

I think, notwithstanding such poor results in the early spring, I should always advise mating pouters about the first of February, to secure good results during the breeding season in Virginia. The early hatched birds are usually the healthiest, and, moreover, they seem to resist better the danger which all young pouters incur during the first winter of their lives. Most fanciers find the age of three or four months the most critical period of a pouter's life. I have found my young pouters very subject to some form of severe cold, and consequent debilitation, during their first winter. Young hens are particularly liable to such attacks, but they frequently recover entirely, and make the finest breeders. My experience fully corroborates the statements of old fanciers, that old hens breed much better birds than young hens. At least I prefer to have a hen *more than one year old*, if I wish to mate her for the production of the finest progeny. The progeny of hens or cocks produced the first year of their lives will not probably be very strong, although they may be fine in points.

My feeders, flying outside, have been much annoyed by hawks, which are bolder and more numerous than they have been for years. A few days since I destroyed a hawk's nest, by having the tree which contained it cut down, and by the fall the pair of eggs in the nest were broken, and two immense embryo hawks were killed, apparently only a few hours previous to hatching. Their skulls were prodigious, and their beaks and talons had already assumed a positively murderous appearance. It was pleasant to feel assured that my pets' enemies were diminished by two.

P. S. HUNTER.

Loyds, Virginia, May 8, 1884.

The Lop-eared Rabbits.

The excellent illustration on first page in this month's REVIEW portrays correctly this most ancient variety of fancy rabbits.

Formerly length of ear was all that was aimed at, but now there are many other properties which combine to make a perfect specimen. They were judged by mere measurement of ear alone, but the following standard shows how the value of this property has decreased of late years:—Length of ear, 20; width of ear, 20; carriage of ear, 5; color, 10; make and shape, 10; eye, 10; condition, 10; weight, 10; total, 100 points. As shown by this the ear carries half the points, the remaining half being divided amongst the other properties.

It will be seen by referring to the illustration that the ears are very long, in fact, resting or dragging on the ground. Eighteen inches was thought a good length, but now nineteen is only fair, under twenty-two good, over twenty-two very good. There is on record a measurement of twenty-four inches, but this is very extraordinary.

To get this enormous length artificial heat is employed. Breeders differ much in the exact degree to be used; some say 60°, others 70°, and 80°, and some claim that even 90° or 100° is beneficial. At any rate the heat should be kept at an even temperature, and we should think 60° or 65° would answer all purposes. Anything above this must ultimately assist in undermining the constitution.

There is another way of gaining length of ear,

but we cannot recommend or even countenance it; that is by pulling the ears. The plan is to place the poor animal you operate upon on the knee, warm the ears well, and then tug at them, keeping the pressure up for several seconds at a time. Knotted ears arise from this cause, and if exhibited, should at once be disqualified.

The ears should fall straight down on each side of the head. The hollow part turned towards the cheek, should be thick and strong at the roots, wide in the middle and tapering towards the end; width at the centre not under five inches, and up to 5½, 5¾ or even 6 inches and over, this is called the *full lop*. Sometimes the ears hang down but () not lop properly; this is called the *oar-lop*. Again, they may have what is called the *horn-lop*, an ugly shape, standing out almost straight from the head, sometimes only one ear lops, the other slightly inclining to the same side. This is the *half lop*. These may sometimes be rectified by gently working the ears down, pressing them softly, but not causing any pain. They will often turn out good breeders if from a well established strain.

Next property is carriage. It will be seen that the back rises slightly, being at its highest part as high as the top of the head. The shoulders should slightly fall. Under the chin is the *dew-lap*. It consists of a skin filled with fat and flesh, and is not developed till the animal is full grown.

(To be continued.)

Editor Review.

I am daily in receipt of applications, by *postal card*, from pigeon fanciers, to send them a price-list of birds I have for sale, almost always stating they "want to get some *good ones*." Now, if there is any breeder or fancier that I have ever asked for any information, or a price-list, and have not inclosed a stamp for a reply, I want to know it, and I think it is only reasonable to ask the same from others. My outlay for stamps the last year or two has been very considerable. As a rule, after replying nothing more is heard from the applicants. I suppose they consider the prices too high for the *good* birds they want, not thinking what it costs me to procure good stock in the first place, and the trouble and thought to properly mate, breed, and select before I have this *good* stock to dispose of in my turn. In future I shall take no notice of post-card applications, nor will I reply to communications asking for information unless a three-cent stamp is inclosed. I would be pleased to know that all breeders and fanciers had adopted the same rule, which I am sure would put a stop to a great deal of unnecessary trouble and expense.

I have also many callers to see my stock, and they too "want some *good* birds." After much valuable time is spent with them, they will in many cases pick out my exhibition birds, and then offer me *scrub* bird prices for them.

I have no doubt the experience of the majority of fanciers is similar to mine in this respect, and I would suggest that united action be taken in the endeavor to put an end to what cannot but be felt as an unnecessary tax on the fancy.

J. B. JONES.

Toronto, May 1, 1884.