

MOULTING OF FOWLS.

Moulting, while, as being a natural process of annual occurrence, it can scarcely be called a disease, yet must be treated of as if it really were one, from a consideration of the effects which it produces. It is most dangerous in young chickens. With adult birds, warmth and shelter are usually all that is required, united with diet of a somewhat extra stimulating and nutritious character.

Dr. Bechstein remarks, that, in a state of nature, moulting occurs to wild birds when their food is most plentiful; hence, nature herself points out that the fowl should, during that period, be furnished with an extra supply of food. After the third year the period of moulting becomes later and later, until it will sometimes happen in January or February. Of course, when this occurs, every care as to warmth should be bestowed. The use of Cayenne pepper alone, administering two or three grains made into a pill with bread, will generally suffice. Do not listen to the recommendation of ignorant or presuming quacks; if this simple treatment do not help them through, they will die in spite of all you may do.

The feathers will at times drop off fowl, when not moulting, to a very considerable extent, rendering them often nearly naked. This is a disorder similar to the mange in many other animals; and the same sort of treatment—viz., alteratives, such as sulphur and nitre, in the proportions of one quarter each, mixed with fresh butter, a change of diet, cleanliness, and fresh air, in addition to this—will generally be found sufficient to effect the cure. Be careful not to confound this affection with moulting. The distinction is, that in the latter case the feathers are replaced by new ones as fast as they are cast; but in the former this is not so, and the animal becomes bald. Mr. Martin relates an anecdote which would indicate that fear has influences as great upon birds as on the human being. "A cock," he says, "belonging to a friend, was dreadfully frightened by a dog, and became white, but recovered his natural plumage at the next moult. A black Poland cock, being seized near the house by a fox, his screams being heard, he was rescued desperately wounded, with the loss of half his feathers. In time the remainder of his feathers came off, and he became perfectly white."—*Richardson on the Domestic Fowl.*

Time may command money, but money cannot command time.