

first description of the breed that I am acquainted with was published in the *Fiehl* of March 16, 1867, and was partly written by myself and partly by Mr. Jones Percival. Other accounts have since been published.

PROPERTIES.—I now pass to the consideration of the characters or properties of this breed. Unfortunately, we have no standard to fall back upon, but there was an old-fashioned Dragon whose properties were well-known, even if they had not been recorded. I need hardly say in recent times we have seen a very different breed called the Dragon; I will, therefore, go over the points in detail, taking the general form first, and color afterwards.

FORM.—All persons are agreed that in form the Dragon should be compact and muscular, with powerful chest muscles for flight, and a perfectly straight breastbone. The plumage should be firm and close, being so tight to the skin that the shoulders stand well out from the body. The skull should not, in my opinion, be narrow and flat, like that of a Carrier, but be moderately broad and capacious, so that the bird may possess a fair-sized brain, on which the intelligence depends. The beak, measured in the usual manner, from the corner of the eye, should not exceed $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length, even in cocks; in form it should be slightly curved at the tip, being neither the box beak of the Carrier nor the skewer of the Birmingham Diagram. We now come to that most disputed point—the eye wattle. A hard-and-fast line can hardly be laid down as to size, as that increases with age; but is it to be circular or pinched behind? If it can be bred circular without departing from the true Dragon standard, I do not see why it should not; and I must say I admire it. In Blues, Grizzles and Silvers, the colour of the eye wattles is again a matter of dispute. Should it be white, or dark? I have good birds of both varieties. The beak wattle I prefer to be neat; and, not having the fear of "Carrier," of the *Fiehl*, before my eyes, I must say I do not admire a decidedly peg or flat wattled bird. Why should we not, by careful selection of brood stock, give a little more elegance of form to old chuckle-head, still retaining his old characteristics? I am by no means arguing for such a bird as that figured in the *Gardener*—with pointed flight feathers such as never existed in a

pigeon, and a beak like a sharp-pointed skewer, but simply the old-fashioned Dragon, somewhat improved by careful breeding.

Among the important errors in the Birmingham description are not only those mentioned, but some others. We are told that the bird should be nervous, tremulous, and timid. Fancy a tremulous Dragon, with a long neck and narrow skull and long legs! As I said before, such a bird is a poor carrier. The Birmingham fanciers have done good service in founding a handsome breed of show Antwerps, often called Birmingham Antwerps. They are also great in Rollers, Rosewings, Saddlebacks, Black and Blue Badges, &c. But this thing they try to palm off on the London Dragon fanciers is a miserable wretch, if it is at all like its portrait and description; and I propose that it is not even worthy of the name of the Birmingham bird, but that it should be in future known as the "Birmingham Dragon."

COLOUR.—I now come to colour. Blues should be of a good sound blue, with blue rumps and black bars—jet black, and not bronze black, as stated in the *Gardener*. The only disputed question of colour in blues is whether the bars should be broad or narrow. The eye should be fiery, and the beak black. Silvers should be of a silver-gray, with dark bars. But the Birmingham Society say they should be whitish-brown or light drab, with dark drab bars, neck and flight, and pearlsh eyes. The same authority (!) says they should not be bred from blues. Good yellows, we are also informed, should not be yellow at all, but sienna brown! And we are further instructed that they are not good breeders! In Whites, the colour of eye wattle is not definitely settled: is a red wattle desirable, or otherwise? The old-fashioned grizzle blue and white is peculiarly characteristic of Dragons; and, as some of the very best birds are of that colour, I hope to see it in favour at our shows. Reds, as shown of late years, have been decidedly coarse in head and bad in colour.

A PAIR of Black Cayuga Ducks in the possession of a gentleman in Oneida Co., New York, weighed a trifle over 15 pounds, at five months old. The parents weighed over twenty-four pounds when twenty months old.