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PRESENTED BY
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ERROR the First.

Of making Choice of COCKS for being successful, without any Regard to the Excellency of their Breed.

AMONG the great Variety of Crosses that are made, I have observed a particular Sort that is endowed with such an excellent Shape and Constitution, as enables them to do great Execution; and tho' the Breeder has deprived them either through Neglect or want of Judgment of that Share of Blood which is necessary in all fighting Fowl, yet, by Virtue of those other Qualifications, they will beat high bred Cocks, which are wanting in those Respects, that is, such as are tainted and withal deformed; but suppose them to be tainted only, it is sufficient to render them incapable of any great Performance: It would be endless as well as tedious to the Reader was I to enumerate a

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tenth Part of the Persons, which have come within my Knowledge, that have suffered by this Practice, therefore, I hope, an Instance will not be thought amiss to detect the Folly of it.

Wilkins of *Grantham*, deceased, was known by most of the *Lincolnshire* Sportsmen to be a very great Cocker, and more particularly famed for his *Plimouths* and *Buttons*; the former of which was bred from a Cock of Lord *Plimouth's*, which came out of the Duke of *Rutland's* Pens, when his Grace fought against Lord *Exeter*, the latter from a Strain of Colonel *Lee's* by the Cock, and out of the Hen of Mr *He-neage's*; yet *Wilkins* could not content himself with his own, but suffered his Thoughts, like a great many others, to wander after Conquests made in various Parts of the Country, thinking thereby to meet with something superior to those he had already got, whereas, had he been content with making the best of his own, no Fowls in *England* could have beat them.

It happen'd at a certain Cocking in the Neighbourhood that one more particular than all the rest came off with great Honour, by beating his Adversary after a handsome easy Manner, which gain'd *Wilkins's* Favour so much as to put him upon intreating for a fresh Brother of him to breed from, which he effected, and bred out of two Years together, without making Trial of the first Year's Product, except one shatter'd Stagg, which proved very indifferent; but not meeting with a terrible Cock against him, he resign'd his Life without running away: That
not

not being a sufficient Trial, *Wilkins* still reposed a Confidence in them that they would be very good when they became Cocks, which he made Trial of very early the next Season, when to his great Surprize found them to fly the Pitt a great deal too soon; in the same Season also he fought the Old Cock, which was then three Years old, and behaved so well as to gain the general Applause of the Pitt, by beating two very good Cocks in few Meetings each: This Performance in the Old Cock, together with the good Opinion, upon sufficient Proof, he had of the Hens, revived his Hopes again, that the remaining Part of them would prove better, he therefore reserved them for Mr *Chumley's* Main, against Mr *Turner*, who was assisted by Mr *Heneage*, but being of a larger Size than common, very few of them fell into the Match, and those that did were beat by Mr *Heneage's*, which tho' they were double fed, were undeniable Cocks, and made the other appear very bad in Comparison of them: Now had these Fowls of *Wilkins's*, which were called *Wed's Greys*, fought against such as were no higher bred than themselves, or otherways against such as were something tainted, they might have got a Character, as Thousands have done before, without any Reason; and tho' they had nought to boast of except Shape and a Perfect Constitution, yet if they find themselves too powerful for their Adversary, they will dispatch in such a Manner as to deceive Men of tolerable good Judgment; yet *Wilkins* could not be satisfy'd where

this Taint proceeded from, or whether to blame the Cock or the Hens for it, till he fought him again, which was then four Years old, and proved the vilest Rogue that ever was bred for a Game Cock ; now, had this old Cock died, or happen'd any Misfortune, so as to have hindered him from fighting again, the Hens would have been condemn'd very innocently : This Practice of being overseen by the Behaviour of Fowls, without any Certainty, and giving too much Credit to Report, both are built upon such weak Foundations, that no one possibly can continue a good Breed long that bend their Mind either Way.

I have seen a great many Mains fought which have given a Character to Fowls undeservedly, by beating such as were not able to make any Resistance; either through the want of Condition, Goodness, or both; and if it should happen that both these Imperfections attended the losing Side, where is the Applause? where the Honour of winning a Match against such Cocks? and it is too often from such Success as this that Cocks get a Character, and deceive the succeeding Breeder, as not meeting with sufficient Trials.



E R R O R

ERROR the Second.

Of the Sufficiency of good H E N S.

TH E antient Breeders in this Kind of Diversion were of Opinion, that a true Game Hen would breed good Fowl even from a Dunghill Cock, whereas a Cock without a Hen equivalent availeth nothing; nay, to this Day this idle Notion is so predominant, that a great many which I have convers'd with, look upon a Hen to be much the safest Side, which is more than I ever could bring to Proof throughout the Practice that I have had; nor do I believe the oldest and most experienc'd Breeder upon Earth can justify it, and I am very well assured, there cannot be any other Reason given for it than this, Hens are not so liable to receive a Taint as Cocks are, because they are, generally speaking, continu'd at one Place unmolested, whereas Cocks are harras'd about and removed frequently from their Places of Breeding, which bring old Age upon them too soon; and what is it that has grounded this Notion in People, but meeting with Disappointments of their Expectations in Cocks breeding good Fowl, occasion'd chiefly by their own Neglect and bad Management: Suppose a Cock to have fought, or only to have gone through a regular Course of Feeding, it is impossible he should produce as good Fowl as the Sisters to him, which have never been disturbed

turbed at all ; these and other Reasons there are to be given, why Cocks do not preserve their Constitutions so long nor so perfect as Hens do ; but provided one shares the same Fate, either of good or bad Management, in every individual Respect as the other, they are equally as meritorious, nor is it in the Power of either of them to breed steady Fowl, without pretty near an equal Share of Blood of each Side. I have already shewn that the celebrated *Plimouth* Hens of *Wilkin's*, were incapable of breeding good Fowl with as active and healthful a Cock as I ever saw, and bred for thorough Game ; so in like Manner was Mr *Bosom's* old *Duck-Wing* Hens let down by a Cock that was deficient in Blood, which Hens might justly be said to be the highest bred Hens upon Earth ; they were got by the renowned Hero the *Old Duck-Wing* before he fought, and out of Alderman *Brown's* Old half *Plimouth* and half *Black Joke* Hen. Instances of this Nature are endless, and I believe it is chiefly owing to this Practice, that some have got a Notion, breed as you will, there shall be such Difference in Brothers, that some will be very good, others but indifferent, to which I agree if there be a Want of Blood of either Side, and will differ as much in their Nature as they frequently do in Feather ; some will take after the good Kind and be pretty near as good as them, others after the bad, and will partake a very little Share of the good, others upon a Medium ; but if Fowl are thorough bred on both Sides, and regularly cross
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for Generations past, they will resemble one another in a particular Manner, and will be little or no more Difference in them than as an Accident in Fighting, or Condition may occasion.

ERROR the Third.

Of Breeding out of old Fought COCKS.

TRUTH or Goodness must be allowed to be the best and most valuable Qualification belonging to a Game Cock, and what every Breeder should endeavour to attain to; yet the true Way and Method of arriving to it is oftentimes mistaken, and in a particular Manner, so by breeding out of old fought Cocks; nay, some are so fond of this Way of breeding, that they rather chuse to make use of one which has been sufficiently cut by Way of Trial, than they would a fresh one, and look upon it as the most certain Way of breeding, which in my Opinion is quite the reverse; for when Nature is almost worn out and exhausted either by Time or too frequent Engagements, it is impossible the Issue proceeding from such Cocks should have much Vigour, Life, or Activity, and this is the Reason, in a great Measure, that we meet with so many idle, slack mettled Cocks, or rather fool hardy, much fitter for a Pot than the Pit; but tho' I am far from advising any one to
breed

breed from Cocks that have received visible Damage by fighting, yet I would not totally exclude the Use of a clipt Cock, provided he has receiv'd no Damage, because sometimes a good Breed is to be attained that Way when no other Means will offer; for among the Curious there are a great many which never set a Value upon their Fowl after fighting, even tho' they come off ever so well; therefore don't mind giving one away to any distant Part, where they are not likely to come against them, when perhaps if a fresh Cock was required, fifty Pounds would not purchase one: Now provided this Cock be of an excellent Kind, which must be prov'd by seeing a Number of Brothers sufficiently tried, not only for their Blood, but also for their genteel and regular Way of fighting; I say provided this Cock be such, I would breed out of him even then for no other End, than to reserve Stock to be renewed again, because it is impossible a Cock can be cut out of Feather and not receive more or less Damage, therefore it will be necessary to make Choice of a proper Hen in order to repair the Damage he is liable to receive from it, and propagate a healthful and lively Posterity, so that I shall lay old Age aside tho' ever so good, and chuse out a fresh Pullet or two Years old Hen at the most, which if I might, should be bred from a youthful Strain, because it is not sufficient that you breed from Youth only, even tho' it be on both Sides, if the Fowl they were bred from were either too antient or tainted; but and if there
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be a Taint, if it is not a very severe one, indeed it may in a great Measure be extirpated, by a due Observance of Youth for two Generations, or three at the most. There remains yet another Observation that I have made, which is, that a Cock will get better Fowl out of Feather, than the Year after when in Feather, and tho' this may seem contrary to Reason to a great many that have not try'd the Experiment, yet I have met with so many sufficient Proofs of it in my Time, that the Issue of the former have prov'd exceeding good, and that of the latter quite the reverse, from the same Hens; the Reasons being these. After a Cock has once fought, and received no Damage by it, and if due Care be taken of him after coming out of warm Pens, and he be bred out of in the Month of *April*, so that the Chickens may come off in *May*, and put to a young blooming Hen, he will get pretty active Fowl, and even then I should deem their Issue unfit for a present Engagement for a large Sum of Money, till they were renewed once more with Youth and Vigour, and only commend such in Comparison of the second Year's Product, which I will endeavour to explain. All Breeders must allow, that during the Time of a Cock's being out of Feather, he is liable to a great many Casualties and Misfortunes, which render him incapable of shedding his Feathers after a regular Manner and at a proper Time of the Year, which if he does not it is impossible he should be healthful; this is upon Supposition, that a Cock be generated with a

good Constitution, how liable he is to be deprived of it in that Interval of Time, but if he has the least Taint upon him, or be inclined to grow out of Shape, it is incredible to think what a great Alteration a Year will make, after He is cut out of Feather.

E R R O R the Fourth.

Of Breeding out of Tainted Fowl, also shewing the Symptoms, and how they proceed.

THIS Folly of breeding out of Fowl which have not a perfect Constitution, is attended with worse Consequences than the latter I have been treating of, because, as I have before observ'd, if they are made the best of they will get pretty active Fowl, which is more than I can say of a tainted Cock; I am rather of Opinion, that some Taints are so deeply radicated, that it will require some Years to cross them out, for there is as much Difference and as many Degrees of Taints in Fowl, as there are of Consumptions in human Bodies; some discover a natural Taint from being long and loose feathered, having a dejected, melancholy Aspect, such I look upon to receive their Disorder from being bred out of Fowl that are too antient on both Sides, and through bad Usage their Constitutions rather impair'd withal, which if they unite,
produce

produce such a Taint in their Posterity as is not worth recovering; others there are whose Plume is rather shorter and more gaudy, and is not easily discover'd if the Breeder or Feeder is not a competent Judge: This Taint may either be natural or acquired; if natural, the Fowl on one Side, if not both, might be youthful, which produc'd it, but through bad Walking, Irregularity of Diet, or getting batter'd, become tainted; therefore it is not old Age altogether that produces tainted Fowl, tho' very liable, because we see that in other Creatures as well as them, some are more capable of doing Business in advanc'd Years than others, which should be in their best Days and Prime of Life, occasion'd by the different Constitutions of Fowl they are bred from, and Management afterwards.

Others there are which have a Consumptive Taint from Nature, and don't discover it so much in long and loose Feathers, as by having a pale Complexion and thin Meagre Body; and tho' these are far from being properly called a rotten Cock, yet the Constitution is so very dry, that they will not stand the Pens without great Detriment, tho' this Taint as often proceeds from bad Usage as any natural Cause; as for Instance, when Staggs are taken up into Pens to be cut, which I hold necessary because it makes them familiar against the Time of coming up to feed, yet most Breeders are apt to keep them up too long, which if they be neglected during that Time, and have not Plenty of fresh Water, as well as proper Food, it will

prove very destructive to those which have not good Constitutions: For as Gravel is the Life of those Animals, by Virtue of which they digest their Food, they cannot subsist long without it.

Mill Walks are also very liable to create a Taint of the like Nature, as being too much exposed for want of Shelter, both to Winter's Cold and Summer's Heat, besides the want of Water in dry Summers; tho' it must be allowed, that where the Situation is nigh Inclosure, which generally afford Water, they are good ones.

Having shewn the most material Ways that I am capable of how Fowl become tainted, I shall observe from the Whole, that it is much the safest Way, as soon as ever a Taint is discovered, to destroy the whole Race of them, unless it be a trifling One, and the Fowl be of an exceeding good Kind indeed by having all other good Qualifications. I doubt not but what I have said concerning breeding out of fought and tainted Fowl, will meet with some Objections by some Breeders, who may plead, that they have bred very good Fowl from both these imperfect Ways, but still it is no Contradiction to what I have said, because there is no General Rule without some Exception; but this I will venture to aver, that if the same Fowl had been bred out of in their Youth and Prime of Life, the Issue of them, with equal Feeding and Management, would win twenty Mains successively, were they to be decided against such

as could be bred from them in Old Age, and at that Disadvantage, tho' I allow some Fowl are so very excellent in their Nature, and retain a good Shape so perfectly in Old Age, that they breed to a Miracle, but for want of a Supply of Youth and fresh Blood, will become slack-mettled and fool-hardy in another Generation.

A Description of the true GAME-COCK.

IN describing the true Game-Cock, I shall speak first of his Shape, which is of so great Efficacy in Battle, that he cannot properly be said to be compleat without it, not but there are good Cocks of all Shapes.

A certain celebrated Breeder says, that a Cock ought to be form'd in Manner like a Sugar-Loaf; which, in my Opinion, is a preposterous Comparison, for the Truth of a Cock's Shape consists in a true Proportion, neither too long, nor too short, too broad, nor too flat, too thick backward or forward, or too thin; and tho' it is allowed by at least two-thirds of Breeders, that a Cock cannot be too thin backward, yet I cannot see that great Advantage in it, and the Question is, whether there is not as great a Necessity for Strength backward as forward? A flat sided Cock, if his Limbs are strong and well proportioned, will be very active, and
hit

hit deep; whereas a Cock that is too broad, unless he has a proper Length with it, is apt to tire and strike short, especially if he has too much Flesh; therefore a Medium is to be observed in both, Length is very necessary if Strength be added to it; and what I mean by a Cock's being too long, is having a long thin Body, and withal long Legs and Thighs, such ought not to fight till three Years old; for if they fight sooner, tho' they have the Advantage of their Adversary in Height, yet they are wanting in other Parts, where Strength is more requir'd; but I am far from advising any one to breed short Fowl, nor indeed can they, unless from Dwarfs, or else at the latter End of the Season; for there is more Danger of Fowl being too long than too short, if bred early and from youthful Stock. In fine, a Cock ought to be form'd in Manner following; First, He should have a long Beam and well set on, arising almost perpendicular from his Shoulder: Secondly, The Body ought to be upon a Medium, not long, nor too short, and rather deep than shallow: Thirdly, His Legs ought to be rather long than short, especially if the Body be stiffish, but if on the contrary the Body be long as well as flat, there is a Necessity for a shortish Leg; for, as I have observed before, Length of Body and Limbs together will not suit with a two Year old Cock: Lastly, His Thighs, whatever Shape he is of, should be short; for long and weak thigh'd Cocks frequently break it themselves, since long Weapons have been so much

in Esteem; nor can a Cock possibly be active that has a long Thigh, and, generally speaking, long Legs and Thighs go together; but tho' a Man be ever so curious, it is a difficult Matter to bring Shape to Perfection as well as other Qualifications, but nevertheless, we must endeavour to come as near it as possible, and he that judges the best, doubtless, will meet with the most Success. Some that I am acquainted with have attempted in vain to breed Fowl of a true Shape, and now, like the Fox, think it a trifling Qualification, but Activity ought to be the Study of every Breeder, and if Strength be added to it, together with a proper Length, it is my Description of a true shap'd Cock.

Having shewn, as near as I can, the proper Shape that a true Game-Cock ought to be formed with, I shall next endeavour to shew the Necessity of a good Extraction. Most Breeders are fond of Game, and make it their chief Aim and Study of Breeding, without consulting whether there be Mettle with it or not, or whether they fight in a handsome Manner, or in a proper Place or not, if the Constitution has not been impair'd by bad Management, or whether they be of an active Shape or not; all these Requisites ought to be consulted, or else Breeding of Cocks becomes very expensive: I have known several keen Sportsmen contented with mere Game-Fowl for several Years, and tho' they could not win above two Fights of them, yet would they not censure them so strictly as to forsake them, but generally imputed their losing
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to bad Feeding, and it is become very common to condemn the Feeder when it is the Breeder's Fault only ; for if Cocks are good in Nature and quite healthful, they seldom bring Disgrace to the Feeders. I have already shewn the Danger of breeding out of Fowl that are tainted in Constitution, and to fulfil my Design of describing the true Game Cock, obliges me to make use of the same Caution with regard to Genealogy, that there be no Deficiency in it so long as Memory can extend, for it is quite a parallel Case ; if there be a Taint, whether in their Nature or Constitution, it will discover itself for two or three Generations, and sometimes to the fourth ; therefore it behoves Breeders to be strictly curious whenever they have Occasion for a Cross, to make Choice of such as will rather add than diminish in any of the before-mention'd Particulars ; thus when a Cock is form'd of an active Shape, and full of Youth and Vigour without a Tincture of bad Blood in his Veins, he may properly be call'd a true Game-Cock, and instead of having long and tedious Battles, occasion'd by Breakings out of Heat for Want of Strength, those will dispatch one or the other in very few Blows, if thoroughly fed and properly weapon'd.

What different Sorts there are that excel in their respective Ways of Fighting.

VARIOUS are the Sorts of Cocks which go under the Denomination of Game-Fowl, that

that are not worthy of it, yet appear as such in the Eye of those, who have not Judgment to distinguish rightly betwixt a true Game-Cock and the many different Sorts that in Reality are not so; my Design therefore shall be, to describe such as are worthy, which consist of three different Sorts, the first of which I call, the *Active and Ready Fighting* Cock, the second I term, the *Bull-dog* Kind, and the third the *Artful Fighting* Cock; when Fowl are equally fed and of equal Goodness, what is it that must give Success but superior Activity and Truth of Fighting; and I have often observ'd, when Men of Judgment come into a Pit where they are entire Strangers to Fowl, they bet their Money according to the Behaviour of them in Fighting, and when some think it Odds on one Side, 'tis Six to Four in their Opinion, on the contrary.

This First Sort, which I call the ready fighting Cock, if they are in perfect Condition, have the Advantage of any other, for by breaking in upon a Cock in that furious Manner, it frustrates the Design of the Adversary tho' ever so well intended, which if pursu'd, as any Cock of Mettle will do, must beat the best slow Cock that can be bred, because we daily see, that a Blow is a Battle given at the Beginning; but if this Sort are not in good Condition, they are much the worst of the three, their fast Fighting then will be of no Service to them, but rather occasion them to tire, and let a slow Cock knock them down at the last. I have

seen many excellent Breeds of this Kind, but I think none are so worthy of being taken Notice of as Mr *Heneage's Dog-Kennels*, more particularly the *Right Norrils*, which were bred from the *Old Nonpareil Dog-Kennel Cock*, and out of Sir *Windsor Hunlock's Hens*, which Fowl fought in every Main more or less against Lord *Exeter*; indeed there was one Main which chiefly consisted of them, beat at *Louth*, being the second Main that was fought, which was apparently thrown away by bad Feeding; and I am of Opinion, that if the Feeders had undertaken the contrary Pens, it would have beat a hollow Main in Behalf of Mr *Heneage*; the worst Failing belonging to these Cocks, was their Want of being a proper Size, which was a great Misfortune.

In the last Main of the four, tho' it was won by Mr *Heneage* in great Extremity, having seven Battles to win successively to win the Main, yet there was a great many of the *Right Norrils* that fell out of Match, which went immediately from thence to *Grantham*, being forty Miles, to assist Mr *Turner* against Mr *Cholmley*, most of which fell into Match, and all won except one that prov'd exceeding good, which was beat, without any Disgrace to him, by a strait Ey'd Cock, Son of the *Old Plimouth* of *Wilkins*, and out of the Favourite *Brick-Breasted Hens*, which came from an unknown Part of the World.

The Second Sort I am to treat of, is what I call the *Bull-dog* Kind, and differs as much from
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the Random fighting Cock, as a Bull-Dog does from a Mastiff; this Sort of Cocks, to answer their Design in Fighting, ought to be furnish'd with Strength suitable to it, and somewhat of more Bone than the former, for as the other excels by Activity, so these require Strength in a particular Manner, to accomplish their End: It is observable in this Sort of Cocks, that they are never in a Hurry, and seldom known to spar, but keep their Ground and stand it fairly Blow for Blow, always coming in a Place where they are sure to do Execution. Mr *Boslow*, who I made mention of in the Second Error, was as famous for his *Duck-wings* of this exact Kind, as Mr *Heneage* was for his *Dog-Kennels*, which excelled differently; and it may not be amiss to observe, that the Sixscore Guineas which was fought for three Years together at *Lincoln*, by Subscription, was won every Year by his Fowl, but indeed they were Cocks form'd on Purpose for that Business, having Strength to go thorough with their Battles, and a Death Blow entail'd upon the Family. The original Cock, call'd by the Name of the *Old Duck-wing*, he had from *Smith* of *Peterborough*, which must be allowed by all that knew him, to be as fine a Cock as *England* ever bred: He fought four Years together at *Lincoln*, Horse Races, besides other Times; and in the eighth Year of his Age, almost blind, and gouty footed, he beat a fine, fresh Cock, in few Blows; and what was very remarkable in him, he never fought without either breaking or bending *Smith's* Weapons

almost double, he was a Cock of that prodigious Strength.

The Third Sort I am to describe is called the Artful Fighting Cock, differing very much from either of the other; this Sort are always upon their Guard from the first of their being pitted; for as soon as ever they have made Trial of their Adversary, if they find him either too long, or too strong for them, they take directly to a short Turn, and never after will let them have a fair Blow at the Face of them; and as soon as ever they have made a Blow, if it is not effectual, shoot off and clear themselves from Danger; thus, by Degrees, one of those Cocks will beat such as are much heavier and stronger than themselves, by fighting after that artful Manner, tho' it is a very great Chance to meet with a Breed of the right Sort of these, nor did I ever see any to come up to *Wilkins's Plimouths of Grantham*. The Advantage of this Way of fighting is very great, for when a Pair of Cocks are of equal Blood and Strength, then such Presence of Mind is of very great Service to them; for it is impossible when a Cock is almost bereav'd of Breath, that he can come up to his Mark without taking off to recover himself, and one Blow given in full Breath and at full Length, is worth half a Dozen otherways; for tho' Cocks are ever so good Game, or strike ever so hard, it availeth not much if they stand too near their Adversary to take Blows, especially if they come to a long Battle.

Having mention'd all the Sorts of Game-Fowl

Fowl that excel respectively, I shall leave it for the Curious to dispute which of them deserves the Superiority.

Of the Attainment of Good F O W L, and the Continuance of them.

Without a great deal of Caution used, when a Gentleman first sets out to be a Cocker, he is liable to meet with great Disappointments, for as very few at the first are willing to rely upon their own Judgment, they are apt to accept of such as Sportsmen are pleased to put into their Hands; some will present him with Fowl, and commend them for the best in the World, for want of Judgment to know better; Others, through a View of Interest, will impose any upon him, so they are not mere Dunghills, purely to serve their own private Ends; Others may supply him with really good Fowl, but having no better Opinion of his Judgment than of the former Persons, in all Probability crosses one with the other, and so, consequently, will have a promiscuous Breed; Thus I have known Gentlemen go on for several Years, till the Expence of it became so great, without Success, for want of taking proper Measures, that they were almost weary of it, tho' the Inclination has been ever so strong, before they could arrive at a good Breed; and as it is not a very easy Matter to fall into a good Breed

Breed of Cocks, I thought it might be necessary to lay down Rules for the more immediate Attainment of them; therefore, of Necessity, Enquiry must first be made into a Man's Judgment who recommends Fowl; Secondly, into his Principle, for tho' the Principle be ever so good, if Judgment is wanting, it availeth nothing; they may bear the Character, like a great many that I have known, of having good Fowl, and in two or three Years quite run out; therefore, it is not altogether having Fowl from People, who are reported to have such by Men of no Judgment, that will answer the End, but rather from those whose Conduct and Diligence in Breeding is such as can propose a Certainty every Year, which may be done by proper Trials; and tho' the best Judges may be deceived in Crosses hitting, yet they may be so far upon a Certainty as not to injure any young Beginner; and there are but two certain Ways that I can propose for it, the first of which relates a good deal to what I have already said, which is, having Fowl from Men of approved Honour and Integrity, as well as Judgment; and who, if they thought, had not a good Cross within themselves, would rather send them none, than such as would do their Friend Injury: The Second Way is by frequenting great Matches, where, in all Probability the best Cocks are fought; for by this Means you have an Opportunity of seeing a Number of Brothers fight, of several Sorts; so that if you have so much Interest in the Owners, or can make a Friend to procure a fresh
Cock

Cock, full Brother to such as have excell'd in the Match, or else a Pair of Sisters, you are sure to be upon a Certainty: Thus, by frequenting Meetings, it is possible to get a Cock of one, and a Pair of Hens of another, and so enter immediately upon a good Breed.

Having shewn the speediest and most certain Methods for the Attainment of good Fowl, I shall endeavour next to shew how to continue them; as there are great Difficulties to go thro' before a good Breed is, generally speaking, to be attain'd, so are they as great in the Continuance of them: Any insignificant trifling Breeder may meet with a good Breed by Chance, but they are no sooner possess'd of them, than they immediately ruin their Constitution by bad Management, else how should so many good Breeds have been destroy'd in a few Years as I could mention, was it not for Want of Judgment in crossing of them; sometimes two or three Years are thrown away by too long a Continuance of them together; other sometimes they fly from that Way of Breeding, when it is necessary they should be continued, which shews, that there ought to be no general Rule for either, but should be continued a longer or shorter Time just as they turn out in Shape and Constitution; some Fowl will preserve a good Shape till they arrive at the Age of Seven or Eight; others, which might be very fit to fight at Two, will decline, and grow out of Shape, at Three or Four, at the most; the same with Regard to their Constitution; all which proceed from the

Diffe-

Difference of Age, Shape, and Constitution of Fowl they are bred from.

The first Trial that can be made, whether a Cock will suit with Hens or not, is when he is three, and the Hens two Years old, which being put together the Year before, the Product of them are then Staggs; which, if a Trial is made of them in a proper Manner, and they answer Expectation, it is sufficient to encourage any one to continue the same again. I can't say, but a Trial of Cocks is more satisfactory than of Staggs, but if they are bred early, chusing the shortest and stiffest for Trials, it may suffice: Thus would I continue a Cock with Hens till they be three and four Years old each, which makes up three Years, beginning with the Cock of two Years old and the Hens one; Youth is very necessary on one Side, and ought to be made a general Rule, for tho' a Cock be seven, eight, nay ten Years old, which is the farthest I would ever exceed, if he has never been abus'd in any Respect, he will get very good Fowl with early Pullets of a youthful Strain; in the same Manner also Staggs will relieve old Hens; and it must be observ'd, that Youth on one Side must be stinted, according to the Age of the contrary Side, be what it will; but Fowl ought never to be made Use of sooner than two Years old on one Side, and one on the other; but the surest Way that I can propose to breed ready Money Cocks, is from two and three Years old each, they being then in the greatest Perfection; for if Fowl are not form'd of an active, clean
Shape,

Shape, they will be rather gummy at four, and require Youth to repair those droffy Particles, so that I shall endeavour to find out a Method to preserve Youth on one Side, at the Expiration of four Years, without running from the Certainty of a good Cross, which must be effected by breeding out of Father and Daughters, and Mother and Aunts, with a Son and Nephew, beginning at five Years old with the Cock, putting the last Year's Product to him; and that Daughter's Pullets may be put to him for four Years together; one of the finest old Hens must be continued with him for that Use only, chusing every Year the finest shap'd Ones, and best feather'd: By the same Method, a Staggon may also be put every Year to the old Hens, which is called a better Way of breeding; but in my Opinion, quite equal: This Method I look upon to be a great deal better than continuing the old Fowl together till seven and eight Years old each; for if the Cross was just before, they will not be let down by adding Relations together: Also Brother and Sister may be put together in the youthful Days of their Parents; and it may be necessary to observe, that Youth is more required in Brother and Sister, than in either of the other Methods of Breeding, because there is no Change of Blood, which in either of the other is one Third.

There are yet two more Ways of keeping to a good Kind, which, I think, are superior to any yet mention'd; the first of which is, By breeding from half Brother and Sister, that is twice

by the Cock, but from different Hens, provided each Sort, from a Year's Trial of each, have prov'd very good ; if so, the putting of them together in this Manner, will increase the Blood, and make them hit considerably deeper. The Second Way is by breeding from Own-Cousins, whether Brother or Sister's Issue it is not material, if they have met with equal Usage ; and I never see better throughout the whole Course of my being a Sportsman, than from this Way of Breeding.

Having run through all the different Ways that are material for breeding out of Relations, the better to keep Blood together, I shall endeavour to shew the Advantages that are to be reap'd from it : First, You have it in your Power to choose out of a Number, Things of an excellent Shape, as well as Youth and Vigour, in every Method on one Side, and in several on both. Secondly, You are upon a Certainty, with Regard to Constitution ; all which you are deprived of when strange Fowl are recommended and put into your Hands ; besides the great Advantage of raising a Number of the same Blood, from the Truth of Breeding ; for we frequently see Crosses made by Fowl, which are respectively good themselves, and have been prov'd as such by sufficient Trials, yet the Product of them will be nothing comparable to themselves.

Among the great many Instances that I could give of this Nature, I shall beg Leave to mention

tion one or two as briefly as possible ; In the last Year, save one, that Mr *Boslom* of *Lincoln* bred, he made a Cross betwixt his *Duck Wings* and favourite *Down-Rumps*, which were both excellent good ; the Cock being a true shap'd, fresh, two Year old Cock, and the Hens fresh three Years old ; Mr *Boslom* thought this to be the best Cross he ever made in his Life, yet notwithstanding these were really good of themselves, and sufficiently tried as such, by fighting a Number of Brothers of each Sort, which, to my Knowledge were exceeding good, yet they bred very indifferent Stock ; not excelling in any one Respect, but, on the Contrary, full of Sloth and Inactivity ; indeed, there was one of them very remarkable for his Game, (nor was any of them wanting in that Respect) but struck fifty fair Blows without doing any Execution, therefore had no Place in my Affection, because every stupid Clod can perform the same. But why this Cock and Hens, full of Youth and Life, and approv'd Goodness, did not breed better, is the Thing necessary to be enquired into, and must be accounted for, or else can never be amended. The only Reasons that can be given for it, therefore, are these ; The Cock was got by the old *Duck-Wing*, when eight Years old, and out of Mr *Colson's Dolly-Pullet* ; and tho' he appear'd a very healthful Cock at that Age, yet, it is impossible, but his Constitution must have been impair'd, by being cut so often out of Feather at that fatal Time of the Year, being in *September*, besides being removed to, at least,

twenty different Places, where he must meet with bad Usage at some of them; and tho' his Sons, which he got at that Age, appear'd very gay, and all of them won very handsomly, yet it is possible a Taint might ensue from the hard Usage the old *Duck-Wing* Cock met with, and lie conceal'd in the first Generation, or, at least, not discover it self so much in the first as the second.

The second Reason that is to be given for it, might be owing to their different Way and Method of fighting, one being of the Bull-Dog Kind, the other of a more active and ready Way of fighting, which is quite the reverse, and is very often the Occasion of Crosses missing, tho' there are very few, even of the Curious, that look upon it to be material; but I will venture to say, that no one can assure themselves of a Cross being just, without either consulting in what Manner they fight, and wherein they excel, that they may cross with Things proper to suit that Way of fighting, and keep up that Excellence, or else by putting Relations together after a proper Manner: I don't say, but good Fowl may, and have been bred, without consulting either of those Methods, and chiefly by relying upon Youth and Blood; but yet there is not that Certainty in it, as in the former Ways, which was the Reason of my undertaking to nominate three different Sorts that might excel, the better to furnish the Publick with Ideas of what never enter'd the Verge of their Thoughts; not that it was, in my Opinion,

nion, more owing to the last Reason than the first, that the Fowl of Mr *Boslom's* did not breed better, but add them both together, and they may appear to any Person of Judgment as an Obstacle.

I also knew a *Right Norril* of Mr *Heneage's*, one of the very best I ever saw, which fought at *Grantbam*, put to young Hens of Mr *Boslom's*, Grand Daughters of the *Old Duck-wing*, button'd in Left, which bred as indifferent Fowl as the other Instance before mention'd, both which Kinds excell'd respectively: Now, there are no Reasons to be given for this, but the Cock's being cut out of Feather, and harras'd about, for he receiv'd no Damage by fighting, and the Reason that was given before.

These, with a great many more Instances of the like Nature that I have met with lately, give me sufficient Ground to believe, that it is dangerous to pursue strange Breeds too much; and wherever a Cross does hit, to make the best Use of it, according to the Rules laid down; not but I must observe before I conclude, that it is equally as dangerous as it is advantageous, to put Relations together, if not manag'd with a great Deal of Caution; therefore, strict Examination must be made, that there be no Taint, whether in their Nature or Constitution, for it will certainly shew itself double in the Offspring; likewise the same in Shape, if there be any Deformity or Disproportion it is a sure Means to encrease it; the same also of their Irregularity in fighting, an Addition of which will render them quite

quite aukward, for, as I have observ'd before, there are a great many Sorts and Degrees of Game-Fowl, that are deficient in several material Points, and whenever such Defects are discover'd, 'tis necessary they should be repair'd before Relations be put together ; for it is but reasonable to think, that two trifling Failings become a Fault, as well as two good Qualifications help to make an Excellence.

Of Breeding and Management of them, 'till fit for Business.

I Have before describ'd the true Game-Cock in such Manner as I would chuse to breed from, therefore shall begin with the properest Months in the Year to breed in, which are *March, April, and May* : *June* sometimes produces very stiff, shapely Fowl, when the preceding Months will not admit of it ; but yet it is not proper to rely upon it in general, and none will answer in that Month but such as are bred from lengthy as well as youthful Fowl on both Sides. *March* is look'd upon by most, to be the best Month in the Year, and which I agree to if it be moderate and open Weather, but if attended with severe frosty Mornings, and cold, dry Winds, as it has in a particular Manner distinguish'd itself for four or five Years last past, it stops Chickens of their Growth.

The only Thing I have to speak in Favour of *March*, is the Advantage of having the first Fruits of the Hen's Production, which is very
great

great, Nature being at that Time twice as strong as at the latter End of the Summer, and was I oblig'd to breed Fowl in *June* and *July*, as some do, I would let my Hens sit in *March*, and bring up their Young, after which, when they come to be fresh and lustful again, would breed out of them ; for I am of Opinion, that if a Hen begins to lay at *Candlemas* and continues till *Mayday*, tho' she is ever so fresh and young, it is as long as she can possibly produce out worth setting ; and I have observ'd, that every Lowter have been considerably less than other, when a Hen is strongly inclin'd to sit ; but the best Month in the Year is *April*, for in this Month the Weather is more temperate, and Chickens may be permitted to go out four or five Hours in a Day, for it is not to be suppos'd what Difference there is betwixt Chickens that are confin'd too much in the House in cold Weather, as from the latter End of *February* until the Middle of *March*, and those which are bred in *April* ; and was I a person qualify'd to breed a Number, I would have them all come as near the Month of *April* as possible. *May* is not amiss, but does not in general, produce so long Fowl as the former Months do, yet it is soon enough for Chickens to come that are bred from lengthy as well as youthful Fowl, so that there is no Necessity for any one to confine themselves to one Month, but should breed sooner or later as the Fowl require : It is no Matter how soon Eggs are gather'd from old Hens, because they don't lay either so soon or

so many as young ones do, nor do the Fowl run so much into a preposterous Length as the Product of young ones.

The next Thing I shall treat of with Regard to Breeding, is Places proper for it ; a great many are of Opinion, that any Place will do, provided it be an odd One, which Notion will admit of some Contradiction, because there are divers Places, such as Hovels, Windmills, &c. which lie too much expos'd to cold Weather at the Spring of the Year: There is here and there a Cottage-House which may serve for that End, for generally speaking, there is a little Garden which affords a great deal of Pleasure and Warmth ; but the best and most natural Places to breed early Birds at, are private Farm-Yards, which afford both Plenty and Variety of Meat all the Spring ; such a Place as this is far preferable to any other that can be found out, where Fowl must be Hand-fed, for if due Care be not taken both as to Quantity and Quality of Meat, they will decline very much in one Year's Time ; besides the Want of Exercise that a Farm-Yard affords, for high Keeping, with a moderate Quantity of Hens, requires Exercise in them as well as Horses and other Creatures ; but here is the Misfortune, there is not one Breeder in an hundred that will be at the Expence of a Farm-Yard ; for suppose it to be a Tenant's, it can't be expected to be taken up the whole Year round, without a reasonable Consideration: In this Farm-Yard I would breed, sometimes out of four, five, or six Sisters, just as the Cock requir'd
for

or Age ; with Staggs I would not exceed the Number of three, because they are so full of Mettle, that by constant Treading, if they have too many, Nature becomes weak, and so consequently will produce weakly Fowl ; two, three, and four Year old Cocks may dispense with five or six, and at at five, six, seven, and eight Year old, would lessen their Number as they advanced in Years: There are some Breeders even of the celebrated Race, which put ten Hens to a Cock without any Exception to Years or ought else, and the Reason they give, why they do it, is, because one Strain from the Cock is sufficient for the whole Lowter ; which Notion is quite wrong, and it is so far evident to the contrary, that tho' a Hen has been with a Cock a Week or ten Days, which, was it possible to be done, is long enough, upon taking him away, that it is not sufficient to strain above eight or nine Eggs, which is far short of the whole Lowter ; nay, there is a great deal of Room to object against the Truth of this, because there has been innumerable Proofs, that upon taking up a Cock from a Hen and putting down another, after flinging away three or four Eggs at the most, the Remaining Part shall all be got by the second Cock : This I say, seemingly contradicts the other, yet it is possible they may both be true, because the Seed of the second Cock may destroy that of the first, and render it of none Effect. But when all these Doubts are answered, what do they avail to the Truth of Breeding ; for suppose there be a Necessity of

putting a second Cock down to Hens, it is proper they should be all clear before an Egg be saved from him, tho' there be half a Dozen with him, or else how must a Person come to the Truth of his Breed; for Supposition will never do in breeding Cocks.

There is another great Dispute among Breeders concerning Rucking Eggs, whether they will be as good as the prior Part of the Lowter or not? To which I answer, that there will be no Difference as to Goodness or Way of fighting, but will be smaller and weaker than the Generality of the rest; for when a Hen rucks, she is depriv'd of all her Lust, and does not receive the Cock with that Warmth and Vigour, at such Times as should strain those Eggs, as at other Times, nor are they nigh so well filled. As for flinging away the first, it is for Fashion's Sake more than any Reason a Breeder can give; and among the many idle Notions that is one: But the best Way to avoid all Disputes concerning Rucking Eggs, is to omit setting of them, which is not to be done effectually without taking up every Hen as soon as they ruck, into some adjacent Place, and keep them up in a Pen without Straw, 'till they have laid out all their Rucking Eggs; and at the same Time it is necessary to give them a little warm Meat once or twice during the Time, for it will help to encrease their Lust and make them cleave to the Cock a great deal sooner; by this Means you have not only the full Strength of every respective Hen, but may get a great many more than by suffering them

them to sit two or three Days before they are turned off their Nests. There remains another Thing in the Practice of setting Eggs, which I look upon to be very trifling, and that is the shiring or picking out those which are addle; if a Cletch are a Fortnight of gathering, and kept the same Quantity of Time before they are set, in cold Weather, as is very common, there will then be as many addle as otherways, and it may not be amiss upon such Suspicion to examine them; but if Eggs are gathered as they ought to be, tho' it be a Fortnight from one Hen, and kept in a Place where there is a moderate Warmth, and set immediately after the Number of eleven are gathered, which Number I would not exceed early in the Year, what Necessity can there be for endeavouring to find out such as are addle; but I have no Notion of having many such, for I can safely take it upon Oath, in the Year 1741, I set upwards of an hundred from four odd Hens, and had only four faulty in the whole Number; and the greatest Failing that I find among Breeders with regard to setting Eggs, is the Neglect of providing sitting Hens in due Time, for it is proper they should be procured three or four Days before there is Occasion for them, during which Time they will have Laid out all their Rucking Eggs, and be sure to sit steady; but least they should not, or an Egg be added to the Number, which should be all mark'd, 'tis proper to examine every Nest two or three Days after they are set: There is a great deal also in forming a Nest after

a proper Manner, and mind that it is not too deep, for if so, there is no Relief for some Part of them, but must be crowded one upon another, so that some will receive a great deal more Warmth than others, because the Hen cannot turn them as Nature directs, the Want of which commonly produces small Cletches.

The next Thing necessary to be observ'd is the bringing up of Chickens, which, if stopt in their Growth by bad Management, cannot arrive to Perfection; therefore, as soon as Chickens are all hatch'd, it is proper they should be taken into a Room which is pretty warm and dry, as a boarded Floor with Straw at each Corner, for the Hen to brood them on, or else into a little Straw House, where nought can get to them that is hurtful; for tho' the Hen can give Warmth to all Parts of the Body while they continue small, yet their tender Feet are apt to be cold.

I need not be very particular as to the Dieting Part, most People being acquainted with it; therefore, shall only observe, that their Meat ought not to be either too large or too dry, while they are young: Milk is an excellent Thing for them the first Fortnight, and Cheese Cùrd; and when they are large enough to eat whole Oat-Meal, they should have Plenty of Milk and Water with it, as being very dry Food; and whether their Food afterward be Wheat or Barley, they ought to have Plenty of Water; for I have known Fowl receive a Taint in their Youth for want of it, in a dry Season.

The

The next Thing that follows is, the putting out Staggs to Walks, there being divers Ways of doing it ; but the most prejudicial Way of all is, the putting of them out to Master Walks too soon, as a great many do at three and four Months old, without considering the ill Consequences of it ; for tho' they are bred ever so early, it must be at a Time of the Year when Corn is, generally speaking, thrash'd out ; therefore, their Dependance is chiefly upon being fed once a Day with Hinder-ends, which they get a very small Share of among a Number of Hens ; besides, the Detriment they must receive, thro' a Necessity of performing Family-Duty, which they are not capable of at that Age, but ought rather to reserve that Strength, which they are needlessly deprived of, till they have an Opportunity of shewing their Valour another Way ; and it is as much owing to this, as any one Thing that I can mention, that we have so many flat sided, slender bon'd, loose feather'd Cocks ; and, I think, of the two bad Ways, it is a great deal worse than letting Staggs run under, tho' it be a whole Year.

A better Way than either of these is, to keep them together, by Hand-feeding, till Harvest is all got in, for then early Staggs are able to encounter with a few Hens ; besides, at that Time of the Year, Hens are either sitting or molting ; and those which are not, are not so craving, as from the Spring of the Year till *July* : But then again, there is one Misfortune attends this Way, as those Staggs won't go
under

under, there must either be a Supply of fresh Walks every Year, or else a lesser Number bred one Year, to make Room for a greater the next; therefore, this is not the perfect Way, tho' it differs only in this, instead of putting them out at *Michaelmas*, I would continue them together in a Farm-Yard all Winter, and until the old Cocks were fought off, to the End, that they might succeed them: But I must observe, that there ought not to be a Female of any Age with them, least it occasion a Civil War amongst them; nor must their Comb and Gills be cut during the Time of their Cohabitation together, but rather when they are about three Months old, or else, not till they go out to Walks: But I think the former much the best Way, because the most of them being nigh a Year old, before they can take Master-Walks by this Method, their Combs will be apt to be too full grown, and therefore will loose too great a Quantity of Blood.

I shall conclude the whole by shewing a Necessity for keeping proper and regular Books, with the Manner of doing it: A great many Breeders content themselves with keeping a small and imperfect Account of the Genealogy of their Fowl, and think Books are only useful for Memorandums of what Fowl are bred, and where they are walked; but I must beg Leave to give them to understand, that it is very material, to insert in a particular Manner, what such and such Cocks and Hens are descended from, which are put together every Year, or
else

else, how can they form any Judgment how to make proper Crosses in their own Family? This Neglect I look upon to be very much the Occasion of a great many good Breeds being lost, for want of knowing how far they were related, or whether they were related at all or not.

A Man that would be a curious Breeder of Cocks, ought to be a good Genealogist, and carry all in his Head that is material to be inserted in the Book, with regard to Pedigree; and I am of Opinion, that there ought to be two Books, one for Memorandums, during the Time of Breeding, the other to give a satisfactory Account of the Parentage of Fowl, and where they are walked: In the former Book, you are to take an Account, First, Of what Places you breed at, what Fowl you have at each Place, and how they are marked: Secondly, You are to take an Account of the Quantity of Eggs set in every Cutch, from each Place, and where they are set: Thirdly, When Chickens come off you are to cross out the Eggs, and set down so many Chickens come off at such a Time, mentioning the Place where they are to be brought up; and when any dies, or happen any Misfortune, you must reduce the Number accordingly: Lastly, When they arrive at that Age, so as to distinguish handsome Pullets from others, which will be about the Time when Cockrels ought to have their Combs either cut or pulled, the whole Number then should be collected together, killing of those Pullets that are useless, the rest must be taken an Account of as well as
the

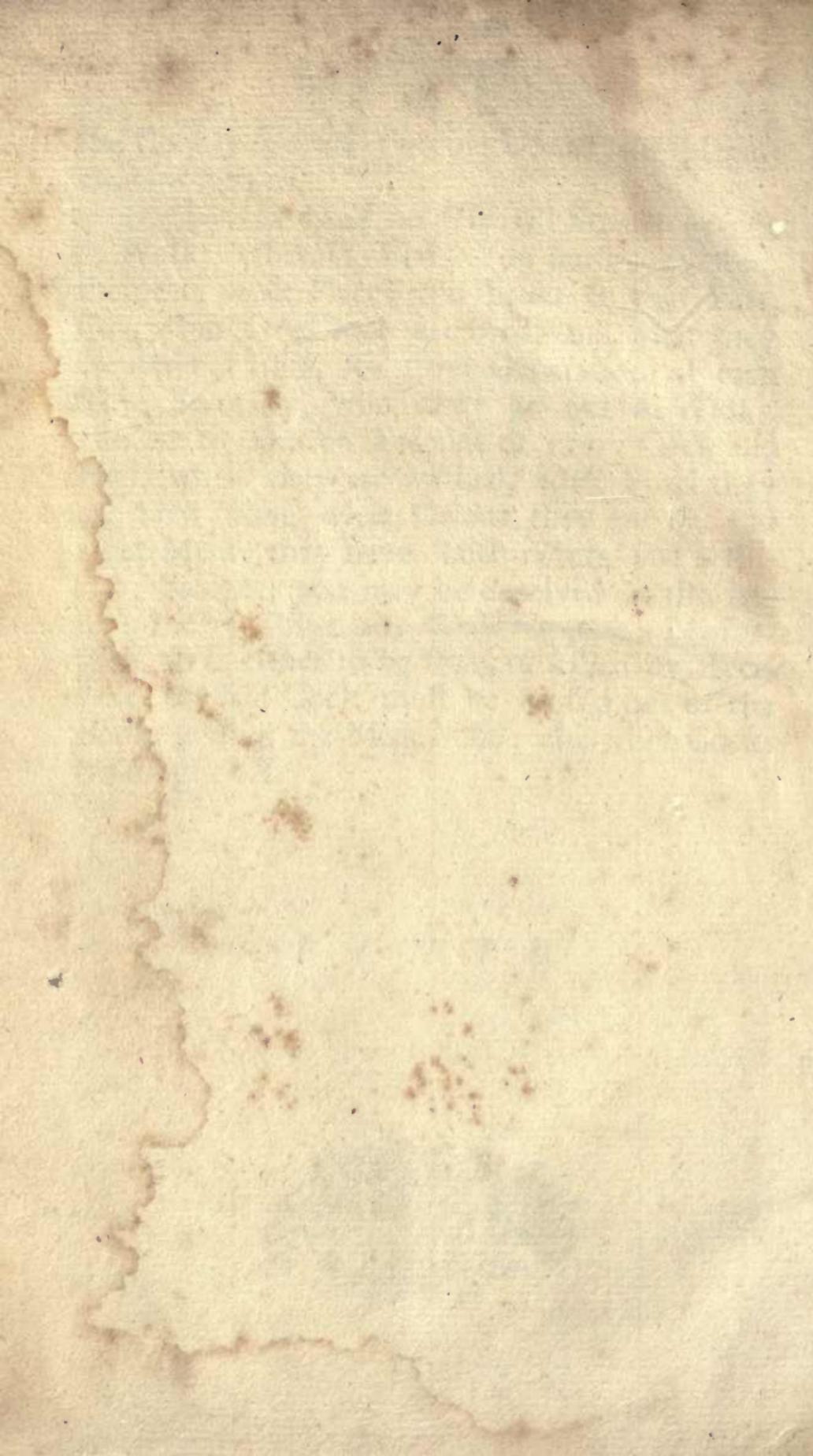
the Cocks: This is the sole Use of the Memorandum Book.

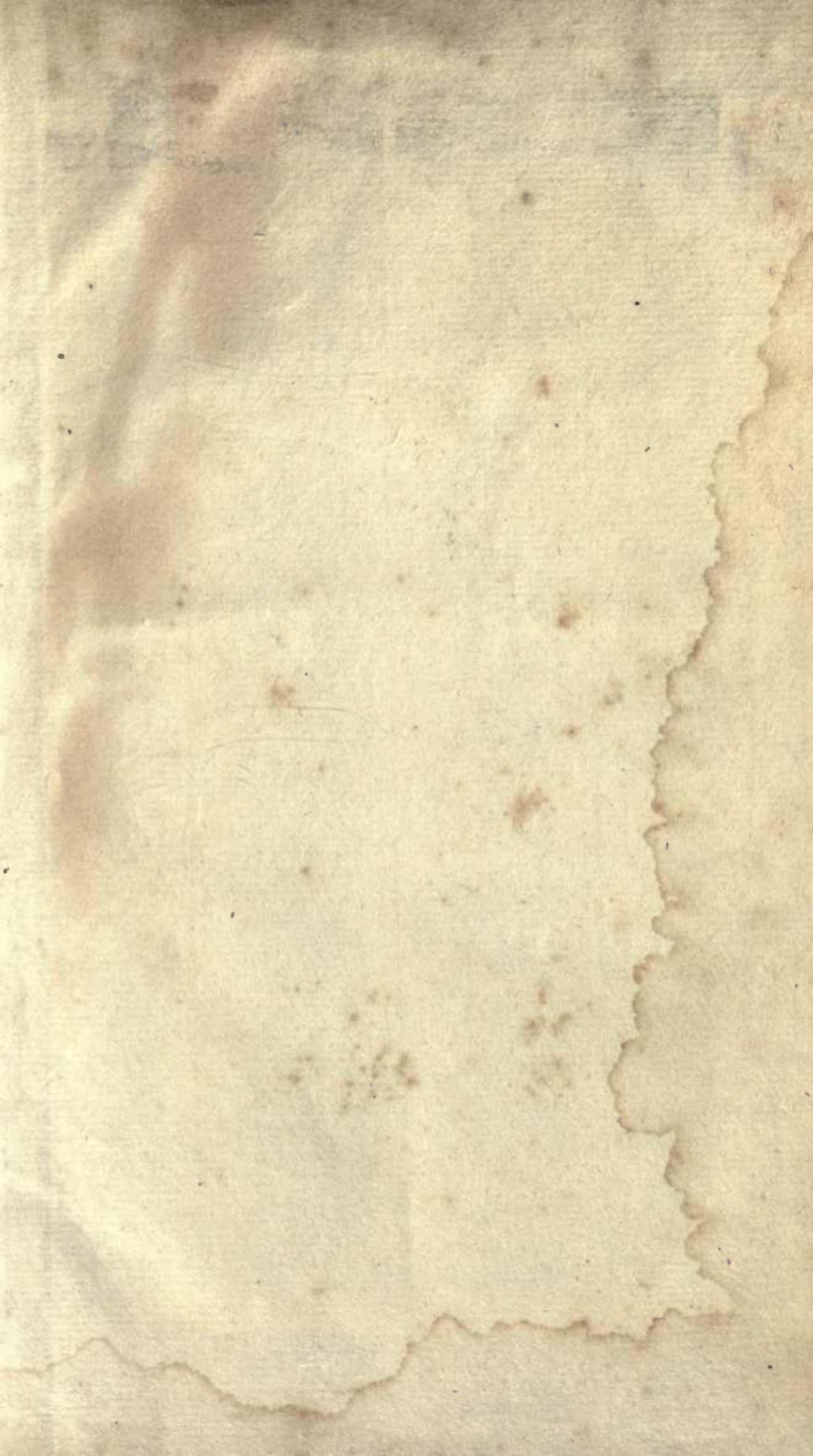
The Second is of no Use till Staggs go out to Walks, wherein, First, You must copy from the other what Places you breed at that Year, from what Fowl they are bred, and what they are derived from, for three Generations of each Side; Secondly, when they go out to Walks, you are to take an Account of every Cock and Hen, where they are walked, what Fowl they are bred from, what Colour they are of, and what Marks they have, both natural and artificial; because, you may be deceived in the latter; Lastly, When any Cock happens a Misfortune, so as either to be stole, or killed by Accident, the said Cock must be cross'd out of the Book, adding the Misfortune; also when Cocks are fought off.

F I N I S.









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