

its full size until the second year. The Spanish cock is pre-eminent for his magnificent comb, and this is developed at an unusually early age; so that the young males can be distinguished from the females when only a few weeks old, and therefore earlier than in other breeds; they likewise crow very early, namely, when about six weeks old. In the Dutch sub-breed of the Spanish fowl the white ear-lappets are developed earlier than in the common Spanish breed.⁴¹ Cochins are characterised by a small tail, and in the young cocks the tail is developed at an unusually late period.⁴² Game fowls are notorious for their pugnacity; and the young cocks crow, clap their little wings, and fight obstinately with each other, even whilst under their mother's care.⁴³ "I have often had," says one author,⁴⁴ "whole broods, scarcely feathered, stone blind from fighting; the rival couples moping in corners, and renewing their battles on obtaining the first ray of light." The weapons and pugnacity of all male gallinaeous birds evidently serve the purpose of gaining possession of the females; so that the tendency in our Game chickens to fight at an extremely early age is not only useless, but injurious, as they suffer much from their wounds. The training for battle during an early age may be natural to the wild *Gallus bankiva*; but as man during many generations has gone on selecting the most obstinately pugnacious cocks, it is more probable that their pugnacity has been unnaturally increased, and unnaturally transferred to the young male chickens. In the same manner, it is probable that the extraordinary development of the comb in the Spanish cock has been unintentionally transferred to the young cocks; for fanciers would not care whether their young birds had large combs, but would select for breeding the adults which had the finest combs, whether or not developed at an early period. The last point which need here be noticed is that, though the chickens of Spanish and Malay fowls are well covered with down, the true feathers are acquired at an unusually late age;

⁴¹ On these points, see 'Poultry Chronicle,' vol. iii. p. 166; and Tegetmeier's 'Poultry Book,' 1866, pp. 105 and 121.

⁴² Dixon. 'Ornamental and Domes-

tic Poultry,' p. 273.

⁴³ Ferguson on Rare and Prize Poultry, p. 261.

⁴⁴ Mowbray on Poultry, 7th edit. 1834, p. 13.