

particularly if some be destined to appear at the coming shows. When the breeding season is over, the hens should either be drafted all together on a large run, or given their liberty. The cocks should remain in their old runs, disconsolate widowers, sadly reflecting what home was like when the "gudewife" was there.

At the first sign of moult each fowl intended for exhibition should be placed in a separate coop and yard, a little sulphate of iron added to the drinking water, and a few grains of hempseed with a little raw meat given two or three times a week. The coops should be well shaded from sun and rain, moved every now and then to fresh ground, frequently cleaned out, and all the moulted feathers burnt or buried. Fresh vegetable food should be given daily, and this is very imperative if the coop be not placed on grass.

The next few weeks will be full of interest to the fancier, for, while faults will daily become apparent, a few chickens will gradually stand out superior to others in the flock. These promising chickens should, if possible, be drafted in small parties to select runs, and extra attention bestowed on them; they should be kept confined to the houses and runs during inclement weather, as protection from wet is still most essential.

Perchance the handsome appearance of one or two may induce their owner to test their merits at an approaching show; with this end in view the selected birds should be penned, about a fortnight before the event, in one of the now abandoned coops placed with its little yard in some dry sheltered spot. The coop having been well painted and whitewashed and thoroughly overhauled after being abandoned by the hen and chicks, should be furnished with a broad low perch and is then ready for its present purpose; or the cockerel houses advertised by various poultry furniture manufacturers will now be found most valuable; every intending exhibitor should provide some accommodation of the kind, together with three or four large show pens. A cockerel or a couple of pullets may be penned in each coop, and well, but not over, fed. Keep them always ready to eat, yet never very hungry. The coop must be regularly cleaned out, a little sand scattered on the floor, and moved with the yard every day or two to fresh ground. Tame the birds by handling them, and accustom them to be examined; a bird which shows well in his pen possesses a great advantage over a wild one. The owner of a wild bird may derive some satisfaction by stating his bird had never been in a pen before, but it can hardly be satisfactory to the judge to meet with a bird which presses to the far corner of its pen and shrinks up into half its proper size as soon as it is looked at. During this preparation, as, indeed,

throughout the whole of a Houdan's life, protection from rain and damp is of paramount importance to young and adult birds alike.

A good Houdan in the month of November in tip top show condition is indeed a handsome bird, the pure clear white, the rich lustrous green black, the neat compact crest, and vividly red comb afford a striking, yet agreeable contrast, which a thorough wetting by rain and bespattering of mud will destroy almost beyond recovery, no matter how cunningly the washing operations be conducted. Fowls carefully tended during their moult need no further preparation for the first show or two than a good washing of legs and feet; subsequently they may require a thorough wash—an important part in a Houdan's toilet which needs some description, although more knowledge will be acquired by actually washing a fowl or two than by reading a page of directions. Washing fowls has now almost risen to an art, yet not so very long ago it was rarely attempted, and even to-day the general public are lost in wonderment why the feathered pets they see at shows look so different from those in their backyard!

The requisite articles for "the wash" are a bright clear fire, before which a large unlined show basket may remain for some ten or twelve hours, two medium size washtubs, a large sponge, a piece of brown soap, a plentiful supply of hot and cold water, and a towel or two. Place the fowl in a tub half filled with very warm water, and press it gently down; sponge it well all over, then work up a lather and thoroughly scrub and soap the feathers downwards, commencing with the head and crest and finish with the tail, taking great care not injure the tail sickles; rinse the soap off well with the sponge and change the water, lathering up and scrubbing again until all the feathers appear to be clean.

*(To be continued.)*

MR. AUG. D. ARNOLD, DILLSBURG, PA., writes us: "I am again getting some birds from England, from Mrs. Lister-Kay's yards, among them the first Dairy and Palace cockerel, considered the best bird of the breed ever shown in England. He left Liverpool on the 6th of December. I expect him every day. I have since ordered a cockerel, the best breeding bird Mrs. Kay would sell. I expect some grand matings this season and good results. I find in the very best matings there are many off colored chicks. This we must look for for some time yet, but the improvement is very marked every year. I expect to show some good birds at New York, the only show I will attend this year. I hope to be there during the show, full time."