prominent of all is reported to have sold ducks quite recently giving 100% of green eggs, (while claiming a strictly white-egg strain) and refusing to make good to the customer who complained. This information was sent me in March, 1913. This much is certain: *If the American Standard breeders could select to a white-egg strain, the Cumberland-Fairy Fawn breeders can do the same.* That is all that needs to be said, except that this work is largely done already.

As to the exact place of origin of these ducks, I doubt if any one knows except Mr. J. W. Walton and one or two co-workers. Mr. Walton, with whom I have long been in correspondence, has never stated that they came from India directly, so far as I know. He has said that he had "new blood direct from the native Indian source" and people have translated this as variously as their own interests demanded. "Indian Root Type," is one of Mr. Walton's

expressions. His contention is that, as certain breeder-huckster-judges did their best to ruin the Cumberland Runners in earlier years, he will give them no chance to do this with the new type before it is well established. This is the reason he gives for not revealing the definite source of his new stock.

It becomes simply a question as to whom to believe. Every prominent writer in England whom I was able to consult referred me to Mr. Walton as knowing more about origin and value of Runners than *any other man in England*. In addition to this, he has been the "Honorable Secretary" to the British Runner Club for a long term of years consecutively. This, it seems to me, ought to establish his standing with the general public.

Much of India consists of mountain fastness and wild Jungle. While I am not concerned in proving that the Runners came direct from India to England (though Mr. Walton has said *it is proved that the first ones came in an India ship*) it is certainly possible that Runners *could* exist in a wild or partially-wild state in forgotten or never-known localities, and utterly unknown to the "authorities." It would be far more easily possible for travelers and agents on the lookout, to find the "from-England" Runners said to have been introduced into India many years ago, than it would be to find the "natives". For these last might be in hiding in far-away fastness or jungle-swamps, or untrodden desert. Thus it would be almost certain that interested American or other foreigners to India, who follow mostly the beaten routes, would find and import home the "from-England" kind; and they might, no doubt, firmly believe that they had the real "Indian" Runners. Critics and writers in general seem to have no conception that both domesticated and wild or "native" Runners might be found in India, if only people knew where to look.

It is plain, however, that for people here to assert that no native Runners exist in that distant and huge country, just be-

cause domesticated Runners (admittedly sent from England to India at a time when Runners in England were in a bad tangle as to type) are also found there, is to show an amazing lack of logic. It would be exactly as sensible for a Chinaman who had never seen a wild Mallard here, to swear that there were no wild Mallards in existence in the United States because he had seen or heard of domesticated Mallards, and crossed Mallards, (and even Runner-Mallards) here!

I have been for some time in possession of letters telling of "importations direct from Calcutta", and indeed of a photograph said to show one of them. A few people seem to believe that India was "salted" with Runners! A Dutch writer speaks of Runners as somewhat common in some parts of the Dutch East Indies. However, it seems likely that all these may be of the "from-Europe" kind. A letter is even now being published by the less-careful poultry journals, purporting to give positive proof that there are no Runners native to India. The so-called "proof" is so flimsy as to be almost ludicrous. It consists chiefly of a "probable" and a "probably" from an "Agricultural Adviser's assistant", doubtless only a clerk with as scant knowledge of things outside his desk as clerks usually have. Even if the one real statement of the letter: "Nothing in the nature of a definite breed of duck is obtainable in India, as there are as yet no fanciers who have taken up the selection of birds to type," be literally and exactly true, it would have *no bearing* on the question; except to make it the more likely that all the people who deny Mr. Walton's claims to have imported Runners from there are wrong. For, the word "*breed*" is never properly used except in connection with domesticated animals. The claimed importations by various people in England and the United States of birds which are said to be fairly common in India may very well be domesticated "Runners of the rather indifferent kind sent from England to India twenty or thirty or perhaps more years

N. Y. Blue Ribbon
Old Duck in Fore-
ground

Head from Life,
Ideal in Type

A Snappy Young
Cumberland Duck
of 1912 Hatch

ago." The Wilsons of England are said to have sent Runners there at that time, before the British breeders had done very much selective work. Mrs. Pickering has said publicly that she herself "sent eggs and the breed all over the world," including the European countries where it is said that they are found. But *none of these groups* is admitted by Mr. Walton to be of the genuine best type.

The fact that one of his bitterest rivals among Runner breeders recently sent to Mr. Walton to buy all he could spare of one group of the Walton "new native blood" Runners, speaks more loudly for Mr. Walton's stock than any words could do.

THE INDIAN RUNNER CLUBS IN AMERICA.

Up to 1912, all efforts to start a successful club among Runner breeders failed. Most of these seemed to die before they were born, as one might say. Mr. W. J. Patton told me, early in 1912, that he knew of "at least six attempts to start Runner Clubs" before that time, and all failures. "Cold feet", lack of ambition, etc., were offered as reasons for these failures.

All at once, however, a club for the newer White Runners, one for the American Standard birds and two for the English type sprang up, and have kept Runners pretty thoroughly to the fore. There is also the Waterfowl Club which is wooing Runner breeders, and which believes that all these specialty Clubs should unite under its own management. A so-called International Club for water fowls is also holding out inducements. Many of the specialty breeders believe that an "omnibus" club is rather certain to be dominated by the largest group of breeders in it, chiefly for their own interest. These prefer the specialty Clubs, for one breed or variety only. The American Poultry Association complains that water-fowl breeders join it in very small numbers, and therefore it feels no intense interest in their matters, and argues that they have little right to expect its aid

The White Runner Club is now more than a year old, while the two clubs for English Runners are now (May, 1913) nearing a year, counting from the beginnings of publicity as to organization. When it was about a year old, the White Runner Club voted thenceforth to breed to the English Standard as to type. This sensible action may be regarded as a striking victory for the English type.

One of the peculiarities as to club influence is seen in recently published news and comment. One of the English Runner Clubs here has adopted the Standard heretofore in force, just as British breeders have adopted *a revision of it*, and Belgian breeders have petitioned to be allowed to use *this revision*. A man somewhat prominent in the International Club has declared for the *older* 1905 American Runner Standard, whose requirements were largely discarded by the best British breeders years ago.

The Cumberland White-Egg Indian Runner Club, of which the present writer has been President since its organization, has made a slow and steady growth, and has put out a year-book declaring its aims, laying down breeding ideals, giving information boiled down for all its members. It has prepared an original Standard for the Penciled Runners, and, with others, has petitioned for its rightful place in the Standard of Perfection, for the English Penciled Indian Runner Duck. Its Business Unity Committee was a bright, original thought, and this Committee is doing good work. This Club invites to join it, as members, only those who place the English Penciled Runner first, as being the true breed type. As all varieties *must follow in type* the one which gains admission as the breed type, breeders of this type stand fast in the claim to this position.

Breeders of the American Standard type have recently shown much unfairness by keeping very prominent the statement that the English Runner is a disqualified bird. This has never been true, if the Standard was followed, for it uses the

general descriptive term "fawn" and does not say a word about color disqualification for penciling, in two shades of fawn. Moreover, not mentioning this at all, the English Penciled Runner is still *strictly a Standard duck, carefully bred to a Standard that is stronger on type than the American Standard for Runners has ever been.* English ducks are very properly bred to English Standards and *are as thoroughly Standard ducks as any that can be mentioned.* More so, in fact, because they follow true Runner type. To speak of them as non-standard is simply to make one more attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the people who want to know, and who have been, in the past, blinded beyond measure by the "dust."

The Future of the Indian Runners in America

CHAPTER XV

At the present writing, many of the *fanciers* of the country still favor the plain, fawn type. I have no doubt that most of them have taught themselves to admire the plain feathers most, in the Indian Runner, even if they did not do so at first. Yet, the very same breeders would go into raptures over a Cornish hen if she showed extra good penciling! Many of these breeders are so inconsistent as to argue for the greater beauty of the plain Runner, when it is a well-known fact that *pencilings, lacings, and the like have given all the more distinctive beauty to our wonderfully varied breeds of the ornamental types among our domestic fowls*. Those distinctively known as “ornamental” (therefore especially beautiful, of course) are the ones that show most variation in colors and markings. The plain are simply—well, *plain*, and that is all there is to it.

It behooves every one who wants Indian Runners, no matter of which type, to inform himself thoroughly as to the differences in the two types, and to be very sure that he buys of a breeder who has what he wants. The two types have been *bred together*, which of course makes more confusion. The oldest of the breeders here of the English type sold birds, years ago, to the chief promoters of the American Standard type of to-day. Very many breeders have tried both types. A dozen or more of them have written of their experiences in the poultry papers. Of them all, I think only one or two have reported that the American type were the better layers. Most of the others stated that, when han-

dled side by side, the English type were the better layers; some, that they were equal.

I am not for a minute in opposition to those who really want to breed the Runner of the present American, Standard type. What I do want, is to make sure that the farmers, who are to supply the great majority of buyers of Indian Runner eggs for hatching, for some years at least, shall get the type of bird that will prove most practical. They will stand for the white-egg type, I am certain. They will also stand for the English type strongly when they are made to know that it calls for a bird with longer body, and therefore with more egg and meat capacity.

It is scarcely possible, I think, to insist too strongly that those who believe in the Indian Runner as bred to the specific, English Standard, should make clear in each advertisement, just what they are offering. Only in this way, can we avoid the infinite confusion which is likely to arise.

In 1910, I said: "It would be only just if classes should be made, in the shows, for the English-bred duck. It would be the only *amende* that could be made for having taken the breed name away from this duck and given it to a substitute duck. It is perfectly practicable, as I see it, to have classes for the English type, and judged by the English Standard." This good work has now begun.

Future? Her future brightens daily! Nearly every mail brings good news of some new opening, some change to higher status of the genuine Runners. Only occasionally is there any doubt of the Runner.

I read on this day of writing, one of the very few stories of failure with the Indian Runner. The story ran that the first sitting of eggs from "a prominent breeder" gave only two weak ducklings; a second sitting gave five ducklings, all of which lived to maturity, but from the two ducks, June-hatched, only one egg was received in March, and later, the owner sold them in disgust.

I do not hesitate to say that one of two things was back of this: either the stock was run-down, weak show stock or close-yarded till it was worthless, or else the ducks had no decent care.

Again I say: Whether the genuine Indian Runner of the best type will make good or not no longer enters into the question of the future of the breed here at all; she will absolutely do her part. *That is proved.* The only thing that does enter as a real question is whether or not growers have sufficient business ability to make a market for the eggs as table eggs. The Runner will furnish at least three varieties of fancy ducks; her "difference," her distinction ensure that. But, if, as a farm duck, she is to make good, people must be able to sell the eggs. If James Rankin was able to push a duck not at all wanted into the market, and to create such a demand that these birds sold by the tens of thousands in individual growers' hands, are we willing to admit that we cannot make a market for a product in such infinitely greater demand, viz., large white eggs? I affirm that, if this matter does not work out as we would like, *it will be our fault*, not that of the Indian Runner!

Every day adds to the possibilities. The morning mail, one November day,—the day before the 2nd edition of the Indian Runner Duck Book went to press,—brought me the news that the big Chicago show would receive the English Runners and the white Runners on the same terms with the American Standard type. For this immediate outcome along the line of justice, we have to thank especially Mr. Theo. Hewes, the Secretary.

There is really no limit, as things promise at present, to the helpful future of the Indian Runner. The south has been shipping a few duck eggs in late winter, the best being scheduled as "Baltimore eggs," at wonderfully good prices. She would be missing the greatest new, farm opportunity that has ever been offered her did she not add the Indian Runner to her helpers, and send *more* duck eggs through the channel already open. She sees it, I know, for inquiries from the south multiply!

Under date of March 6, 1910, "The Egg Reporter" quoted 22½c and 23c, "the lowest price so far this season" on hens' eggs, fresh gathered firsts. At the same time, ducks' eggs were referred to as "beginning to move; the best coming from Baltimore, and these bring 42c." If, as the New York dealer assured me, New York market, even now, will average 35c a dozen for ducks' eggs, the year around, the 180-egg duck will bring in \$5.25. Who would ask a better investment?

One attempt was made by a Northern breeder to influence the future of the Indian Runner in this country by sending a pen of the Penciled, white-egg English-bred type to the National Competition in Missouri, then just beginning its work. Once more, the Express Companies killed the hopes of one of their patrons, as they have done in thousands of instances before. The birds were nearly all smothered *en route*, and thus was the Penciled Runner hindered from showing her pace in utility work. It had been hoped that a test in this country might settle many questions now open to difference of opinion.

Which type will lead? This is the question which has been agitating Runner breeders for the last five years, and the problem has more recently been complicated by the introduction here of the very superior Cumberland-Fairy-Fawns. The plain-fawn-and-white contingent felt assured they had forced this question to a settlement, when their views were expressed in the 1910 American Standard Revision. But the position of the Penciled breeders is: "This matter won't be settled till it is settled right!"

The prospect that it will be settled right as English Penciled breeders look at it is far more encouraging than it was three years, or two, even one year ago. The whole world now knows that the penciled birds were the birds described in the Digby Standard and the more recent English Standards as "fawn". I believe the great majority of people are now convinced that the penciled birds were shut out from their rightful place in the American

Standard of Perfection. It has not been so much a question as to what is right, as a question of what is expedient, with the Standard makers: a question of whether or not they dare to "turn down" the breeders of the solid-fawn-and-white Runners.

Just as this book goes to press, two interesting items offered as news, from two different "camps", come to hand. I set them down here, simply that readers may watch for the future to prove whether or not these prophets had solid basis for their news-prophecies. Mrs. George Simpson, a chief representative of the more rabid division of American Standard Runner fanatics, says in print, with regard to the future status of the types, and Runner Standard revision: "We had information only a few days ago, said to be reliable and from one high in authority, that we need not expect a change." Later, under the same heading, she says: "I am informed by one high in authority that that [the admission of the Penciled Runners to the American Standard] is not likely to happen." In May, 1913, O. F. Sampson, of the American-English club, speaking of the Standard recently discarded by the British Indian Runner Club, said: "As I wrote before, I am pretty sure it will be the Standard of the future, and adopted by the American Poultry Association Committee for the 1915 edition."

There are two thoroughly good reasons why this Standard should not be adopted here in 1915: 1st, it has just been revised and changed by the people who have bred Runners the longest and know most about them,—the English breeders: 2nd, an unwritten rule of the American Poultry Association regarding the Standards it uses, makes it certain that the Standard to which Mr. Sampson refers will not be used, unless all previous precedents are broken. A third might be that the Revision Committee is not likely to make the mistake of using a discarded Standard.

The Cumberland White Egg Indian Runner Club has also presented a Standard (approved by its Directors and declared by

good legal opinion not to infringe on any other) original with this Club, and following the best precedent as far as possible; together with a petition that the English Penciled Runners be admitted as the breed-type. There is no way in which the English Penciled Runner, as now bred, can come in under the present Standard demands, because it does not and will not "follow in every respect" the type at present described in the American Standard.

I am not sufficiently a prophet, to be able, like others to tell what *will* be done; there is too much human nature and warring business interest involved. But of this I feel sure: That the men on the Revision committee have not given out through the above news-mongers, what they will do in settlement of the Indian Runner muddle; for I think they are both too wise and too decent to do this. Besides, the two above reports do not agree!

The one thing that is most certain just now, is that unless the English Penciled type is admitted as the breed type, the muddle will grow worse instead of better, because some of the breeders of the American Standard type are adopting the tactics of the desperate, and are leaving no stone unturned to cloud the origin, the history and the present situation of the breed. They have said that these birds came from the West Indies, from Scotland, from Canada, from Belgium; and even that they were manufactured in this country. They have said, and are still saying that the birds were named by a woman resident in America, after an American Indian. This christener—it is claimed—sent the Runners to many foreign countries. The fact that items on Indian Runners *were in print before the date of this claimed naming*, makes no apparent difference with the vogue of this amazing story. The fact that ex-Hon. Secretary Wilson said years ago that his birds had bred true to type for fifty years, makes no difference with the story here that they were named something like thirty years ago; it is repeated just the same. The latest repe-

tition of this name-story comes from a man who claims to be Secretary of an "International" Club; who favors green eggs equally with white; and who says that iridescent blue on head and back is absolutely foreign to the breed; yet who favors a steely sheen on a fawn duck, all over! A blind leader, surely. To blend steel color with fawn is surely the last word of folly and inconsistency.

Whether the Indian Runner Duck eventually makes good all over this country or not depends not on the duck, but on the breeders. If they permit a slump in size; if they send stale and under-sized eggs to market; if they handle the birds for many successive seasons without water, without proper care and without new blood from other flocks which have more natural conditions, they will ruin the Runner and her chances to make a great opportunity for the American people on the farms. The feed of ducks in a natural state consists largely of meat, as proportional to other feed. I think those who have not had good success have either had run down stock or else have not made proper use of meat, and bone, in the rations.

The southern city of Atlanta has for two years held a marvelous show, especially in the line of Runners. In 1911 it had a wonderful exhibit as to numbers. But in 1912, the classes of White Runners so far outdistanced even the American Standard birds as to leave them almost unnoticeable, by comparison. When a single show can get out an entry of a single type of Runners counting well up toward 400, it is setting a pace hard to equal. Yet even this is mixed with danger to the breed, because the favored birds were very small, and English breeders are sending green-egg White Runners to this country.

GREEN-EGG WHITE RUNNERS

The matter of the color of Runner eggs is getting worse and worse. It has been said all over the country in the poultry periodicals that the White Runners never laid any green eggs. Many

felt that it would be well to go into whites, in order to dodge the whole question of green-egg Runners. I have not known of any American strains of White Runners laying green eggs. Certainly the "White Queen Quality" strain has not done so, and I have had no complaints about the Spencer strain, so well distributed here.

But early in the spring of 1913, I received a letter from a western breeder of Runners, relating his experience in getting green-egg White Runners from England. He stated that he had spent well toward \$100.00 trying to get something really first class, (although he was a poor man) believing that it would be a wise investment. Not knowing that any Whites laid green eggs, he had not specified white-egg birds. Later, he sent me a letter from the English firm of the Cooks, of Orpington fame,—who sold him the ducks,—stating that they had never had a strain of White Runners that laid anything but green eggs. As it is impossible for English breeders to conceive the feeling against green-duck eggs in America, it is absolutely necessary to state positively that you do not want and will not receive green-egg birds, when that is the case.

Southern breeders have become so eager to get the lead in white Runners, at any cost, that a good many have been imported from England into the South. I do not know how many of them lay green eggs. But a breeder named Seeds reports that he had green-egg white Runners from Gilbert of England. It must be remembered that British breeders, not disdaining the green egg, cannot take our point of view, and think it is utter folly to turn down a good bird because of the green eggs. Hence, buyers who are obsessed with the white-egg idea, must see to it that they protect themselves.

What, then, of the dilution of "new native blood direct from the Indian source," known as the "Cumberland-Fairy-Fawn" stock? Those breeders of this stock, in this country, with whose work I am familiar, have 1913 breeding stock of seven-eighths

Cumberland white-egg blood, the rest (one-eighth) being the "new native" blood. If bred again to the Cumberlands this year, the progeny will be only one-sixteenth "new native" or green-egg blood. If they laid in exact proportion to their blood, they might give about six eggs to the hundred showing the color more or less. No one knows just how they will lay, of course. Hence, the future of the Runner as affected by the new blood is as yet uncertain.

That is, it is a bit uncertain as regards the market egg. As to the fancy quality, it is perfectly certain that the new blood will improve it, wherever it is used. The bodies are better, the backs straighter at neck, the feathering more compact, the penciling more in accordance with the breed Standard, and the markings very nearly as good; probably quite as good in the best specimens. The heads and necks are better, the carriage more graceful, the running gait not only faster, but decidedly better than any hitherto shown even in New York's best shows.

It works out about to this, as a commercial proposition: If a buyer wants to go into fancy stock and is willing to do a moderately good business, without any trouble in answering questions about the green egg, it is better for him to stick to the pure white-egg Cumberland stock. If, however, he wants to get a look-in at the best prizes in the best shows, or if he is going to raise Runners for market eggs only, the Cumberland-Fairy-Fawn stock bred to a white egg is the best stock for him. The small proportion of green-egg ducks which the future will give may be sold with the surplus males for more than they cost to produce, and a few years will weed them all out, if we may judge by the American Standard breeders' claims. The faint-hearted would better take the Cumberlands. We do not have to argue that the white egg is the more attractive: it shows for itself. But, at present, the proportion of Irish people in New York insures, there, the sale of the green eggs. Later, they will be fewer, if proper selections are made in the stock.

The Newer Variety, the White Runner

CHAPTER XVI

The future of the Indian Runners must, of course, include the variety recently come into such amazing popularity in this country, the beautiful White Runner. Though not long advertised here, the White Runners already interest the public at large so greatly that they deserve accented notice. In California, in the middle-west, in the middle states,—the three great first centers of the variety,—they are now strongly advertised, often displacing the Fawn types; while the South is “wild” over them.

There cannot be much doubt that very many White Runners—so-called—have arisen through crosses. The most likely crosses, perhaps, are those of the Pekin, or the Call Duck, with the colored Runners; with later selection. This last probably explains why we have “white Runners,” even in the most prominent shows, showing short, badly-dished bills, and small size; while very coarse heads and a tendency to dishing in the bill and logy, heavy bodies point back to the Pekin cross. I saw Pekins in a very large show that were as upright in carriage as almost any of the American Standard Runners there. One specimen, in especial, was as upright in carriage as any Runner I had then seen; though colored Runners are better now, especially since the Penciled birds have been given place in the shows again.

A 1913 letter from the South says of local “white Runners”: “I am afraid of them, as all have the Pekin type very much pronounced.” Texas breeders say this is true of most of the so-called White Runners which appear in their shows, also. A Runner built on a Pekin foundation would be too broad and thick-set, for many generations, no doubt.

I wish to call especial attention to the cut of a White Runner female given herewith, "The White Queen." I believe her to be the most typical Runner in the sport-ancestry of the White Runners in this country. This bird is, moreover, a *straight* sport, as far as anything I really know can show. I do know that no white blood has been introduced into her ancestry since it came into my hands, some years before her arrival on the scene; nor for some years previous to this. It is a known fact that all colored breeds sometimes "sport" into white. The White Queen is the ancestor of many birds better than herself: a sufficient proof of good blood.

White Runners are not an absolutely new product except in specific cases. Mr. H. DeCourcy, speaking of the Runners as they appeared in Ireland some years ago, wrote, in the *Reliable Poultry Journal*, that the Runners had been bred for several years by farmers, with no regard to type and feathering. Yet he stated that the distinctive features of the bird were so fixed that they still tended to dominate. I noticed that he referred to the "carriage" as penguin-like, not making the blunder of the American 1905 Standard in saying that the FORM is like the penguin, which is positively absurd!

He spoke of three distinct varieties at the time of writing, known in Ireland, and said that the penciled fawn and white—"a beautifully-penciled fawn color," as he described it—"certainly has a distinctive shape and carriage which the other varieties possess but in a modified form, and it is most probable that both the Brown-and-White and the White varieties have been bred from the original Fawn-and-White, either by the admixture of foreign blood, or by selection, or by both."

This testimony must be considered by any fair mind as absolutely unbiased, because it was given before our Standard-makers discovered that the plain fawn, with white, was "the one and only true." It was published in this country before there

THE FIRST GENERATION FROM "WHITE QUEEN" AND "QUEEN'S
SISTER" (EXTREME POSE OF EXCITEMENT)

was any question of breeding to a solid fawn as far as our Standard was concerned.

I said, in the first edition of the Indian Runner Duck Book: "The white bird, everywhere and always, is a popular bird. And as soon as the public is assured that it breeds true in any measure, we may look for a strong movement toward the White Runner." I think my short chapter was the first reference in any book to the White Runners. They were then very new here.

The march of events is already showing my 1910 prediction just. One breeder of the White Runners calls them "the coming duck of America"; another says: "It seems to have outclassed its parent in the matter of egg production and in the production of pure white eggs." (Its parent, from this man's point of view, being the American Standard Runner). Also: "as a fancy fowl, for pleasure and profit, I doubt if there is any other that has ever proved itself the equal of the White Runner Duck."

To be sure, these are the words of lovers and advertisers of the variety. But even T. F. McGrew, the prominent judge and head of a Correspondence Department in a widely-known system of schools, voiced something of the same opinion recently in a private letter, when he said: "I believe that the most popular of all Runners will be the White Runner Ducks." He also referred to the fact that breeders are dropping the adjective "Indian," in this variety, with commendation.

With reference to the varying quality of White Runners, I might mention a report that came over from England concerning some which were exhibited there in 1911. The regular correspondent of "The Feathered World" (the most highly regarded English poultry periodical, I believe) said, with regard to those appearing at the Crystal Palace Show (England), after describing the new "Upright Mysteries," or "Fairy Fawns," as some call them: "As to the Whites, penned alongside the ex-

tremes above named, perhaps it's scarcely fair to criticise. Comparisons may be unfair. The 'made in Germany' fraternity might very well benefit by a trot around alongside the 'uprights.' Still, they are under way, and no doubt in a few years we may see them as perfect in soda-water-bottle character as the winners of to-day, when even the orthodox 'Fawn and whites' had to take a back seat."

This indicates that far the best birds seen in England to date are the "Fairy Fawns," and not the 'orthodox' Fawns, nor the Whites. Where the first sport into the Whites was an exceptionally good bird, the progeny has a chance to be better than most of the Fawns. When not exceptional, the progeny is likely to be common-place also.

In a large group shown in photograph in one of the widely-circulated poultry magazines a few months before this writing, appear a few birds of extra-fine carriage; in it, also, appear a goodly number of the kind one would rather not have intending customers see. This shows that even the best breeders do not have *all* good birds, and that to buy of any one simply because he is known to have *some* good specimens, and not knowing anything about the actual birds one is buying, is too likely to prove a fiasco.

A very large number of the birds here are of the "Spencer" strain; sometimes called the "Carlisle" strain. Many breeders using this as a foundation have built on it till they convince themselves and advertise that they have a special strain of their own. This modified strain is bred very largely through the west and middle west. The "White Queen Quality" strain has been distributed through many localities in the south, and to quite an extent in California, and has been placed in the main Experiment Station in Texas; whence the authorities reported themselves as "very well pleased."

Before 1912, almost no complaints of any kind reached me

regarding the White Runners, except the very general one of birds following the Pekin type. Some months before the present writing, however, I received a letter from the south, as follows: "We would like very much to know whether your white Runners stay white the year 'round, or whether they are fawn a part of the time. When we started with our whites, we purchased a pen from one of the originators and foremost breeders of this variety in the United States. Our pen is supposed to have been taken out of the flock after the breeders had been mated up for the season. *We were assured that this pen was as good as the best*, and we paid the price. They were white when they came, but they are not white now and have not been for some time. The under part of the head, neck and body are quite a nice shade of fawn, as you will observe by the enclosed feather. You will notice it is only the tip of the feather that is fawn. *Why* were they white when we secured them? *How* could the feathers change color?" This letter is from one of the Directors of the Cumberland Club and shows the need of care in buying even the whites. The feathers showed nearly a half-inch tip of good fawn color. Another letter of near the same time told of buying eggs which gave more than half spotted ducklings, like those of the Fawn varieties.

Earlier, I had thought it probable that quality in the White Runner might be a thing difficult to secure at once. But correspondents have sent me photographs showing, I think, more beautiful birds, for type, than I have ever yet seen at the shows in any one of the three varieties—pictures, indeed, of white loveliness.

The White Runner has been described in at least one American periodical as having a full breast, with more meat than the original Runners carried. From the fancy point of view, I think that to breed thus to a fuller breast would be a mistake. I happen to have personal data upon this very point, because many of the very best (otherwise) of my penciled Runners

have had this full breast. It makes a pretty bird, but not one so distinctive as the original type called for in the English Standard, and shown in our American Standard by Mr. A. O. Schilling.

These birds, and the "ideal" birds shown in the American Standard of Perfection, stand at an angle of 45 degrees. The English ideal is 55 to 65 degrees when in motion, and 65 to 75 degrees when on the alert. I believe that there are few in this country that will reach 55 to 65 degrees when in motion; but I have seen birds easily reach 75 degrees when on the alert, and they were reported from the Crystal Palace Show in England last year as reaching practically 90 degrees! These were, however, from the "new blood from the native source" recently acquired and bred in there, and I presume this country can show nothing quite equal to it, even in an instantaneous pose. I have, indeed, seen birds "stand on end," as it is expressed, and other breeders have told me they had them. The American Standard gives no definite rules for carriage, the nearest it comes to this being in the words, "carried erectly." *Some* photographs, which show perpendicular birds, are pronounced by Mr. Walton to be of stuffed specimens, "posed" to suit!

White Runners are reported now in hand that have laid unceasingly for more than a year, eight of the eggs being equal in weight to a dozen hens' eggs. Why should any one question the equal value of the White Runner with the original fawn and white sorts? Of the two variations in blood in this country of which I have knowledge, one is, *I know*, a sport; the other also claims to be a sport. The White Runners are also said to be more valuable than the original types. If they are, in my opinion it is simply because, at the present time, they will bring higher prices. As to actual, intrinsic value, I doubt if either the white or the penciled excels the other by the value of a copper. Both are "gold-mines" for the people who have skill in handling and skill in marketing, be it as utility birds or as the

fanciest of the fancy, and the charmingest of the charming. In the last, however, the lovely white variety is a lap or two ahead of its blood-rival, the sprightly fawn and white. Yet those who think "trimmings" add to the beauty of all things, may easily convince themselves that the fawns with their liberal trimmings of white, are the lovelier.

One breeder says of the whites: "They seem to fill the long-felt want for a fowl that is easy to rear, one that grows rapidly and matures at an early age, one that produces eggs both summer and winter, and a fowl that can live on almost any kind of food. Such a one we have in the White Runner duck." She continues, "I can conscientiously recommend this new variety," and says that those who raise it will be in the happy condition of never waiting for either eggs, or spending money in the purse.

In some quarters, there has been much doubt as to the kind of bird the new, White Runner might be. Suspicion seemed to forecast that it was likely to have outside blood. It is, as I have shown, no doubt possible that this may be true of some strains—if such they can be called. A sample of this feeling reached me in July of 1911, from one who had seen a cut of Somebody's "White Runners," so-called. He wrote:

"I don't think I care for any White Runners; the head is too large, the neck too thick, the body too short, the breast prominent, and carriage bad; in fact, it lacks about every characteristic we look for in a Runner. It would seem that there is now, and will be almost as much danger of breeders using foreign blood to get white ducks as there has been to get solid light fawn and white ducks."

This does not look like a man who would invest early in White Runners. Yet, having found a breeder whose word he was willing to trust, he bought a start in White Runners in the following September. His first letter, after their receipt, was of this tenor: "I am very much pleased with the White Run-

ners. All that I have seen heretofore and all the cuts that I have gotten hold of have shown such coarse, angular birds that I had almost concluded that I didn't want any White Runners in mine. However, I felt sure that — would either breed good ones or he would not breed any, and you can tell him from me that I have no kick coming on White Runners."

Judging from the way they have been received thus far by those who know of the better types, I think it quite safe to say that their popularity will distance that of the parti-colored varieties. In the premium list of the Southern International Poultry Association show scheduled for December, 1911, special high first prizes of \$10.00 for singles were given to sixteen of the most popular varieties. Among the sixteen *appear both the American Standard Runners and the English penciled type!* This was the first *long step ahead* in the matter of justice to the penciled Runners. I congratulate the managers, and especially Mr. Loring Brown, who was largely instrumental in having this action taken. Southern breeders are going into White Runners heavily.

[A few days later, Mr. Theo. Hewes, Secretary of the great Chicago Show, announced that Chicago would make a class for the Penciled Runners. This gave great encouragement to those breeding to the English Standard. During the same week, word came to me that the Runners with original native blood would surely be shown at Madison Square Garden in December. Such a male bird *was* there shown.]

Some have ventured to inquire, rather timidly, as to the comparative productive capacity and vigor of the White variety. As to vigor, shown by fertility, I may say that I have known the White Runners to produce eggs running to nearly 100 per cent of fertility for months in succession. An occasional sitting would give 100 per cent of ducklings. *This is as good as any variety of duck or of hen will do.* The White Runner is not,

DESCENDANTS FROM ENGLISH PENCILLED; OF 1912 HATCH

of course, thoroughly tested in this country. But when she is a sport, I know no reason why she *should not* be equal in all respects to her fawn progenitors.

As to beauty and charm, a customer recently wrote me, after several months' experience with the White Runners: "I do not think there is anything else in birds that can be so enchanting as the White Runner."

At the present time, the older variety has been so widely advertised, has made small fortunes for so many, and has so caught the public fancy through its style, that it has the greater call, by far. But, inasmuch as the white bird has ever been the favored one in American eyes, and inasmuch as it has greater charm with perhaps equal utility qualities, I look for the White Runner to sweep the decks as soon as there are enough of them to fill the demand. That its breeders are increasing very rapidly, the advertising pages of the poultry prints, and the tremendous entry at the last big Atlanta show, prove very conclusively.

The White Runner, having, when descended from sports from English Penciled, all the effort toward high breeding of many years behind her in her ancestry, has the possibility of improving with great rapidity. I do not hesitate to say that one who starts with Indian Runners will do infinitely better to get one good pair rather than six pairs of average birds, even though the pair cost as much as the other six pairs. Probably this is true of all fancy fowls. I know it to be true of the White Runner.

Mr. Scott, who claims the high egg record of the world, makes the public statement that he considers the loss of 24 ducklings out of 35 in his first season with his present line of birds as the best thing that could have happened to him, since the few left included the famous heavy layer, so that most of his stock came from her. To get all one's stock, from the beginning,

from an extra layer or an extra-good exhibition specimen of extra vigor is the one thing that may count most for the beginner. It saves him from many years of up-hill work in trying to breed up to the good specimens.

As to ornamental quality, there is nothing in nature more lovely and charming than white water fowl playing on the water. The swans have been considered most attractive ornaments since time immemorial. Men have bought white domestic fowls wherewith to ornament the lawns of their country places, merely for the beauty of the contrast. The White Embden Goose and the White Chinese variety have also been much used as ornamental fowls. But the White Indian Runner, slimmer, graceful as a fawn, distinctive in shape and carriage, bids fair to become infinitely more popular than either the goose or even the swan could ever become.

Altogether, it seems to me that the most beautiful and distinctive fancy fowl ever offered to the American public is the charming White Runner Duck.

ADDENDUM

As this third edition is about to go to the bindery, the first copy of the new "British Standard of Perfection" of the Indian Runner Duck Club of England reaches America. Some of the changes may be regarded here as radical. For instance, any color or combination of color is accepted, provided that it is accompanied by correct type, as shown in shape, carriage and gait. The accepted weight of the drake is from three and one-half pound, to five pounds, with the females a half pound lighter on each figure. Happily, type is stressed even more than before; eighty-five points in all being given to it, thirty of which are accredited to carriage. The other fifteen are given to color and condition together. One drastic change is that waddling has been made a disqualification. This means that birds must be judged on the move as well as in the show coop. And, it is demanded that judges hold strictly to the Standard.

A new office has been created in the above Club, viz., that of "American Secretary." The first to fill this office is C. S. Valentine.