

be sent to be marked when squakers, and again when half through the moult, before they have lost the first stamp. But who will expose their best birds twice at such a tender age to the risks of a long journey and promiscuous handling by the marking committee? I should be sorry to see the movement fall to the ground, but it must unavoidably do so unless some better method can be adopted.

All are now on the *qui vive* in anticipation of the coming shows, the advance guard of which are already upon us, but the new cracks do not usually make their *début* before the Dairy Show, which is held at Islington Hall, London, on October 6th.

Now is the time for beginners to get their lofts together if they can get some knowing friend to put them on the right track. Breeders are now holding heavy stocks, and are generally willing to sell at low prices to make room for their coming champions (everyone thinks he has two or three of these until the prize list undeceives him.) Fanciers who know what to look for frequently "strike ile" in these speculative purchases during the fall. An indifferent looking bird, purchased perhaps for 20s. or 30s., blossoms frequently into a prize specimen, and is resold at ten or twelve times the amount paid for it. Of course it requires an experienced eye to pick out the good bird from the second-rater when both are only a shapeless bundle of stubbly quills. All fanciers should now be mentally paring their birds for 1886, looking out for some to fill vacancies without delay.

The English poultry fancy sustained an irreparable loss last month in the sudden death of Mr. Teebay, one of our oldest breeders and judges, who was almost the father of the Brahma fancy in England and the main stay of the Black Spanish.

OLLUF.

England, Sept. 7, 1885.

Are Fancy Pigeons "Low?"

It is indeed difficult to see in what sense such an epithet as that can be applied; that it is applied is, however, unfortunately only too true. One often hears it said that Pigeon fancying is confined to a certain class, and that that class is, to say the least, not respectable, and from the various disparaging remarks that from time to time catch the ear, one would suppose that the mere fact of indulging in this hobby is in itself calculated to demoralize.

Whence these preposterous ideas? Surely not from those who have had any experience whatever in the breeding of Pigeons. Nay, rather would I attribute it to simple ignorance, unless there be any really substantial evidence to the contrary, which, it seems to me there is not.

Of course, we each have our different hobbies, or at least most of us, for a person without a hobby of some kind or other is like a bird without wings—a

pitiable object. Not only as a necessary diversion from the daily routine of a busy life, but also as a health-giving fountain of knowledge, inexhaustible and ever fresh, the pursuit of some pleasant as well as harmless hobby is certainly to be recommended. Far from being "low," it seems to me that the study of animal life in whatever form or shape soever, must have the exactly opposite effect on a healthy mind for what can possibly tend to heighten our sense of the beautiful and to raise the tone of our thoughts more than the study of Nature herself? And in no instance is this better exemplified than in the case of fancy Pigeons.

We each have our favorite variety, and for each variety we have our ideal; then in the selection of birds which most resemble that ideal our judgment is called into play, with the result that the keener our perception the more artistic our eye, so the nearer do we approach perfection in our efforts.

The same may be said with regard to those of us whose bent is in a different direction. We all aim at perfection, though perhaps we never reach it—thus, whatever be our favorite pursuit, the effect, if kept within legitimate bounds, must be conducive to mental as well as physical health. Now, sir, I trust I have not occupied too much of your valuable space, and I will conclude by urging all whose taste lies in the direction of pigeons, whether fancy or otherwise, to cultivate that taste more and more, and to stimulate others who may be like-minded, thus helping to swell the ranks of true fanciers.—FLAGEOLET, *in Poultry*.

Bald-head Tumblers.

The Rev. Coombe Williams writes: "Mr. Burchatt bred his Baldheads in and in for many years and thus succeeded in producing them almost in perfection, (I presume absolute perfection to be unattainable) as far as color and markings were concerned. But his birds were all deficient in carriage, eye, and skull till he introduced a cross from an Almond bred bird into his strain. The bird he selected for his experimental cross was a whole colored red hen, very excellent in skull and carriage which he procured from the late Mr. J. B. Jayne, of Croydon, and she belonged to the pure strain of Mr. Chapman, of Cambridge. This hen Mr. Burchatt crossed with a cock of his established strain of Red Bald-heads, and the bird selected from this union was a hen of grand Tumbler properties, red in color and self colored excepting three white flight feathers in one wing. This was paired to her father, and this pair produced a Red hen grand in skull and carriage, with a few white feathers on the top of the head. The third cross, that of this red and white hen with her paternal uncle, produced, as it were suddenly, very well marked Baldheads with fine carriage, broad and lofty in skull, with typical eye and beak."