



Christmas Goose

► **CHRISTMAS, COMING** so soon after Thanksgiving, is rather hard on the poultry population. Many thousands of turkeys that escaped the late November massacre have lost their lives during the past few days and weeks, and will sizzle on Christmas platters come Dec. 25.

Although turkeys are popular for the holiday feast, the Christmas goose is coming back into its own. Long before America was discovered, and with it the turkey, the goose held undisputed sway as the bird of the day at Christmas and other festive seasons.

Even where turkeys are abundant there are many who prefer goose, for its liberal natural larding makes it easier to roast and also makes the stuffing tastier.

As the turkey is the most recent addition to the poultry yard, the goose was probably its first inhabitant, though possibly the duck

might claim that honor. Both duck and goose, as well as the common barnyard hen, were man's domestic companions long before the dawn of written history.

The goose especially has had the esteem of primitive peoples, who dedicated it to one or another of their pagan gods. Even people so civilized as the Romans considered the goose sacred to Juno; the legend of the saving of the city by the alarmed cries of her flock at midnight is a well-known one.

In the old-world rural economy, the goose was as useful a bird as the hog was an animal. Nothing but the bones and the beak were thrown away. And the goose is still one of the most completely usable of all our domestic animals. Besides yielding a great lump of meat upon its involuntary demise, it gives us quantities of huge eggs before that event.

In the old days the fat of the Christmas goose also used to yield a pot of "goose grease," sovereign remedy for colds in the chest, aches and pains, or whatever else ailed you, and the fat was good in cooking as well as in medicine.

The goose supplies whole snowstorms of feathers and down for cushions and old-fashioned feather-beds, and can be plucked alive without apparent inconvenience. If you travel in the Rhine country, you will at first be nearly smothered at night, for you will not merely sleep on a feather bed; you will sleep under one.

Finally, the heavy quills of the goose's wings were instruments of both peace and war, for they guided the shafts of the archers and formed the quills of the clerks. Whole wing-ends with feathers still affixed made excellent hearthbrushes. And even the bones became meteorological instruments.

The goose has been falsely defamed as a foolish bird, but it really is not.

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MEDICINE

With Ulcers, No ACTH

► **CORTISONE AND ACTH** are bad medicine for stomach ulcer patients. But studies of their effects show that the emotional stress and strain which can bring on a stomach ulcer act through gland hormones as well as through the vagus nerve.

These findings are reported to the *JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION* (Dec. 15) by Drs. Seymour J. Gray, John A. Benson Jr., Robert W. Reifstein and Howard M. Spiro of Boston.

The hormone mechanism for stress to ulcer formation runs from the hypothalamus in the brain to the pituitary gland next to it, then to the adrenal gland through ACTH, and then to the stomach through cortisone. ACTH from the pituitary is known to stimulate the adrenal glands to produce cortisone.

The Boston doctors gave ACTH injections daily for three to four weeks to

persons with normal stomachs. In every case the acid secretion by the stomach rose to the level found in cases of active ulcer. Cortisone produced the same effect.

One young man, they report, who got four courses of ACTH over a six-month period for severe arthritis developed an ulcer and hemorrhage and died in shock. This and similar cases lead the Boston doctors to warn that prolonged treatment with ACTH or cortisone is a hazard to patients with stomach ulcers. They advise X-ray examination of the stomach before starting the hormone treatment and use of antacids during the treatment.

Similar precautions, they state, may be necessary in giving cortisone or ACTH to patients with brain tumors and conditions such as chronic asthma or heart trouble who suffer from oxygen deficiency.

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MEDICINE

Emotional Upsets Cause Cold Sores and Fever Blisters

► **ADD COLD sores and fever blisters** to the list of ailments which may in some cases be brought on by emotional upsets.

Studies showing this were reported by Drs. Harvey Blank of the University of Pennsylvania and Morris W. Brody of Temple University, both in Philadelphia, at the Chicago meeting of the American Academy of Dermatology and Syphilology.

Fever blisters are caused by a virus which most adults harbor. Exposure to the sun, stomach upset, colds and other stimuli may bring on the blisters in these persons.

The small group of persons who repeatedly get cold sores and fever blisters without apparent cause are those the Philadelphia doctors find get them from psychiatric factors.

"Psychological" cold sores, they reported, attack the very "good" people, who are passive, submissive and anxious to please and gain approval, but whose concern with conforming to the good and true conflicts with their actual circumstances. The conflict is such that emotional upsets including cold sores result.

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ENTOMOLOGY

"Hobo" Flies Travel Miles Searching Food

► **FLIES ARE "hoboes"** and may travel eight miles or more to get food, scientists of the U. S. Public Health Service report.

They used radioisotopes to trace tagged flies and in recent tests in Georgia and Arizona released more than 200,000 of these "hot" flies, later trapping many of them at fixed distances from the release point.

How far the flies roam is important both in measuring their role in transmitting diseases and in planning effective control operations, they told the American Association of Economic Entomologists meeting in Cincinnati. Radioactive tagging is the latest tracking method and is so fast that 10 "hot" flies can be isolated from 50,000 in less than five minutes. The amount of radioactivity used is harmless—less than that in radium watch dials.

Flies move toward food or breeding material, called "attractants" by entomologists. By hopping from attractant to attractant they cover considerable distances, and communities, therefore, must stress the removal both of breeding sources and of food in order to get proper fly control, the scientists concluded.

Reporting on the Georgia and Arizona tests were Dr. H. F. Schoof, R. E. Siverly, J. A. Jensen, K. D. Quarterman, W. Mathis and J. W. Kilpatrick of the Health Service's Communicable Disease Center.

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