

healthy cock, for none but perfectly healthy and vigorous birds should be allowed to feed nestlings. then watch for the laying of any hen that is weakly or that has proved an indifferent mother, and transfer one of her eggs to the barren bird. Some pairs will bring up one squaker well but always fail to rear two. One of their eggs should always be transferred. As a rule eggs can only be interchanged between pairs which have begun to sit at nearly the same time. The pigeon ordinarily incubates about seventeen days; will desert its eggs if they do not hatch by the twentieth to twenty-second day, and should eggs under her hatch before about the twelfth day will not yet have Nature's provision of soft milk like food in the crop for the newly born nestlings. These barren birds are, however, much more accommodating; they will sit longer, and will provide for young birds which appear long before the natural time. I have often given eggs to one within a week of hatching; and quite lately in the case of a hen (an excellent layer and mother last year, which has thus far done nothing but build nests this season) I gave her straight off a squab two days old. I put an egg into the nest at the same time to tempt her towards the young bird. For some minutes she looked with suspicion at the little intruder, then her maternal instinct seemed to get the better, and she crept on the egg and the little pigeon. After some hours she seemed not to have fed it, but her warmth kept it alive. I removed the egg, and by the morning the young bird was well fed, and has been so ever since by both parents. Thus an apparently useless bird, which one had not closely watched the habits of the domestic pigeon would not unnaturally be inclined to kill, may be made of the utmost use, and the unproductive may really bring up more young ones to maturity than the productive hen. A fancier who does not know how to utilise such would-be but disappointed mothers has still something to learn in pigeon lore.—CRESWELL, in *Journal of Horticulture*.

To Liberators of Homing Pigeons.

The *Homing Pigeon* for July gives the following instructions to liberators of Homing Pigeons:—

Do not handle the birds, nor take them from the basket or box in which they are consigned to you, unless you are specially instructed to do so.

Follow carefully to the letter all instructions sent with the birds, feeding and watering as directed, and starting the birds at the time and under the conditions named.

If instructions accompany the birds, we would suggest as follows:

1.—Count the birds in the box or basket, and before receipting for them from the carrier see that the number corresponds with the number on the

tag, or that you were advised would be sent.

1.—The only time it is allowable to handle the birds is when they have been carried a great distance in close quarters and their feet have become clogged and soiled. The feet may be washed in cold water, or the bottom of box or hamper may be covered with clean, dry sand.

3.—To loose the birds, select an open place free from telegraph wires, trees or like obstructions. Face the basket towards home, make the lid free to open, then standing behind, raise it towards you. Have the space before the basket clear, so the birds may rise without hindrance.

4.—For short distances, the birds will not need food before starting; but if they remain with you even half an hour, give them drinking water. If received in the afternoon to be loosed the next morning, give them all they will eat and drink at night, allowing them but little food, though plenty of water, in the morning, if their distance is not over 100 miles. If the distance is greater, give them a hearty meal, and allow the drinking water to remain with them to the last moment. Corn, peas, wheat or buckwheat may be fed.

5.—Never loose a bird before sunrise; and for great distances, allow them time after sunrise to eat and rest a little before being started.

6.—When the birds are loosed, make a note of the direction taken, and of their action generally. Note also the exact time of loosing, the direction of the wind, and state of the atmosphere.

7.—If you are requested to countermark the birds, observe the following: Hold the bird in the right hand, the feet between the first and second fingers, the thumb over one wing and the back. Open the flights of the right wing, rest them flat upon a table or similar surface, and upon one of the largest stamp plainly, making all marks as nearly together as possible, and only once on one feather.

8.—Have a witness to the start if possible, and call attention to the number of birds as seen in the air.

A gentleman of Cadiz, Spain, contemplates building a loft to accommodate 8000 pigeons. The birds to be trained for military purposes.

Homing Antwerp Stations.

Guelph, Ont.,—John Campbell, Box 700.

Hamilton, Ont.,—Thos. Gain.

Lefroy, Ont.,—Stanley Spillett.

Mount Brydges, Ont.,—Thos. Pearce.

St. Marys, Ont.,—R. A. Brown, address Cherry Grove, Ont.

Simcoe, Ont.,—J. H. Madigin.

Strathroy, Ont.,—Jas. Fullerton.

Toronto or Yorkville,—Chas. Bonnick.

Woodstock, Ont.,—Burgess and Douglas.