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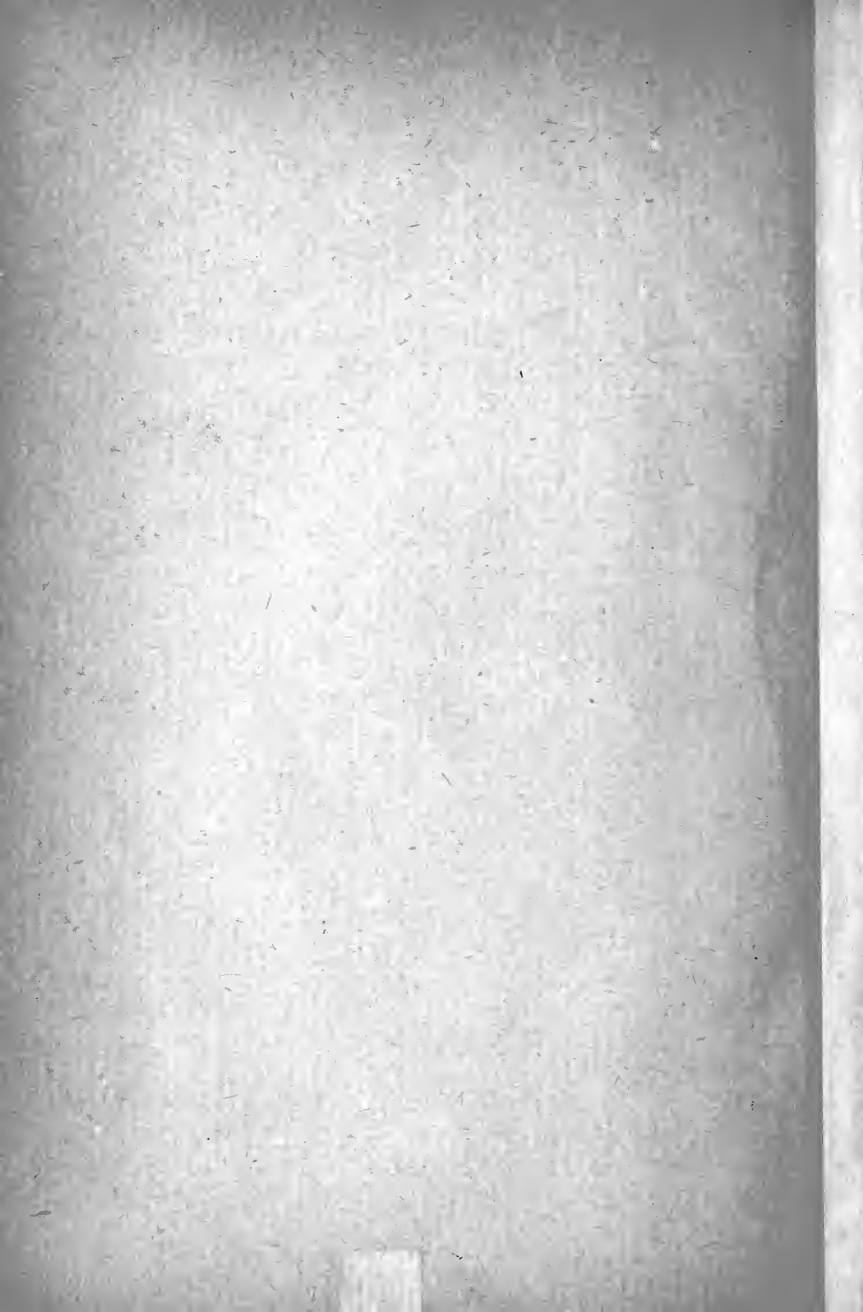
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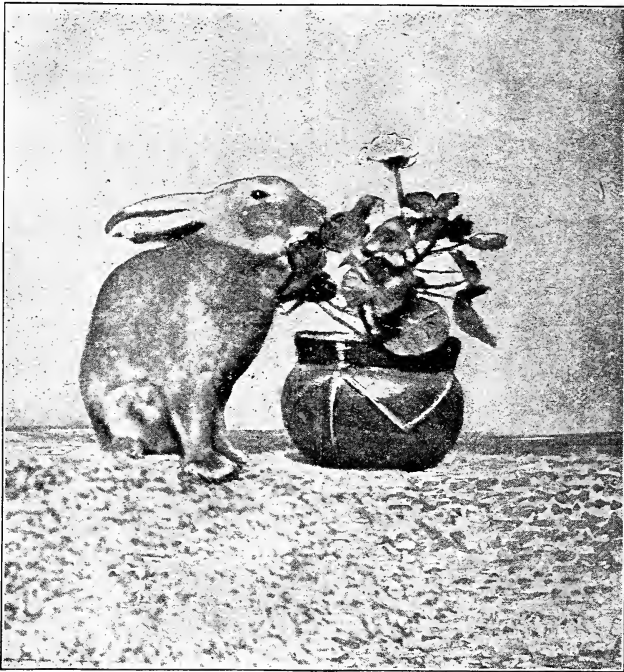
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STANDARD
BELGIAN HARE MANUAL



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GENERAL DASH (95½)

AT LUNCH

Scored by Judge H. C. Halfpenny.

Owned by Hall Brothers.

LAIRD & LEE'S

STANDARD

BELGIAN HARE MANUAL

THE ORIGIN, MATING, SCORING, FEEDING AND
MANAGEMENT GENERALLY OF THIS NEWLY-
CROWNED KING OF THE RABBIT RACE

3800.136

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

GEO. F. HALL

MEMBER NATIONAL BELGIAN HARE ASSOCIATION



CHICAGO,
LAIRD & LEE, PUBLISHERS

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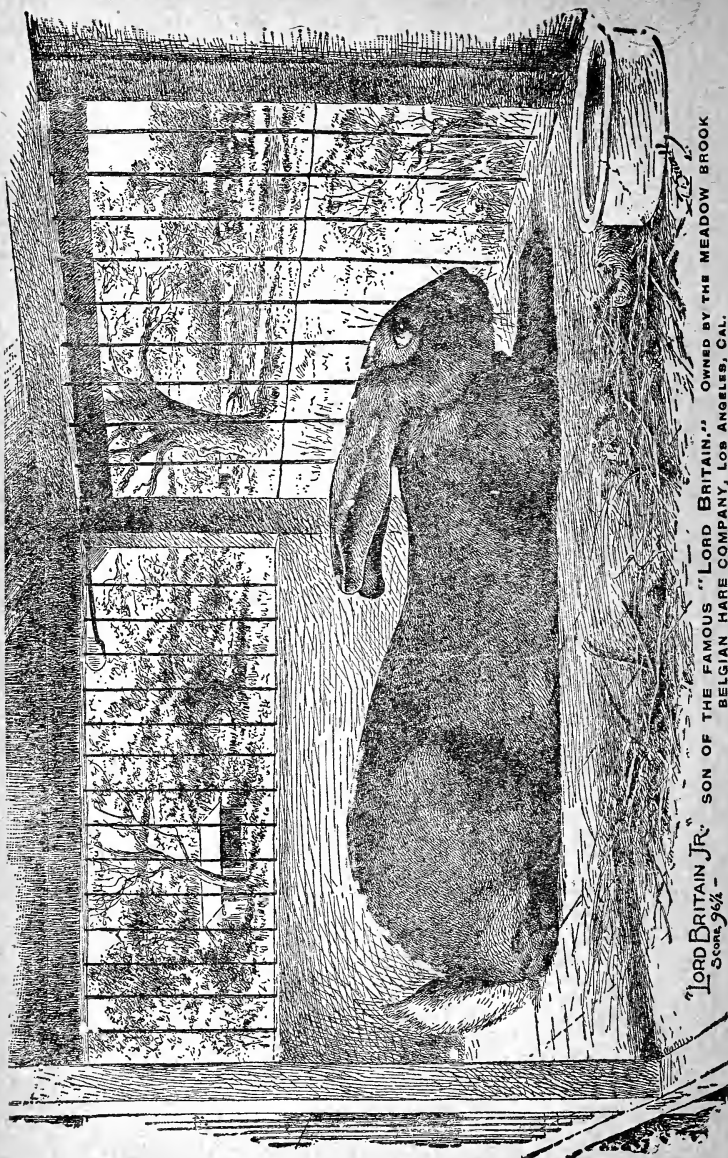
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"LORD BRITAIN JR." SON OF THE FAMOUS "LORD BRITAIN," OWNED BY THE MEADOW BROOK
SCORE 9 3/4 -
BELGIAN HARE COMPANY, LOS ANGELES, CAL.

Official Score Card of the

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of Belgian Hare Judges

(INC.)
**DECIMAL
SYSTEM**

Adapted to the
National Standard of Excellence



Dr. B. C. PLATT, Pres't, Philadelphia
H. C. HALFPENNY, Vice-Pres't, Los Angeles, Cal.
Mrs. S. C. MARTIN, Sec'y., Seattle, Wash.
W. J. IRWIN, Acting Sec'y., Los Angeles, Cal.
Mrs. J. F. BOVD, Treas., Los Angeles, Cal.

Name *Charming Girl*
Born *Oct 12, 1900* Sex *Female*
Ear No. *996* Reg. No. *898*
Class _____ Coop No. _____
Lbs. *9* oz. *4* Date *May 26, 1901*
Owner *Dr. B. C. Platt*
Address *Philadelphia Pa.*
Exhibition _____

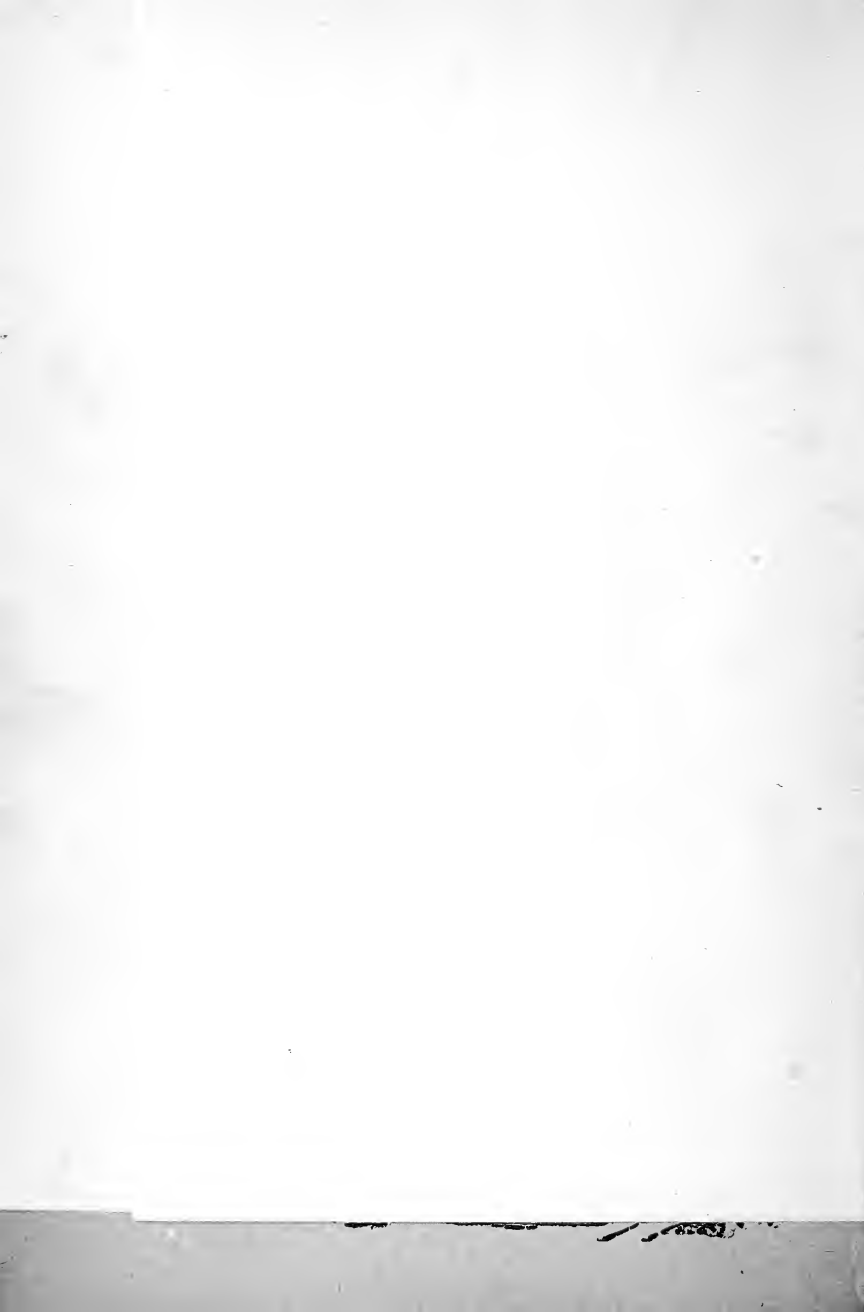
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100 -5.2 = 94.8 Score *Dr. B. C. Platt* Judge *Phila Penna*



STANDARD BELGIAN HARE MANUAL.

CHAPTER I.

Origin of the Belgian Hare.

One of the best English authorities, Mr. Ernest Wilkins, in his little work on the subject, says:

“The Belgian Hare originated in Belgium some time early in the past century. About forty years ago a race of tame rabbits arose in that country, which somewhat distantly resembled the wild hare, and some enterprising breeder pretended that he had succeeded in crossing the wild hare and rabbit, and that these were the product, and were called ‘Leporines.’ ‘When these were brought to the Zoological Gardens, London,’ says Mr. Salter, (I was on the council of the society at the time), ‘the fiction was soon exploded.’

“A pair of Belgian rabbits were exhibited at the Crystal Palace Show in 1898. They were imported from Belgium for the express purpose of demonstrating the difference in the English Belgian Hare and the continental species. They can be best described as a mixture of Belgian Hare as bred

here and the English Flemish Giant, partaking of the color of the Belgian Hare only, and this of a dark, smudgy shade. The body was heavy and coarse, and of the Flemish build, altogether lacking the graceful shape and style, fineness of bone, and clean-cut, racy appearance which constitute some of the great characteristics and charms of the typical Belgian Hare.

“Although the possibility of this country’s (England) and the Belgian Hare rabbit breeding together was, years ago, decided impossible by such a learned body of naturalists as the Council of the Zoological Gardens, there have been from time to time to the present day persons who have argued that such a cross is possible, and some have even brought forward specimens purporting to be hybrids between those two animals, but every representation has failed to be substantiated. I have myself tried to bring about this result both with Belgian doe and wild hare buck, and vice versa, and this under the most favorable conditions, but with no success. My experiences have been so similar to Mr. Lumb’s (another noted English fancier) that his words will explain both cases, and, I think, that of all others who have attempted the same experiments: ‘It is an utter impossibility to breed with the wild hare and Belgian; one is a hare, and the other a rabbit. I have tried for years with wild buck and Belgian doe, and with Belgian buck and wild

hare doe, in every conceivable manner. I had one wild buck, picked up in Grimsby Park the day it was opened, at about three weeks old. I reared him with a spoon, and when full grown I could sit down on a box and call him on to my knee. I could carry him about anywhere, but get him to strike a doe I could not—in fact, I have left them together for several days, until one morning I found his hip skinned and hanging down to his foot, so I thought it time to part them. Then I got another about two years after, about a month old, and brought it up in the same hutch with a young Belgian when it was ready to leave its mother, and kept them together for six months, but it was no use; on the other hand the wild one would never let the Belgian buck go near her to strike her. If ever such a thing could be accomplished, I ought to have managed it with my old favorite wild buck Skipper.'

“Since the ‘Leporines’ (so-called), were introduced into this country they have bred continuously, but with two distinct and different objects—in the one for size, and in the other, ostensibly, to develop a rabbit of the form, color and fur of the wild hare. The larger race has been called ‘Patagonian,’ but is now recognized in a different type as the ‘Flemish Giant.’ The latter has been named ‘Belgian Hare Rabbit.’ Dr. Barnham says of the early days of the Belgian Hare: ‘Early Belgians doubtless were bred from

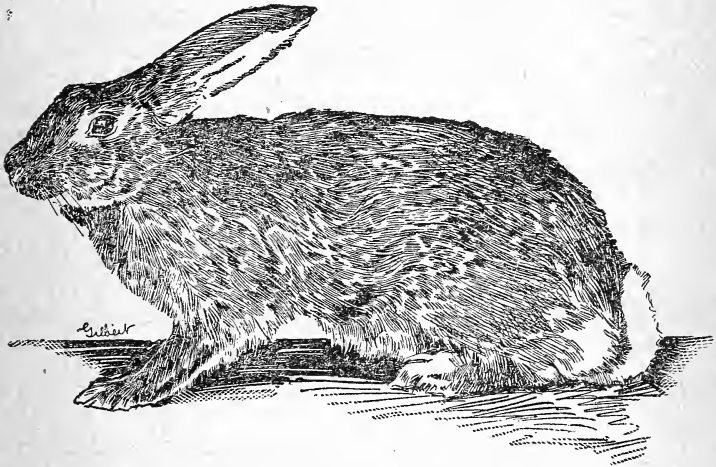
the imperfect specimens imported from Belgium. These latter, although often very racy, were spoilt by the following defects, viz., washed-out red or fawn color, little or no ear-lacing, white toes, and even white feet or barred fore-legs, putty noses, white stars in forehead (like horses), little or no ticking. I have possessed several of the better specimens in my early days (some forty years ago), but none without some of these defects. To obviate these matters, fanciers crossed with the common prick-eared sandy or grey rabbits, and even with the wild rabbit. These crosses, while improving some of the points, changed the shape with loss of raciness, and they became more cobby-built, or rabbit, so the remedy was almost worse than the disease. I have always suspected that the far-famed Maori Queen had a cross of the wild rabbit in her composition.'

"In *Poultry*, Feb. 12, 1885, Mr. Salter, discussing the Belgian Hare, from the view of a scientific naturalist, says: 'The breeding of fancy varieties of domestic animals has done much to interest and instruct men of science, and these efforts were thoroughly appreciated by my friend, Mr. Darwin. As regards rabbits, one curious result has been the production, by artificial selection, of a race which approaches in external configuration and color the common hare of this country, *lepus timidus*.'

One of the most scholarly and readable articles I have

yet seen on the origin and development of the Belgian Hare was written by the Rev. Jno. L. Brandt, of Valparaiso, Ind., for the Prospectus of the American Belgian Hare Association, of Chicago, published in the summer of 1900. Mr. Brandt is himself an enthusiastic fancier, and speaks with authority. He says:

“Animals that suckle their young are called Mammalia, from the Latin ‘Mamma,’ a nipple. They are divided into two great families, based upon their structure and habits. The larger family is the rodent, or gnawing family, and is very small in comparison to the other division of the great



family. They are, for the most part, vegetarians. They have many enemies, and, notwithstanding their weakness and size, are able to hold out because of their wonderful

breeding power. This fecundity being so great, it tends to make them at times a serious menace to vegetable life; and yet they act as a balancing power—keeping vegetation in check and transforming plant tissue into animal tissue, or vegetable life into animal life, thus advancing the scale of evolution one step. These rodents are classified according to the arrangement of their teeth, and scientifically form four natural groups. To the first group belong the hares and rabbits. It is known as the Leporide (or Leporine), arising from the Latin “Lepus,” a hare. Each family possesses twenty-six or twenty-eight teeth.

“Externally these animals are readily distinguished from others by possessing hind limbs much larger than the fore limbs, and ears of great length—equal to and frequently exceeding the length of the head. When in rapid motion they leap with great bounds, covering from five to fifteen feet at a single bound. They have large full eyes, a tail recurring over the rump, five toes on the fore feet and four on the hind feet, with the soles of the feet furry. These animals are natives of all parts of the world, except Australia, and to this country they were imported, and now abound in great numbers, notwithstanding the rigorous efforts to exterminate them. They thrive in Arctic and tropical regions, and, like a Chinaman, can live in comfort anywhere and everywhere. However, the family is at its best in North

America, where there are some twenty different species.

“There is considerable difference between hares and rabbits—the rabbit burrowing, while the hare does not; the rabbit lining her nest with fur pulled from her own body, while the hare does not; the rabbit gives birth to more young than the hare; the young of the rabbit are born naked, blind and helpless, while the young of the hare are born with a covering and with eyes open. The common rabbit is sixteen to seventeen inches long, from nose to tip of tail, and weighs from two to four pounds. From the original stock there has sprung diverse breeds of pet rabbits, of various colors and greatly modified in size, form and fur. These different breeds have received various names as the result of some special feature. Thus we have the Dutch, Himalayas, the Lops and Half Lops, the Silver Greys, the Fawns, Patagonians, Angoras and Belgians.

“The Belgian Hare is the most important of these varieties, and is called a hare because fanciers have bred it to resemble the true hare. It is much larger than the common rabbit, measuring from twenty to twenty-five inches from the tip of its nose to the end of the tail, and weighing from seven to twelve pounds. Its limbs are also longer than those of the common rabbit, and its color of a rich rufus red, with black hairs so beautifully distributed through the fur as to produce a wavy ticking appearance. The ears are

sharply laced with a velvety black, and the eyes are prominent and hazel in color.

“Those who have carefully investigated the subject claim that it is the result of the application of scientific means to a desired end—that end being to combine beauty with practical qualities. Early in the nineteenth century some students of nature, who resided in Belgium, engaged in the systematic crossing of these animals with one great purpose in view—that of producing one animal possessed of all the desirable qualities of the various varieties, and at the same time discarding all the undesirable qualities, traits and markings. The animal was then called the Leporide, and was shorter and heavier in body and limb, and not so fine in flesh and fur as the beautiful Belgian Hare of to-day. About the middle of the century the Leporide was taken to England as a producer of meat, and here it soon attracted the attention of some English fanciers, who became much interested in the further development of the animal; and, as a result of several years of breeding in England, there was a marked improvement and development in the animal, and finally the fanciers adopted a standard in 1882, which is the foundation of the present English standard, though somewhat different. The name given to the animal was the Belgian Hare, while another development was called the Flemish Giant. In the course of this variation the Eng-

lish fanciers became energetic and progressive. Numerous meetings were held. Many discussions took place. Various revisions were made. Different standards were submitted, until finally the fancier's efforts were rewarded by an alteration in the standard in 1889, when Mr. Lumb drew up the standard and submitted it to the annual meeting of the Belgian Hare Club, by whom it was accepted and approved. Since then the wild hare has been more faithfully copied, and the result has been the advancement of the variety both in popular estimation amongst fanciers and in producing a hare-like rabbit.

“It is claimed that Mr. E. M. Hughes, of Auburn, N. Y., had the honor of first introducing the Belgian Hare into the United States. This was in 1888. He was a Scotchman of splendid organism, and a great lover of pets. He devoted much of his life to introducing his hobby, and in 1898, when he passed away, the Belgian Hare lost one of its most ardent admirers.

“The industry will doubtless increase in this country until it equals or surpasses that of Europe and England, where the hare has become a staple article of food. The ‘Dictionary of Useful Animals,’ says: ‘In the season, England imports one million five hundred thousand pounds weekly from Ostend, Belgium, or about seventy-five million annually; that France consumes from seventy to eighty mil-

lion per annum; Paris, alone, ten million pounds annually.' The Britannica states that 'two hundred tons are imported into London from Ostend every week during the colder months of the year. The pelts are valuable—sixty millions being sold each year in France, thirty millions in England, five millions in Leipsig, four millions in Belgium, and so on, besides large numbers being imported into the United States for the purpose of making felt hats." These figures are based on official data and are reliable. A conservative writer estimates that fully two million dollars are invested in the Belgian Hare industry in the United States."

The *Agricultural and Live Stock Herald*, Los Angeles, March, 1900, says:

"The present noble and beautiful animal—the Belgian Hare—finds his remote origin in the wild rabbit of Europe. The domestic hare has been known in England as a large and handsome creature, delicious eating, but not prolific. The wild rabbit lacks in daintiness of flesh what it makes up in fecundity. Many years ago, nobody knows exactly when or how, though presumably it occurred in Belgium, the idea was conceived of interbreeding wild rabbits with hares to produce a race with the grace and fecundity of the wild rabbit and the size and toothsome-ness of the domestic hare. This process of upbreeding has been going on for

several generations, and the modern Belgian Hare is the result."

So much as to the origin of what Mr. A. M. Lambert in his charming little work calls "His Lordship, the Belgian Hare." He is here, and is beginning what many of his admirers hope will prove a beneficent reign.

THE WONDERFUL LUCKY RABBIT FOOT.

BY ROLLIN B. TULLER.

Some men are always lucky and live on Easy street :
 If they'd fall from off the housetop they'd land upon their feet ;
 Not a bone would then be broken and their bruises would be slight ;
 But with me—well, I've been reckoned just a poor unlucky wight.

To me the most familiar street has been Old Rocky Row,
 And when I've told of my affairs it's been a tale of woe ;
 I've had my share of uphill, and I've wallowed in the mire,
 And there never blew a lucky wind to bring my heart's desire.

I was born, you see, on Friday, on the thirteenth day of May,
 In the wrong time of the moon's phase, as people often say ;
 But presto ! things are different—I'm sailing with the tide ;
 Luck's now come o'er on my side and I'll just to you confide :

A year ago last Easter I bought a Belgian hare,
 Or, more correctly speaking, I bought a buck and pair ;
 I did not realize at first the prize I got to boot—
 A thing I had longed and hankered for—a lucky rabbit foot.

But the rabbit foot that's lucky must be a rufous red ;
 I've put it with the proving with a strain that's thoroughbred,
 And I'm on the road to fortune, hard times are on the wane,
 For my brood is multiplying just to beat the endless chain.

Belgian hares are worth the money, if they have the proper strain,
 And with calculation easy one can show the story plain :
 Begin with two and multiply in geometric way,
 And the lucky foot with money will enrich you every day.

—*Belgian Hare Advocate.*

CHAPTER II.

Present Status of the Industry.

It is simply sweeping through every civilized land like a conqueror! For more than a quarter of a century the Belgian Hare industry was confined principally to England. There, many men of leisure joined what they pleased to call "the fancy," and followed the business more for pleasure than for profit. Shows were instituted in different sections of the "little island," and owners of extra fine animals entered their pets, going from show to show, capturing as many prizes as possible, and then winding up with the world-famed Crystal Palace exhibition. At this crowning event of every season, a prize cup valued at \$250 is given for the best specimen, and the winner becomes the acknowledged champion of the year. This cup must be won at three successive exhibitions before its holder can become its final owner.

At last Americans, seeing the commercial possibilities of the industry, became interested, and began to import. A few specimens were exhibited at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, but attracted no general attention. By 1896 there were a number of fanciers in New York, Illinois, Colorado,

and other states, but not until 1899 did the interest become epidemic, and then it took its strongest hold in California. It has been estimated that more than 1,500 rabbitries, large and small, have been started in and about Los Angeles alone. The majority are of course conducted in a small way, but in some instances big capital has been invested, and the business conducted on an astonishingly large scale. One firm has a ranch of 80 acres devoted to the industry, with an annual capacity of 5,000 hares. And yet at the beginning of the new century the industry is only in its infancy. America probably leads the world now in the number of breeders and the quantity, if not quality, of stock. It has been predicted that the country would soon be overrun with the little animals, that the business would be fearfully overdone, etc. Yet it is altogether probable that there are not to-day Belgian Hares enough in the United States, big and little, old and young, pedigreed and common, to feed the people of New York City one day!

In the winter of 1900-1901 I understand one of the prominent clubs in Chicago made a standing offer of 35 cents a pound for Belgian Hare meat, and agreed to take 200 pounds a week at that figure, but could not get the desired amount even at these tempting figures. And there are 3,000 fanciers in Illinois! But thus far there is more profit in raising Belgians for breeders than for market.

Denver and Kansas City are also "storm centers" in this "craze," both cities having enrolled hundreds of interested men, women, and children in the industry. And from these cities many car-loads of animals have been shipped to Boston, New York, and Washington City. But Chicago, as in pork and beef, is destined to be the greatest Belgian Hare center of the world. Already several small fortunes have been made in and about the city by persons who were foresighted enough to go in on the wave a year or two ago. Prices are somewhat "off" at present as compared with 1899 and 1900, and perhaps will always remain so, except for the most superb stock. But as a good rooster brings a higher price to-day for breeding purposes than ever before in the history of the poultry business, so a good Belgian Hare will always command a good figure. At the great Chicago Stock Show in December, 1900, a certain bull sold for \$8,000, probably the highest price ever paid for such an animal since the world began. And he was no doubt worth it as an addition to the herd of the gentleman who purchased him. In his "Bonanza Rabbitry Manual," one of the most interesting and helpful works thus far published on the subject, Dr. Platt says:

"England is to-day sending her finest specimens, at enormous prices compared with the prices of two or three years ago, into Germany, France, Austria, and especially to

America. These are the fancy individuals selected and exported for breeding purposes only. The other phase of the industry, that of providing a delicious article of food, has reached enormous proportions in Europe, and millions of pounds of hare meat are consumed every week in the great cities of the old world.

"The Belgian has become at once exceedingly popular wherever he has been introduced. It is a fact that no community, so far as heard from, has ever refused to receive and encourage this beautiful little animal. His progress has probably been more rapid in Southern California than in most other sections. Within eighteen months, from about November 1, 1898, to May 1, 1900, some 1,400 rabbitries, averaging nearly one hundred head each were founded in this part of the State of California, a district with a population of only about 300,000 people. This is a vivid illustration of the taking qualities of this noblest and most useful of the rabbit family.

"There are various reasons for this great popularity of the Belgian Hare wherever known. The first of these is his beauty. I shall discuss this more at length in my description of the Belgian in a succeeding paragraph. The second is his docility and fondness for fondling. The Belgian Hare makes a most attractive pet. He is intelligent, becomes attached to his owner, can readily be trained to pose and to

come at call. He appreciates care and good treatment. The third reason is the interest aroused in every member of the family fortunate enough to own Belgians by observing the habits of the animal, especially of the does in caring for their young. As in all wild animals (for the Belgian is really a wild animal domesticated) the mother love is very strong. All their habits of life, the poses that they assume, their ways of communicating with each other, their care of their persons, etc., are intensely interesting. Every sound mind harbors a love for animals, and the wild traits, such as are shown in the Belgian, are those with which we are least familiar and which are therefore most intensely interesting.

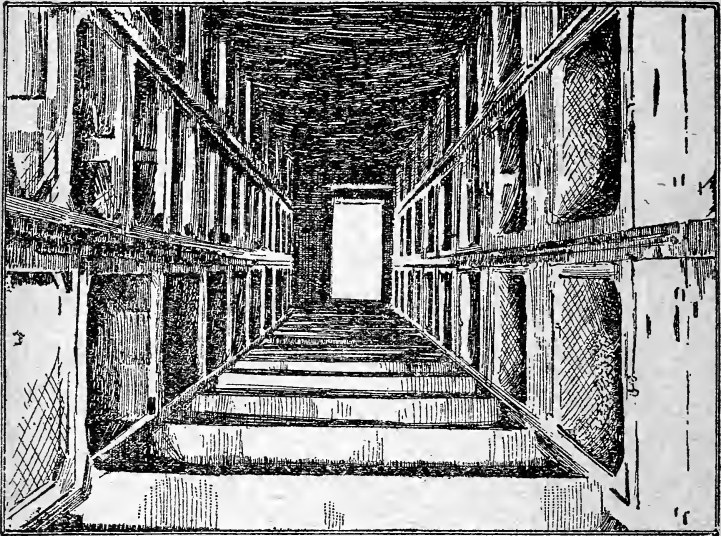
“A fourth reason is the fascination of mating individuals so as to secure best results in the progeny. This appeals to the scientific turn in every man’s brain. It is a well known fact that a type may be fixed in six generations—that is to say, you may take an ordinary animal, say a cow or a mare, and by mating with an improved specimen of the opposite sex produce better offspring than the mother. Repeat this process six times and you have an animal which is entitled to registration as a thoroughbred. This could be done in the case of the Belgian in less than two years. Whether carried to this extreme or not, the improvement of the species has for any man with a talent for this sort of

development a most profound interest besides the absorbing excitement of a legitimate speculation.

“All of these reasons are founded in the more esthetic and refined phases of the industry. Besides these there is the commercial side. The Belgian, so far, has uniformly afforded a profit. In this country the highest profits have been in the best stock, that taken up by the “fancy,” so-called. But as a producer of delicious meat the Belgian has no equal, for the size of the animal and the cost of meat-producing stock. The meat is all white, tender and sweet. It has no “wild” flavor, but is very similar to the best chicken or turkey, with enough difference to make it novel. One doe will readily produce six litters a year, averaging eight to the litter. These will average at birth three ounces in weight. In fourteen days they will increase in size five or six times, then weighing from fifteen to twenty ounces. From this point they will gain a pound a month to five or six months, at maturity from six to eight months they will weigh eight or nine pounds each. This meat sells readily at 25 cents per pound dressed. Allowing one-third for waste a doe will produce in one year 252 pounds of meat, ready for the market and readily salable at 25 cents per pound. This amounts to \$63. The first cost of the doe will not exceed \$15 and her keeping for the year will be not more than \$3. This leaves a clear profit, over cost of

animal and all, of at least \$45, and the original investment is still left. This is a very moderate estimate. It has been far exceeded in some instances.

We must not lose sight of the value of the pelts, which are worth from 25 cents to \$1 each, according to their beauty, the place at which they are sold and the use for which they are intended. In the East there are some ex-



THE NORTHWESTERN RABBITRY, WOODSTOCK, ILL., U. S. A .

One of the Largest in the World, Contains 270 Cages. The above Cut represents one of four sections. Established 1894. Owned and managed by Mrs. Edith Kingman Poyer.

tensive establishments raising Belgians principally for the purpose of manufacturing the hair of pelts into silk hats. They are also made into rugs, muffs, mittens, gloves, col-

larettes and cloaks for ladies' and children's wear. These are very handsome. Dealers abroad have a process of "plucking" by which some of the hairs are removed, leaving on the remainder of the fur a rich, seal-brown color and luster. A machine has recently been invented which accomplishes the same result without plucking, simply by cutting off the dark tips of the fur. This process involves no coloring or artificial dyeing, although there is another beautiful product, known as "electric seal," which comes from a process of dyeing. The pelt of the up-to-date high type Belgian is worth several times as much as the pelt of the common class of Belgians."

Authentic instances of profit are always demanded by investigators, and I here present a few, culled from reliable sources. I think they will help in establishing the claim that there is no business in the world to-day in which so much can be made from small capital, and so easily and pleasantly:

A Chicago lady received as a present from friends in England a bred doe. In one year she had sold three litters from her pet for \$1,200.

An Indiana pastor started with a trio in March, 1900, purchased from a Chicago firm, and by August he had sold over \$1,100 worth of stock, when he left on a three months' European trip, taking in Egypt and the Holy Land.

A young man in Los Angeles, Cal., purchased \$80 worth

or bred does from the Meadow Brook people. In two months he had sold \$225 worth of animals and a half interest in his remaining stock for \$350.

A poorly-paid California pastor, a personal friend of mine, purchased three high-bred does for his invalid wife in January, 1900, paying therefor \$200. It looked like foolishness, but in August following he told me that she had raised \$2,000 worth of stock.

A Denver man built and paid for a \$3,000 home out of the profits of his Belgian Hare business in three years.

In the "Belgian Hare Success Book," published by the New England Belgian Hare Co., many instances of quick returns on small investments are given.

An investment of \$300 in a fine buck cleared the owner \$1,200 in four months, and the buck still on hand.

Two does at one rabbitry dropped progeny for which their owner received \$1,200 and \$1,400 respectively.

A book-keeper whose salary was \$15 per week, received as a present from his wife's relatives in England a trio (one buck and two does). The couple commenced business on the back of their fifty foot lot. In two years they had sold over \$2,000 worth of stock, and had \$5,000 worth left at the time of the narrative. The former book-keeper for others now keeps books for himself, and goes to the old country twice a year to purchase new stock.

A writer in the *Boston Globe* says: "This statement, reading like a fairy tale, is vouched for as true: A Californian read in a German magazine of a district in Belgium devoted exclusively to the raising of the 'rothen hase.' He sent to Antwerp for a brace. They have been so prolific that they have made his fortune. His bucks have earned \$5,000 a year alone. Out of his original investment of \$40 for the pair he has taken \$15,000 from the business, and owns a plant worth \$20,000."

An English wholesale merchant takes great pleasure in the fancy. He keeps about 40 high-bred Belgians in a small out-building. His wife and daughters care for them. He attends to the mating and sales. In 1899 he cleared over \$6,000 from his hutches, many of his finest specimens coming to America at fancy figures.

I recently read of a California woman who claimed that she cleared \$1,500 in one year raising Belgian Hares. Whether this is true or not, I can not say, but I know two gentlemen, partners, in Chicago, who I am confident cleared more than that in 1900. They have a very fine rabbitry, are good advertisers, and have had a steady business from the first.

The famous Lord Britain paid his owners 15 per cent. on \$30,000. He cost them but \$250, and scored but 94½. But he was imported at the fortunate moment, and was no doubt

at the time one of the very finest animals in America. There are thousands now just as good, and many better, for the standard of excellence has risen considerably higher since his day.

I will close this chapter with a quotation from the "Success Book" already referred to. Miss E. C. Copeland, of Kenmore Ave., Chicago, says:

"Can a woman make money by raising Belgians? I answer yes, a thousand times yes! I know to-day many a poor frail woman, who is supporting an invalid husband and children, by only raising a few Belgian Hares. Early in December I received from Mr. W. P. Schumann, the pioneer hare breeder of Denver, a Belgian Hare which he had trained as a pet. I became so deeply interested in the hardy little creature which is now the presiding spirit of the house, that I coaxed my mother into letting me have a few to raise and sell. Of course I met with but little sympathy or encouragement from my family and friends, who considered it but a silly 'fad.' But I closed my eyes and went steadily on, and soon had a snug corner of the cellar fitted up with boxes for eight young hares, five does and three bucks, and so began my business career. From a small advertisement in an evening sheet, I next day had the honor to receive twenty-three callers, and by night my hutches were empty, and I had the sum of \$195, which I

at once sent on to Denver for still better stock. There is no doubt that a woman has the great advantage over a man in the hare culture. She is naturally more patient and enduring, and will study the individual traits and dispositions of her many different animals. I would strongly advise and assist any woman in raising Belgians, and can only say as to profit, I now clear from \$100 to \$600 each week. So if one girl can, with no help, save a smile of incredulity from her friends, build up such a business with little or no capital, only fancy what an older and wiser woman, with a better business head could accomplish. Once more I repeat that I would strongly urge and advise any woman to give up an office or store position, and put what little money she may possess in even one good doe, and thus earn her bread in a way which is clear and sure, and at the same time is relaxing her tired brain and giving her body its much-needed healthful exercise."

CHAPTER III.

How to Begin the Business.

The following general suggestions from the "Belgian Hare Guide," published by the Indiana Poultry Journal Co., Indianapolis, may be found helpful by those who have not yet embarked in the business of raising Belgians, but who are thinking of doing so:

"The importance of a proper beginning must not be overlooked by those about to engage in the breeding of Belgian Hares, as a little careful thought and planning beforehand will in most cases not only mean a saving of dollars, but loss of time as well. Whether you go into the business to raise meat or fancy stock, if you have had no previous experience, it is advisable to make a beginning with only a few hares and as your knowledge of the business increases so will your herd. In the meantime you will have gained knowledge that can only be learned by experience as to the habits and what is necessary for the proper care of the Belgian, and more than this you will be able to determine what constitutes a good hare, and thus be able to judiciously purchase new blood for the betterment of your herd.

"While there are hosts of honest, reliable and conscientious breeders of Belgian Hares, yet as in all other kinds of

business, we find the unscrupulous among them, and you should carefully investigate the standing and reliability of those from whom you purchase, before paying long prices for stock. Much depends on the honesty of the breeder, as high-sounding pedigrees are easily trumped up, and he must not only have animals that possess merit, but he must back them up by his reliability and authentic and reliable pedigrees. Another important point is to purchase only stock that is in good health and not subject to any hereditary disease.

“If you intend to raise meat stock exclusively, in the selection of your foundation stock, size is the most important point. Cost of animals will vary, but get thoroughbreds, as the excellent quality of meat is found in them only.

“In beginning with fancy stock it is most profitable to consider quality instead of quantity, as it is the well pedigreed and high scoring animals that bring the best prices and these can be produced only by parent stock of like quality. Just what to purchase for foundation stock depends entirely on your financial condition, and if your means are very limited you had perhaps better make your investment in one doe, having her bred to a good buck. A pair, unrelated, about three months old, can be purchased at quite a saving and cared for until maturity before breeding, but by this plan the cash returns do not begin to come in as soon

as if you begin with matured stock. Another plan, and one requiring a little more capital, is to buy a trio, two does and a buck, all unrelated, and having the does bred at time of purchase to different bucks.

“In making larger beginnings care should be taken to select animals of as good and as many strains as possible that you may be able to supply your customers with trios or herds that are unrelated. It is best to always purchase young stock, not over eighteen months of age.

“Many advocate beginning with common or medium grade stock, which by careful mating you can improve, but we would not recommend a beginning of this kind unless your means are very limited, as there is little demand for the surplus of this kind of stock, except for meat purposes, and of course will not bring the high prices. It requires no more room, feed, care and attention to care for a good hare than a poor one, and if only medium success is met with the well-bred animal pays you much the best profit.

“We can lay down no fixed prices for either meat or fancy stock, but by correspondence with reliable breeders you will be able to ascertain what the quality you desire is worth.

“If there are any rabbitries in your locality, it would be well for you to visit them, as you can in this way pick up much valuable information that you would otherwise have

to learn by study and experimenting, but by no means neglect the reading and studying."

In an article addressed "To the Beginner," the editor of the "Belgian Hare Advocate," Chicago, writes:

"As many are just engaging in the raising of Belgian Hares, and we have often been asked how to start into the business, we believe a few suggestions to the beginner will not be amiss:



W. W. Simmons, Kansas City, and one of his favorites. One of the middle-west pioneers in the Belgian Hare business.

"First, you must take into consideration your circumstances, for with different persons these vary so much that what is applicable to one will not be to another. We will,

therefore, try to suggest ideas that will apply to all, without regard to any particular situation. In procuring stock to start with, try and get good ones. If the price does seem a little high, they will prove to be the cheaper ones in the outcome.

“After procuring your stock do not think that you can turn them out and let them shift for themselves. You want to provide good comfortable quarters for them; not necessarily expensive, but comfortable, by being warm and dry. Hutches 3x4 feet and two feet high for each one is ample room. Inside of the hutch should be placed a nest box, for ‘Bunny’ loves to get in and enjoys a nest very much at times. Provide some soft hay or straw for a nest. You may put it in the nest box yourself, or you can put it inside the hutch and Mrs. Rabbit will carry it into the box herself, saving you that trouble. The above sized hutch will be ample room for a doe and her young ones until the young ones are old enough to wean. When old enough to wean, say about six weeks old, you can put the whole litter in quarters by themselves and allow them together until about four months old, when you should separate them, putting males and females separate. A place five feet wide and twenty feet long will contain two or three dozen of these youngsters very comfortably. Feed regularly, and you can feed almost any vegetable. I have found it a very good plan

to feed two or three kinds one or two days then change to some other kinds a few days. In summer time there is so much of a variety to be had, that their feed costs little else than the trouble of gathering. Do not feed too much at a time, for by so doing it becomes wasted and is lost. Scraps from the table makes good feed for them also. No difference how hard and dry the bread-crusts, give it to them and see if it gets too hard for them. I guess not! For a doe with a litter of young ones, if you have milk, you can feed them milk also. Some say milk is not good for them, and some say they will not use it, but we have never found such to be the case, and advise soaking bread in milk for them as being excellent, especially for young ones until several months old. Rabbits are very great eaters. They consume a large quantity of food during twenty-four hours. They do not eat very greedily, but they do eat a great part of the time, and put on flesh very rapidly.

Caution should be used in feeding milk and table scraps.

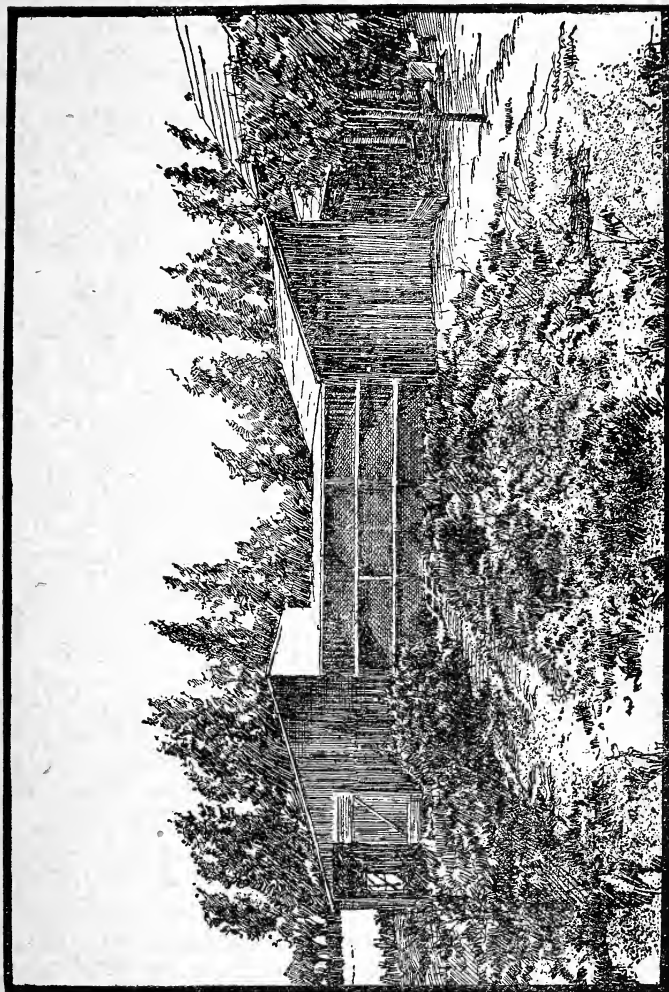
“They need water as well as food, and you should see that they have good fresh water. You should give them just as good and careful attention as you would any other kind of stock. They need it. They deserve it, either for pets or for profit.”

When I first began in the business, I had a doe that dropped a litter of nine. Two of them died, but the remaining seven

got along finely till they were about a month old, when the mother got off her feed some way, I presume from over-feeding, for my wife and boys could not do enough for their pets. She refused to eat, and in a day or two both she and the little ones were very gaunt. I thought I would try cow's milk on the little ones, and having access to a fresh cow, I fed them liberally from her milk. At first they thrived beautifully—grew as fat as little pigs. But in two or three days they had the slobbers, and began to scour. They all died, and I profited by the experience. Beginners should be careful to feed only that which agrees with the bunnies, and not too much of that. As to the little ones, leave them alone, the mother will take better care of them than you can. Feed the mother right and she will feed her children properly.

Knowing from my own experience that beginners like full particulars about all the little details of the business, I will give the following chatty and suggestive selection entitled "Beginning a Hare Farm," from the columns of the "Poultry and Belgian Hare Standard," Kansas City:

"When we started in the Belgian Hare business, we began in a small way one spring. When fall came, we had between thirty and forty hares cooped in covered wire runs, each about 12 feet square and 3 feet high, with a box inside about 2 feet square that could be used by hares when stormy



Australian Rabbitry, Pomona, Cal., Capacity 1,200 hares per season. A. W. Wedderburn, Prop.

or by the does for nests. Later in the fall, as it began to grow colder, we were rather perplexed as to what kind of a rabbitry it was most advisable to build in which to winter the stock. We finally remodeled a poultry house in the following manner. To begin with the house was 21 feet long, 8 feet wide, 5 feet high at the front, 7 feet high at the ridgepole, and 6 feet high at the back; the board floor a foot from the ground, and the door at one end, next to back. We took the boards off the 5-foot side and covered that side with our inch mesh wire. We then made a second floor $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet above the one already there. This second floor ran the length of the house, was $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, and was made of matched boards.

“We partitioned off the two floors we now had and made 14 pens, 7 on a floor, each pen being $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep and 3 feet wide at the open wire front and $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. The partitions between the pens were boarded up for about a foot and the rest was covered with one-inch mesh wire. In the back of these pens we had left a space running the length of the house and $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, where we could keep supplies. The doors in the different pens were made of a framework covered with wire. These doors were $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high and 3 feet wide, and opened into the alley-way inside of the house. In each pen we had a nest box 12 inches high, 12 inches wide and 18 inches long, with a hole about 6 inches square in one

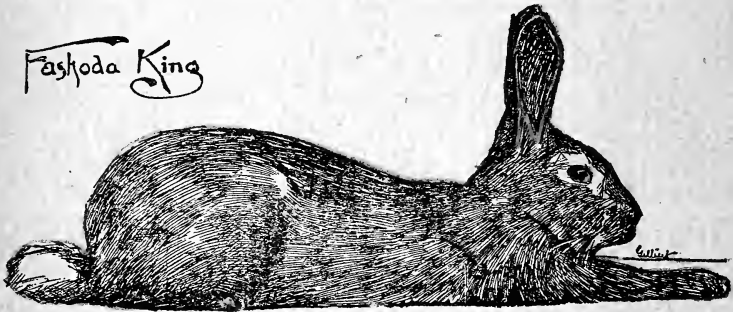
side. We use sawdust on the floors, cleaning twice each week, feed principally on second crop hay, oats and water, besides a few old vegetables.

“In this way, with an open front house, we wintered our stock, breeding the does every two months. They stood the two great storms and all the cold weather without any trouble, were never sick, and we lost only one or two very young ones. We think this shows pretty clearly that the Belgian Hare is very hardy and will stand, and breed in very cold weather.”

If one has the will to begin, the way will suggest itself. I have had many say to me, “I should like to try my hand in the business if I only had a place to keep the hares.” I always reply that any place is good enough, just so it is fairly light, dry, and free from draughts,—a woodshed, barn, attic, basement, vacant room, or any old corner where the three conditions above mentioned can be met.

Last summer I called upon a ministerial friend of mine in Chicago, and before leaving he said, “Come up and see my hares.” Thought I, what does he mean? He was boarding, and I could not conceive how he could raise rabbits under his circumscribed surroundings. But imagine my surprise when he took me upstairs to a large bedroom, which he had rented, stripped of its usual furniture, and divided into neat hutches. He had about fifty fine animals, and they were

doing well. Since then I have started a number of persons in the business by suggesting to them the use of a vacant room in the house. If properly cared for, the hutches will



Owned by the Northwestern Belgian Hare Co., Chicago.

emit no odor to speak of, and the bunnies instead of being a nuisance, as many imagine, will prove household pets. Willie Vanderbilt paid \$20,000 for a pup some months ago. If he had put the same amount in Belgian Hares, he could have had not one, but many pets, and from their cultivation could have doubled his princely fortune in a few years and showered blessings on legions. But then, we are not all constituted alike.

CHAPTER IV.

General Hints on Selection and Breeding.

Perhaps nine persons out of ten entering the Belgian Hare business blunder by buying inferior stock. They are not fully convinced that the industry is worth their while, but they hope that in some way, and quickly, "luck" will strike them hard, if they purchase a Belgian or two, no matter of what degree of perfection, just so it is guaranteed to be a Belgian. Success does not come in this manner. It takes ordinary brains to make money in this business as well as in anything else.

"The most important matter, when first engaging in the Belgian Hare industry, is the selection of breeding stock. If your funds are limited, get some medium grade does, pedigreed if possible, and free from disqualifications. Have them bred to fine pedigreed bucks, (better animals than the does) and at the same time buy for your own use a four months old buck of good pedigree, and as good points as possible. By buying a buck of this age you can procure it for about one-half its value at breeding age. This young buck should not be used for service until he is seven or eight months old. When he has reached that age the does will be in condition for another breeding, and can be served

by this buck. The youngsters from these matings will be better than their dams, and your stock will have taken one step upward. By continuing on this line, at the end of



CHAMPION FIRE QUEEN.

Winner of Six Firsts and Specials under five expert American judges. Owned by the Kaw Valley Belgian Hare Company, Kansas City, Mo.

eighteen or twenty months you will be producing some handsome specimens," says Mr. J. Howard Payne in the "Belgian Hare Guide."

“If you feel that you can afford to purchase does of the very best quality, I would advise you to procure this class of stock. For, if they are carefully mated, the first litter from them will be as good, if not better, than the stock you would produce after ‘grading up’ from the medium grade stock for one and one-half to two years, thus you save much time and ‘time is money.’

“In regard to pedigrees, these are very important, as the saying ‘blood will tell’ is especially true with the Belgian Hare. Of course, if the pedigree contains the names of animals unknown to fame, it is not of much value. But if an animal is the descendant of any English champion, or American winner, you can depend on the progeny of such animal being choice. To be sure that the pedigree of the animal you are purchasing is correct, insist on its being registered with some reliable registry association.

“Give your does plenty of time to grow. If, by six months, which is the usual breeding age, they are undersized and not fully matured, wait until they are eight pounds, or a little less, in weight, before breeding. The youngsters will be racier, and more satisfactory in every way, if this be done.”

In 1882 a number of prominent English fanciers agreed upon the following standard:

Color—Reddish brown	20
Ticking—Extended uniformly throughout and of a chocolate black	15
Shape—Like that of the wild hare.....	20
Ears	10
Feet	10
Eyes	10
Size	5
Condition	10
<hr/>	
Total.....	100

Most breeders were agreed upon the points of shape, but there was a diversity of opinion as to color and ticking. As a result of much discussion, the standard was revised in 1899 to read as follows:

*Disqualifications—1. Lopped or fallen ear or ears. 2.

White front teeth or white bar or bars on same. 3.

Decidedly wry feet. 4. Wry tail. A specimen should have the benefit of any doubt.

Color—Rich rufus red (not dark, smudgy color), carried well down sides and hindquarters, and as little white under jaws as possible..... 20

Ticking—Rather wavy appearance and plentiful.. 15

Shape—Body: Long, thin, well tucked up flank, and well ribbed up; back, slightly arched; loins, well rounded, not choppy; head, rather lengthy; muscular chest; tail straight, not screwed; and altogether of a racy appearance..... 20

Ears—About five inches, well laced on tips, and as far down outside edges as possible; good color inside and outside, and well set on..... 10

Eyes—Hazel color, large, round, bright and bold.. 10

Legs and Feet—Forefeet and legs, long, straight, slender, well colored and free from white bars; hind feet, as well colored as possible..... 10

Size—About eight pounds 5

Condition—Not fat, but flesh firm and like a race horse, and good condition 5

Without dewlap 5

100

*The disqualifications are not a part of the English standard, but were incorporated by American fanciers when they adopted it in this country.

Commenting on the English standard, Mr. Wilkins says:

“I am greatly in favor of the wild hare being copied as closely as possible. The make and formation of the fur, as before described, is very different in the Wild English Hare and in the Belgian. Opinions are varied as to whether it is desirable to try and copy the formation, structure, and hare marking of the wild hare’s coat, even in the field of experimental breeding. Mr. Roberts, the great judge, so far back as 1886, said that he had seen Belgian Hares, the coat of which he preferred to those of the Wild Hare. I, however, heartily concur with Mr. Salter, who says, ‘The

coat of the common hare is one of the most beautiful of all animals, and if it were but rare it would be sought after as a fur, for dress of the highest value.' There is no doubt that the nearer we approach the hare with Belgians the more beauty will we impart to our rabbits. I am an enthusiastic admirer of the Wild Hare; its gracefulness in action and repose, together with its beauty of formation of body and coat, produce an impression of pleasure and admiration to the senses of all lovers of the beauties of nature, and I have no doubt that the adoption of the Wild Hare as the standard accounts for the great hold the Belgian Hare has taken on Englishmen in the fancy in all parts of the world. In taking the Wild Hare as the standard to which the Belgian should be bred, we are using a model that is definite and fixed as no other model can be. Certain writers have dwelt at length and with emphasis upon the variation of the Wild Hare, but there is no doubt that the divergence of color which may occur in the Wild Hare is very much over-estimated. To quote Mr. Salter again: "There is really very little variety in specimens of the same age. I have been shooting hares for the last forty years, and in many counties, and have handled them not only as a sportsman, but as a naturalist, so I can speak from practical experience. Some may be a shade browner, and some a trifle more rufus, but that is all. The distribution of light and dark,

the white and colored parts, and the regions that are ticked, are constant and never vary, but at different ages the color certainly varies. The young and immature specimens are always dark and more ruddy. At ten or twelve months a hare has arrived at maturity, and is then a perfect model to which a Belgian should be bred, not only for color, but for size, form, and length of limb.'

"To take the points of an exhibition Belgian as they are required to constitute a perfect specimen, we find color stands first with a maximum of twenty points, to which number it is fully entitled, for color in quantity and on the sides, haunches, and ears (usually the weakest points for color), and of the correct shade is, beyond dispute, the hardest of all properties to obtain. Color in a Belgian is of first importance; it is the cardinal point. The colors that compose a Belgian's coat are black, white, and rich rufus red or golden tan, and the distribution of the first two and the character of the last determine the merits of the specimen. We are all agreed as to the distribution of the white. It should be confined to the underpart of the body and the pads of the feet; bars on the forefeet, white toes, and putty noses are inadmissible. There is a small amount of white under the jaw, but too much of this is considered a fault. What black there is should appear in the form of ticking, long black hairs protruding through and among the golden



Challenge Cup won by the Kaw Valley Belgian Hare Co., Kansas City, Mo.

tan ground color. These black hairs produce the characteristic appearance of the Hare's coat known as ticking, and confer the hare-like aspect. Ticking should be coarse, crumpled and wavy, and of a jet black. It should occupy certain positions and no more, and its proper localities are the back and loins. If the area is increased it lessens the brilliancy of the specimen, as the black hairs in the wrong places and in too great abundance cover up and obscure the tan of the under fur. The brightness of the specimen depends on its tan color, and if this is not prominent in the right places the beauty of the specimen is dimmed. Very fine ticking which is even and distributed all over the body is inferior, and not of the character necessary to produce its Hare-like coat. A much smaller number of long bright black hairs overlaying the golden tan ground color produces the best resemblance. There should be no ticking on the fore legs, chest, lower two-thirds of shoulder, along the lower half of the sides, and on the hind feet.

"The color described in the Belgian Hare Club's standard of points is 'rich rufus red.' This term for the correct color is wrong, it should rather be 'rich golden tan,' or 'rich red shaded golden,' this being the more correct term for the color required, and is also the color that wins under the best judges of the variety. In early life the coat of a Belgian is not matured. In the nest they are of various colors

or shades of color with no ticking, and it is interesting to note which of the various shades in the nest produce the best colored specimens. Mr. J. H. Roberts says he likes mouse colored ones with a dark skin in the nest, finding they come out the best colored specimens. There can be no hard and fast rule applied to youngsters in the nest, but I like to see them bright on the top, showing a greyish red nest coat with dark blue under color. Golden red youngsters rarely come out a good color after four months, generally going off to a washed-out appearance after their first moult. So much depends on the strain and the parents, their breeding and points, and their mode of development, that no hard and fast rule will apply to youngster in the nest. A breeder who knows what his strain is made of, and what results he seeks for and obtains by given means, can form, to some extent, an opinion of the merits of his stock in the nest, but his opinion on another stock at this early age may be wrong entirely. When in full coat a typical Belgian is very beautiful, its proper color being a rich red shaded golden, or otherwise, and correctly termed "golden tan."

"The next important point to color to consider is shape, with which I must incorporate style, limbs, and general make-up of body. Shape gains as many points as color on the show bench, and is quite as important; the only reason

why I put color first is because it is the hardest point to obtain and retain. A Belgian is not a good specimen if it lacks color, even if it has good shape, just as a good colored but badly shaped specimen is not characteristic of the true hare-like type. Shape is more easy to obtain than color, but on this I will dwell fully later on. Suffice it now for me to describe the shape as it should be.

“The body of a Belgian should be long and fine in build; the forepart should not be heavy, but fine and graceful; the back nicely arched and rounded from shoulder to tail; the haunches round and not choppy; the forelegs should be long, fine, and well set on, that is to say, they should be so placed as to lift the fore part of the body well from the ground and let plenty of daylight under the body. There are many long-bodied, good-shaped Hares that are lazy and crouch up in a heap, never showing their shape to any advantage, either because they are lazy, crouchy animals, or because their forelegs are not set on as they should be. My old champion ‘Nonpareil’ was not exceedingly long in limb, but he was always alert and on his toes, and showed off his shape to great advantage. I always advise the use of a graceful, lively buck, because the squatty lazy ones, although they may have the properties, do not exhibit them, and often transmit the failing to their progeny.

“The head of a Belgian should be long and lean, with

prominent eyes full of lustre. The ears should well set on the head, carried erect when in motion, and laid on the



FAIRY QUEEN.

Imported by the Bonanza Rabbitry, Los Angeles, Cal. Sire, Champion Priory Prince; Dam, by Red King, he by Champion Unicorn. At six months of age this beautiful doe scored 94%.

shoulder when in repose. They should not be too short, as

shortness of ear causes a rabbity appearance. The correct length is about five inches, and if you take notice of the ears of a wild Hare you will at once see the shape they should be. The neck should be fairly long and slim in proportion to the body. The bones of the hind legs should be long and lean, not thick and chumpy, as this spoils the hare-like aspect. The tail should be straight, and in no way curled. The whole properties of the make of a Belgian should combine to present to the eye, as the Wild Hare does, a look of gracefulness and activity. A thick, choppy, angular Belgian is an abomination."

Mr. Wilkins is not only a charming writer, but, it should be remembered, one of the highest authorities in the world to-day on the Belgian Hare. Along with this may be incorporated some timely advice from the pen of a well-posted writer in the "Western Graphic:"

"The length and weight of a doe should regulate the time to breed. As a general thing a doe should not be bred until she weighs at least eight pounds, and has an altogether racy appearance. If you are breeding for the fancy, and wish those extra long hares, wait until both buck and doe are eight months old. An important point is to mate the doe to a buck that is strong in those parts where the doe shows a weakness, and vice versa. This will tend to eliminate the defects of both the parent stock in the progeny.

“Another point: The foundation stock should be of some good pedigreed strain. This is all important. Fortune never smiles on the haphazard breeder. One must know what the particular marking strain has accomplished in the past, and the proper way to keep posted in this matter is to have a complete record of your stock.

“One strain may be weak in a certain point, and oftentimes reproduce it with startling regularity. To avoid this you must know to a certainty what other strain you mate to—that it is free from this weakness, or you will never reach the top round of success. Thus you may readily see the importance of pedigrees. In selecting your brood doe the first property to receive attention is color. She should have a rich red coat, rather inclined to a dark shade, should be of good length, not too fat, and her coat possess a lustre. She must have good under as well as top-color. Next for consideration comes shape. The doe should be of good size, long bodied, and limbs as fine as possible. The more nearly perfect your doe in this respect, the better your chances for getting shapely youngsters. If it is not the lot of the doe to possess the desired color, be sure you get the fine front and gracefully rounded haunches at least, as in the transmission of this property she is very strong.

“Taken as a whole your brood doe should have good length of body, be fine limbed, have plenty of ticking and

ear lacing, well colored front and hind legs, rich body color, slim, neat head, eye large and full.

“Let the buck be a shade lighter, but possessed of good general body color carried well down the sides and haunches. Don’t tolerate the greyish coat for a moment. The fore legs should be free from ticking, and the hind feet well colored up to the hock. He should possess good shape and be of a lively disposition. Try and get a buck with as lean a head as possible. It has been found that a young buck is best to transmit this property. You will also get more vigorous and lively progeny from such an animal. To sum up, your buck must be of the highest excellence, being particularly strong in head properties.”

After all experience is the best teacher. A few months spent in selecting and breeding for one’s self will add more to one’s fund of knowledge in the matter than he will be likely to get from all the books ever written on the subject. But the hints given in this chapter are all from the most trustworthy sources, and I hope they will prove helpful to every reader who enters the fancy, and who attempts to secure both pleasure and profit therefrom.

CHAPTER V.

Scientific Mating.

No fancier should expect good results from haphazard mating. Given good stock and proper environments, the most important thing in connection with the business is mating. This matter has been reduced to a science by experts, and their suggestions are of inestimable value to breeders.

Writing on "Proper Mating of the Belgian Hare," Mr. F. E. Crabtree, of Denver, one of the most noted and competent authorities in the fancy, says in "The Agricultural Herald:"

"Use the greatest possible care in mating up your stock if you wish to succeed in producing show specimens. Remember that the mating of two specimens possessing a common defect will surely magnify that defect in their progeny as positively as will the mating of a common desirable quality strengthen it. If you have been guided only by comparison of animals and have not the guidance of the score card to assist you in evading the mating of common defects, we call your attention to a few defects which are usually overlooked, as well as to a number of features in animals very desirable for best results in the production of

really high class specimens. On the more ordinary sections (ones not so likely to be overlooked) we will not at present dwell.

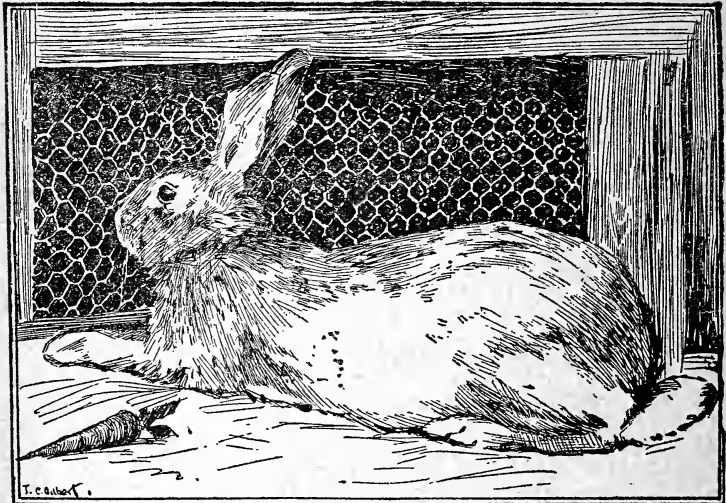
“Look with suspicion on beefy ears. Require a bold and round eye. Strive for a deep, rich cream color under jaws. Give preference to a bright cream color under belly. Tolerate snowy white on Belgian Hares only on under side of tail. Value a cream color for inner part of ear. Outer ear color should be of as rufus a shade of golden as you can possibly produce, and should be absolutely free from ticking. Remember that the ticking of a hare is usually a complex section to the breeder and to the amateur judge.

“As a whole, the effect of ticking is what is to be considered in estimating that requirement, and this effect is caused by three things, viz., quantity, quality and distribution. Turn the animal's head from you to estimate ticking. Center your point of view at the coupling, the point where the hip-bone connects with the vertebrae. As to quantity, you should see a 25 to 75 per cent. effect black (ticking) and 75 per cent. rich rufus red. In quality the ticking should be very black and the rufus a pronounced red, in order to furnish the necessary contrast in colors.

“In the matter of distribution, the ticking should be heaviest at point of coupling and radiate, in a diminishing degree, in all directions.

"These three requirements, properly met, furnish the effect that is most pleasing and yet difficult to produce.

"Ticking on breast, front legs, and shoulders should be avoided.



CHAMPION EXCELSIOR.

Winner 24 Firsts and Specials. Owned by Upton Park Rabbitry, Thorngrove Road, London, England. A. D. Rider, American Manager, Kansas City, Mo.

"Be satisfied only with extreme length of limb, a feature that will carry the body high off the ground, adding symmetry and grace of movement.

"Do not forget that a most discouraging defect, so often overlooked by amateurs in their breeding stock is a dense blue or slate under-color next the skin. This should not be tolerated, as it is the cause of smudgy color on sides, smutty

color on hindquarters, and sooty color alongside of hind feet, all of which are very objectionable.

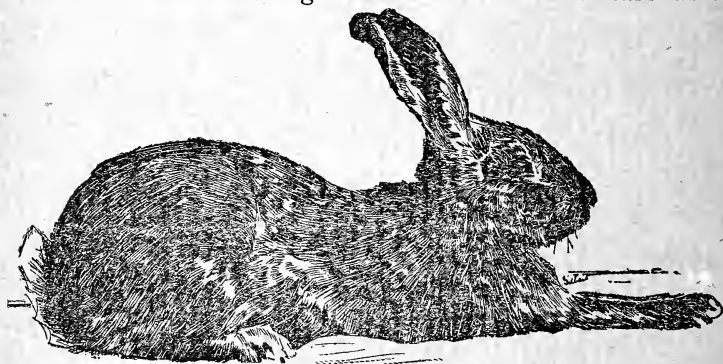
“Make a close study of mating. The instructions here given, if carefully followed out in the next few matings, will produce results worth hundreds of dollars to progressive breeders.”

Mr. Wilkins says, “In mating a doe you should have some particular object in view. The best hares, subject to the usual variations in results, are specimens which have been sought for; therefore we must look ahead and predict the result of a certain cross, and make that cross produce the result sought for. To do this a breeder must attend to two matters, and neither must be overlooked: The one is that the points of dam and sire so match and blend that where there is a deficiency in any point on the one side, there may be a fulness of that point on the other, the result being a point nearer perfect in the progeny. The other matter is that a breeder should know what his stock are likely to produce, because hereditary transmission of certain points is a characteristic of all stock, and they are produced in a more or less marked degree by all. These results have to be noted and turned to account. Some does and some bucks (to illustrate my meaning) will produce striking points in most of their offspring; and this must be borne in mind by the careful breeder and used when wanted to fill up any de-

iciency another may have inherited in the same point. Here the value of pedigree comes in; every breeder should know how his stock is bred, and what, if any particular points have been most strongly represented in their sires and dams, grand-sires and grand-dams. By this he will know what his stock is made of, so to speak; and as hereditary transmission is built upon the prominent characteristics of past parents, and as such is most likely to appear in the progeny, it will be at once evident to the thoughtful that to know your stock is one of the surest guides to successful breeding. With beginners this is next to impossible; but they have in the following advice as much of the law in their own hands as may be. Buy of a genuine breeder good specimens in points of a reliable strain, from someone who will treat you honestly. Let me firmly impress upon the would-be-winner-producer the old saying, 'You cannot make bricks without straw;' and in applying this to the subject under discussion, I translate it thus: 'It is next to impossible to build up a strain, or to endeavor to produce high-class stock upon a bad foundation. The stock you commence with strikes a chord for success, or a muffled peal for the funeral of your high ambitions and cherished hopes centered in their offspring. The stock you commence with cannot be too carefully selected, must possess certain points, and must have been well bred in these car-

dinal points to produce stock that may be reliable for future breeding, or to produce good stuff themselves. The stumbling block which extinguishes the bright light of enthusiasm and ambitious hope in many beginners is the bad, weedy wasters they start with (specimens that a good breeder would not let go outside his rabbitry alive), and expect to breed good stock because they may have a grand pedigree tacked under their high-sounding names. Names and pedigrees are excellent, and both useful in every way to a breeder; but to tack them on to a bad specimen for the purposes of sale is an artifice no real fancier and breeder would resort to. Really good breeding stock of reliable strains can now be bought at reasonable prices so that there is no excuse but the excuse of inexperience for buying bad stock specimens. Mr. Ambrose, in an excellent article in 'Fur and Feather,' gives the key to the solution in the case of inexperience in the words: 'Write to a breeder you know by repute to be an honest man, and ask him what he has for sale.' Well, if you do write to an honest man—and the fancy has many such gentlemen, who would scorn to impose on the inexperience of a beginner—he will not only state what he can sell you, but he will give you his candid opinion on their merits and capabilities as breeding or exhibition specimens as the case may be. Now, I imagine I hear someone wishing to start in the fancy, and whose ambition

is fuller than his purse, exclaim, 'Oh, yes, your advice is very right and good, but if I wait till I can purchase such grand specimens before I can hope for any success, I shall never be able to make a start at all.' I will ask such an one to bear with me while I explain in a few words a remark I made just now. 'Good breeding specimens of reliable antecedents can be bought from a breeder at a reasonable



ROBIN RED.

Owned by the Kaw Valley Belgian Hare Company, Kansas City, Mo.

figure.' By reasonable prices I mean prices that, taking into consideration, the value of the strain and the amount of time, study and labor put into it, represent the just value of the specimens. Many brood does and bucks in the stud of a good breeder are actually worth very heavy prices, and would fetch it. The breeder retains just a few of their produce, and the others go at a tithe of the value of their parents. However, I am treading here on delicate ground, and as I do not wish to be misunderstood, let me impress

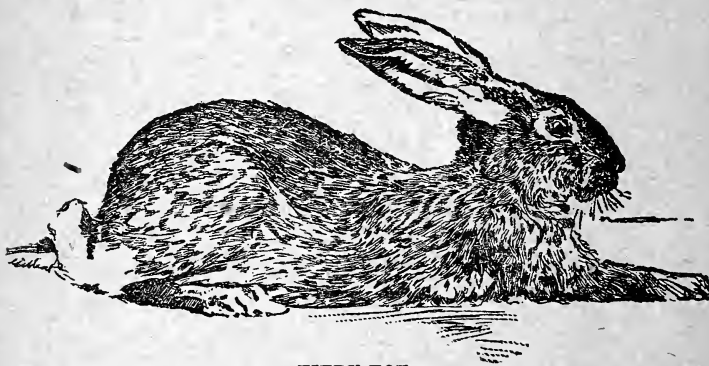
upon the would-be breeder not to purchase wasters, horee, ever they may be bred. Buy good bred stock, but they must be some visible quality. Get as good color, shape, arces, lacing as possible for the money you can invest. Slight failings in other points you will have to set yourself to eradicate. It is exhibition specimens that, as a rule, fetch fabulous prices, and these are not always the most desirable for stock purposes."

Never breed a buck to a doe of close kin. One buck may advantageously serve four does regularly, and more if necessary. But it is desirable to have as many different strains represented in one's rabbitry as possible, so one buck to every four to six does is a good proportion. The bucks should be the very best one is able to obtain. It is poor policy to invest in a cheap buck. Never allow two bucks to run in adjoining hutches, or pens, as under such circumstances both are likely to be in a state of frenzy very hurtful to their development.

When you are ready to breed, place your doe in the pen with the buck, never vice versa. When a doe is in heat, she will roll over, stretch herself frequently, and loll about generally. This is the proper time to serve her. Do not allow her to remain in the pen with the buck over five minutes. If she does not accept his service in that length of time, better try her with another buck, or wait till another day. It

is better to allow the buck to cover the doe twice before moving from the pen, and then it will be unnecessary to visit her later, as is the custom in some rabbitries. This practice is fraught with considerable danger, and I would not recommend it as a rule. The chances are that your doe will kindle all right at the end of thirty days if she cheerfully accepted the buck twice.

Never leave a buck and doe together over night, or indeed any length of time, for they will worry each other to the serious injury of one or both.



FIERY FOX.

Seven times a winner under six expert judges in England. Imported and owned by Edith Kingman Poyer, Proprietor Northwestern Rabbitry, Woodstock, Ill. On Oct. 25, 1900, Mrs. Poyer refused \$1,000.00 for this buck.

There are some barren does. If you happen to have a doe in the rabbitry that will not accept the service of one buck, try her with another. If in due time you fail to breed her to any of them, fatten her for the table. Do not palm

her off on an amateur, who, because of her pedigree, may be easily deceived with the notion that he is getting a valuable doe for a song. No matter how high she scores, unless she will breed she is worth only what she will weigh out at so much a pound.

A doe will kindle as a rule almost exactly thirty days from the time she was bred. Occasionally a doe will drop her litter a day or two before, or a day or two after the usual time. Do not be deceived into believing that your doe is not with young because she does not become larger of girth, for sometimes there is very little change of belly perceptible. Do not handle a doe much after the first week or two of pregnancy, and then very gently. Never lift a doe, or a buck either, by the ears. This is cruel, and is very liable to result in irreparable injury to your pets. Take a firm hand hold of the hide just back of the ears, and lift the animal as tenderly as possible, placing the other hand beneath the body. Never allow them to struggle in your hands. Press them gently to your bosom, hiding the head between your arm and body, and then stroke the fur affectionately. Treatment of this kind will work wonders in subduing even the wildest hare. Never strike a hare, or in any way treat it unkindly. It is not only wrong in the sight of your Creator, but mighty poor policy from a business standpoint.

- You can commence breeding your does when they are

five months old, but as a rule six or seven months would be better. Don't wait till they get fat, however, as then they are likely to suffer from fever when kindling, or to have caked udders, or to take cold easily and die.

It is better not to use a buck till he is eight months old, though if you have but one he may be served occasionally from the time he is six months old. From eight or ten months upwards he may be used every other day. He should be very carefully cared for, as a good buck is equal to half a herd. Tempt him with tid-bits, mashes, and wholesome eatables. Groom him often, and make him your pet. Any sensible affection of the sort you may lavish upon him will repay you richly in the increased number and quality of his get. After serving regularly for three or four months, always allow him a month or two in which to rest. See that he has a long run, and access to the earth.

Watch the bucks carefully as they develop, especially if a number are allowed to run together in one pen. They should be separated at three months of age. Otherwise they will castrate one another, and the operation is not always beneficial to the patient.

It has been estimated that a first-class buck can get as many as a thousand of his progeny in one year's time. Say you commence work with him when he is six months old, and use him three times a week for four periods each of eleven weeks. This will allow him two months rest during

the year, and still give him service 132 times. If his families average eight each, he would have 1,056 specimens of his class to carry his name down to posterity. This is not a wild estimate at all. In fact, your buck can easily stand a goodly number of extra breedings if necessary to make up for any losses that might occur, and he can continue this work until he is two or three years old, though few fanciers deem it advisable to use a buck after he is two years old.

Now suppose that one-half of his first thousand offspring are does, and suppose that they are properly bred, and drop an average of 50 each their first year—you would have fifty thousand hares at the end of your second year's business! No wonder some foolish sentimentalists who never look at the practical side of things are scared. But those of us who believe that it is high time the human family were being fed on a better and cheaper meat than is now obtainable, see in the possibilities of Belgian culture a God-send to the world.

Do not breed a buck intended for exhibition purposes until after he has won his spurs, as service nearly always thickens the jaw, dims the peculiar lustre of the coat, so essential to prize winners, and in other ways detracts from the rating of your candidate anywhere from a half-point to three points, according to the best judges.

Scientific mating, careful breeding, and common sense will always bring good returns to the Belgian Hare investor.

CHAPTER VI.

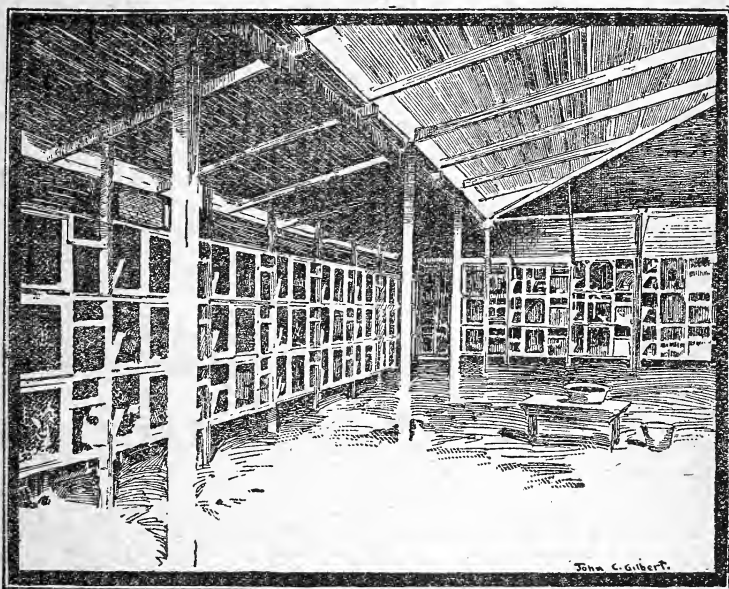
Housing the Belgian.

As in everything else, so in housing the Belgian, circumstances alter cases. How and what one builds depends largely upon the number of ducats he has to spare. But a few general suggestions may be given, which I trust will prove helpful.

In an article on "Houses and Hutches," in the "Belgian Hare Guide," the writer ("Fields") says:

"One of the first steps to be considered by all beginners in the handling of Belgian Hares, is where to put them. Have you the building, or the ground on which to build? Some writers state that all you need is a good-sized dry-goods box, placed in a shady place in the back yard, and while this might do in some climates or for temporary use, we would not recommend the plan for permanent use, as great care must be taken to protect your hares from draughts, dampness and direct heat of the sun in summer. Being a fur-bearing animal, they can stand almost any amount of cold, if protected from direct draughts and dampness, but heat must be avoided as much as possible. The hare is a very cleanly little animal and you will notice they devote much time to their toilet, thus it is very important

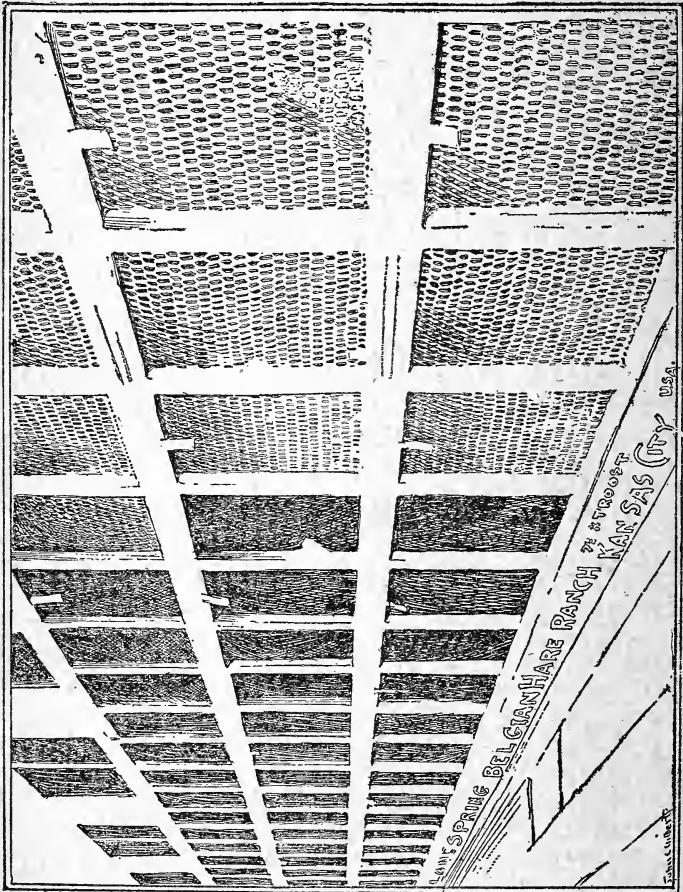
that you keep their surroundings clean and wholesome, and to aid you in doing this, careful attention should be given to the construction of your hutches and houses. If you have only a few hares and do not intend to go into the business to any greater extent, it is not necessary that you build a rabbitry, as hutches may be made of large boxes, and placed



Interior View of Budd Park Rabbitry, Kansas City, Mo.

in a barn or some other building that is suitable. Proper housing and hutching are responsible for the health and condition of your hares, probably to a greater degree than anything else. A slight cold will if not checked in time

lead to the snuffles, while dampness always breeds disease. Too much heat, whether from the direct rays of the sun or



Interior View Lone Spring Ranch, Kansas City, Mo.

from any other source, is dangerous to their health and often fine hares are lost on this account, and not only this,

but the effect will injure the little ones, often making them lop-eared, and of a tired disposition, inclined to huddle in the corner and look as if they were very sick; not bright and lively as they ought to be, with their little front paws as high in the wire front of their hutch as they can stretch and showing their little white empty stomachs at feeding time. Keep your hares bright and lively, and proper quarters are one of the chief factors in promoting these qualities.

“In selecting the location for our house, we must keep off of damp and soggy ground and choose a location that is dry and drains well, and one that is removed from any objectionable features, such as a stable, closet, cess-pool or anything that has an offensive odor to it; a place that is easy accessible and at the same time safe from marauders. The size and style of your building will depend entirely upon your needs and means, but we would advise a frame structure, as brick holds too much dampness.”

I heartily endorse the following paragraph on “The Rabbitry” from the experienced pen of Dr. Platt in his “Manual:” “We emphatically condemn the practice advocated by many authorities of building little cooped-up hutches, set up from the ground, for the hare. The hare requires not only air and food, but plenty of exercise and close contact with the earth. In a wild state he roams the earth and is the most healthy of animals. It is his nature to have wide

room for exercise. Exercise is an antidote to a surplus of fat and sickness. It tends to produce not only the finest animals from the standpoint of the fancier, but the healthiest as well. Anyone who stops to think for a moment about the habits of the hare, as nature intended him to live, will see the force of this reasoning and will realize that, in his domesticated condition, he should be kept as nearly as possible with surroundings similar to those of his wild state. To confine the hares in such small apartments is equal to sacrificing fully one-half the income that may be derived from them when managed as we recommend. Hares reared in the "box hutch" do well if they dress one and a half pounds at two and a half months of age. By our method of management we get three pounds of a far better quality of meat at the same age, and a mortality loss not to exceed six or eight in a hundred of those dropped, while by the "box-hutch" method, fully fifteen out of a hundred die. Our youngsters travel the length of our twenty-four foot pens several times a day when fifteen to twenty days old. They are vigorous, because of the extra freedom and exercise enjoyed by their dams from infancy to the delivery of the young. They are a very active animal, and should not be deprived of this, the most prominent feature of their nature. Give them exercise on the earth, and less drugs, and a smaller graveyard will be needed."

Mrs. A. M. Bush, of Denver, is generally considered one of the highest Belgian Hare authorities in America. She was the founder and able editor of "The Belgian Hare Champion," until its sale some months ago. She writes from a vast fund of information, and with a most suggestive specificness. From a file of her valuable magazine which she presented me with, she has given me permission to quote a few things, and I herewith give her entire article on "The Model Rabbitry:"

"When a man decides to enter the ranks of the Belgian Hare Breeders, his first thought is of the quality of the stock he shall start with; then where he shall put it when he gets it. If his choice of stock should be the very best obtainable, then he will want it properly housed in a building that will be inexpensive, practical and adapted to all the needs of the occupants. One of the most important items to be considered is complete and thorough ventilation of the building, without permitting any draughts to reach the inmates of the hutches. Here is a description of a model rabbitry which will be too large and expensive for the needs of the small breeder, but the essential points can be copied in a less pretentious structure or applied to a vacant shed or barn already at hand. These statements are not the delineations of abstract theories, but a combination of the best and most practical features of the rabbitries

the writer has visited in the past five years, together with any original devices that have proven of value.

“The building is 40 feet long, 20 feet wide in the clear, and 12 feet high to the ceiling joists, with a hip roof. This roof projects over the walls at least 24 inches, a 4-inch opening being left above the walls to allow a ventilating space all around the building. At each end and the back are windows for lighting the building.

“An aisle 5 feet wide is left between the tiers of hutches, and the outer wall of the building, for the use of the attendant in cleaning out the hutches from the rear. In this aisle a car can be wheeled and all cleaning done out of sight of visitors.

“By some a building 20 feet in width might be considered too wide and a mere waste of material. This width is to enclose a large space under the roof above the hutches for the free circulation of the air.

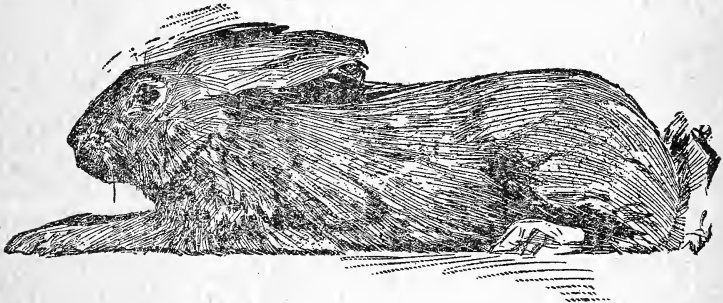
“In hot weather rabbits are kept cooler in a building of this character, which is a very important point to be considered when constructing a rabbitry.

“Having the open front toward the South has been tried, but has not proven so satisfactory as an Eastern frontage.

“One rabbitry recently visited, which faces the South, has a hallway of about 20 feet in width. Instead of hutches, there are runways 10 feet long extending from this hallway

on each side. The owner says that the sun never reaches to the back of these runways, and consequently in the winter time and during damp weather, the rabbits are troubled with colds. He is contemplating opening windows in the east side to admit the morning sunlight.

“The hutches at west side or in back of the Model Rabbitry are 5 feet long, 3 feet wide and 2 feet high, 3 tiers in



LORD BRITAIN.

One of the most famous hares ever brought to America. Paid his owners 15 per cent on \$30,000 annually. Owned by the Meadow Brook Belgian Hare Company, Los Angeles, Cal.

height, numbering 24 hutches in all. The lower hutches are placed at least 6 inches from the ground or floor of the rabbitry. The several partitions between these hutches are removable, and made so that boards of different widths can be slipped in in place of the partitions to provide a hurdle for the young stock. By throwing two hutches into one it gives them a longer run and exercising place. The first hurdle is 6 inches high, suitable for the young that have

just left the nest. As they grow older add another 3-inch board above the first, and again another as required, until they have a 12-inch hurdle, which is sufficiently high for the grown animals.

“These partitions should be made of matched lumber to prevent the transmission of disease from one hutch to another; likewise the floors of the hutches should be of tight flooring to prevent any moisture running into the hutches beneath. An opening 5 inches wide, the full length of the floor, is left at one end. A shallow, sheet-iron drawer, 3 feet long, 7 inches wide and 2 inches deep, is fitted to slide in under the opening for the proper sanitation of the hutches.

“A few extra drawers should be kept on hand, so that when one is removed for cleaning a fresh one may be slipped in its place.

“Each hutch is provided with two doors, 2 feet square, of one inch mesh wire-netting. A narrow space 2 inches wide, at back of each hutch near the top is left for ventilation. This can be provided with a hinged door, which, if desired, will permit of its being left open or closed. As this is placed at the very top of the hutch, the inmates may escape any draughts. The health of the animals depends in a great measure on the proper ventilation. If you have any doubts of the truth of this, try holding your head in a poorly

ventilated hutch for ten minutes and experience for yourself how injurious the air must be where there is poor ventilation. Rabbits are as sensitive to foul odors as human beings, and in a great many cases, diseases, such as colds, snuffles and indigestion, can be traced to this cause. On the proper sanitary condition of the hutches depends, in a great degree, the success of the breeder, and too much care and attention cannot be given to this subject.

“We next consider the nest boxes. These are about 22 inches long, 14 inches high and 16 inches wide, a cracker box making a suitable nest box. A round opening, 7 inches in diameter, is made in one side of the box, 4 inches from the bottom and 4 inches from one end; having the opening a little above the floor of the box, prevents the young from getting out too early—thus causing crooked legs, etc. The top of the box is hinged, so as to enable the breeder to examine the nests occasionally without disturbing the inmates. This box is placed in a quiet corner of the hutch, and answers the double purpose of a shelter for the young as well as a resting place for the mother, when she wishes to escape from her family.

“Each hutch is supplied with a feeding trough 20 inches long and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the top. These can be made rectangular or half cylindrical, and are made of tin to prevent the animals gnawing them. These troughs

are supplied on one side with two or three hooks, placed at intervals at the back, and can be hooked into the wire front of the door, just high enough for little ones to reach the contents easily, without bending their forelegs. As they grow older occasionally raise the troughs higher. The object in this is to prevent the young from crouching over their food, and thus causing a curvature of the soft, flexible bones of the forelegs. This position in feeding will also induce the slender and upright growth of the forelegs, which is so desirable.

“A hay rack of wire, 12 inches long, 6 inches deep, 4 inches wide at the top, decreasing to 1 inch at the bottom, and provided with hooks at back, is attached to the other door of the hutch, at the desired height for the convenience of the animals. The hutch is also supplied with an earthenware drinking vessel of 1 quart capacity. This completes the furnishing of the three tiers of hutches in the back of the rabbitry, which we may consider suitable for the breeding does.

“At each end of the rabbitry are runs for the young stock, 8 feet long, 3 feet wide, and 3 tiers high, making 6 in all, after leaving a passageway 4 feet wide in front of the back hutch.

“Hurdles, 1 foot high, are placed across the center to encourage exercise. These runs should be fitted out in

same manner as the breeding hutches, with the exception of the nest boxes, which in a warm climate are not necessary. In a cold climate the nest boxes are very acceptable during a storm as a place for shelter.

“The front of this building is boarded at each end for a space of 8 feet, to extend to the front of the end hutches, and doors 4 feet wide are placed at the entrance to the hallways.

“The remaining open space of 24 feet, is provided with a curtain of colored canvas and properly fitted with roller and cords, to be raised and lowered at will.

“This arrangement of hutches leaves a rectangular court for the reception of visitors in which to exhibit the stock. An office desk supplied with all necessary blanks, record books, etc., is placed at one side and surrounded with a wire frame work, large enough to afford sufficient room for the occupant, and provided with a door which can be locked when desired. This office in the rabbitry obviates the necessity of the breeder continually running back and forth to his residence for pedigrees, etc., and will be found a great convenience.

“The floor of the rabbitry is of cement (but may be of wood) so it can be thoroughly cleaned and swept without creating a dust, and is very suitable in a warm climate. In a cold climate a wooden floor is preferable. The cement

should never be used as a floor for the hutches as it is too cold.

“A rabbitry modeled and equipped as described above, will, in the opinion of the writer, be found a comfortable and convenient abode for any aristocratic Belgian Hare the fancier may choose to give a home within its walls.”

Personally I am a firm believer in the importance of an out-door run on the ground. Hares like the earth. If every rabbitry could have its hutches so arranged that the bunnies could run back and forth through a small opening, over which a piece of canvas had been tacked, into an out-door pen from 12 to 24 feet long, and about 3 feet wide, the results would well repay the extra expenditure involved in the improved condition of the stock. Almost any carpenter can take Mrs. Bush's description, and my added suggestion regarding outdoor runs, and construct a rabbitry that I think would indeed be a model.

CHAPTER VII.

The Care of the Doe and Her Young.

Every doe should have her nest box in place all the time. She likes to run out and in the same, and to hop up on it. Keep a good supply of nice clean prairie hay in the hutch for several days before the doe is due to kindle. You do not need to put in the box—she will attend to that, making a much better nest for her coming little ones than you can. Shortly before the doe is due to kindle, generally a day or so, but sometimes only an hour or two before, she will remove sufficient fur from the under parts of her body to line her nest and cover the little ones. When they come, leave them alone. If it is cold weather the doe will bank up hay in the entrance to her box to keep out draughts. She knows her business, and should not be interfered with. About the third day after the arrival of the litter, remove the doe from her hutch and tempt her with some dainty tid-bit out of the sight of the hutch, and then put in your hand carefully and feel around for any dead ones. Sometimes you will find one or two, and these should be removed. But do not take the others out of their nest until they are a week old at least, then you may examine them if you wish.

When the little ones are from ten days to two weeks old,

their eyes will open, and they will begin to come out of the box and play about. From this time on keep a shallow receptacle in the hutch filled with fresh rolled oats or bran. They will commence eating quite young, but should not be stuffed.

Some fanciers recommend milk. I have never had any success, but on the other hand, some very unsatisfactory experiences with it. The doe may have bread and milk once a day during the nursing period if you can conveniently provide her with same. And as the little ones grow up they will share a few bites with her, but of course she will get the most of it as she should. Beyond this, I should not give them one drop of milk, except in the case of the mother's death, when, of course, the little ones may be brought up with the spoon, if there is no other doe in your rabbitry to which you can give the orphans. As my experiments have been carried on mostly in Chicago, where milk is high, I have fed my does very little of it, and they have done just as well as the does of those who bank so imperatively on milk.

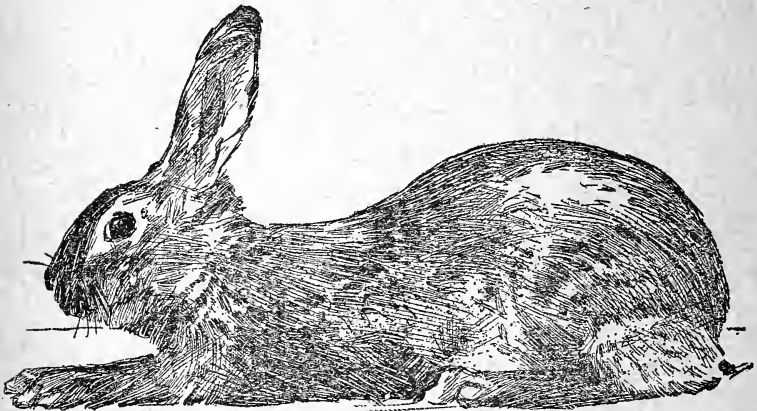
When the doe is about to kindle, plenty of fresh water should be kept before her, as at this time she has an abnormal thirst, and if not satisfied in the proper way, she will eat her young.

Do not wean a litter under six weeks as a rule, and if the

doe is standing the nurse period well, eight weeks is better. Of course, if you are crowding for meat, the nurse period may be shortened. But if you are in no hurry, and want to develop fine animals, let them run with their mother from six to eight weeks, unless she begins to wilt under the strain, in which case, of course, at four or five weeks. By this time the little fellows will have learned to eat hay, rolled oats, scraps of bread, etc., and they will get along all right with cautious feeding.

“For the first few months of their career,” says Dr. Platt, in his “Manual,” “the young do not require such constant and watchful attention as the breeding does because their mission in life is then simply to eat and grow and develop. Nevertheless they must be looked after with a sufficient degree of care. Their responsibilities will increase as they grow older and they must be fitted and prepared for these. The hare is a very warm-blooded animal. The young are born naked, and the mother covers them as soon as born with fur plucked from her own breast. She then goes out about her pen and leaves them to themselves till night, when she goes to them at intervals and nurses them. Except during the comparatively brief periods of suckling, they are left constantly to themselves day and night. Yet one rarely suffers or dies from the cold, no matter how severe that may be. The hair-lined and hair-covered nest

which the mother makes for the young is perfectly adapted to the climate in which they may happen to be born and the instinct of the mother in this regard is absolutely accurate and reliable. The mother will uncover them when they require more fresh air and her instinct may always be trusted in this respect. In the middle of a hot day the doe will open the covered nest and toward night will recover it.



CHAMPION DASH.

Winner of 22 Firsts, Specials, Cups and Challenge Medal in England. Owned by the Meadow Brook Belgian Hare Company, Los Angeles, Cal.

Therefore, for the first three weeks, or until they leave the nest and commence life, to some extent for themselves, by beginning to take other nourishment than that provided for them by the mother, she may be trusted to look out for them. All that is necessary is to provide both doe and young with quarters reasonably adapted to the climate in

which the young are to be reared. In cold climates they will require warmer quarters than they need on the Pacific coast, for example. In extremely cold climates, especially during the most severe weather, they should have access to a mow of hay or, at least, to a bale of hay or straw. The mother will burrow into this and make a warm, snug nest for herself and her progeny. With proper attention to these details, the amount of protection afforded being varied to suit the degrees of cold to be endured in different climates at different seasons of the year, the hare will thrive in any climate and will do equally well in Southern California or in Alaska.

“Other animals, the cat for example, lie with their young to keep them warm, but the female hare never remains with her young longer than the time necessary to nurse them. She will permit them to suckle many times during the night, but rarely, if ever, during the daytime. The hare is a night prowling animal. He mopes about, usually crouching in a corner of his hutch during the daytime, but during the twilight, both of morning and evening, hares are very frolicsome and they roam a good deal during the night, especially on moonlight nights. The morning or the evening are suitable times for mating bucks and does. They should never be disturbed during the middle of the day

more than is absolutely necessary, and on hot days they should be disturbed even less than in cold weather.

“The food of the young for the first ten weeks of their existence should be light weight bran, hay and a thin shaving of carrot or other succulent vegetable to each little hare. They should have three fresh supplies of hot water daily until they are ten weeks or three months old, the dish being removed from the pen after they have been permitted to drink.

“Never allow more than from eight to fifteen young to run together in one pen after they are weaned. And eight is much better than fifteen. They have a habit of piling up together and those in the middle of the pile become heated and moist with perspiration or with the breath of the hares. When the pile breaks and they scatter about the pen, those very warm are liable to contract very severe colds. Always furnish both old and young, in some portion of the pens, a floor, so that they may enjoy occasional rests from lying upon the ground. A portion of every pen should be thoroughly protected from the sun heat, and here hammocks should be placed, made of wire screen, half-inch mesh, and strung about two feet from the floor. These make very comfortable resting places for the hares in hot weather. The little bunnies soon learn that lying on the screen affords more air about their bodies than they secure

on the ground, and they soon learn to lie in the hammocks. They will spend much of their time there during the summer season. They will learn to jump into the hammock from a box which may be placed in a convenient position with this point in view. The hammock may reach from side to side of the pen and a width of two or three feet is not too wide. It should be fitted with hooks at each end so that it may be dropped at either end or removed altogether when you want to pass through the pen. The young will prefer this to a cellar-box during the hot season."

The care of the doe and her young is a very interesting occupation. It appeals especially to ladies. Many distinguished women have been led into the pastime, greatly to their delight, and to the improvement of their health in numerous instances. Mrs. Col. Geo. W. Bain, of Lexington, Ky., is one of the most enthusiastic lady fanciers in the South. The Colonel says she just "camps out at the rabbitry" so deeply interested is she. The Bains have a fine rabbitry. The Flaglers, Rockefellers, J. Pierpont Morgans, and other well-known people who have money to spare for the gratification of any whim, have lately invested quite heavily in Belgian Hares. With many of these people a two-fold object is sought—first, a pleasant diversion; second, the finest meat in the world for the table.

CHAPTER VIII.

General Directions as to Feeding.

The Belgian is a dainty little animal and requires cautious feeding. He will eat almost anything, but not everything is good for him. But he abhors filth. His hutch should be kept at all times scrupulously clean. Just notice the amount of time he gives to his own toilet, and you will not be long in concluding that he deserves and appreciates a clean hutch. If a galvanized iron pan about eighteen inches long, twelve inches wide, and one inch deep is kept in a corner of the hutch, the hare will soon accustom himself to the use of same, and it is then an easy matter to remove the droppings each morning. Keep a plentiful supply of sawdust always on hand—buy it by the barrel—and sprinkle the same freely on the floor of the hutch, and in the above mentioned pan. Before sprinkling the sawdust, it is a good plan to use a little disinfectant. Crude sanitas oil dissolved in water makes a cheap and very acceptable disinfectant. It will keep the rabbitry smelling sweet, and the hares will do better on their feed than if a perpetual odor exists.

Provide each hutch with two earthenware jars, one for cats, etc., and the other for water. These jars should be

about six inches in diameter and two inches deep. They should be washed in boiling water frequently.

A small hay-rack may be made of two-inch wire meshing, and tacked to the side of the hutch. This keeps the animal from wasting his hay, and the plan will more than save the small cost involved in a short time.

A vast amount of literature, pro and con, is extant on the subject of feeding. If one should follow the rules laid down in the average "Guide," or book of "Instructions" issued by the various rabbitries and hare journalists, he would almost certainly kill his entire herd in a short time. The best way is to feed what has been proven to be absolutely safe. Every fancier recommends clean white oats, and good hay. But there are so many varieties of hay! Yes, and some argue that clover, alfalfa, and timothy are sometimes hurtful. But so far as I have ever heard, nobody has ever questioned good, clean prairie hay, the brighter and shorter the better. So here are two staples.

Bread crusts, the harder the better—toasted if you care to go to the trouble—and occasional slice of carrot. Nobody can rule out these two items. Now add plenty of fresh water, and you have a menu upon which the Belgian will thrive and with which there is no risk. I know that some fanciers object to water. But I hold this to be inhuman, and any man who refuses his bunnies water should be

promptly prosecuted by the humane society. Salt, of course, should be given occasionally. All animals like it and the Belgian is no exception. Some fanciers keep a chunk of rock salt always in the hutch. Others sprinkle it in their food or drink.

As to green stuffs I am very suspicious. A very little may be fed, but if there is any place in the rabbit business that caution is required, it is here.

In his little Looklet, Harry Parker, of Williamsport, Pa., writes the following well-balanced advice:

“The proper feeding of the Belgian Hare, while not a difficult thing to learn, is of much greater importance than is generally understood. While it will not create a good specimen out of a poor one, it will make a good one better and greatly aid in winning in the show room.

All feeding of standard bred stock is done with a view of producing hardness of flesh, glossiness of fur, an active, alert disposition and a fineness and slenderness of body which shows little or no stomach.

“The stock should be fed twice daily, with the exception of brood does and young stock under three months of age. These should either be fed three times each day or fed twice daily, giving enough food to last from one meal until the next. With these exceptions the hares should not be fed only what they will eat up clean within one hour. This

is a good general rule, but it has many exceptions. Some hares can consume twice as much feed as others and still remain in good hard condition. The only accurate way to feed is to become acquainted with the needs of each individual specimen and feed accordingly. This is by no means so difficult a task as it would appear on first thought. Feeding twice each day and noting the condition of each hare as it is fed, one quickly becomes expert at estimating the amount of feed required by each.

“Should you notice that a specimen is getting over-fat and showing a tendency to “pot belly,” cut down on its feed, particularly on hay and green food. On the other hand, should it be evident that the hare was too thin and gaunt, showing hollowness in the flank or the back-bone being visible, increase the amount of feed given and if necessary add bread and milk to the regular rations.

It would indeed be a long list that would include all the different foods that a Belgian Hare will eat and that will agree with it. Whole rolled oats, barley, wheat, alfalfa or clover hay, bread, milk, carrots, parsnips, any non-poisonous weed, grass, cabbage, etc., are a few of the best foods. There is a great difference in the English and American methods of feeding the Belgians. In England, green food or roots of some description form a very large portion of the whole diet, and little or no water is given. In this coun-

try we feed green food sparingly and carefully, and have fresh, cool water standing before the stock at all times. In the great majority of rabbitries in this country, oats and alfalfa or clover hay, form the great staples, and green food and other feeds are given as a variety.



Owned by the Rockledge Rabbitry, Kansas City, Mo.

Judging from the condition of the best specimens imported from England, compared with the best American bred hares, I am of the opinion that the English method gives a coat of fur somewhat finer in quality and more glossy than does the American method, but the skin seems to be looser on the body and the flesh not so firm as on our domestic stock. Feeding according to the English

method the stock is not quite so liable to take cold, but is much more apt to suffer from bowel trouble, and the latter is very fatal in a rabbit.

In feeding green food, be certain that it is fresh and crisp. Never feed frozen roots or greens that have dew, rain, or frost on them.

Watch the droppings (which should be dry, hard pellets) and quickly discontinue greens or roots on noting any tendency to softness of the bowels. The proper time to feed is morning and evening, and regularity in the time of feeding is quite necessary. Greens in summer and roots in winter may be given at noon. We feed oats in the morning, and oats and alfalfa, timothy, or clover hay at night. Barley is an excellent conditioner and an occasional linseed oil mash mixed with bran or middlings is a grand feed to give lustre to the coats. Boil the linseed until it becomes a thick, pasty mass; it may then be mixed with bran or middlings, about half and half, and allowed to stand on the back of the stove, covered with a cloth, for five or six hours.

While feeding proper foods in quantities will greatly aid in producing firm flesh, and a bright, lustrous fur, it must be aided by exercise and daily grooming of the specimen when fitting for the show room.

After your brood doe has visited the stud buck, begin gradually to increase the amount of feed given her. About

ten days before she is due to kindle, give her bread and milk once each day. See that she has an extra supply of feed and water when due to kindle, as at this period she is liable to develop an abnormal thirst and appetite, especially the former. Does short of food or water at this period, are quite apt to kill and eat their young to appease their thirst or hunger. After the young are born, continue the extra supply of food and give milk if possible. When the young first come out of the nest box, place a saucer of bran in the hutch. They will take readily to this and it is much better for them than oats, as the oat hulls often cause indigestion and consequent "slobbers."

Salt, in some form, should be fed regularly. If the stock has not been accustomed to its use, it must be fed in such a way that they will get it in their feed. A good method is to place it in the drinking water. Use just enough to give the water a flat, sweet taste. After they have become accustomed to its use, rock salt may be placed in the hutches and they will lick enough of it to answer.

In their "Twentieth Century Manual," Messrs. Corbett & Langley, Los Angeles, have the following hints on "Feeding for Exhibition and Meat":

"This is a very important feature of the business. Many promising youngsters have been ruined by the too liberal

allowance of bulky food, but if these instructions are followed the best results will be obtained:

“After weaning, which should not be before the young are two months old, avoid giving hay in large quantities, and let what little is used be well cured. Even if of the best the supply should be limited to a handful at night. The morning meal should consist of a warm mash made of boiled flaxseed, lentils or peas (previously soaked for twenty-four hours) mixed with sufficient shorts, feed-meal and bran, until the mixture will crumble in the hand (not sloppy). This should be seasoned with a little approved rabbit condition powder. This feeding of a warm mash daily is little understood here, but is used in England with most beneficial effects and is endorsed by no less an authority than Mr. T. C. Lord. To use his own words: “Rabbits kept in confinement should have at least one warm meal once a day.” They should get nothing more until noon, when their troughs should be supplied with oats or barley, on alternate days. The shorts being from wheat render unnecessary the wheat ration that might otherwise be given instead of barley. In the afternoon give carrots or other roots (except raw potatoes). Give no other green food except say twice a week a little dandelion, parsley or sow-thistle. Be guided by the general appearance of the hares and if there is any indication of “pot-belly” cut down the hay and roots. The amount of mash to be given is about

4 oz. each, or less if they do not eat it up clean by noon. Always remove all mash or grain that is left before giving more, that all may be fresh and clean. Give fresh, pure water twice a day. Once a week place three drops of tincture of iron, and one grain of copperas (blue stone) in the drinking water."

As to condition powders I have very little to say. There may be some preparations that are helpful, but if the suggestions in this chapter are carefully observed, it is not probable that any reader will need to put his money in any of the advertised conditioners of the day.

I'M ALL RIGHT — THANK YOU.

While it's true I have been slighted,
 By certain men benighted,
 Yet what they say from day to day cuts little ice.
 For I've cap and station
 In this glorious Yankee nation,
 And the position that I occupy strikes me as mighty nice.

I must endure the Yankee habit
 Of dubbing me a "rabbit,"
 But I know in my own conscience I'm a "bleeding"
 But I'll fool the opposition, ["blooming" hare.
 And retain my proud position
 With a dignity and patience as exalted as 'tis rare.

Adverse critics but amuse me,
 But they surely won't accuse me
 Of not knowing that my coney fur is in every
 For a hare in my position [fellow's hat,
 Would be a funny proposition
 If he didn't know at every turn exactly where he's at.

—*Belgian Hare Advocate.*

CHAPTER IX.

Diseases and How to Treat Them.

As with the human family a wide difference of opinion exists on this subject, so with Belgian Hares—everybody can tell you what is the matter and suggest just what to do. But the results are not always conducive to the fame of the adviser.

Mr. A. V. Meersch, in the "Poultry Monthly," has given the world a strong and timely article on this subject. He covers the ground so admirably that I will quote him in full:

"The diseases generally attacking rabbits are red water, the snuffles, diarrhoea, the rot and pot belly. Although other maladies make their appearance, these will generally be found to arise from want of due care and cleanliness. We cannot too strongly recommend our readers to observe this fact. It will prevent many serious losses and a great deal of disappointment.

"'Prevention is better than cure.' Most especially is this old adage true in diseases of rabbits which, to be treated successfully, must always be taken in time. Some varieties are much more delicate than others—thus the Himalayan Belgian hare, for instance—and will require more careful tending. You may always know when a rabbit is getting "out

of sorts;" it will mope in a corner, refuse to romp about as usual, and neglect its food a few days before the particular disease manifests itself. Remove it at once to a separate hutch, in case it should prove an infectious ailment and in order to treat it more comfortably.

"I should advise you to keep the following rules in force, and you will be troubled with little or no disease:

1. Breed from sound, healthy stock.
2. Take care that the buck and the doe are not nearly related, particularly that they are not bred from the same parents.
3. Have your hutches large and airy. Let them be kept very clean and dry.
4. Feed your rabbits liberally on sound, wholesome food, and at regular intervals.
5. Should your rabbitry be an "inside" one, make a rule to bring the hutches out into the open air for a few hours every other day; and as often as you perceive any offensive smell arising therefrom, purify by applying a coat of lime-white, in which carbolic acid or other disinfectant has been mixed in small quantities. A slight sprinkling of turpentine, now and then, after cleansing, will add to the sweetness of the hutch.
6. Remember that, although your pets must not be exposed to draughts, yet they must have ventilation.

7. Even and genial temperature is of grave importance. Keep a thermometer for ready reference inside your building.

8. The doe should not be allowed to have more than four litters a year.

“Red Water. This disease is so called, from the red color of the urine voided by the rabbit, which in very bad cases is also mixed with blood. The disease may be traced to a vitiated state of the blood, combined with inflammation of the kidneys, and is generally caused by catching a sudden chill, or by its having eaten unwholesome vegetables.

“Cure. The animal should be as little disturbed as possible, should be fed on mucilaginous food as endive, dandelion, sow-thistle, lettuce with cooked potatoes and bran. Six drops of sweet spirits of nitre may now and then be given, and a spoonful of water, in which bran has been soaked, every day until the inflammation ceases. The hutch should be kept well cleaned and extra warm.

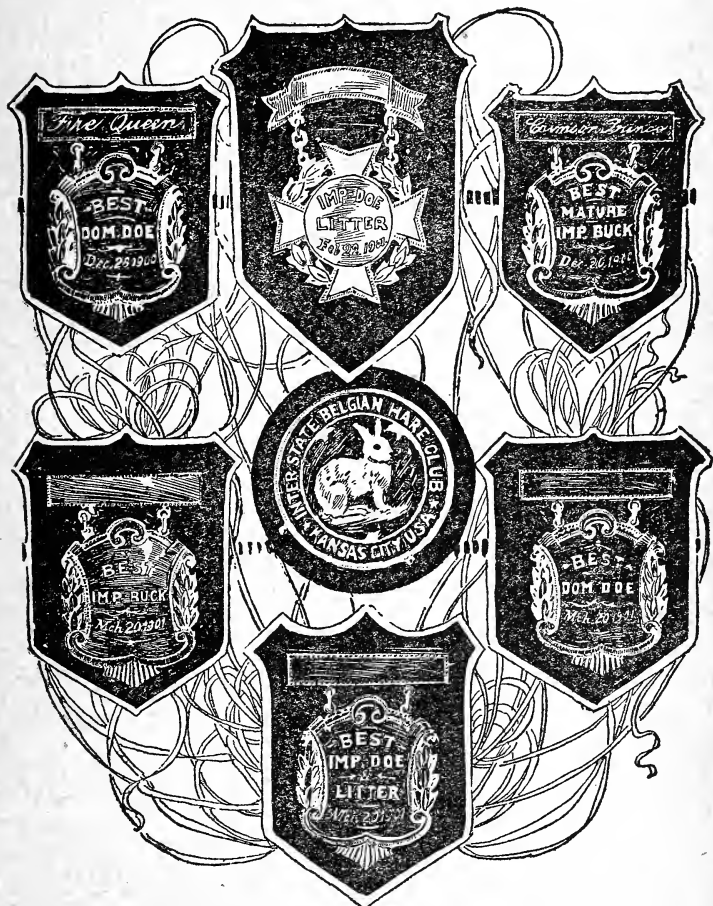
“The Snuffles. Symptoms.—The rabbit catches a violent cold in the head, and if not stopped in time, it degenerates into bronchitis and inflammation of the lungs. It is a very obstinate complaint and most rabbits seized with it die; moreover, it is contagious. You will hear the rabbit sneeze often, and shortly after a thick, gummy exudation runs from the nostrils, causing great difficulty in breathing.

“Cure. The cure of this disease, when it has not been

allowed to proceed too far, is comfortable housing and particular care taken that all draughts and wet are excluded. Extra warmth should be given and the rabbit tempted to eat. A few boiled potatoes mixed with a little salt and just warm. Thin, warm gruel of barley meal, and a piece of carrot or turnip. No green food should be given during the illness. Every day for a week, if the disease does not mend before, give $2\frac{1}{2}$ grains of powdered blue stone. If the discharge from the nostrils then disappears, your rabbit will recover. Occasionally bathe the nose with warm vinegar and water, and every second day after recovery mix $1\frac{1}{2}$ grains of the blue stone with its oats or bran. For another week, 6 grains of James' powder, mixed with 12 grains of powdered nitre, licorice, 20 grains, ipecacuanha, 1 grain; mix and give one-sixth at a time, three times daily. This, in early stages, will generally suffice, otherwise the case will be hopeless.

“Diarrhoea. This disease—an abnormal laxity of the bowels which greatly weakens the animal—is generally the result of permitting the rabbit to eat too much green food and wet vegetables. To effect a cure, a total change of diet must be adopted. Give the rabbit a little bran, in which you have mixed some finely powdered cinnamon and an acorn, grated small, also a little dry sweet hay, which the rabbit will eat when the acorn tonic has produced a little change. The skins of baked potatoes may be given as the animal

improves, also dry crusts of bread or roasted bread. Keep the rabbit in a warm, dry place, and see that the hutch is frequently cleansed.



Prizes won by the Kaw Valley Belgian Hare Company, Kansas City, Mo.

"The Rot. Symptoms: The rot is as fatal to rabbits as to sheep in wet seasons. Animals are found lying about dead, as if the warren had been stricken with pestilence. The animals are attacked by a sort of consumption, which reduces them to extreme leanness, and they become covered with a contagious scabbiness which is extremely difficult to cure. This disease, which attacks them when young, checks their growth, takes away their appetite, and at last causes them to die in violent convulsions. If it is not arrested in time, it may soon spread throughout the whole stock. It is generally attributed to damp and to superabundant moisture in various forms, which seems to be the mortal enemy of the rabbit.

"Cure. A rabbit very much covered with sores or pustules should be, immediately the disease is detected, removed from the rest, and rubbed with a salve made of sulphur and lard. Tobacco liquor is very effective. Take two ounces of "roll" tobacco, and soak it in a pint of boiling water, stir in six grains of Spanish fly, and when cold apply to the skin, where the disease exists, with a piece of rag, every second day. After a few applications, the scurf and hair will tumble off together, but of course the fur will soon grow again. Soft warm food, in which you may put one-fourth ounce of powdered sulphur, and dandelions with sweet hay should form the diet. A little powdered sulphur should at times be

rubbed or shaken round the ears, eyes and nose, on the faintest symptoms of rot or mange showing itself.

“Disease of the Eye. This disease which mostly affects young rabbits, and generally proves fatal, is easier to prevent than to cure. It appears to be caused by the exhalations from filth and urine in a decomposing state. Keep your place clean, and you will not fear the disease. Two grains of sulphate of zinc to one ounce of distilled water, applied three times daily, is the best remedy.

“Disease of the Ear. This is a most vexatious and unaccountable complaint, but is not unless neglected fatal. In some rabbits it completely fills the interior of the ear with a scabby accumulation, whilst in others there is found a moist secretion. Again some rabbits in the same hutch will be affected with it while the others show no sign of a distemper.

“Take a feather, or thin bit of stick, and gently endeavor to remove or loosen the wax, so as not to cause pain. Then pour a few drops sweet oil of almonds into the ear once a day. In a few days the wax will be loosened, and the ear may be gently syringed with warm soap and water, afterwards applying the sulphate of zinc lotion. Flour of sulphur dusted into the ear is a good and simple remedy.

“Pot Belly. Generally caused by not giving green food properly. Young rabbits are most subject to this complaint. The belly swells, and the rabbits become weak and fall away.

If not soon relieved they will die, when their vent appears as though a mixed discharge of dung and urine had terminated their existence.

“Cure. Good air and exercise, by letting them run out on any place not paved with stone, plenty of dry food such as barley, oats and soaked peas, and a very small quantity of water. A small root or two of carrot or parsnip can be given, but no green feed.

“*Mange*. A miserable disease, caused by being kept in close confinement in a damp and unwholesome place and being fed poor and unwholesome food.

“Cure. Feed as you would if attacked by snuffles, and sprinkle small quantities of sulphur daily over those parts of the skin affected. It is soon cured, if it has not got too firm a hold, in which case, kill the animal.

“*Convulsions*. Sometimes attack young rabbits. It is caused either from too frequent breeding from the same stock or from overfeeding.

“Cure. The best remedy is semi-starvation for a day or two, giving them but small quantities of hay and no other food. Then by degrees let them have a portion of soaked peas or oats. Keep them ten days without green food.

“*Injurious Food*. If you find your young rabbit, when about eight or ten weeks old, becomes ill, and the parts about the shoulders become swollen and the skin discolored, it is

evident it has been eating something injurious. I give the following remedy: Mix linseed meal or oat meal, and half the quantity of sulphur together, with hot water, not too thin. Give also a little parsley and a carrot or two, once a day, with plenty of good sweet hay."

It is strange that Mr. Meersch does not even mention *slobbers*, which is one of the most common diseases in the rabbitry. This disease is confined principally to the young, and is caused by over-feeding, or by improper feeding. Concerning this disease Mr. Lambert says:

"A running discharge of a watery fluid comes from the sides of the mouth. The animal may be seen trying to wipe it off with the paws. This disease is usually caused by a too sudden change from dry to green food, but may also be caused by colds or too wet food. Wash the mouth with borax and water. Give twice daily a teaspoonful of milk or water into which put five to ten drops of equal parts of oil of juniper and sweet spirits of nitre, according to age and severity of attack. Another remedy recommended by some is made by mixing and well dissolving: Pepsin, 2 grains; quinine, 1 grain; whiskey, 1 ounce; water, 3 ounces. Dose, one teaspoonful three times a day. This also makes a good tonic. Some fanciers use tincture of ginger, well diluted, for this disease. Still another remedy is six drops of Jamaica

ginger to a teaspoonful of water, forced down the throat with a medicine dropper."

I would object to the use of whiskey. It isn't fit for the stomach of a cast iron dog, let alone that of a tender young hare. Sane people should never use the stuff under any pretext.

I would add that the moment a case of slobbers develops in your rabbitry, remove the afflicted animal to a separate hutch, and allow it nothing to eat but prairie hay for several days. Salt and powdered alum dissolved in its drinking water will hasten a cure.

Concerning the snuffles, Dr. Platt says:

"Snuffles will attack hares anywhere if too closely confined. It arises from an irritation of the delicate mucous membranes of the nose and air passages caused by the fumes of the ammonia in the droppings and urine of the hare, as well as from a cold. It does not come from a cold alone as some people erroneously believe.

"The best way to cure snuffles is to prevent it. This can be done by a constant use of antiseptics. The best of all is fresh air, which is also cheapest of all, and should constantly be supplied in great abundance. Dry loam, not sand, should also be plentifully supplied to the floors of all pens and should be renewed frequently, that which has become saturated and foul being carted away to the manure pile. If

these remedial agencies are constantly used there will rarely be snuffles, but a third excellent antiseptic is Formalin, a preparation made in England and imported into this country. It comes in a highly concentrated liquid, which may be purchased at drug-stores. Twenty-five cents worth will last a long time. A weak solution is made by adding one teaspoonful of Formalin to a quart of plain water. A stronger and better solution for more severe cases is obtained by using two teaspoonfuls of Formalin to a quart of water. This should be sprayed through the pens by use of an atomizer, such as is used for spraying the nose and throat in sickness, or, better because quicker, by using a syringe with a nozzle that will give a spray. In the solutions mentioned this preparation is non-poisonous and its use every day or two will keep the pens free from all odors and will thoroughly disinfect them, killing the microbes that cause snuffles and other diseases:

“The fact that the hare sometimes takes disease does not prove that he is a particularly delicate animal. Any animal, even man, would become diseased if exposed to the conditions that some hares are compelled to endure by their short-sighted owners. If you wish to make your rabbitry a success go at it in the right way and remember that care and cleanliness, with abundant, varied and pure food, are the requisites of success and profit.

“Do not expect to keep a whole herd of rabbits healthy if confined in narrow, close quarters.”

There are several other ailments that sometimes manifest themselves in rabbitries. Among them may be mentioned abscesses, caked or swollen breast, scours, diseased liver, paralysis of the hindquarters, vent disease, and what is termed “going soft.” On these ailments Mr. Wilkins speaks as follows:

“*Abscess.* If an abscess forms let it get ripe; then open with a sharp penknife, squeeze out the matter, and wash out the wound with diluted Condyl’s Fluid; dry, and then drop in Condyl’s Fluid neat. Repeat the washing and fluid for a few days, when a cure should be effected.

“*Paralysis of the Hindquarters.* The hindquarters seem to collapse, and the rabbit drags its hind legs uselessly after it, and the muscles of the thighs sometimes wither away. There is practically no cure for this affliction, and the best remedy is to put the sufferer out of its misery at once.

“*Vent Inflammation.* This is recognized by an inflamed condition of the testicle in bucks and the uterus in does. In the latter it is caused principally by inflammation caused by kindling, by sitting on dung in dirty hutches, etc. Bucks usually catch it from contact with afflicted does. It is a very catching complaint, and on no account should rabbits

be paired while suffering. This complaint is very difficult to cure, and a lot of patience is necessary to effect it.

“Mr. Malley makes an excellent vent ointment, and a cure may generally be effected by its use, if thoroughly persisted in.

“Goulard’s Extract, mixed with a little spring water, often does much good.

“Vinolia cream, vaseline, lard and sulphur, all exercise a beneficial effect; and as the disease is of various degrees of severity, and in various specimens different remedies act better than on others, I may be excused for giving several remedies. As much time is required to effect a perfect cure, if the specimen is of little value it is the best plan to kill it.

“*Diseased Liver.* This is a somewhat common complaint, and is difficult to cure. In fact, if the specimen is not of much value the cheapest way is to kill it. It is often caused by injudicious feeding, such as the giving of decayed green food. The liver decays by reason of a small parasite, termed a “fluke,” which attaches itself to the liver. The symptoms are a difficulty of breathing, often accompanied by an audible noise, and a pinched appearance of the stomach. The appetite may not be affected in the early stage.

“Cure.—If the patient eats well, and is otherwise healthy, give two doses at intervals of twelve hours of one-half grain of calomel. Give special attention to food and fresh air.

Another remedy is to take nitre, 3 dr.; powdered ginger, 2 dr.; common salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.; boiling water, 3 pints. Pour the boiling water over the ingredients, and when blood warm add 3 oz. of rectified spirit of turpentine, and shake well. Give a teaspoonful every morning, an hour before feeding, and repeat the dose three times, missing two days between



Proprietor Kaw Valley Belgian Hare Co., Kansas City, Mo.

each dose. Thoroughly well shake the mixture just before using.

"A simpler form of disease of the liver is caused by bad indigestion, which may cause inflammation. In this the appetite is generally bad. Give twice daily 1 gr. of grey powder. Dandelions may be given with good results.

"*Going Soft.* This complaint is, I think, the result of a

disturbance of the bowels or of defective digestion. It appears often in does when moulting. The symptoms are a soft, flabby state of the whole body, the afflicted one handling like a lump of soft dough; the stomach is often distended. The complaint is curable if taken in time, and nothing has equalled in my experience choline as the best remedy, a teaspoonful twice daily. Feed nourishingly, and give tit-bits of roots, green food, and hay, but do not give more than is eaten up clean. A week's treatment will generally effect a cure."

Hares are not so hardy as some varieties, but if well housed, kept clean, and fed carefully, there should not be much cause for use of the medicine chest; but as these various illnesses will sometimes occur in the best regulated rabbitry, it is best to be prepared with a stock of the remedies that will be generally wanted. A box with a lid and partitions keeps the remedies tidy and handy, and I will give here a list of remedies and chemicals which it will pay you to keep ready in case of emergency:

A bottle of Sanitas Oil.

Ditto of Methylated Spirit.

Ditto Choline (Knight's).

Ditto Nitre (Sweet Spirit of).

Ditto Oil of Juniper.

Box Vent Ointment (Malley's).

Small tin Arrowroot.

Bottle of Ear Canker Lotion (as per recipe).

Bottle Condy's Fluid.

Tin of Disinfectant.

Bottle of Glycerine.

Knight's remedies are recommended by such fanciers as Mrs. Bush and Dr. Platt in this country, as well as the leading fanciers of England, and it is only a question of time when your druggist will keep a stock of them on hand if he is not at present supplied.

HARES ON THE BRAIN.

They showed him the park when the light of the moon
 Was silvering forest and lea,
 "I don't care for parks, but I'm thinking," he said,
 "What a fine place for hares this would be."
 He called on a friend, a composer of note,
 Who played for his visitor's sake.
 "I've no ear for song; but the case don't you see
 What a beautiful "hutch" it would make?"

He went to the horse-show and viewed with the rest
 The kingliest animals there.
 "They are passable beasts, but they've no show at all
 Compared to the Belgian hare."
 He snubbed a good parson whose "ticking" was poor,
 And a maid who in "symmetry" failed;
 He spurned a pug dog as a gift from a friend,
 Declaring the brute was "wry-tailed."
 He called on a lady who showed him her pet—
 A baby girl, dainty and fair.
 He wished to be gallant, so, in stammering, said:
 "It looks like a Belgian hare!"

—*J. Worthington Jones in the Herald.*

against doing a hundred things common sense led us to think were all right—common sense based on our general observations and knowledge of animal life. We were told that snuffles were contagious, and a well developed case could not be cured.

My experience as a breeder for over six years, assisted by the knowledge of a nose and throat specialist of over thirty years' experience, coupled with the experience of many others, leads me to flatly contradict all of these theories, and I think I can satisfy any ordinary mind that in practicing these ridiculous customs we have been following false gods, and drifting away from the main great purpose of the hare. I am not in a position to question the methods of English breeders, as their climate is damp and very different from ours and may justify the course they pursue, but I am satisfied that if we are ever to place the hare in its proper place in this country we must get entirely away from many of the old ideas, and it is in furtherance of this I write this article.

My "experiment farm" is a piece of ground 50x100, fenced with inch mesh wire. On it I have a good shed 16x32, divided into compartments—one for does and one for bucks. Besides the doors and windows I have an opening 6x6 inches in each part, allowing the hares to run freely in their half of the large yard. This opening is made indirect by laying a 16-ft. board in front of it, compelling the hares to enter

the opening at either end before getting into the shed, thus shutting out the cold and preventing draughts. No hutches in this building. With plenty of room and stumps, rocks and other places of refuge, the hares do not injure one another fighting. They burrow in the earth, run foot-races around the yard, eat anything, and are all healthy and long-bodied. A hundred dollars reward would not bring a single cold—much less snuffles—to light. The does are treated exactly the same way. No hutches. Every three months I turn the “buck herd” in with the does, as they do sheep. In about three weeks I begin to pick up the heavy does and place them in another building, where I keep them in hutches until the young are weaned. I then separate the does from the bucks and place them in with the others in the large pens. This, of course, is all unpedigreed meat stock, and my experiments have thus far been confined to about two hundred head. I feed them anything as I do my chickens—potato parings, turnips, sugar beets and green food of all kinds. I feed hay, both prairie and alfalfa, in racks 18 inches high, provided with a top to prevent hares from getting on the hay. It takes me about five minutes to feed the two hundred head, and a small creek through the lot supplies them with water. In this manner I think one man can care for 5,000 head.

In my pedigreed stock—which I still keep in hutches—

when I get one affected with a bad cold, I simply throw it into the big lot, and the outdoor exercise and pure air soon cures the cold. I have cured seemingly hopeless cases of snuffles in this way—turning hares out in the dead of winter, with four inches of snow in the lot. If allowed to run this way, hares will not go out in the cold wet storms of March and April, but will remain in the sheds. Dampness is the great thing to be dreaded in hares. Dampness, coupled with close confinement, is sure death. If allowed to run free, a hare will work off the effects of exposure to dampness. Cold damp draughts, striking the hare when confined in a hutch, is what causes pneumonia—for snuffles is nothing else, coupled with catarrh. If you were treated in the same manner the result would be the same. The man accustomed to out-door life does not take cold when exposed to a cold rain. It's the preacher and lawyer, who are confined indoors.

There are two fields open for the Belgian in this country—the show-room and the table. The latter field is the one we need to cultivate, and in doing so we must divest the hare of all the reverence attached to him by the fancier and put him in the same boat with the homely hen. “His Lordship the Belgian Hare,” with all the ravings about red feet and symmetry, must give way to B'rer Rabbit the utility animal, found on every butcher's block, if we ever expect to fully realize the profit from this animal the future prom-

ises. The hare will always be raised for the fancy, but it will be on the same basis as all other fancy stock. The meat side of the question must be the source from which we draw the profits, and to do this more economical methods of handling must be followed to lessen the cost of the meat animal. Following the method outlined above, hares may be raised for a few cents, and sold at a profit for a quarter. This is the ultimate end of the hare, and the sooner we look at it in this light the sooner we will reap the profits.

(Mr. Barrow was the founder of the "Belgian Hare Journal," Kansas City, Mo., and edited the same until its consolidation with the "Belgian Hare News," Chicago. He is at present at the head of the Kansas City Belgian Hare Syndicate.—Editor.)

CHAPTER XI.

On Judging Hares.

There are two systems of judging hares in vogue. One is known as the "comparison" system, and is used exclusively in England. The other is called the "score card" system, and has a large following in this country. Concerning the former Mr. Will C. Harris, a noted American fancier who



Originator of the Score Card System of judging Belgian Hares, Denver, Col.

recently visited England, writes, in the "California Poultry Tribune":

"Judging in England is all done by comparison, several specimens being placed before the judge at one time, and

the inferior ones sent away—as they are so determined—until the number is reduced to two or three, when the best in the group is decided on.

A great many people in America have been misled on the question of championship, thinking that a hare that has scored one or two prizes in England is a champion. As a matter of fact a hare does not become a champion until it has won five firsts under three different judges; and it requires but little reflection to appreciate the fact that a specimen must possess unusually good qualities to stand the test of championship. One judge may have a hobby, and be prejudiced in favor of an animal because it possesses some points in accordance with his particular ideas, while another man, equally as competent, might have his hobby in another direction, thus making it necessary for the hare to pass muster under more than two judges. So remember this,—no hare becomes a champion that has not received five firsts, under three different judges. A first prize means that the specimen thus declared is the best in that particular class, in the estimation of that one judge. A special prize may be offered by one or more individuals, and is given to promote and encourage competition and increase the interest in the fancy. It is oftentimes awarded to the best hare in the show.”

So far as the awards are concerned, this is all very good. But I prefer the American system of getting at the best hare.

I do not care to enter into any discussion as to the merits of the two systems, but simply wish to give my preference emphatically to the score card system. For a small show where only a few animals are to be judged, the comparison system may do. But for an immense mail order business, where millions of animals are bought and sold annually, we must have a more capable and scientific system, and I think the score card harmonizing with the American standard of points presents all that is required.

Mrs. M. D. Capps, in the "Poultry and Belgian Hare Standard," Kansas City, presents a very readable article under the caption, "To Judge a Good Belgian." Mrs. Capps is high authority, and I take pleasure in quoting her:

"It is greatly a matter of experience to be able to select from a number of animals those that will score high or make first-class breeders.

"There are does that will not score above 90 that make first-class breeding stock if properly mated to bucks strong on points in which they are lacking. For the same reason a buck is sometimes found which is a valuable breeder for a certain class of does, but will not reach an unusually high score.

"Those who intend purchasing breeding animals with which to stock a rabbitry, and who are lacking in practical experience could do no better than secure the services of a

practical breeder to point out to them desirable and undesirable points of animals under consideration, allowing them to choose according to the object for which they intend to breed.

“When this is impractical it is well to remember that the accepted standard by which hares are judged disqualifies or bars from the showroom animals possessing any of the following defects: Lopped or fallen ear or ears. White front feet or white bars on same. Decidedly wry front feet or wry tail.

“First of these in the standard requirements is a rich rufus red color carried well down sides and hindquarters, with as little white under jaws as possible. Rufus red is usually found nearest perfection on the back of neck. The sides are correspondingly deficient as regards their distance from the given point and the color of feet is variable even on animals of fairly good rufus color otherwise. The white under the jaws should be of a creamy tinge rather than clear white and it is desirable that it extend out into view as little as possible. Ticking should be wavy in appearance and rather plentiful and confined to body of animal. Although some ticking will be found on the feet, ears and head it is punished in scoring when very noticeable and is not an addition to the beauty of the animal.

“One of the greatest beauty points of the hare is its long,

slender body, being as near as possible of the same girth about the flank as it is just back of the shoulders, or in other words as carefully shaped as a symmetrical roadster, showing careful feeding and a reasonable amount of exercise. Fat will quickly spoil the shape of a show animal and want of exercise and overfeeding will certainly produce fat.

“The ears should be carried closely together and alert, not drooping nor crooked forward to an unnatural position.

“Eyes should be round, bright and bold, and hazel in color, as they usually are. A dull eye is often produced by poor condition from improper care and is seldom found in a vigorous, healthy specimen.

“The weight should be eight pounds for mature animals and at least a pound for every month of its age up to seven months.

“The flesh should be firm and the fur, when the moult is complete, should present the glossiest of black and the deepest, richest, rufous red. The glossiness of the fur is a pretty good indication of the animal's condition, as disease soon produces a rough, faded coat, anything but handsome to the fancier.

“A dewlap, which is the loose skin under the neck, is unsightly when pronounced, although does which are constantly bred develop this defect almost always.

Bucks are usually thick and heavy in shape of head after

a year old, especially when used as breeders. This should be taken into consideration when judging of their breeding qualities.

“A body well arched or carried well up from the ground denotes nice length and gives a symmetrical curve to the back.

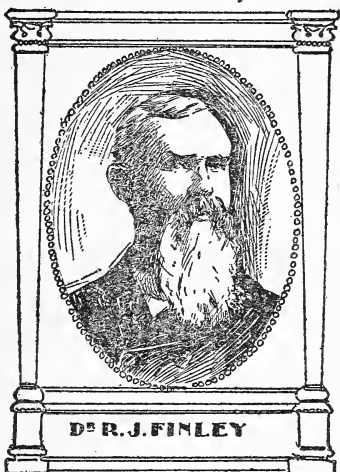
“Extreme length of ears tends to produce lop ears and is not desirable in a breeder. If thin and fine in quality, some of the young are almost sure to develop this trouble, especially in warm weather, when exercise is limited.

“An inexperienced buyer is not necessarily at the mercy of misrepresentation when some study is given to standard requirements and a visit to several rabbitries will usually go far towards the beginning of an education in hare lore.”

When I began collecting the best material obtainable for this work, I wrote Dr. R. J. Finley, Macon, Mo., requesting him for a contribution. He favored me with the following signed article. Dr. Finley stands high in the fancy as a careful, considerate judge:

“The all important and first things to be looked after in judging or purchasing Belgians are the points that disqualify, which are a lop ear or ears, white bars or spots on the front feet or limbs, and the time is at hand when the only white permissible on a Belgian is the pad and the under part of the tail, also wry first feet. The standard says a wry tail is

a disqualification. There is a difference of opinion on what constitutes a wry tail—some claiming “turning to one side or deviating from the right direction” is a wry tail, while others insist a twisted tail is understood in the standard. We believe the makers of the standard in the latter case disqualify, while in the former give the animal the benefit of the doubt, as it is often the case they are carried to one side



Belgian Hare Judge and Editor of the "Record" Macon, Mo.

for quite a length of time and then appear to be all right. A screw tail is easily discerned by passing it between your fingers, which, under any and all circumstances, disqualifies.

"A putty nose is easily discovered, and disqualifies.

"After all of the points which disqualify are carefully looked after, to my mind, the shape is the important thing in a Belgian. It is the hare shape we want. I am aware that the color is the first thing on the score cards and stand-

ard, but give me the perfect shape and I can place the color on by judicious breeding. It is much easier to obtain the color than the shape. You can breed the color upon a hog or hen, but you cannot breed the shape of a hare.

“Then it is necessary to have the body long and racy, from ten to twelve inches; front feet long and fine bone, a narrow head and long (not rabbit-shape), a round, bold eye, with ears erect and well set on the head. The whole shape and action to conform to the wild English hare, ever on the alert and ready to flee upon the approach of danger or leap a hedge fence.

“There are only two things to look after in selecting a Belgian or judging it—shape and color. We hear and see a great deal about color and how difficult it is to decide what is the correct shade for a rufus red or golden tan, which is the desire of Belgian fanciers. Some go so far as to advocate a color tape for every judge to carry, and have the color correspond in shade with the color of the tape. When man can catch all of the different hues of an autumn New England forest on a tape line, then give us the tape line to judge the Belgian by, but not until then. It seems to me a very easy task to select the color, for when once seen in its beauty it is not so easily eradicated from memory.

The health of the animal has much to do with the beautiful brilliant golden hue which is so much sought after. The

effect is apparent, equally as much so as in the human race. A disordered stomach, liver or a cold is quickly discerned in man, and as plainly manifest in the color and general appearance of a Belgian. Different shades of light through which a Belgian is examined affects its color. The degree of light and sunshine in which a Belgian has been kept has much to do with the bright, brilliant glossy tinge. A dark hutch and health is required to bring out and perfect the much-desired Belgian hare color. Sunshine and light make a dull, washed-out color. At this point is where many make a mistake. They have an idea sunshine is required, never stopping to consider the nature of the animal they are breeding. The hare and rabbit seek their hole or some secluded, shady or dark place to quietly spend the day. That is their nature, and see to it you do not try to change it, for in so doing you will make a failure as a successful breeder.

Ask yourself when rabbits and hares feed in their wild state and arrange your time for feeding accordingly, regularity and cleanliness in feeding is one of the important features which brings a prosperous termination. Another point which should be considered but is disregarded is disturbing them during the day which is their time to rest—expressing in small packages and the noise and confusion attending an exhibition with the continual handling by owner and strangers worries and wearies them many times, so much so as

to affect the position they assume when being scored or compared with others. A person in their home has the advantage in appearance over the weary and worn traveler, so a Belgian in his home where everything is familiar will exhibit better points in shape than at a show where strangers and surroundings are new and many times alarming. The exhibitors and officers of every pet stock and poultry association should have a separate room or place apart from the exhibition room for judging the stock, and none should be permitted to enter it while the judge is judging the stock except the attendants who are selected to bring the stock and it should always be brought in a coop and only handled by the judge in the room for judging.

“There are many things that go to complete the shape and color of a perfect Belgian and they are what a breeder and exhibitor must look after if successful. The reason of the failure of an animal to have the perfect shape in any of its parts or the perfect color is not taken into consideration by the judge, neither is he supposed to know the reasons or who is the owner, whether friend or foe. He is to judge the animal just as he stands before him. If the animal has been taught to take a correct position upon being placed upon a table it has the advantage of those who have not. The art of taking a correct position is admired in man and beast. Teach your Belgians what you want them to do and

they will do it when in other hands; like the child they will do away from home what they are permitted to do at home. The position taken by the Belgians has much to do with displaying the color to advantage. Remember the better the form or more perfect the shape on which you have color the more perfectly it is displayed whether on man, beast or fowl. A person cannot be a competent judge of any animal until he has seen stock which is as near a perfect specimen of the species to be judged as is possible to secure. Every judge's ideal is the best specimen seen by him and that is the standard by which he judges until he sees a better one and as he discovers better specimens from time to time he becomes more critical in his examinations and judging. Every breeder thinks he has the best until he discovers some one has something better."

It affords me great pleasure in closing this chapter to present a signed article prepared for me by the distinguished Dr. B. C. Platt, author of the "Manual" that bears his name, and, with his son, proprietor of the Bonanza Rabbitry, Los Angeles. Dr. Platt is a true fancier, and speaks with the authority of both the scientist and the lover:

A New Score Card on the Decimal Basis the Foundation for a Logical System of Judging Belgians, by Dr. B. C. Platt.

The dissatisfaction existing among a large proportion of

breeders over the method in vogue for judging Belgian hares has prompted me to work out a more rational system, one that will be satisfactory to the progressive breeder and also to the most ardent admirer of true sportsmanlike methods.

The prevailing practices have done fairly well and have served to educate the pains-taking breeder and exhibitor in many directions, notably, that the logical way to determine the value of a specimen, as defined by the standard of excellence, is by the score card system of judging. Even with the crudeness of the method in vogue better results in judging by the score card have been obtained than by the comparison way, but those who have adopted the Belgian hare as a permanent business proposition are desirous for every feature tending to advance the best interest of the industry. There is nothing in the annals of live stock culture in America that at all compares with the profits that have been made from the Belgian hare and the growth of the industry. Yet, there is room for improvement in several particulars. With these improvements effected, still greater benefits than have been realized will come to the fraternity.

The genuine good business side of the industry is just coming to the front. To-day the industry is largely in the hands of a more practical and substantial class of people than it has ever been, up to within a short time. Now is

the time for the adoption of everything that will elevate the industry and force upon the attention of enterprising people its merits. Progression is imperatively demanded here. Nothing stands still. Advancement must be made, else re-



Reduced Fac-simile of the Crystal Palace Challenge Cup won by Fashoda, at the Pet Stock Exhibition, London, Eng., Nov. 1st, 1899.

trogression will take place.

The custom of making one-fourth point the minimum penalty necessitates a great deal of guessing on the part of

the judge, the spectator, the purchaser and everybody interested in the Belgian hare and the result is very indefinite.

Another and very important objection to this method of judging is the possibility and probability of many ties in prize contests.

In the high type class of Belgians the expert judge often meets with a specimen with certain sections all but perfect, but he cannot pass the section perfect, yet a one-fourth point penalty is unjust, but it is the minimum penalty he may impose according to the prevailing custom.

The practice of imposing a penalty of one-fourth point, where one-half of this one-fourth point only is due the section, and the judge attempting to carry in his mind the other half of the one-fourth point to some other section where he may find a like condition existing, is confusing, at least tends to complicate the proposition and often leads to failure to do a specimen full justice. The judge may forget or not find another section where he may right the wrong on the section previously too severely penalized, or if he chooses to pass a section on a one-fourth point penalty when it is entitled to almost a half point, thinking that he may right it up, the result is the same.

The application of the standard of excellence by the decimal system admits of finer discrimination in the whole proposition. It forms the basis for exact science.

To the eye and mind of one trained to minute distinction, the decimal basis of judging will prove most satisfactory and will enable him to judge to a degree of nicety impossible to equal by the one-quarter point fractional system.

One of the most valuable features of the score card system of judging lies in the fact that the authority passing upon the merits of a specimen makes a record of his opinion, which serves to confirm the ability or inability of the judge and this record is valuable as a study. Now, with the work well done by the decimal system, the score of any given section of the specimen will correspond with the notation on the card; that is, the defects of sections noted on the score card will be found in the specimen when specimen and score card are brought together at any time within a reasonable length of time after the judge has completed his work. Not so with the work done by the rule employed to-day.

We will take, for instance, the section of quality of front legs that are nearly perfect. The skillful judge with a one-fourth point card as a minimum cut, and which in this case is too much of a penalty, must nevertheless impose it under the existing custom. Now, when the card and the specimen are brought together and another specimen which is entitled to just one-fourth point penalty for the same element in the same section, and each specimen receiving the same penalty, the injustice or the weakness of the present system stands

out boldly to all critical observers. Though the judge may say he attempted to and did even up this excessive punishment on specimen number one, it does not appear on the card as a matter of record. With a minimum cut of one-tenth of a point, as admitted in the decimal system, there remains no room for a give-and-take deal over the sections. The exact value of a section may be noted and passed once for all, and the card and sections will correspond.

Regarding ties: With the point divided into fourths only, many ties are bound to occur in every class in every exhibition where there are a large number of entries. With the point divided into tenths, where three or four ties now occur only one is possible, and even less are probable, and this percentage may be reduced for the very reason that many ties now occur through the oversight of the judge to even up excessive penalties imposed on one or more sections of the specimen because of the complication of the system and the confusion resulting.

I anticipate opposition to this advanced move for the reason that some people interested in any given proposition involving close application, study and thought invariably adopt the easiest and often a make-shift or pretence of a way in the matter. But to those who are deeply in love with the industry, have its future welfare at heart and who are really enterprising and progressive, I feel confident that a

new score card, based on the decimal system, will meet with hearty approval and immediate acceptance.

I am prepared to demonstrate in actual practice the superiority of the decimal system over any other method of judging Belgians.*

To those who seek further information on the subject I would say, that Mrs. A. M. Bush's series of articles on "How to Judge Your Own Hares," contained in the file of her *Champion*, contains much valuable matter, as also does Dr. Platt's "Manual," and Judge P. E. Crabtree's new work. Belgian Hare judging is becoming a very important and very profitable business. I know of one judge who is reported to have made \$10,000 during 1900, judging hares. And the business is legitimate too. It is certainly worth 50 cents to any breeder to know exactly what a certain animal scores—it may bring him \$20 more than if sold at a guess.

*Copyright applied for by B. C. Platt.

CHAPTER XII.

The Meat Proposition.

Mr. Frank Evans, in his prize poem written for the "Poultry and Belgian Hare Standard," Kansas City, strikes the nail squarely on the head, something poets do not always do. Under the significant title, "The End of the Belgian Hare," he says:

Beautiful Belgian Hare,—
With form so trim and neat,
And eyes so soft and brown, alas!
Your ultimate end is meat.

A poor man's friend, a rich man's joy,
With the ladies: "You're just too sweet,"
But alas for fancier, alas for us all!
Your ultimate end is meat.

We love every point you possess,
Each one helps to make you complete—
Combines to make you charm, but alas!
Your ultimate end is meat.

If you can't show a first-class score,
Ninety-three, at the least, you must beat,
Or fried, or stewed, or roasted you'll be,
Your ultimate end is meat.

Dr. A. S. Heath, of New York City, says: "There should be hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of Belgian Hare meat shipped to our Hospitals and sanitariums annually. For digestibility and nutritive value there is no meat com-

parable with that of the Belgian. Beef gives fifty-five per cent of net nutriment, mutton sixty-five, pork seventy-five, while chicken and Belgian Hare meat gives eighty to eighty-five per cent of digestible nutriment far superior to any other meat."

I should much prefer hare meat to that of the chicken I think if I were a physician, although the two meats seem to possess about the same amount of nutritive value, for while the hare is one of the cleanest animals in the world, the chicken is one of the nastiest fowls on earth.

The Belgian dresses from six to ten pounds at maturity. There is very little waste, and the meat is practically all white, similar to that of the quail or young turkey. It does not have that wild taste peculiar to the cotton tail or jack rabbit, and it is much more easily digested than chicken. It is as yet, however, hard to obtain, for nearly everybody who has Belgians is breeding for the trade, not for the market. But it is only a question of time when Belgian meat will be found in every butcher shop, or canned in groceries. The Armour's have already added a Belgian department to their immense packeries I understand, and pay good prices for the animal on foot.

What is needed to give the market phase of the industry a firm hold, is an exchange in every city. On this subject I am glad to be able to present a signed article from the

pen of Dr. Fred E. Jones, Chicago, President of the National Belgian Hare Association—an article prepared especially for this work. Incidentally he touches upon some other interesting phases of our subject also:



President National Belgian Hare Association, Chicago.

“The Belgian Hare meat as an article of diet, is almost entirely unknown to the American people at large, and for this reason there appears to be considerable prejudice regarding it. It has therefore seemed proper that an effort should be made in the right direction, tending to overcome this aversion. That the meat is desirable as food, there is absolutely no doubt, being extremely nutritious, more so than that of fowl or other animals, and tender and of fine flavor,

it is bound to find favor where given a fair and impartial test.

“It has been my pleasure to bring before the National Belgian Hare Association, the question of providing a means of disposing of the meat product of our members, the intention being to provide one or more places, centrally located, as may be deemed advisable, where the animals may be sent alive, and where, as a protection to the public, they may be passed upon by persons competent to judge of their soundness, thus insuring to the public a desirable and pure article of food, and also provide against the humbugging of the public through the sale of Jack Rabbit, and other undesirable stuff. In this, I fancy the breeder will be assured the best possible returns, not only for the meat, but for the pelts as well, which handled in large numbers will sell the more readily and bring a much better price than could possibly be secured by individual members, in small lots and in competition with each other. Competition in business may be a healthy stimulant, but to the Belgian Hare industry, it would prove a very serious hinderance.

“I feel quite sure that centralizing the sale of market product in the manner proposed, will do for the breeders in and about Chicago, what has already been accomplished and is being successfully tested in other states: California, Iowa, Maine and Colorado. In Denver, the breeders were brought face to face with a serious problem, in that their

hutches were being overcrowded, with absolutely no outlet, whereupon the Association took the matter in hand, in somewhat the manner outlined above, making a contract with one of their prominent markets, for a period of four months, which was reluctantly conceded, guaranteeing to relieve the aforesaid market of any unsold meat that might remain upon their counter. At the expiration of the four months' period, the contract was not renewed for the reason of the meat having gained such a sale that Denver breeders were absolutely unable to supply the demand. We have information through Mr. Crabtree of that city, that the meat is now being shipped in from places as far away as Ohio, and the demand cannot be kept pace with. I am in receipt of letters from breeders at various points in the West commending and endorsing the plan most heartily. It will appear to anyone without second thought, in meeting the demand this method will create, that a steady supply in large quantities is absolutely necessary to insure a continuous market for the meat product as well as in the disposal of the pelts, and at the same time aid the members of our Association to make association absolutely necessary for the best results to breeder and the public.

“Our Association should, of course, be in constant touch with every member, whose regular reports to the proper source, would furnish in advance, knowledge of the number

of animals each member could supply, daily, weekly or monthly, as the case might prove to require.

“It is my earnest belief, that the Belgian Hare as an article of food, will prove a most beneficial one to the people of the U. S., both rich and poor, as with a little care, a poor man can have his supply of meat at an extremely low cost, and I firmly believe that in the next five years the consumption of this animal will equal, if not exceed, that of Europe, which we are credibly informed amounts in the aggregate to one hundred million pounds annually.

“At the present time, I understand that a certain gentleman of this city, having the backing of a large corporation, is about to visit France for the purpose of learning the secret of dyeing Belgian Hare pelts for the purpose of manufacturing Electric Seal. This will require considerable money, as the secret is well guarded, and cannot be learned without a large expenditure. This certainly indicates that the holders of capital appreciate the future of the Belgian Hare industry.”

It costs so little to raise a Belgian that his economic importance is almost immeasurable. Mr. Charles C. Chapman, President of the Meadow Brook Company, Los Angeles, estimates that where a large number of hares are allowed to run together they will thrive on ten cents' worth of hay per month when that article of food is selling at \$9 per ton.

A writer in the "California Poultry Tribune," speaking on the subject of feeding Belgians for meat says:

"The question is often asked by those interested or contemplating raising their own or some one else's hares, "Does it pay to feed for meat?" I contend that it does most decidedly, and I know whereof I speak, as I have repeatedly put ten to twenty bucks six weeks old (just weaned) into my corral, and weighed their rolled barley to them two or three times a week, having a hopper-shaped self-feeding box that will hold ten pounds, and if feeding for meat, I give them all they can eat, which will average for the first month (including hay, of which they will eat the same value) five cents; second month, eight cents. They are then three and a half months old, and the bucks should be separated from the does. They should now weigh between four and five pounds, and are at a good age to sell, though I have kept them another month and made it pay."

Dr. Platt, in his "Manual," says:

"Without doubt hare meat may be produced, on a small scale, at a cost of not more than four cents per pound. Hares may be kept in any back yard. Not so with cows, hogs or poultry, to an extent that would leave any profit to speak of. With the greater net profit in hares over any other live stock, the poor man may purchase in abundance all of the commodities produced by cow, hog or poultry.

When from the labor of a boy not more than twelve years old, an income of over \$1,000 is realized, certainly the possibilities for a grown person are very flattering. It is no exaggeration to say that a wide-awake, methodical man may, by devoting his entire time to the care of hares, make per year from ten to twenty thousand dollars from the meat for market only. With a well appointed paddock system of rearing, water piped and all conveniences, a man can care for 1,000 breeding does, dress and ship the increase.

“From this herd of 1,000 does should come an increase of 50,000 hares each year. At five pounds each, dressed, and at twenty cents per pound, they would bring \$50,000. For safety cut this estimate in half and then deduct twenty per cent more. The balance is \$20,000. The expenses will not exceed \$5,000 per year, so we have \$15,000 net profit. To many this estimate will seem unreasonably high, so we will reduce the price of meat to five cents a pound. This basis brings us \$12,500. Deducting expenses, we have a profit of \$7,500 for one man’s yearly labor.”

Nor does this estimate take any account of the profit to be derived from the pelts. Certainly this new industry presents great inducements to the poor of this country, as well as the rich, and he who brings it to the practical attention of his fellowmen is a real benefactor, be he breeder, packer, judge or writer.

CHAPTER XIII.

Keeping a Record—Pedigrees.

On this subject Mr. Lambert, always brief and to the point says:

“ ‘Order is God’s first law.’ Order and system should prevail in the rabbitry as much as anywhere, if you would know at any and all times ‘where you are at.’ A systematic record should be kept of the breeding of each specimen and also a record for breeding does. The first record should show name or number or both, number of pen, sex, date of birth, sire and dam. The second record should show name or number or both, name of buck to whom served, date of service, date of testing, date of kindling, number in litter and date of weaning litter. Both records should have space for general remarks. Other devices than mine may be made for this purpose. Most readers will probably choose to make one that will suit his individual fancy. You should also keep a day book and ledger. Open an account with each breeder. In this way you may know the aggregate profit, not only from the rabbitry, but from each breeder. It does not pay to start into the fancy with anything but good stock, as otherwise it is but a waste of time, patience and money. Buy each specimen for its individual merits and the merits of its

ancestors. Starting thus, you should be able to give a pedigree with each animal sold, and also to display the same when exhibiting stock."

All the Belgian Hare publications furnish blank pedigrees in books or blocks, at a nominal price, but for the information of those who do not care to use them, but simply wish to know how it is done, I will give below a reduced facsimile of the pedigree recently furnished by my three little boys to one of their customers (they are very successful young fanciers, keeping always on hand in the basement of our home a good supply of hares):

HALL BROTHERS,
Breeders and Shippers of HIGH GRADE BELGIAN HARES,
CHICAGO, ILLS.

We hereby certify that we have this day sold to Mrs. J. G. McKay, of Hamilton, Mont., one Belgian Hare. Sex, doe. Born February 11, 1900.

Pedigree of Royal Rose Score 92½	{	Sire	{	Rochdale	{	Diamond King
		Earl of Rochdale		Miss Climax		
	{	Dam Delmon's Lady	{	Jennie	{	Young Nonpariel
				1st Lady of Orange		
		{	Delmon	{	Yukon Jr. II.	
			Lady Irving			
		{	Lady Lill	{	Lord Lion	
			Lady Rugby			

Shipped in Crate No. 3.

Breeders should furnish nothing but a reliable pedigree. There are dishonest people, I have heard, in the Belgian Hare business, as well as in other lines. Sometimes fictitious

pedigrees are written out and low grade animals are there-with palmed off on the unwary at fancy prices. This practice is on a level with horse stealing, gold-bricking, or any other form of devilishness, and cannot be too severely condemned. As Judge Crabtree said in a recent article, the Golden Rule should be practiced in the Belgian Hare business. A breeder should not palm off diseased stock on his neighbor either. If he has any stock that in any point fails to come up to the standard, he should be fair and state particulars, governing his price accordingly.

Every breeder should keep a supply of hutch cards on hand. These can be obtained also at most any printing office of the fancy, or can be re-produced from the form given below at small cost:

HUTCH CARD.

PEN No. 6

SCORE 93½

DROPPED April 3, 1900

BELGIAN Ramona.

SIRE Champion Dash.

DAM Denver Beauty.

Served By	Date.	Tested.	Kindled.	No. of Litter.	Weaned Litter.	No. Raised.	Ear Marks.
Redwood	Mch 9	Mch 11	April 9	7	June 9	7	L 5
.....
.....

This card is copied from one in the home rabbitry operated by my three boys and their mamma, and shows at a glance the full history of the doe under observation. These cards

should be enclosed in a little tin frame which can be obtained of any tinner, and tacked over the hutch. Every animal should be named, and his record kept carefully tabulated. It is a real pleasure then to show animals, for one can state full particulars concerning each one to his visitors, or would-be customers.

Very little has been done in America as yet with reference to registration of animals. Writing on this subject Mrs. Bush says, in the "Champion":



First President American Belgian Hare Association, Chicago.

"A Registration System, to be really effective, and of value to the fancy, must be as stringent as possible; a system that will admit any Belgian hare rabbit for registration that is not disqualified for scoring, could result in no possible good. All

the systems so far adopted by the clubs, seem to me altogether too lenient, and do not enhance the value of the animal so registered. In one club, the registration rules, which are the best now in vogue, require that an animal shall have a three generation pedigree, and to the best knowledge and belief of the owner, must be a pure-bred Belgian hare rabbit. The result is that anyone that cares to invest fifty cents can have their rabbit, whether it is of any real value as a breeder or not, registered under this system. Another result of such easy regulations is that breeders of really fine Belgians will not have their animals registered and thus put on an equality with those of commoner grades. For my part, I have never yet had a Belgian hare registered and never will so long as the rules are so lax.

“The proper animals with which to start in inaugurating a proper registration system, is rather difficult to determine. We all know that it should be the best, and we also know that the best stock now in this country is that which has been imported during the past two years, or the direct progeny of such importations. If all animals imported during this time were of equal merit, the matter could be easily arranged on the basis that they were imported, but in the rage for imported stock, a great many animals have been sent over from England that are not equal to some of our best domestic stock, so that it is necessary to draw more

definite lines, and in my opinion this can best be accomplished by the use of a proper score card system. Under the present system, I would favor registering all imported specimens that score 93 or over."

Personally I should prefer leaving out the word "imported" from the above paragraph, for we are producing just as good, if not better, animals in America to-day as they are in England. But clubs will have to settle these matters for themselves. Thus far most breeders have a registry of their own. But it seems inevitable that the time will come when we will have a more general registry, just as do breeders of horses, cattle, sheep, hogs, etc.

THE BELGIAN HARE.

There's a little Belgian hare, don't you know ;
And as yet he's very rare, don't you know :
 But he's wanted all the same,
 From Florida to Maine,
For he's got a reputation, don't you know.
He's a daisy of a pet, don't you know.
And when baked he's better yet, don't you know ;
 For he's never yet been beat
 As a wholesome bit of meat,
He's the finest ever ate, don't you know.
He's the smartest beast that lives, do you know,
 He can quickly multiply,
 And add profits, bye and bye,
If you haven't one, just buy, don't you know.

—Z. T. Spencer, in *Fanciers' Favorite*.

CHAPTER XIV.

Belgian Hare Pelts and Furs.

On this subject, as yet very little discussed, the "Prospectus" of the National Belgian Hare Association has the following to say:

"The value of Belgian Hare pelts is unquestionable, but there is little demand.

"One reason for this is that there is as yet so few offered that manufacturers cannot get them in quantities to justify the effort. When in the near future the number increases, there will certainly be an open market for them. In the winter months, December, January, February, the hides are the best. It is just after their fall moult, and the fur is full and the hide tough. Take off the pelt, leaving as little meat on it as possible, tack it on a board; four parts fine salt and one of powdered alum, mixed and rubbed well into the pelt and covered, and then placed in a shady place to cure. Within two or three weeks it may be put aside until enough are accumulated for sale.

"Any tannery can tan them for you, or you can do it yourself, though it is not so satisfactory, and some trouble.

"The following process, if carefully carried out, will usually be successful, and will answer for all ordinary purposes:

"As soon as the hide is taken off, salt thoroughly, being careful to rub it in well and to the very edge of the hide; then fold flesh side in, wrap loosely in paper and lay in a cool, dry place for a few days. Unfold, then shake off the salt and cover with powdered alum; fold again and let remain for a couple of days. Then the skin may be scraped with a block of wood to remove the particles of flesh that may remain. When smooth and clean, dust over with dry starch and rub till soft and dry.

Charles Fisher, of Los Angeles, in an article in the "California Poultry Tribune," says:

"The skin of the Belgian hare is well worth saving, and although at present there is no general market for them, the demand is increasing. I dry about a hundred skins every week, and sell mostly to New York Hatters, although I tan a great many which I sell to local dealers.

"There are a number of ways of treating the skins, but I find curing the simplest way of preparing them for market. Skins are cured as follows: First, in skinning the hare, cut the skin between the hind legs, draw it down over the body and off over the head, thus leaving the skin whole and flesh side out. Then stretch it over a shake which has been pointed at one end, driving a tack in each hind leg to keep it stretched firmly. Rub a little fine salt on the skin and put it away to dry in the shade, and when dry scrape off the

surplus fat. Split it down the belly, take it off the shake, and the pelt is ready either for market or to be tanned for your own use.

“If you are clever with the needle you can work up the tanned skins into handsome garments, or use them wherever fur trimming is needed. They can be made into fine buggy robes and rugs. I have seen three ladies’ capes, with standing collars, made of the fur of the Belgian hare in its natural colors. Whole skins had been used by joining the whites of the bellies, making a strip of white alternating with the rufus red of the backs, giving a pretty effect. I consider the pelts very valuable, for they can be made to take the place of almost every other kind of fur. Jet black pelts are the most valuable of all and there is a greater demand for them. They are one solid color and need no dyeing, but when dyed they take an even shade. Soon we shall see most ladies wearing furs made from these fine little animals, which are not only fur-producers but a table luxury.”

Mr. Durkee, in his “Columbian Belgian Hare Manual,” writes at some length on the subject of pelts and furs. He says:

“After you have sold all your fancy breeders at high prices and your heavier animals for meat, you still have the hides or pelts of those you dress. These are worth from twenty to fifty cents each. The fur is used for capes, coats, collar-

ettes, muffs, fur trimmings and linings. You have heard of 'electric seal' capes—they are made of rabbit fur.

“Until the demand for good breeding stock is supplied and larger numbers are killed for meat there need be no haste to look up a market for the pelts. As it is but a question of time when this will be the case and millions of hares will be killed for consumption as food the profit to be derived from the sale of pelts will surely prove no small item. The many uses to which the fur is put and the many more which are bound to be discovered by American genius as the industry develops will cause this feature of the business to assume an importance which cannot now be readily conceived. There is no question but that eventually there will be a steady and profitable market for the hides, especially in the manufacturing centers where domestic goods are used.

“When the hare has his winter coat on is the best season for handling the pelts. At this time the fur is thick and soft and the hide is stronger and will stand more strain. At best the hide is tender and must be handled with care. France has made more progress in the use of Belgian hare pelts than any other country, and they have reached a position of such importance as to give them considerable commercial value. The hair from the pelt is used for hat-making, and millions are dyed all shades and made into children's furs in imitation of seal, beaver, etc. The pelt sales from reliable statistics are

annually 60,000,000 in France, 30,000,000 in England, 4,000,000 in Belgium, 5,000,000 in Leipsic. New Zealand exports about 12,000,000 skins annually; value \$500,000.

“That the attention of manufacturers in the United States is being directed to the importance of the hare is shown by the establishment of a 1,000 acre Belgian hare farm near Wabash, Ind., by Northam Meyer, of the Pioneer hat factory of that place, where animals will be grown for their pelts, the fur to be used in the manufacture of hat felt. Other similar ventures are being entered into in various parts of the country, but the matter is still in the experimental line. The Arctic Fur Company, of San Francisco, is a steady purchaser of Belgian Hare Pelts for use in their business. A gentleman in Los Angeles has procured a patent for a process by which he manufactures a parchment from the Belgian Hare pelt, said by experts to be superior to that manufactured from sheepskin.”

Dr. Platt is enthusiastic on this subject as well as on every other that concerns the Belgian Hare. And as no living man perhaps has made a more exhaustive study of the little animal in all his adaptations, his opinions are of inestimable value. He says:

“We have demonstrated that the pelts have uses almost unnumbered. The first of these is for leather. To the surprise of all investigators into the qualities possessed by the

leather made from the pelt of the Belgian hare, it has been found to be as tough as buckskin and is adapted to a far greater variety of uses than the buckskin. A strand the width of a shoestring clipped from a well-tanned hide possesses tensile strength almost equal to iron wire of the same thickness. In fact, few men are strong enough to break such a strand by pulling it with one hand against the other.

“We have shown that the leather is especially adapted to use for whiplashes, for covering baseballs, for braided reins to riding bridles, for Spanish riatas, for belt lacings, trimmings to suspenders, shoe uppers for both ladies’ and gentlemen’s shoes, for gloves equal to kid, for book-bindings, burnt-leather work, doll bodies and an almost endless variety of similar uses. It is readily tanned to resemble chamois skin and the skins of younger hares may be tanned and processed to duplicate the finest of kid. We have worked out various processes of tanning, several of which are very successful for the different uses. It is impossible to estimate the enormous demand that may arise for Belgian hare leather for these purposes.

“The high-type, up-to-date, large-sized Belgian, with his rich rufus-red color, handsomely ticked, with either the snowy white or creamy belly and the light, buff-colored side, furnishes a pelt that can be made into a handsome garment

without coloring. But there are different processes of coloring, especially the electric seal, which add variety. The electric seal is black and has been in vogue among furriers in Europe for a quarter of a century. These furs uncolored are especially adapted for children's wear, in caps, capes, muffs, boas, collars and for fur linings to gentlemen's overcoats, for linings to the wrists of gloves or for the whole glove or for mitts. Beautiful robes and rugs may also be made from these. In fact, these furs are adapted to any use of fur, possessing great warmth and great durability."

Wonderful indeed is bunny! As a minister, student of sociology, and friend of humanity, I feel deeply grateful to a kind Providence for opening up in these latter days this remarkable industry—an industry in which our wives and boys may share; an industry in which the poor man stands as good a chance as the rich; and industry which develops the tender side of one's nature, for who is so hard-hearted as not to be influenced by the manifest innocence of these dear little pets?

CHAPTER XV.

Crating and Shipping.

When I was a boy my mother taught me the old maxim that "whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well." If Belgian hare breeders ever learned this truth many of them must have forgotten it. Mr. M. M. Conner, of Ada, Ohio, touches up this matter very forcibly and, I think, sensibly, in a letter to the "Belgian Hare Standard," Kansas City:

"It occurs to me that hare breeders are making a mistake in sending out fine animals in the unsightly and cumbersome boxes that I find a great many use. I have several of these boxes on hand, now, that I have recently received from prominent breeders, and to say they are horrid looking affairs, is putting it too mildly. Here is an assortment of Cream of Cereal, Shredded Whole Wheat, Warner's Safe Cure, Carter's Little Liver Pills, Pisos' Cure for Consumption, etc.

"These boxes are plastered all over with the advertisements of the different firms by whom they are used. But breeders may say, 'we are selling hares, not boxes.' That's all right, but how does it look?

"I regard it as poor economy to use such cheap-John arrangements for shipping fine stock. A nice crate, with a

good solid bottom, partly covered with wire screen or netting can be made for a trifle, also printed shipping cards should be used. This will make a good advertisement all along the route to destination, and possibly be the means of securing customers.

"The other day the expressman drove up to my office and was endeavoring to unload a monstrous box. 'Hello,' says I. 'Hello,' says he. 'What have you there?' says I. 'By cripe,' says he, 'I think it's a bear.' Well, we unloaded the box, pried off one of the top boards, and lo, and behold, there was a pair of little animals that would weigh about twelve pounds, crouched in one corner. Now the writer had sent a check for the contents of that box that would have made a respectable payment on a farm, and to have them shipped in such a contraption as that is certainly not a credit to any concerned.

"Then again it must be remembered that the purchaser has to pay expressage on this car load of lumber, which your box contains, and you should therefore have some mercy on him."

The Editor of the "Belgian Hare Advocate," Chicago, in a recent issue, says:

"As there are at this time so many orders coming in for hares to be shipped all over the country, it is in order to offer a few suggestions as to the manner in which this should be

done to insure the shipper against loss or accident. There are many ways of preparing these little pets for the road, but an article in the *Pet Stock Tribune* by a Mr. C. R. Root, giving his plan of crating and shipping, is one of the best. Mr. Root says: 'Too little thought and attention has been given to the matter of shipping. Many a choice specimen, perfectly healthy, has been damaged in transit. With suitable crate a hare can be transported around the globe. I find the most satisfactory crate is one with light bottom and sides for nine inches up; rest of sides and top lath or slatted material, except in center of top use a six-inch board, on which place the name and address of consignee. This board strengthens the cover. Have the space between the slats on the side three-fourths of an inch wide; on the top one inch, but never any more than this. Be sure and use the lightest material possible—say, five-eighths of an inch, for the ends and about three-eighths of an inch for the rest.

“Provide feeding cups, in which grain and water can be given en route. Take two one-quart cups and fasten them on for oats and water. Above all things do not use any old tomato cans or any other sharp-edged cups. They will be sure to scratch or cut the animal. Use factory made cups altogether. Guard the hares against draughts, yet have good ventilation, which should be supplied from above. One of the chief advantages of crates with the side openings is that

they may be open when the crates are placed one above the other, as is often done in the express car. To insure against boxes being set right on top of the crates, nail on two or more three-quarter inch square strips, as on peach and apple crates. If only one animal is to be shipped in each crate make it 18x18x15 inches, which will give ample room."

An orange box makes a fairly good crate for a pair. Of course it is not absolutely necessary, but I think it adds greatly to the appearance of things if the crates are painted snow white. Paint is cheap, and when a crate arrives in a manner that proves care had been taken by the breeder, it makes his customer feel like he was getting a bargain.

The address should be printed in large, legible, black letters to my notion, on the upper side of the crate. The breeder's shipping tags, with address of consignee, may be tacked one on either end. But in case these should be lost off in transport, the painted address will be there.

CHAPTER XVI.

Identifying the Belgian.

An Improved Method for Marking Belgian Hares — A Little Invention of Great Importance.



Author *Bonanza Rabbitry Manual*. President National Association of Belgian Hare Judges. Proprietor *Bonanza Rabbitry*, Los Angeles, Cal.

Dr. B. C. Platt, President of the National Association of Belgian Hare Judges and one of the most enthusiastic American friends of the Belgian bunny, has recently perfected an invention that promises to be of the greatest utility to all lovers of the Belgian hare. This is a new and improved device enabling each fancier to mark his hares in a manner painless to the animal yet in a way that cannot be erased or

ered. The doctor has kindly furnished me the following particulars concerning his device, in manuscript prepared especially for this work:

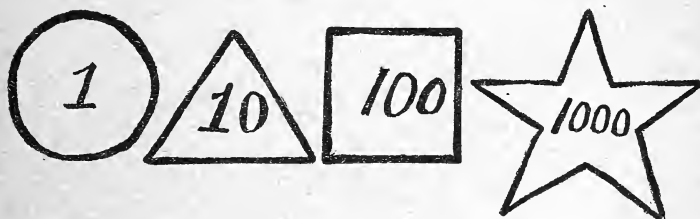
“Nearly all former devices for this purpose have consisted of some form of metal tag placed in the ear of the animal and numbered, or a system of clipping the edge of the ear. A common method consists of an aluminum tag pressed through the ear with a forceps and clinched in much the same style that lawyers employ to bind together legal documents. Another device is a tag retained in the ear by an aluminum wire. These methods are open to many objections, such as causing the animal considerable pain and being easily removed by dishonest persons either in the rabbitries of breeders or when hares are en route between breeders and purchasers with the intent and result of defrauding buyers, and great injury to the reputation of breeders.

“Dr. Platt’s device avoids these and other objections. Like many other little inventions of great utility it is beautifully simple and the wonder is that no one ever thought of it before. It consists essentially in tatooing a device upon the ear of the animal by means of an ingenious little instrument. The plan is capable of infinite variety so that every breeder may have his own brand which he may use to the exclusion of all others. And, instead of a deformity, as with the alumi-

num tag, and marking bits, the marking in the ear may be made really ornamental.

"Stars, circles, squares, diamonds, triangles and other designs form the framework of the device and numbers supply the necessary individual characterization. For instance, a breeder may adopt a star and in the center he places the figure 1 for the first hare and may continue the series up to a hundred thousand, if the breeding capacity of his rabbitry supplies the material. We give herewith a few of the devices that have already suggested themselves to the fertile brain of the inventor.

"Such as:



"Some of the advantages of this method are the following:

"First.—It is absolutely permanent as a means of identification. The young hare may be marked when taken from his dam and then has a means of identification attached to his person that cannot be removed without cutting off his ear.

"Second.—There is no mutilation, no pain. The beauty of the ear lacing is not marred. There is no disfiguring wire

or tag. No one likes to torture a pet animal, especially so docile and innocent a creature as the hare. In most localities public sentiment is against cutting off the ears of dogs and the tails of horses, shooting pigeons for sport or running hares with dogs. Although there has been a necessity for marking hares which has undoubtedly justified the somewhat cruel methods heretofore in vogue, yet every sensible and thoughtful person will welcome a method of far greater utility and infinitely more humane.

“Third.—One may use either numbers, letters, or monograms and the mark for ployed will constitute a trade mark for the owner. With a perfected system of national registration such as is probable in the near future this method will be the best that can be employed. It will enable every progressive breeder to maintain his individuality by advertising and selling the product of his rabbitry under a uniform brand of his own. In California it is a criminal offence to counterfeit or alter the brand of live stock and laws similar to that of California could be passed in every state.

“Fourth.—The cost of this method is only a trifle. Each breeder may illustrate his style of marking on his circulars, stationery and advertising material, and also in his ads in newspapers. It will be a guarantee against frauds in the show room or between buyers and sellers and will stimulate

fanciers in their efforts to breed the best specimens, knowing that the credit cannot be taken from them.

“Dr. Platt has filed an application for patents upon this device in order to protect both himself and all who may adopt it in practical use. Its simplicity and effectiveness will undoubtedly commend it to every breeder and bring it deserved popularity.”

JOHNSON'S HARES.

(Johnson stands for several of us.)

When Johnson dons his talking clothes,
And strikes his favorite “easy” pose,
You may bet the only talk that “goes”
Is Belgian hares.

“My buck, he always takes first prize ;
My doe, she always does likewise ;
They are ‘hot stuff’ ”, he cries,
“My Belgian hares ! ”

His wife may yell and jar and pout,
His children, they may rant about,
But still that clarion voice rings out :
“My Belgian hares.”

He talked to Smith till he was ill,
Told him all other things were nil ;
That the only things his wants could fill
Were Belgian hares.

When he'd meet Jones along the street,
He'd yell—as Jones would kindly greet—
“They've all got perfect red hind feet—
My Belgian hares.”

And when he learns there'll be a show,
Johnson is always first to go,
Because he wants us all to know
His Belgian hares.

—*Frank Evans in the Poultry and Belgian Hare Standard.*

CHAPTER XVII.

How to Dress, Cook and Carve the Hare.

Mr. E. L. Durkee, of Delavan, Wis., in his "Columbian Manual," gives the best instructions I have seen anywhere on dressing the hare. He says:

"The labor of dressing a considerable number of hares can be materially lightened by arranging a place expressly for the purpose. This can be done in a few moments.

"Every boy who has hunted rabbits knows how to skin them. But as some, especially our women readers, may not have done so, a few words may be necessary. Construct a trough by nailing together at right angles two boards about two feet long and six inches wide. Leave both ends open. A better way is to have a tinner bend lengthwise for you a piece of galvanized iron 10x24 inches. Put your trough on legs high enough to avoid the necessity of stooping while at work. Set a bucket under one end of the trough to catch the blood. Now pass one fore leg of the hare back between the hind legs and tie three feet firmly together. This leaves one fore leg free. Lay your hare on his back in the trough allowing his head to hang over the pail. Take the ears in your left hand and turn the head well to one side. With the right strike a quick, sharp blow with a smooth stick at

the base of the brain behind the ears. With a keen, narrow-bladed knife pierce the jugular vein on each side of the neck, training the blade forward and out at the front of the throat. The disengaged fore leg now assists in the process by forcing the blood out by muscular contraction. Now untie the legs. Cut the skin around the first joint of the hind legs. Next cut the skin on the inside of the thighs and pull carefully from the hind legs. Tie the hind legs together and hang the hare to a hook attached to an upright or a clothes line about two feet above your trough. Now gently pull the skin downward to the head, being careful not to tear it in skinning the fore legs. This leaves the carcass clean and free from flying hairs. Cut the head off, draw the rabbit, saving the heart and liver if desired and wash the carcass with cold water to which has been added a little salt."

The next thing is preparation for the table. And when it comes to this subject I feel a weakness, being just a man! So I will quote from the columns of that excellent fancier's publication, the Kansas City "Poultry and Belgian Hare Standard," a portion of a prize article, written by a woman, Annie E. Craft, of St. Joseph, Mo.:

"I submit a few ways of cooking the Belgian hare. You will see, on reading them, that I do not use any foreign flavors to spoil the taste of the hare. I have read a few ways, lately, to cook Belgian hare, where they used wine, beer, etc.

Why should one wish to ruin the flavor of a true Belgian seems strange to me; that way may be all right for the wild English hare, or for our own wild rabbit, but we do not want any such way of cooking the real 'Simon pure Belgian.' Nothing but pepper and salt is needed on the Belgian hare, if you wish to enjoy the rich, yet delicate, flavor of the true Belgian.'

*“Belgian Hare Roasted, (less than six months-old).—*You need not steam a hare of this age; use oyster dressing, which may be made as for an old hare, leaving out the onion. Rub with butter and seasoned flour, lay in covered pan, with one pint of water, in which put tablespoonful of salt, one of pepper; cook till tender, baste every fifteen minutes; if not brown, remove cover and let brown nicely, turning so as to brown all parts.

*“Fried Belgian, (old).—*Cut into eight pieces or more; put into a steamer; steam until tender; sprinkle over the pieces, while cooking, one tablespoonful of salt, one of pepper; when tender, remove and dip each piece in beaten egg, then in cracker dust; have frying pan very hot, with plenty of sweet lard; lay in, fry a rich brown; serve with rich cream gravy, in which you have put the liver, cut fine.

*“Young Belgian, Fried.—*The best are from 2½ to 4 months. Cut into eight pieces, (these will not need to be steamed), dip each piece into flour; have pan very hot, with

plenty of good lard; lay in, sprinkle with salt and pepper, put on cover and fry a golden brown, then try the pieces; set the pan on the back part of stove and fry slowly until cooked through; that part you must be careful about; serve with rich cream gravy.

“Belgian Stew.—Cut into pieces, either an old or a young hare, an old one will have more flavor and require more cooking; cover with hot water and boil slowly; when nearly done, season with salt and pepper; when tender, remove to a dish; keep hot; add to the water it was boiled in, one pint rich milk, half cup of butter, boil up, stir in a thickening of flour, which has been rubbed smooth in a little milk, let boil up once more, then put in the hare; set on back part of range, where it will only simmer a few moments. You can serve this with a rich crust on platter, or serve plain.

“Belgian Hare Pie.—Cut up, put in kettle, boil until tender, cut off the meat from the bones. Have your deep pan lined with rich biscuit dough. Don't cover the bottom of the pan; put in the meat, sprinkle with salt and pepper, one cup of butter, cut fine, sprinkle over all three tablespoonfuls of flour, pour in enough of the water, the hare was boiled in, to cover all the meat; cover with a crust; bake brown; have slits cut in top crust. When done, pour in one cup of rich milk, hot; serve in dish it was baked in.”

Mrs. C. Rapp, of Ridgway, Ill., prepared a number of

choice recipes for the "Prospectus" of the American Belgian Hare Association, from which I cull the following:

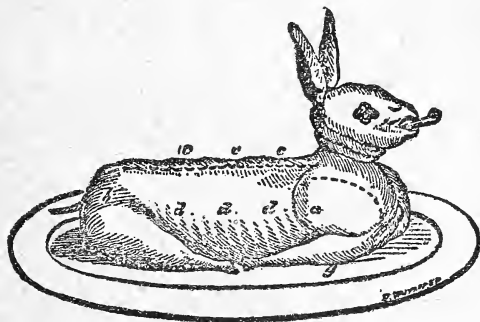
"Hare Baked with Rice.—Cut up a hare; stew gently in stock or water, with enough tomatoes to equal the amount of stock, and three green Chili peppers, emptied of seeds and sliced fine; salt to taste. While the hare is stewing, boil half a cupful of rice in a quart of water; also boil one dozen eggs until hard. After the hare is about half cooked, line a baking dish, suitable for the table, with part of the cooked rice; place the hare on the dish with alternate layers of eggs, peeled and sliced; pour over this the sauce, unstrained, and cover with a layer of rice and sliced eggs pressed well into the rice. Pour on the top half a cup of melted butter or thick, sweet cream, and bake in a slow oven one hour and serve hot.

"Hare a la Creme.—Clean and cut up the hare; melt two tablespoonfuls of butter, fry in it a small onion, minced; then fry the hare until a light brown; when well colored, remove the hare and add to the butter an equal measure of corn starch; stir until smooth, then add milk to make a thin sauce. Place the hare in a baking pan; pour over it the sauce, strain and bake in the oven until thoroughly done.

"Jugged Hare.—Skin, wipe with a towel dipped in boiling water, to remove the loose hairs; dry thoroughly and cut in pieces; stew with pepper and salt; fry brown; season with two anchovies, a sprig of thyme, a little chopped parsley,

nutmeg, mace, cloves and grated lemon peel. Put a layer of the pieces with the seasoning into a wide-mouthed jug or jar; then a layer of bacon, sliced thin, and so on till all is used; add a scant half pint of water; cover the jar close and put in cold water; let boil three or four hours, according to the age of the hare; take the jar out of the kettle; pick out the unmelted bacon and make a gravy of a little butter and flour, with a little catsup. A teaspoon of lemon peel will heighten the flavor.

The "Belgian Hare Advocate," Chicago, gives the following directions with reference to that delightful and appetizing process known to gentlemen as carving:



"Insert the point of the knife under the shoulder in the direction A and then cut all down the rump in the line A B. Do the same on the other side, by which process the whole hare will be divided into three parts. Cut the back into four, as E D which with the legs is most esteemed. Cut the

shoulder off circularly as A E G, lay the pieces on the dish as they are taken off, and then help the company, giving some stuffing and gravy to each. If the hare is old it cannot be thus divided; therefore in that case put the knife between the leg and back, and give it a little turn inwards at the joint, which must be hit and not broken by force. When the legs are separated, a fine collop will be found on each side of the back; then divide the latter into as many pieces as you think proper, and take off the shoulders, which are the sportsman's pieces, and with many obtain the preference. After helping all round off the head, put the knife between the upper and lower jaw, and divide them; then place the point of the knife in the center, and part the head in two. The ears and brains may then be helped to those who choose them."

KEEP TOOTING.

(TO BELGIAN BREEDERS FOR THE TRADE.)

If you toot your little tooter and then lay aside your horn,
 There's not a soul in ten short days will know that you were born.
 The man who gathers pumpkins is the man who plows all day,
 And the man who keeps a-humping is the one who makes it pay.
 The man who advertises with a short and sudden jerk,
 Is the man who blames the printer because it didn't work.
 The man who gets the business has a long and steady pull,
 And keeps the paying papers years and years quite full.
 He plans his advertisements in a thoughtful, honest way,
 And keeps forever at it until he makes it pay.
 He has faith in all the future, can withstand a sudden shock,
 And like the man of Scripture, has his business on a rock.

—After *Kingsley Times*.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Possibilities of the Business.

Mr. G. H. Lanphere, of Kansas City, Kansas, one of the oldest of American fanciers, contributes the following article to this work. Mr. Lanphere has always made a specialty of gilt-edge stock. In 1900 his firm sold \$5,000 worth of animals in four months. A man with his experience and success is always gladly heard:



A veteran fancier, Kansas City, Kas. Sold \$5,000 worth of stock in four months in 1900.

“Much has been written pro and con concerning the Belgian hare. Some writers have advocated the extermination

of the little animal, denouncing it as a pest that would prove ruinous to fruit trees, shrubbery, etc.; and this denunciation is from persons who know absolutely nothing of the characteristics of the Belgian hare.

“Other writers have printed statements that read a good deal like the prospectus of a gold brick manufactory, ‘a gold mine in the back yard,’ ‘how to get rich quick,’ and other equally nonsensical talk. After seven years’ experience in the culture of Belgian hares we are satisfied that both of these propositions are wrong. We believe that if all the Belgian hares in America were turned loose to shift for themselves, in less than thirty days there would not be a baker’s dozen left to harrow the soul of the cautious horticulturalist. If there were any left after the boys got through their natural enemy, the dog and cat would soon exterminate them. On the other hand it is a mistake to suppose ‘there are millions in it.’ The business of raising hares or poultry to make a success of it must be conducted along the same lines as any other business. Economy in management, business methods and honesty, and if these three elements of success are put into the business it will pay. In our opinion one grave mistake made by breeders is, in mating their does too often, the result being an over production of bred-to-death stock on the market. Where does are mated more than four times a year the young will be weak, have little vitality or strength,

consequently when a light cold takes hold of them they have no strength to throw it off. If the fanciers would only mate their best does twice or possibly three times a year, and then reserve from such mating only one or two of the best of each family for breeders, and throw the balance into the killing pen to be fattened for market, good prices for fancy breeders could be maintained for years to come. Judging from the quality of stock I have seen in the last two years, while in attendance at the leading shows, I believe that fully seventy-five per cent of all the Belgian hares in America today are fit only for market stock. They can't win in the show room, but as the owners payed a big price for them on the strength of a padded score card, they are still holding \$2 stock at \$15 and \$20.

"Everyone who has given the article a trial admits the toothsome-ness of a nicely cooked hare, but it is seldom on sale at the market. Too much attention has been paid to the raising of fancy stock for exhibition purposes, and too little to the practical or market side of the business.

"If each breeder would make it a point as he increases his number of breeding does, to increase his number of customers for dressed hares, the glut now noticeable in the market in some quarters would be relieved very quickly.

Of all the astonishing things ever written by Dr. B. C. Platt, I suppose nothing has equaled his article on "The

Fecundity of the Hare," which has been widely copied from his "Manual," and yet I presume many who will read this book have never happened to see it. A chapter on the possibilities of the hare without this remarkable contribution would be incomplete, so I will give it, but request my readers to please not all start into the business at once, for if you do, what will become of Messrs. Morgan, Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, Carnegie, and other poor fellows who are trying to make a living out of the monopoly business in the East!

"The hare is a species of rabbit; and the astonishing fecundity of all members of the family is universally understood. Everyone has read that, imported into Australia, the English wild hare overran the country and threatened to destroy every green thing by sheer force of numbers. We have all heard of the devices for killing them by poison and starvation. Yet this was the wild hare which only drops two litters a year and one pair at each litter. Nevertheless, his powers of reproduction were enough to stagger the Australian government, which offered a reward of twenty-five thousand dollars for any certain method of exterminating him. Now, the Belgian has from five to six litters a year and from eight to fifteen at a litter. Had the Belgian been turned loose in Australia instead of the wild hare, there is no telling what the government would have been driven to do.

"The following interesting table shows the possible in-

crease from a single pair of Belgian hares for five years, assuming that all lived for whatever period intervened between their birth and the end of the five years. The calculation is based upon a single pair of Belgian hares, six months old, to start with, allowing each doe of the progeny to drop her first litter at six months of age, and the litters to average eight, the sexes being equally divided. A well-cared-for doe will breed until she is four or five years old. The calculation ends with the fifth year. So prolific are these animals that, if permitted, a doe will drop a litter every thirty days all the year round, but in making this calculation they are only credited with six litters a year, or half the full producing capacity:

FIRST YEAR.	No. Born.	Total No.
September 1.....	8	10
November 1.....	8	18
January 1.....	8	26
March 1	40	66
May 1	72	138
July 1	104	243
SECOND YEAR.		
September 1	264	506
November 1	552	1,058
January 1	968	2,026
March 1	2,024	4,050
May 1	4,232	8,282
July 1	8,104	16,386

THIRD YEAR.

September 1	16,200	32,586
November 1	33,128	65,714
January 1	65,544	131,258
March 1	130,344	261,602
May 1	262,856	524,458
July 1	525,032	1,049,490

FOURTH YEAR.

September 1	1,046,408	2,095,898
November 1	2,097,832	4,193,730
January 1	4,197,960	8,391,690
March 1	8,383,592	16,775,282
May 1	16,774,920	33,550,202
July 1	33,566,760	67,116,962

FIFTH YEAR.

September 1	67,101,128	134,218,090
November 1	134,200,808	268,418,898
January 1	268,467,848	536,886,746
March 1	546,872,360	1,083,759,106
May 1	1,073,675,592	2,157,434,698
July 1	2,147,746,994	4,305,181,682

A brief calculation shows that, allowing each hare only two square yards of space, it would require for the above number 278 square miles. Allowing an equal amount of ground for the purpose of raising hay, grain and roots to

feed the hares, we have a total of 556 square miles, a good-sized ranch, almost as large as Orange county, Cal. However, supposing the hares were only worth \$1 apiece—the price would probably fall off a little with such a large stock on the market—the owner of this stock could well afford to buy Orange county, including all the improvements, and then could build the Nicaragua Canal, pay off the public debt of the United States, build 100 first-class battleships, give \$25 to each man, woman and child in the United States, and still have left a neat little fortune of about \$1,000,000,000.

“Now take the product of two does and a buck for two years. This would be the product of one doe doubled. Thus two does and a buck would have produced, in two years, 32,769. Doubling this we have the product of four does and a buck for the same period, amounting to 65,538. While this result would probably never happen in its entirety, yet the illustration shows the possibilities of the industry.”

Mr. J. F. Willey, a well-known Los Angeles fancier, in a conservative, well-balanced article in the “Pet Stock Tribune,” says:

“With so many people becoming interested in the Belgian hare without any previous knowledge or experience in the business, it is quite natural that the bump of inquisitiveness should be more than normal. Among the first questions asked of the average breeder are How much money can I

make out of Belgians? Shall I buy high or low grade, imported or domestic, and from whom? How can I get the quickest results? Does a cold do any harm? Shall I use more does, etc. A doe will produce an average of forty young per annum, and may live five years, but as a basis of calculation lets take the conservative estimate of two years as the length of time she will be useful as a breeder. During this time she will produce eighty young, one of which must take her place for the next two years and so on. This leaves seventy-nine to sell. Dressed Belgian hare brings twenty cents per pound in the market. Now if we turn these seventy-nine hares into meat as soon as they are large enough to dress five pounds, we will have the following business proposition, say for ten does, as this is about the number for one buck to serve:

790 Hares at \$1.00.....	\$790.00
10 per cent. two years on \$55.00 (cost of 11 hutches)	\$11.00
Feed (said to be covered by sale of pelts)..	
Advertising	25.00
	<hr/>
Net	\$754.00

"As eleven hares are required to produce this amount in two years, we have \$34.27 as the income from one hare for one year, which is ten per cent. on \$342.70.

“With a better class of hares—those that sell readily for \$50—we have the following for ten does and one buck in two years:

790 Hares at \$50.00.....	\$39,500.00	
10 per cent. two years on \$275 (cost of 11 hutches)	\$ 55.00	
Feed (regardless of economy) \$1.00 per head	801.00	
Advertising, etc.	300.00	1,156.00
		<hr/>
Net		\$38,344.00

“Income from one hare one year \$1,742.91. To avoid the possibility of being taxed (by skeptics) with over-estimating the possibilities of the Belgian, lets cut this down two-thirds, then we will have \$580.97, or ten per cent on \$5,809.70.

“I know of a fancier who sold \$1,250 worth from one doe in one season. How much is a first-class Belgian hare worth? How much can I make out of one? Shall I buy high or low grade? Imported or domestic? Well, do not buy an animal simply because it is imported, or simply because it is domestic but buy for quality. The legitimate 95-point animal is just as good bred in one country as in another, except, perhaps, in making a long voyage and becoming accustomed to a new climate. Buy from reliable

breeders who have a reputation at stake and not from irresponsible parties. Tell the breeder what you want and ask him to do the best he can for you for the amount you wish to invest. The established breeder will look for future patronage and do his best for you every time."

I want to suggest to pastors who have churches burdened with debt, put your people at work raising Belgian Hares a while, and ease up on begging the merchants, serving ice cream and oysters thrice weekly, and otherwise boring your communities. If each family in your congregation would purchase one trio of hares and devote the proceeds of two or three years business to work, you could not only pay every dollar you owe, but quadruple your offerings to missions and other benevolences.

If young men and women who desire an education would cease waiting for some rich man to pick them up, and go to work raising Belgians, they could soon have sufficient funds with which to school themselves. Verily, this new industry presents mightly possibilities to all.

CHAPTER XIX.

What Women Can Do.

Francis E. Willard once wrote that "the greatest discovery of the nineteenth century is this: *Woman has discovered herself!*" Discovered that she has business as well as social capabilities. Discovered that in her independence lies her greatest safe-guard for this life.

Thousands of women have entered the Belgian hare business, and they are scoring brilliant successes. One of the most entertaining articles I have ever read from the pen of a lady fancier, and one which bears directly on the subject at the head of this chapter, may be found in the "Belgian Hare Success Book," a small but valuable pamphlet issued by the New England Belgian Hare Co., Boston. I will quote a portion of it. The writer is Mrs. Edith Kingman Poyer, of Woodstock, Ill., an erstwhile school teacher, who gave up her class-room for the rabbitry:

"For years I was on the lookout for something adapted to my small capital and limited time, firmly believing that there was a financial future for me, and that I should eventually hit upon the right plan. The thought of raising poultry occurred to me many times, but was always put aside on account of the vermin. Reading in an English journal one

evening I threw down the paper and said to my brother, 'What is the reason we could not make money raising Belgian hares? People of good standing in England carry on the industry with great success. It is said that their flesh is more relished than that of poultry. They are so clean in their habits, and large numbers can be raised in such small



Proprietor Northwestern Rabbitry, Woodstock, Ill.

places, I should think it would pay better than chickens.' After a great deal of discussion, I said, 'Let us try. You fix up the old barn, and we will start in a small way, and see what success we have in raising them, and what the merits of the flesh are.' So, for a small price, we bought some beautiful Belgian hares, four does and two bucks,

which we placed in the barn, in which my brother built four cages. This was in April, 1896. We were very successful in raising our hares, and by January 1 the four does and two bucks with their progeny had produced for us 338 animals, which we readily disposed of at, of course, small prices, our first customer being a little boy who from buying a buck and a doe raised 51 hares, making a snug little profit of \$45, a very good beginning for a boy of ten. During the season we ate quite a number, finding the flesh unusually juicy, sweet, and tender, with no similarity of taste to that of the common rabbit. We found it could be prepared in a number of attractive ways, with no more trouble than a fowl, and far surpassing the latter as an appetizing and delicious meat. The surplus out of 338 hares, reserving the good breeders, and supplying the table, would not make one's fortune, but the business we did with those few, was an index of what might be done when the merits of the animal were known. So far we had made no effort to put forth his good qualities, and I myself took particular precaution that even my friends should not know that I was interested in a business so unknown, so uncertain so far as public opinion was concerned. But in this case public opinion could not be consulted, for had it been, the Belgian hare business as an industry would have retired to oblivion upon its first public appearance. Through the winter and

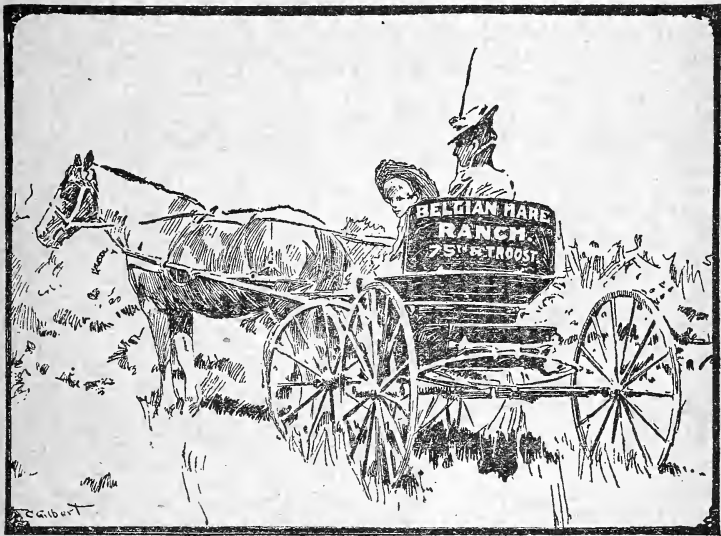
early spring the question as to its permanency and final popularity was uppermost in my mind, for in the little barn, the hares were growing and multiplying and their home quarters were becoming every day more limited. If the experiment were to be continued they must have a suitable home of sufficient size and convenience, to insure health and comfort in caring for them. The question of whether I would give the experiment a full test was debated every day. Faith that the American people would become convinced of its table merit, and place it on their daily menus finally decided my future course, and I commenced planning a permanent home for the dainty pets, firmly believing in the outcome, and the assured future of this beautiful animal, little dreaming that in the short space of three years his merits would place him for the time being beyond the reach of market prices, and raise his value to equal and surpass that of any fancy stock for its size on the American market. As the demand and value of the fancy animal had not presented itself to my mind, my building had to be planned to accommodate large numbers, consequently a three-story building fifty feet long and twenty-eight feet wide assumed proportions in my father's back yard in Woodstock, Illinois, in the early spring following my first experiment. This building might have been taken for a commodious barn, but when day after day carpenters continued to work on the

interior, the curious public casually dropped in, only to be confronted with wire cages from floor to ceiling, 276 in all, with four wide aisles running lengthwise of the building with windows at either end. And then the secret was out. Pandora, lifting the lid of the magic box, could not have created more commotion. But as Hope came to Pandora, so it was ever present with me, never failing me, despite criticism, costly experience, hard luck, adverse public opinion. That a woman, heretofore absorbed in educational interests, and living her life inside the four walls of a school-room, should launch so precarious and untried an industry as the raising of Belgian hares, and erect an immense building arranged to hold 3,000 animals, seemed to my friends and acquaintances pitiable in the extreme. From the time the first sill was laid and the first nail driven, opposition to so wild a scheme was rife. Even the contractors urged its abandonment, as they did not wish to be parties to my inevitable loss. One friend, of unusual foresight and financial success said to me, 'it may be all right, but I am very skeptical.' It is pleasant to have the approval of one's friends, but sometimes it is dearly bought. The approval of an inner conscience is sometimes all on which we may depend. We cannot live by the course of life laid down by our friends, and if, in going forward we lose old friends, we gain new and valued ones. One dear and most highly valued friend

whose support I never dreamed of having come to my rescue and overreached all criticism. Let me pause a moment to pay tribute to that friend—the newspaper. Quick to see that this novel enterprise, termed at first a fad, would be a benefit to thousands of people, it took up the cause, setting forth its merits and possibilities, proving itself as always, the benefactor of mankind. As the industry became more widely known the graceful Belgian became very popular, and a demand for a hare with the highest points of breeding manifested itself. The hare must be brought to perfection as the high bred horse, cow or dog. Then I sent to England where fanciers for years had been breeding for purest type, and procured some of the finest pedigreed and registered stock, from which to breed. People who at first thought \$25 an enormous price and openly said that no such amount of money should ever leave their hands in exchange for a Belgian hare, now willingly paid \$500 to secure a champion animal. One man who ridiculed the industry, and said he would rather put his money into a dairy, now owns six fine Belgian does, and declares he would not exchange them for six of the best cows in the country.”

Mrs. Brothers, proprietor of the “Lone Spring Belgian Hare Ranch” 75th Street and Troost Avenue, Kansas City, Mo., is another woman who has made both fame and fortune out of bunnies. I met her while preparing these pages in

the busy city at the mouth of the Kaw, and asked her to write an article for my book. She has a magnificent rabbitry, has personally visited England for the purpose of selecting hares for her hutches, and has given the industry an exhaustive study and test. She kindly prepared for me the following signed contribution:



TAKING LIFE PLEASANTLY.

Mrs. Marie A. Brothers and her young son on the way to town to buy feed for The Lone Spring Ranch, Kansas City, Mo.

Belgian Hares in America and England.

“When I first became interested in the Belgian hare industry, it was through the love of the animal as a pet. This latter spread to an appreciation of the value of the animal

as a meat producer, and this, in turn, to a real enthusiasm for the fancy animal and a full understanding of the vast amount of money that was changing hands in the fancy of the industry.



Proprietor "The Lone Spring Ranch," Kansas City, Mo.

"One of the first things that impressed me most forcibly was the fact that when one is in the business for either pleasure or profit, they should have some very fine ones as well as many medium good ones. By using the best judgment they will soon have their entire stock improving rapidly, and before a long while has elapsed the progeny of the fancy specimens will fill the rabbitry and the selling of the cheaper specimens will be done in conjunction with the rearing of

the better ones in such a systematic manner that no loss of time or very large expenditure will be necessary.

“With this general plan in view I sought to procure a few of the very best prize winners that could be had, the same, however, to be winners at such shows as were judged in a competent manner. I might here state that the winning of a specimen does not necessarily mean anything unless that winning is made in respectably strong competition and the award made by a judge who knows what a Belgian hare is.

“No person with ambition enough to give the fancy valuable time and a liberal investment will think seriously of exhibiting their stock where a Show Association or Club will not announce in their Premium List who is to handle their stock, nor will they exhibit them under poultry judges who have never been interested in hares.

“Civilization has reached that stage in America where the expert is in demand in almost every phase of life. In no particular instance is it more stringently required than in the fancy, and in no other fancy is it quite as important as in the Belgian hare fancy.

“On observation I am led to believe that this matter is at times overlooked or sadly neglected, with the result that in some instances the premium is lost on stock worth nearly half a thousand dollars, to a mongrel heavy weight that more

nearly resembles a cross between a Leporine and a Rocky Mountain Burro than it does a twentieth century Belgian hare.

“‘Business is business,’ and I am convinced that good hares are worth too much money to justify the toleration of a show on other than the strictest business principles.

“My experience with the best American stock and at the leading shows has been most satisfactory; and I have been lured into greater investments and more extended ventures as the result of continued success.

“Noting the great demand for animals of the highest type of imported stock, and not overlooking the disappointment that so many importers meet with, I decided to make a business trip to England and to secure the best there.

“Not feeling entirely free to entrust myself to the selection of them, I engaged the services of Mr. Crabtree, to take the trip and make the selections for me.

“When he placed them in the Lone Spring Rabbitry his last advice was, ‘Show them wherever a show is to be judged by a person who knows a good hare and where there is a practical classification arranged, and you can safely wager great odds on the result.’

“Never have I been more strongly of the opinion that the very best pays the largest profits on the investment and gives

the greatest pleasure for the time devoted to the fancy and the study of the animal in its every requirement.

“At the recent Kansas City Show with an entry in only a part of the general classes, owing to the fact of having much of my stock bred, I was gratified with a sweeping victory as follows: Six first premiums, four second premiums, one third premium and thirteen specials.

“Among the specials the ones I prize most highly are the \$75.00 loving cup and \$35.00 in gold.

“Now, the readers would perhaps like to have my ideas regarding the respective values of domestic and imported stock, since my experience and winnings have been with both.

“I will say this, that it matters little where the stock was born, if one only has the real qualifications in them.

“Some of my domestic young are fully equal to anything that I have ever imported when they were at the same age. Of course they are of the choicest imported blood, but simply short the word ‘imported’ when spoken of individually.

“On the other hand, I could not continue as successfully in business were I deprived of several of the grand specimens which I brought from England.

“I shall take this opportunity to say that there is a wide difference between the mating of stock in England and the same pursuit in America.

"America is much more educational in its application of the work, and mating is here done on very scientific lines with the result that wonderful results have crowned the efforts of the breeder.

"In that country a few of the older members of their National Club make careful matings, but the great majority of their breeders have little more idea of what a certain mating will produce than a man on an exploring expedition has of what a day's journey will develop.

"Thus it is that such a small percentage of their animals are uniform in themselves or in their propagation, and that such a general dissatisfaction has gone boardcast over America during the past year regarding the imported Belgian hare.

"A requirement which is very generally ignored in that country is size, and although the standard there is the same in that respect, you will find that the majority of breeders there produce only 7 lb. animals, and often mature animals are found that only weigh about $5\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.

"Another difference which is noticeable is the health of animals.

"As to snuffles, the two countries are about the same. As to ear-canker, little of it is seen in this country except in recently imported specimens. It is quite prevalent there. As to the 'Vent Disease,' which is by far the worst disease

to which the Belgian is subject, I have never known a case to develop in this country unless it be in imported specimens that have been but a short time here. In England this disease is quite prevalent and in most cases is not seriously enough considered.

“Where persons do importing I would advise them to specify particularly that the stock sent should be entirely free from ear-canker and ‘Vent Disease,’ and on their arrival I should examine them carefully for both, and later give them a careful and thorough examination again for the Vent, as it takes forty days from exposure for the latter to develop noticeably.

“As to which country can and has produced the very best specimens, there is no choice, as has been clearly demonstrated by a careful application of the score card, by a competent person, to the very best that has ever been produced in each country.

“The very highest score ever actually made was the same in both countries, showing that the foremost breeders of the two countries are on an equal footing.

“When it comes to the average standing of all the stock produced, America is far in the lead. I can easily see why this is true, from the fact that we stick more closely to the requirements of the standard in our breeding stock, strive harder to contrast defects that do exist in them and produce

a far stronger uniformity in the progeny than they possibly can until they follow it up on the same practical lines.

“As to where a customer will get the best satisfaction, I simply have this to say: Buy of one who is well established in the business, one who has a reputation at stake, one who can back up the assertions made in his advertisement by meeting the strongest of competition where competent judges officiate.

“What is directly for the good of the industry is indirectly for the good of every conscientious, well-meaning fancier, and therefore I wish your valuable publication and the industry unbounded success.”

I am convinced from what I have seen and heard in my travels that a brighter day has dawned for woman economically. Every woman likes pin money, Easter hats, etc. Well, here is the chance—raise Belgians. The industry not only means pin money, but it means better health for thousands. The physical exercise and mental diversion gained while caring for the rabbitry will prove a god-send to multitudes. And the joy of adding a few dollars every month to the family exchequer—perhaps enough to pay the rent—will be worth more than one can tell in the limits of an ordinary book, and so I will leave the subject right here.

CHAPTER XX.

Pot Pouri.

A Belgian buck and a Belgian doe
Of pedigree and renown—
They started a hundred thousand club
Just as the sun went down.

And after a month there were thirty-six,
In six months thousands or more;
And after a year the club contained
A hundred thousand and four.

Fresno Democrat.

* *

Some Don'ts to Observe.

- Don't starve your pets.
- Don't feed corn in hot weather.
- Don't buy poor stock.
- Don't feed musty hay or grain.
- Don't feed grass wet with dew.
- Don't breed during hot weather.
- Don't feed too much green food.
- Don't use dark or damp hutches.
- Don't neglect to provide runways.
- Don't use metal dishes for water.
- Don't allow animals in filthy quarters.
- Don't neglect to give good, fresh water.
- Don't wean the young under six weeks.
- Don't use boxes for nests in the summer.
- Don't fail to give fresh water twice a day.

Don't feed grain on the floor of your hutch.

Don't neglect to give stock regular attention.

Don't rely too much on the markings of animals.

Don't handle does that are bred—keep them quiet.

Don't overfeed, but give all they will eat up clean.

Don't breed a buck oftener than three times a week.

Don't handle a doe after she is two weeks with young.

Don't fail to have feed and water before the nursing doe at all times.

Don't imagine you can have good animals without labor and care.

Don't feed more than will be eaten in an hour, except to the nursing doe.

Don't breed too much; four to six litters a year is all a doe ought to have.

Don't buy an animal because it is cheap. Get good stock and take care of it.

Don't think you know all about the business or more than all other fanciers combined.

Don't sell young hares before their markings are indicated—you may sell a prize winner.

Above all things, don't handle hares by the ears. It is certain to cause lopped or fallen ears and render them worthless except for market.

—*Columbian Belgian Hare Manual.*

State of Mass. vs. Sec'y Wilson.

The Massachusetts Commissioners of Inland Fisheries and Game, in their recent report, had this to say on the subject of the Belgian hare.

"The Belgian hare has come to stay, it is excellent food, is easily raised and constitutes a fine farm product, where there is land enough to devote an acre or two to rearing it.

"It is the intention of the commission to stock the state, more or less, with these rabbits as an addition to our game resources. As reared at the state rabbitry, the Belgian hare is as hardy as our own native wild rabbits and is more prolific.

"The fears expressed by Secretary Wilson of the United States department of agriculture, that the species, if let loose in our woods and fields, may become a nuisance, are believed to be groundless."

This will be instructive reading for the chronic croaker, as well as for Secretary Wilson, and his biological experts, who apparently cannot ascertain anything of interest on the subject.

—*Belgian Hare Advocate.*

Meat Stock and Castration.

Require but limited quarters, as an abundance of exercise would only defeat the object to be obtained. Bone and sinew instead of meat and fat would be the result. Their small hutches should be kept clean and occasionally disinfected as this stock is more liable to disease because of an indolent disposition and their large consumption of nutritious food. When four to six months of age hares make the most acceptable food. The bucks should be castrated just as soon as the testicles "come down." The work of castration is simple. Let a helper spread a burlap sack or other cloth over his lap; lay the hare upon this between his legs, head toward his body and the hind legs extending beyond his knees. Let him take a hind foot in each hand, spreading the hare's legs apart. The operator, a sharp knife in hand, grasps a testicle between the thumb and finger of the left hand, and slits the scrotum lengthwise. The testicle will exude. It is taken firmly, drawn out and severed below the red part adhering; the cord also is severed near the body when well drawn out. To keep off insects and aid in healing at once apply vaseline, upon which has been dropped a little turpentine. A person can do this work single handed by inserting the head, and most of the body, in a boot-leg or similar case. Another

advantage of castration is that the does and bucks can be kept together. Otherwise they must be separated at an early age.

—*New Century Belgian Hare Manual.*

* * *

Determining the Sex in Young Hares.

It is almost impossible to distinguish the sex of a hare before he reaches the third or fourth week of his existence without going into very minute methods of examination.

To examine him take him by the ears and skin of the shoulders with the left hand, lay him over on the small of his back exposing the parts to a bright light. Place the forefinger of the right hand on the skin between the anus and the tail and the thumb about one inch from the finger, and toward the abdomen, and press down and outward, extending the distance between the finger and thumb. This will expose the parts and in the male a very small but round orifice will appear with smooth surface of skin between this orifice and the anus of perhaps from one-third to one-half inch when at the age of four to five weeks. With the female there is none of this space and the orifice is oblong and apparently extends right to the anus and, when well stretched, will expose an opening about one-fourth to three-eighths of an inch in length.

Amateurs often make mistakes in examining hares to determine the sex, especially in the very young animals. It is well to examine frequently though you may have thought that you had settled the question the first time. This rule should apply especially when making selection at a very young age.

—*Dr. B. C. Platt in Bonanza Manual.*

* * *

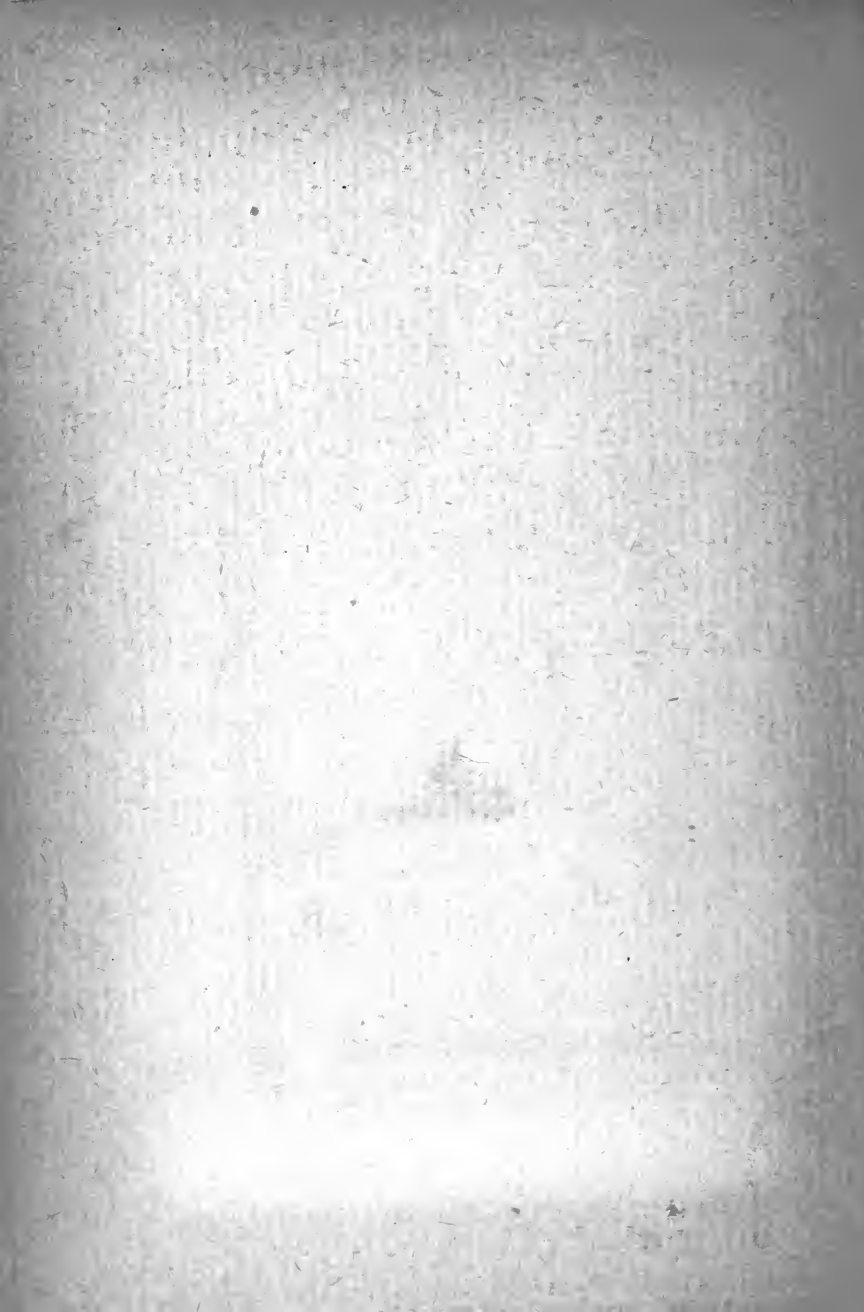
Breeding for Fancy vs. Meat.

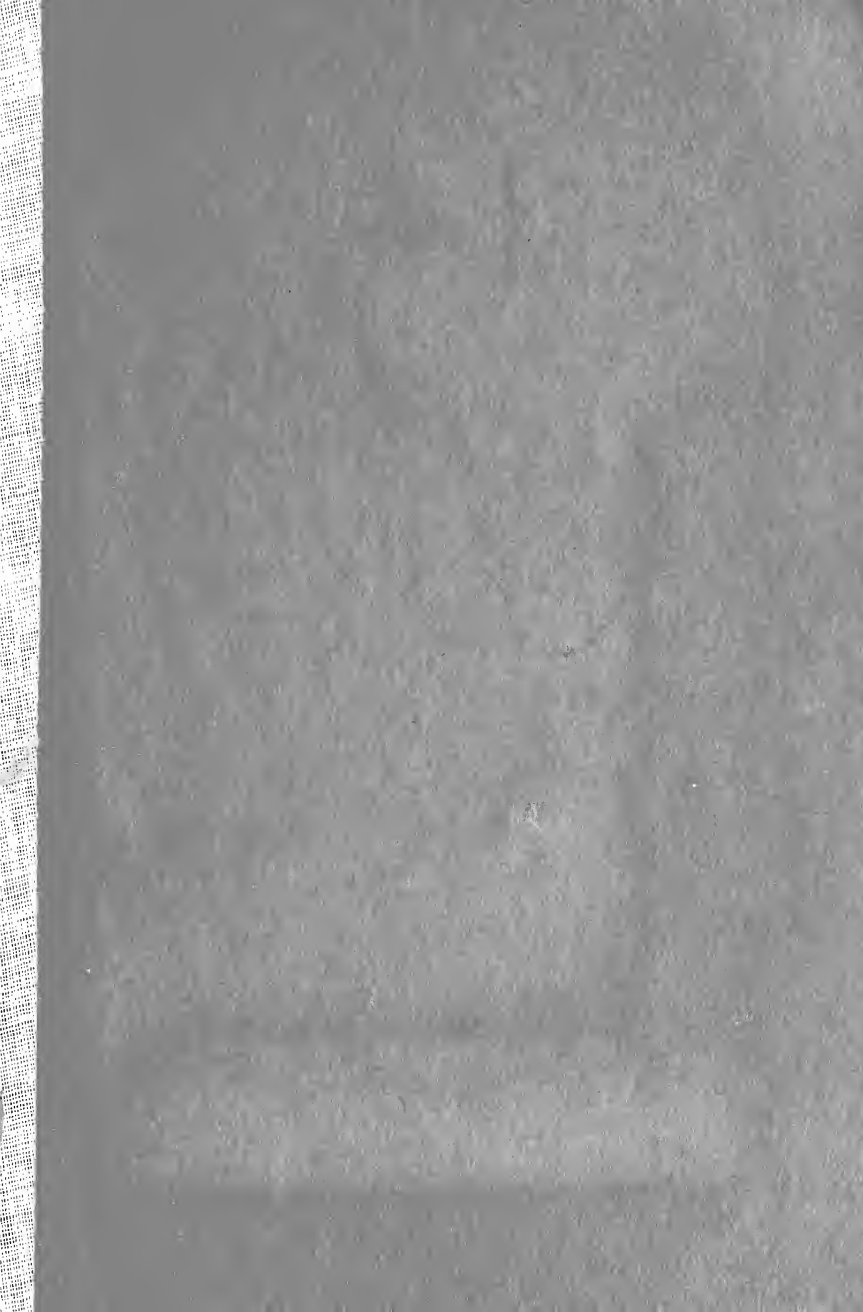
I am in a position to know that one fancier made sales of breeding stock in the month of May to the amount of \$1,500, lacking \$1.50. I know of another who has cleared something between \$7,000 and \$9,000 within the last eighteen months on breeding stock. Now of course, these are breeders of very fancy animals. This only shows one phase, and the hare-breeding for market purposes, another. It is my opinion that in some three or four years, when the business settles down to market purposes, that the people who are now breeding for fancy, and who have not made sufficient from it to retire from business, will settle down to producing meat. They will be most thoroughly prepared to handle the little animal for meat purposes as they will understand its every

requirement. They will have a natural fondness for the animal, and will produce meat to better advantage than a beginner could possibly do. At the same time, enough interest will be retained in the fancy to make it very interesting in exhibition circles, and carrying out first-class shows will proceed in this country on similar lines that it is carried out with poultry, horses and other stock, and with the fancy shows in England.

—*Judge P. E. Crabtree in Field and Stream.*

THE END.





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