

IV. INTESTINAL WORMS.

The intestines of domestic fowls commonly become invaded with worms. These belong to three classes: round worms, tape worms and flukes.

1. Round Worms have a cylindrical body, tapering at either end, like an earth worm, and vary in length from one-fourth of an inch to five inches. Of these seven species have been recorded from the domestic fowl.

2. Tape Worms are flat, ribbon-like, elongated and slender, varying according to the species, from one-twelfth of an inch to 4 or 5 inches in length. They are composed of numerous segments. Nine species have been found in fowl.

3. Flukes differ from others in being less elongated or thread-like, but have a round or oval form, and are more or less flattened laterally. They are provided with one or more suckers by which they adhere. They are quite small, varying in the different species from one-twelfth to one-half inch in length. Five species have been found in the domestic fowl.

Symptoms.—The symptoms of intestinal worms are not marked. The birds are dull, lose strength, become thin, show no disposition to run, and are stiff in their walk. The plumage becomes rough, diarrhœa may be present and epileptic fits may intervene.

With the presence of tape worms, the same general symptoms may exist. The bird holds the head under the wing; there may be epileptic form of attacks, a stiffness of walk, or a straddling position of the legs. Sections of tape-worm may often be found by examining the excrement, but the best way to prove the presence is to kill a fowl and carefully examine the intestinal tract.

Treatment.—The control of the trouble is best effected by sanitary measures. Since the excrement is the carrier of the worms, it is evident that where the trouble is prevalent it will be best to remove the fowl to fresh grounds. The excrement should be removed daily from the houses, and the destruction of the worms and their eggs in the latter effected by mixing each lot of manure with an equal quantity of quicklime.

As medicinal treatment several valuable remedies have been suggested. Oil of turpentine is one of the remedies for all intestinal worms, two teaspoonfuls administered once daily.

For tape worms a teaspoonful of powdered pomegranate root bark mixed with the food intended for 50 birds. This should be followed with a dose of castor oil, two to three teaspoonfuls to a like number.