

I think, been not inaptly termed the Game fowl of the pigeon fancy.

I do not propose to weary you with an exhaustive explanation of the origin of the Dragon, nor the derivation of its name, preferring to confine my remarks to the practical rather than the theoretical side of the subject. I propose, therefore, to simply divide this paper under two headings. First, a general description of the ideal Dragon second, my views relating to the breeding and management of this variety, along with a few general remarks on exhibiting.

First, as doubtless some of you remember, twelve or fourteen years ago much difference of opinion existed, not only in the minds of fanciers and breeders, but also between even the judges themselves, as to the correct type of bird. Hence the necessity arose of a standard for the guidance of breeders. One was carefully compiled by the National Peristeronic Society, and I believe generally accepted by the great body of fanciers. As this may not be in the possession of all members of this society, I need make no apology for placing before you my own ideas, which I will endeavor to do as plainly as possible, which I hope will be found to agree with the opinions of the leading fanciers and breeders of this variety.

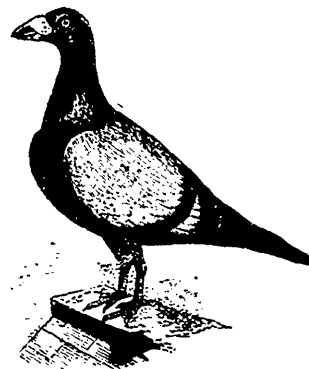
Taking the various properties of the bird in the order of their importance, I commence with the head. The skull, viewed from front to back, should be wedgeshaped; that is, broader at the back than front, nicely tapering off to the neck, free from angles and flatness.

The beak is an important property, and should be stout. Though I am an advocate of stoutness, too much stress should not be laid on this point. What is required is a beak proportionate to the other properties of the bird, so as to nicely harmonise with the whole and thus complete the *beau ideal*. If measured from the centre of the eye to the tip of the beak, the length should

not exceed 1 5-8 in., as a rule, the upper mandible is somewhat stouter than the lower; both should be strong, straight, and close-fitting. The beak in blues, blue chequers, and grizzles should be as dark in colour as possible. In silvers I prefer it of a brown or horn colour in preference to a white or flesh-colour, as harmonising more with the hardness of wattle and plumage. In yellows, reds, and whites, I would insist upon the beak being flesh-coloured. I am not ignorant of the difficulty ex-

towards the tip of the beak. There should be little or no wattle on the lower mandible.

The eye should be bold and prominent. I fear the colour of the iris has not received from all fanciers the attention it deserves. In blues, blue chequers and grizzles the nearer it approaches a deep rich blood-red colour the better. In silvers, yellows, and reds a lighter shade is allowable. In whites the eye should be bull or black. Let me caution you to avoid pearl or



BLUE DRAGON.

perienced in producing reds with perfectly clean beaks. Whilst a little latitude may be allowed for this colour, I hope the desideratum will not be lost sight of by breeders.

Beak wattle to my mind is an equally important property. Nothing sets off a bird so much as a good-shaped wattle, and perhaps no other property is more difficult to produce. Let me ask you to pay particular attention to the shape and quality of the wattle, which should be peg-shaped, *i. e.*, higher at the back and nicely tapering from all directions

brown eyes. These are the most hereditary defects, and fatal to success in the show pen.

The eye-cere should be small in size slightly pinched at the back, and firm in texture, forming a complete network of lacing. This is a valuable property, though difficult to obtain, but when a breeder does produce a bird with a finely-laced eyecere, he has stepped on the right road to success, and has something he may feel proud of. The colour of eye-cere in blues, blue chequers, and grizzles should be as