

his business. But will this not be taking advantage of a system of cheap advertising? No, I think not; you already have your paid advertisement, and cannot be reasonably accused of such. For the same reason beginners, who have not a paid for advertisement in some poultry paper, should not and do not sigh their names, but use a *non de plume*. But, fanciers of the first class, let us know you—we want your stock.

Yours fraternally,

GALLINÆ.

Lefroy, May 31st, 1879.

Fancy Prices for Fancy Stock.

A hundred dollars for a hen! What a fool a man must be to pay such a lot of money for one bird! This is just what a non-fancier, and one disinterested, would naturally say on hearing of any man paying as much for one bird as the contents of a dozen barnyards could be purchased for; and to those who care nothing for a chicken only as so much butcher's meat on the table or for the eggs he wants for his breakfast, it is only a very natural remark, and it would be strange indeed if he expressed any other opinion.

When a fancier hears of a large price being paid for a bird, it does not strike him in the same way at all; he sees nothing in it to laugh at or make light of. His first expression likely is, how I would like to own that bird, or how I would like to see that bird; and should he be fortunate enough to see it, supposing he is a really good judge, he will look at it with that inquisitive eye of criticism that a non-fancier knows nothing about. If the bird is up to his standard he is much more apt to think the seller was the fool and not the purchaser; he fully realizes, perhaps from sad experience, the labor, the difficulties, the uncertainties, and the misfortunes one has to wade through before he can produce a bird like that; he knows that twice the money paid as salary or wages would not begin to recompense him for it. Still, of all who see the bird and hear of the price paid, Fool! is the verdict of ninety-nine hundredths.

Those who have never engaged in the breeding of fancy stock, or of fine bred animals of any kind, cannot understand that a pigeon or chicken which can be bought at 12½ cts by the single bird or by the thousand, can, by constant care and attention, be so bred up to a recognized standard as that one single bird will sell readily for as much as would purchase a thousand common specimens; still such is the case, and when the matter is looked at in its proper light there is not the absurdity about it that appears to be to the casual observer. It is not simply the placing of a setting of eggs under a hen, and raising a brood of chickens, with the same

carelessness as they are hatched and raised in the barnyard, that will produce such specimens as the fancier requires; it is a far different matter from that. A standard of excellence is set up, may be the arriving at even that has been a matter of study for many fanciers for years; the mating, the crossing, the breeding, and rearing such specimens as will come up to that standard is not the labor of a day for one man, it may be the labor, the energy and perseverance of many for years. This is something which cannot be paid for in money; it is a study and a labor which cannot be bought or hired. Many are working to attain the same standard; one out of perhaps thousands arrive at it. He has, by industry and good judgement, produced an animal which, according to the standard, is perfect, or nearly so; what is the consequence? every fancier who sees it envies and wants that bird, and almost every one of them are willing to pay for it according to the length of their purse. All are ambitious to own the best, knowing well that as like produce like, their chances for producing first-class stock from first class-specimens is as twenty to one in their favor, than in breeding from ordinary specimens, even of the same strain.

While I quite believe it possible for even the very best specimens to sell for more than they are worth, I quite as firmly believe that the purchaser is, in three cases out of four, more money in pocket than the seller. Many fanciers will not put a price at all on such specimens, knowing well that money, even in very large sums, can only occasionally replace them; indeed few true fanciers will put a price on a perfect bird. Four hundred dollars was offered and refused for the pigeon that won first prize in the last great race from Rome to Brussels. It seems almost incredible that the owner of that bird would refuse such an offer, but he did so. There are several ways of looking at this: he might have been a man that the amount was no object to, and he would rather be able to say that he owned the best proved flyer in the world, than he would that he could say he was worth that much more gold; another way of viewing it, is, though a needy man, and would not and could not pay \$400 for the bird if another owned it, still, as he owned it himself, he would rather keep it than exchange it for the money. There can be no doubt as to the value of such a bird as this to a flying fancier for breeding purposes; and say the owner mated it with another bird that flew from Rome, supposing even it was one of the latest to arrive, there is not a man buying a Homing Antwerp but would willingly pay four times as much for the young of a pair of birds that flew from Rome to Brussels—the longest race on record—than he would for those bred from shorter distance flyers; and, notwithstanding the high price refused