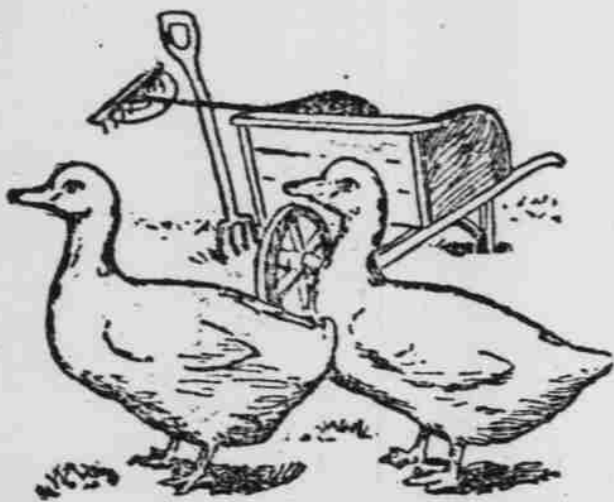


AGRICULTURAL.

TOPICS OF INTEREST RELATIVE TO FARM AND GARDEN.

GROWING PEKIN DUCKS.

A great many people, first and last, have been seized with an irresistible desire to go into poultry raising upon a large scale, says Webb Donnell in the New York Times. They have followed out the desire with varying results, but the majority have made lamentable failures. Especially has there been failure when the attempt has been made to make chickens and eggs the chief source of income. There is one branch of the poultry business, however, in which certain individuals have made quite a distinct success, and that is the raising of young ducks for market. Long Island is particularly noted as the location of the greater number of these mammoth duck plants, though an equal degree of success appears to have followed the efforts of parties in other parts of the country along the same line. The Pekin, a pair of which are figured herewith, is the duck used for breeding purposes in all these great duck hatcheries. This is because of its white color—making pin-feathers less objectionable in the dressed specimen—its large size and, in particular, its habit of wonderfully rapid growth from the shell up to six or eight weeks of age. One who has never raised these ducks can scarcely realize with what amazing rapidity the Pekin ducklings will shoot up. It almost



seems as though one can see them expanding before his very eyes! I have kept all kinds of poultry, with the exception of geese, and speak advisedly when I say that for rapid growth—the rapid doubling and doubling again of size—there is nothing in the whole list that has come under my notice that can at all compare with the growth of a young Pekin duck. In the meantime, the young duck is eating in a way to well nigh cause a famine! But he turns what he eats to good purpose, and gives a satisfactory profit if he is fed to his utmost capacity for a few weeks and is then sent promptly to market. Kept a little beyond the proper limit, and he will soon be "eating his head off," for a duck's bill is a veritable shovel, and a shovel that will always be worked effectively when anything in the way of food is in sight. I suppose there is a limit to a duck's appetite, but just at this moment I do not recall ever having witnessed it.

In large cities there is a demand at particular seasons of the year for young ducks, and it is to meet this demand that the business of duck raising on a truly mammoth scale has been established. All of these establishments hatch with incubators, some of them having a capacity of 9000 or 10,000 eggs every four weeks. Moreover, as Pekin duck eggs are remarkably fertile, almost as many little ducks are hatched out as there are eggs put into the incubators. The little ducks are brooded by hot water pipes passing through long sectional brooders, and are fed from start to finish on a forcing diet. As these ducks are, in many cases, to take the place of unobtainable, or too expensive, wild ducks, the idea has been conceived of feeding them on celery during the last few weeks of their growth to give the peculiar game flavor which wild ducks acquire by feeding upon wild celery in the marshes. So pronounced is this flavor of celery fed ducks that one firm, at

least, has acres upon acres of celery growing to feed to its thousands upon thousands of ducks.

It goes without saying that ducks love the water, and in the case of the breeding stock it is undoubtedly better if access can be had to a pond or stream, but in the case of young ducks being grown rapidly, the absence of water for swimming purposes is not a detriment, but probably a positive advantage, for it would undoubtedly be much more difficult and very much more expensive to put flesh upon a duck that has access to water for swimming. Too much exercise is not conducive to the putting on of flesh, and a quick putting on of flesh is an important point in this business.

As a duck for the farm the Pekin is admirably fitted in every way except color, and this is no objection where the birds can have access to water to keep their plumage white; but where ducks are kept simply for consumption, and where water for swimming is not at hand, I should much prefer to keep the beautifully colored Rouens, which are of large size and thrifty habit of growth. They are excellent birds from a practical point of view, while, as ornaments to one's ponds or poultry yards, they cannot be surpassed, being always attractive in appearance, whether there is a chance to swim or not. With a white duck, however, the chance is different, for where water is not at hand it will shortly get its plumage into a decidedly filthy condition that makes its presence an eyesore. But for duck breeding on a large scale, where quick and large growth is of the first importance, the Pekin cannot be surpassed. When celery fed it undoubtedly passes muster on thousands of tables as wild duck.

FARM AND GARDEN NOTES.

Guernsey cattle will give the highest colored butter of any breed of cattle in the world.

The man who sticks to raising first-class cattle and hogs, and does it with good judgment, will find it reasonably profitable.

Do not overlook buckwheat as a summer crop. It grows on poor land but yields more largely if the land is rich. It is considered a profitable crop for plowing under in the fall, being used for renovating poor land. Its blossoms afford excellent forage for bees at a time when they can find but few honey-producing plants on which to work.

It is contended that severe winters do not destroy insects, as they go down below the effects of moisture, but it is a fact that the severe frosts of winter do destroy some of them. Late frosts, however, which come after the warm weather begins, are very destructive to insects. In 1859 a June frost destroyed the growing crops in Pennsylvania, but also exterminated the red wheat weevil, which more than paid for the damage to crops.

The Spice Islands.

The Moluccas, or Spice Islands, is a name applied to the islands of the Malay Archipelago, between Celebes and Papua, comprising Gilolo, Ceram, Booro, Amboyna and Banda Islands, Oby, Bachian and Waigeo. They are volcanic and fertile, producing nutmegs, cloves and other spices, sago, fruits and fine woods. Around them are many pearl fisheries. The Moluccas have been for centuries alternately in the possession of the Spaniards, Portugues and Dutch, but at present are held by the last named Nation. The population consists of Malays, Papuans, Chinese, Japanese and some Europeans.

The Largest Pecan Orchards.

The largest pecan plantation, of which we have seen any account, is that of F. A. Swineln, Brownwood, Texas, which is said to contain 11,000 trees and occupy 400 acres. We have no report on the yield or the price obtained for the nuts. Colonel W. R. Stuart, of Ocean Springs, Miss., is also an extensive cultivator of pecans, and he made a very fine exhibit of these nuts at the World's Fair, Chicago, 1893.

HOLMES A HUMAN FIEND

One of the Most Remarkable Criminals of the Century.

MURDER WAS HIS MANIA.

He Ruthlessly Made Way With Men, Women and Children After Insuring Their Lives—A Sketch of His Bloody Career—His Real Name is Mudgett and He Was Born in New Hampshire.

Weird and gruesome beyond human conception almost are the developments at Chicago in the case of Holmes, the alleged murderer, bigamist and swindler, now in jail at Philadelphia, awaiting trial. From almost every nook and corner of his ma'odorous "castle" are coming evidences of murder in the form of ghastly relics of bodies that were slaughtered. Each hour adds to the discoveries. In fiendish cunning they were laid away and would have remained forever unknown but for the action of the authorities in ordering the place torn down. From the great vault, from the ruins of the cellar, from the vat in which chemicals were placed, from every place, in fact, that could hide a body are evidences of wholesale murder. Chicago is now vying with Detroit, Toronto and Philadelphia in an endeavor to obtain possession of the accused that justice may be meted out to him.

No series of crimes of the century, in cold-blooded atrocity or in the number of unfortunate victims, in any degree approaches this. The victims ranged in age from nine to fifty years. Many were believed to have been murdered for the sake of the insurance they carried. Others were sacrificed, fearing they knew the secret. They were made away with in divers manners. The body of one was cut up into small pieces and fed into a stove. That of another was put into a trunk and sunk in the lake. Two others were shut up in a vault and allowed to die there, the bodies being subsequently articulated and the skeletons sold to a medical student.

Not only is the cellar of the "castle" a veritable graveyard, but the bones of other victims are scattered all over the country. One is believed to have been murdered in Arkansas and two in Canada. The trail of the murderer is all over the country, and in every case it was either the getting of insurance money or the fear of discovery that was the motive. These capital offenses were necessarily accompanied by minor ones, such as arson and perjury, but the graver crimes may be summarized as follows:

The murder of B. F. Pietzel.
The murder of Alice Pietzel.
The murder of Nellie Pietzel.
The murder of Howard Pietzel.
The murder of Mrs. Julia Connor.
The murder of Anna Williams.
The murder of Minnie Williams.
The murder of Emma Cigrand.
The murder of Milford C. Cole.
The murder of Dr. Russler.
The swindling of insurance companies to the extent of at least \$250,000.
Criminal history is without a parallel for Holmes. He seemed to have a mania for crime. There was no form too revolting for him, no deed too daring. Murder and swindling was his life business. He pursued it as a profession and with a boldness that was startling almost beyond credence. He operated everywhere and anywhere, with headquarters at Chicago. His "castle" there was a ghastly mausoleum.
Like most other criminals of method, Holmes was not born in criminal surroundings. His was an educated shrewdness, quickened and made alert by the risks he ran. It was not common, low cunning, but the development of a plan that was the life work of a daring criminal.

The story of the life of Holmes is a gruesome tale. If written in fiction it would be denounced as unnatural and improbable. It would be deemed utterly beyond belief that in every city of consequence in the country, except the city of New York, he had plied successfully his criminal trade and finally was only brought behind prison bars through the accusation of a train robber, whose only grudge was that Holmes had not recompensed him for an introduction to a "useful" man.

This man Holmes, confessed bigamist, perjurer, swindler and alleged murderer, was born a short distance from London, in the New Hampshire hills. His real name is Mudgett. Besides Holmes he is known to have used the alias Howard. His parents were plain, homely country folk, but with ambitions for their boy. He was the prize boy in his classes always. From his farm-home he went to Gilmartin and there taught school. He saved money enough to attend a medical college at Burlington, Vt. Then he went West and entered upon his career of crime, which included murder, arson, swindling insurance companies, bigamy and burking.

An Astonishing Agreement.

Mrs. Sweeny, President of the Dallas (Texas) W. C. T. U., has agreed with John R. Chalesworth and Mr. Paget, infidels, of that city, to pray for their conversion. If they are converted within three months they agree to acknowledge the existence of God, and if not, she agrees to deny His existence.

THE NATIONAL GAME.

Pittsburg has thus far tried nine pitchers. Pitcher Stratton has been released by Chicago.

Hoffer is Baltimore's most successful pitcher.

Brooklyn shut out Louisville three times this season.

Cleveland has not yet won a game in Chicago this season.

Pitcher Meekin, of New York, appears to be all right again.

Ehret, of St. Louis, seems to be a complete failure this season.

Turner, of Philadelphia, generally gets two strikes before he hits the ball.

Clarke, of New York, seems to be even more effective with Farrell to catch him.

Pickett, of the Augustas, is said to be one of the finest young batsmen in the country.

When the Cleveland Club is defeated the attendance drops more than in any other city.

Hassamaer, of Washington, has not made an error in fifty-six games, and but two this season.

In thirty-three games McKean, of Cleveland, has failed but twice to make at least one hit.

The good work of the New Yorks in the West has boomed the game once more in Gotham.

Since Davis has joined the team New York has settled down to good work. His batting was missed.

Rusie declares that he considers Lange, of Chicago, the most valuable outfielder in the League.

Hogriever, of Cincinnati, has stolen more bases than any one except Hamilton, of Philadelphia.

All the League teams have now been shut out, Baltimore being the last to succumb at Cleveland.

Baseball is now being played extensively in Mexico. It ranks next to cycling as a popular sport.

The New York Club has purchased Pfeffer's release from the Louisville Club and he will play second base.

At Rockford, Ill., a dozen society young ladies have organized a baseball team and will play several amateur clubs.

Jennings, of Baltimore, has had seven, eight, nine and ten put-outs in games this year, and in one game had nine assists.

Batting is the life of baseball. Without it no team can win. No matter how well it plays in the field, with no batting the game loses life.

John M. Ward, who managed the New Yorks last season, has been admitted to the New York Bar, for which he passed a most creditable examination.

Baseball has queer changes. Last year Baltimore gave Inks and \$2000 to Louisville for Hemming, and this year, in a losing club, Inks is showing up better than Hemming is with the champions.

It is announced from Chicago that the proposed Australian trip of American baseball players under the management of Hart has been postponed one year, as it has been found impossible to make arrangements for it.

The pitchers have evidently gauged the new distance, and more legislation will soon be required, if there is to be any batting. The three and four hit games are beginning to come with their old frequency, and shut-outs are looming up in formidable numbers. Guess the pitcher will yet have to go to the centre of the diamond.

Connor, the first baseman of the St. Louis team, notified President Von der Ahe that he had decided to abandon baseball, and submitted his resignation. He stated that his playing had deteriorated because his eyesight was failing, and was as unsatisfactory to himself as to the public. Connor's batting average is higher than that of any New York player.

TAILORS ON STRIKE

Nearly 20,000 Coatmakers in New York City, Brooklyn and Brownsville Out.

Nearly 20,000 tailors went on a strike in New York City, Brooklyn and Brownsville, a suburb of Brooklyn, to prevent a return to the sweating system.

In New York City more than 8000 tailors laid down their work in protest against an alleged effort to force them back into the conditions of labor under which they toiled until a year ago. Four thousand men and women struck in Brooklyn and Brownsville, and about 1000 in Newark, N. J. Besides these there were about 3000 persons in New York and 1000 in Brooklyn and Brownsville who were idle because they could not work without those who were on strike, so that the total of those affected amounted to nearly 20,000 persons.

The principal cause of the strike, according to Schoenfeld, its leader, is the refusal of the contractors to renew last year's agreement, which provides that fifty-nine hours shall constitute a week's work, and the minimum rate of wages shall be as follows: Basters, \$13 a week and upward; pressers, \$10 a week and upward; bushellers, \$13 and upward; trimmers, \$13 and upward; and finishers \$9 and upward. None but members of the union are to be employed, and permission is given by it to representatives of the Brotherhood to examine the cards of members; it abolishes the tenement-work system, and permits no settlement with any contractor who employs men in tenements or sweat shops.