

to hasten maturity, whether it be to the chicken, the pullet, or the hen, they are supplied. Chickens thus fed when young, will attain to larger size, pullets will undoubtedly commence laying at about four months old, and hens will be stimulated to winter and early spring laying: but of this all breeders may rest assured, that the continuance of stimulating foods beyond a reasonable time, will result prejudicially to both old and young.

It will not be denied, however, that when judiciously and moderately supplied, and at certain times only, such foods are highly beneficial. If given to chickens while fledging, it greatly assists in this, to them, exhausting process, and when given to drooping fowls has marked effect, quickly restoring them to their former healthy condition. It is a good thing, too, to give stimulating food to old birds in cold or wet weather, and when moulting, and to hens that do not lay in due time in early spring; but in any case, when the desired effect is produced, spiced food should be discontinued, and the usual plain food be again restored. In old birds, when given too frequently or continued beyond the time already mentioned, it produces diseased egg organs, and in pullets stunted growth.

In the case of chickens of all the larger breeds, the longer maturity can be postponed, the larger the birds are likely to be, and no matter what may be said to the contrary, the same feeding which produces forced and rapid growth during the very early period of chickenhood, will of necessity, if continued beyond this, result in stunted, because precocious adults. Large size and early maturity cannot be had in the same bird—they are incompatible.

For many purposes, then, it is well to have stimulating food always on hand, or the means by which it may be prepared at a moment's notice. For two

years we have used the following seasoning mixed with oatmeal, and have found it highly beneficial, and now confidently recommend it as already suggested. Take of ground allspice 2 ozs., ground black pepper 2 ozs., ground ginger  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz., malt dust  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb., and brown sugar 1 lb., mix together, and add to the usual food in sufficient quantity to cause a slightly sweet and hot taste, and we think it will be found fully equal to anything of a similar kind. When prepared it should be kept in a well corked bottle, ready for use when required.

In the matter of feeding fowls, then, the contempt for order and common sense so frequently to be seen in the yards of fanciers, leads to more than half the disappointments and loss, and tends to produce disgust in the minds of others, while again the too frequent use of spiced or heating foods produces disease and death in some of the choicest breeding stock. Moderation and judgment must be used in both cases: food must be given regularly, and in such quantities only as shall be entirely eaten with an appetite at each meal; and this rule equally applies whether to fattening or breeding stock, and the unlimited use of condiments must be guarded against, unless indeed the sole object be the production of eggs for a short period at the sacrifice of the bird.

#### CATS IN POULTRY HOUSES.

From the time I was a boy I have never been fond of this species of carnivorous quadrupeds of the *genus felis*, although I hold a man or boy a brute who can take pleasure in worrying them, especially with bad dogs.

I am writing at present with reference to cats *versus* poultry, which may give confidence to some. I have always, to speak quite truthfully, had a mistrust of cats, even the best trained cats, with chickens and pigeons, but I have wronged them, and I will state how.