

Ryan, of Barriefield in the district of Kingston, Ont., also wrote me on the subject and as her method of treatment is decidedly original; the following quotation from her letter, is given:—"In regard to shortening the moult, I beg to say, that on the 13th August, 1896, I plucked a year old hen and six days later plucked eight more. They were all laying at the time. The fowls did not seem to suffer the least inconvenience, but seemed more lively. Some of the down was left on their bodies. They kept on laying for ten days after being plucked and then ceased until Saturday last, 3d October, when the first one, plucked, on 13th August, laid, and has continued to do so since. A week after being plucked the body of the hen first plucked was entirely covered with pin feathers. All the hens plucked are now (7th Oct.) entirely covered with beautiful, glossy new feathers, wings and all. In marked contrast are the *older* and unplucked hens and cock bird. They are just beginning to look drowsy, in their first stage of moulting. There is not a doubt but that in this case he forcing moulting was successful. I do not intend to let another fowl I own suffer from discomfort or cold by moulting in the old fashioned way. I should add that the fowls experimented on got no extra care. I, however, dusted them well with insect powder to prevent lodgment of lice."

While Miss Ryan's plan might not be convenient in the case of large flocks, it however teaches, in no uncertain manner, the following:—

- 1.—The advantage of early moulting in making early layers.
- 2.—The benefit of young stock as compared with older birds.
- 3.—The shedding of the old feathers was quickly followed by new pin feathers.
- 4.—Hence the necessity of aiding the fowl to get rid of her old feathers.

WHAT MAY BE DONE NOW

What will be of paramount importance to the farmer when he reads this, will be some plan of action that he can at once put in effect. Well, he can do the following:—

- 1.—Weed out all hens over two years of age.
- 2.—Fatten up the old hens, previous to moulting, and make pot pie of them, or, market them as old hens and nothing else. Bad advice, I think I hear you say Mr. Editor! But let me assure you and your numerous readers, that a well

fattened three year old Plymouth Rock hen, is good eating, when properly cooked. We will return the subject.

3.—Utilise waste of table and kitchen, small potatoes, &c., in a mash, to be well cooked and fed in judicious quantity three or four mornings of the week. Let fowls run in fields, or, orchard, Give whole grain for afternoon ration. Give no noon ration. Fed grain other mornings when mash is not fed. If cut bone can be had feed four mornings of week in ben of grain.

4.—Have your poultry house fairly comfortable and scrupulously clean.

5.—Keep fowls and hen house free from lice.

6.—Use intelligence, system and energy. No paying result can be obtained from any department of the farm without earnest, well directed effort.

A. G. GILBERT

Experimental Farm }
Ottawa 25 August 1898. }

The Dairy.

THE EFFECT OF FOOD ON MILK PRODUCTION

I should be sorry if the discussion on this subject should be closed in the *Agricultural Gazette* in its present stage. May I earnestly appeal to the Professors of Dairy Chemistry to show practical men the true position in which dairy farmers stand before our public analysts?

For myself, a mere layman, who for fifty years past have been satisfied by estimating the effect of food on milk by actual results, I must be allowed to repeat what I ventured to assert some years ago: "If chemistry tells us that food does not influence the quality of milk, then chemistry tells a lie." Mr. Primrose McConnell, like Luther, has given an exposition of his faith in certain theorems. These theorems are now before the readers of the *Gazette*, and they seem to me to invite two remarks. First, they mutually contradict each other, *e. g.*, Theorem I. declares "the food does not appreciably or permanently influence the proportion of food and other solids in the milk." Theorem V. declares "succulent foods, will, in my opinion, lower the proportion of solids in the milk, especially the butter-fat." Second, when the contradictions contained in the six theorems are collocated