

most to be desired now is an improvement in the methods of keeping birds on the farm, together with a more sane method of marketing. Poultry would then be a much more profitable side-line than it has ever been in the past.

Even with the improved standing of utility-poultry keeping in New Zealand of late years, some people ridicule the fact that poultry can be made really profitable stock. They are certainly right so far as the stock they fancy are concerned. To enthuse over Brahmas, Cochins, and Langshans, as well as the extreme fancy types of some other breeds, proves that they regard poultry mainly as a monstrosity for the exhibition of extraordinary form or the display of fine feathers. A well-known retired southern Langshan-fancier admitted to me the other day that his pullets did not commence to lay till they were twelve to thirteen months old. This was a result of continual checking of the laying-propensity in order to secure extreme size for the show-pen. Of course, such stock are unprofitable to any one but the fancier. The best argument that can be produced to prove the increasing popularity of poultry-keeping, now that the utility characters of poultry are being developed, is that according to the last census the number of birds in the Dominion increased by over half a million above the number returned at the previous census.

DISEASE.

When a bird is moulting she is just in the condition to contract disease, especially such a disease as tuberculosis. It is imperative, therefore, that the birds at this time should be in as good a condition of health as possible. Naturally they are not as robust as when they commenced to lay, but their blood should be in good order and their surroundings should be as sanitary as possible. A plentiful provision of green food, clean water, and grit are also important, while a plain nourishing diet should be supplied. If birds which it is desired to breed from (the highest-type layers of the flock) are found to be affected with tuberculosis—and it is often the case that the heaviest layer is the first bird to contract disease—no sentiment should be allowed to enter into the matter: they should be killed. Drastic methods of suppression are most necessary, and no time should be lost in thoroughly cleaning up the plant and removing all sources of infection, chief amongst which is the droppings of affected birds.

The most serious cases of tuberculosis I have come across have been where the birds have been housed in badly constructed and ill-ventilated quarters.

The symptoms of tuberculosis are many, but it is only the man of experience who can detect them. To the novice a wasted appearance