

get lost before some can accomplish this long voyage. It was not that the birds were of an indifferent or common breed; they were all of the best and purest breed from the city of Antwerp, in Belgium, and bred from long-distance stock; and that 11 out of the 20 accomplished successfully the voyage from Pittsburg, 315 miles, airline, and with bad weather and contrary winds, proves sufficiently their good qualities. But here, as in Belgium, a great many birds are lost by flying long distances. Take, for instance, the fly from Rome last year: there were over 1,000 birds sent, and of this great number only about 40 found their way home; the first one only coming home in about eight days. Rome is 750 miles from Antwerp, and 728 from Brussels. This year in the race from Madrid, which is about 800 miles, only 14 or 15 birds have returned yet of nearly 500 liberated, after being tossed nearly six weeks.

MR. JAMES GRIST'S CLAIM.

Your paper of last month speaks of the performances of three of Mr. Grist's birds, which he says flew from Dayton, Ohio, 500 miles.

Now, Mr. Editor, I will give you my opinion of the flight of Mr. Grist's birds. Without in the least wishing to contradict Mr. Grist's statement, or to insinuate that his birds did not perform the task, I will say that the secret way he has followed to train his birds to such a distance, and the mysterious ways he employed, must leave doubt that his birds ever flew the distance of 500 miles.

It is true that Mr. Grist wrote about March or April to Mr. Waefelaer to inquire if the city of Dayton, Ohio, which is about as far from Philadelphia as Columbus is from New York, was a proper place to fly from, but later we did not hear a word more from Mr. Grist until he informed us by telegram that two of his three birds which he had sent to Dayton had arrived at their coop at 5, p. m., the day after they had been let loose, and the third coming on the third day.

Mr. Waefelaer and I were of the commission to regulate this race. I proposed to Mr. Waefelaer to go to Philadelphia to inspect the birds, saying that if they had really flown 500 miles, after having been on the wing for nearly two full days, that I would easily see it by their behaviour, as birds after flying such a distance are always very tired, and "the pluck is out of them," as we call it in colombophilic parlance. When we came to Mr. Grist's place we saw the birds, and found them to be as lively as fighting cocks before the battle, driving their hens in grand style; and we were informed, further, that the birds had arrived in the same condition the day before. This seemed to us strange, as we had seen hun-

dreds of races from such distances, and we knew by experience that the birds in Belgium are quite tired out for at least two or three days.

Then when birds are sent to a race it is only natural that before their departure they should be properly stamped and numbered in the society, and the stamps and numbers left with a respectable and trustworthy man, so that these stamps and numbers can be controlled, and see if they correspond after the birds arrive. Besides, Mr. Grist choose his own men at Dayton to counter-mark the birds, which he ought to have left to Mr. Waefelaer and to me; and also sent his own ink and numbers to counter mark them with. This, too, leaves ground for doubts as to fair play. Mr. Grist's birds were counter marked with numbers on their tails. Would it not be an easy matter for Mr. Grist to send these birds to Dayton counter-mark them with, say 3, 5, and 8, and that one of his friends telegraph these numbers to Philadelphia, and that Mr. G. put these three numbers on three other birds, and represent the latter as having flown from Dayton. This game has been played in Belgium, but is too well known to be successful nowadays. I want to be well understood that I don't charge this fraud to Mr. Grist, that I say only that it could and has been done before successfully, and that Mr. Grist ought to have employed all the means in his power to leave no ground for suspicion if his birds should arrive successfully from the 500 miles flight.

Besides, Mr. Grist had been advised by Mr. Wade, before his birds were liberated, that if he flew them without corresponding with us, or without competition, he would not be entitled to the prize.

Now let us see what we New York fanciers have done. We have published in the *Review* and the *Fanciers' Journal* that we were training our birds for the 500 miles race, and have invited the Philadelphia fanciers, and Mr. Grist in particular, to train for this long distance race; we have each month given our monthly trainings in these papers, in fact we have made all our acts in the case as plain as possible. I have written personally to Mr. Thomas Grist, who was also of the commission of three, requesting him to try to influence his brother James to fly his birds again from Dayton, with ours, telling him that if his birds had flown so well, and had come home in such fine condition, and having been over the ground already, the chances were greatly in favor of his gaining an easy victory. But, sir, not a word came from Mr. Grist—my kind inviting letter remained unanswered.

There is another point, which is difficult of explanation except Mr. Grist's stock be exception-