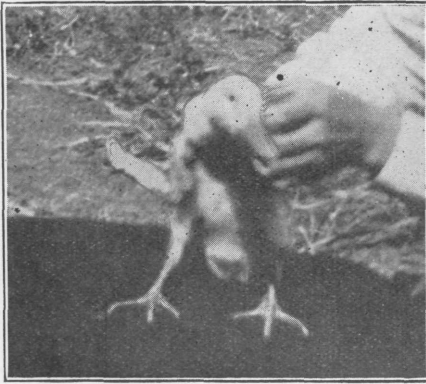


A DUCK WITH WEBLESS FEET.

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During the summer of 1921 there was hatched on the farm of Mr. Louis Weiss, near Morganville, Kansas, a duck which appeared normal in every respect except that the feet had no indication of a web. The owner had a flock of over fifty white ducks of various ages, all having the normal webbed feet except the duckling under consideration.



The toes of the duck are rather long and the prominent web is apparently an aid in walking, as well as swimming, since this mutant duck showed some difficulty in running as compared with the normal individuals. When placed in a tank, it floated about, kicking its feet violently in the water, but made rather slow progress as compared with a normal, web-footed companion.

The duck was a female and grew to maturity, but died at the development of her first egg, which was broken in the oviduct. The writer had planned to carry on breeding experiments to determine the true nature of this remarkable character. Unfortunately, not even the feet were preserved. The owner of the duck, Miss Idella Weiss, and other members of the family reported that this duck developed exceedingly

long claws, over two inches long, which interfered greatly with walking. The writer did not see the animal after the duckling stage, but there is no question as to the reliability of the reports on the long-clawed character. It is to be hoped that if a similar mutation appears at some other time or place the animal will survive, that test may be made to determine the hereditary peculiarities of the character.

The accompanying photograph, although made with a "Brownie" camera, shows the nature of the feet fairly well. There is less web between the toes than in an ordinary chicken. This mutation appealed to the writer as an unusual oddity, for here is a bird that lost, at a single jump, one of the characteristics essential to its normal mode of life and instincts.