

permit us to consider the wild Rock Dove as the type of the Fantail Pigeons."

But Fantails are by no means the miserable and degraded monsters that Temminck and many other writers would induce us to believe them to be. They may be, and often are, closely kept in cages, or dealers' pens, till they are cramped and out of health. The most robust wild pigeon would become so under the same circumstances. But if fairly used, they are respectably vigorous. It is a mistake to suppose that they are deficient in power of flight, unless their muscles have been enfeebled by long incarceration. Their tail is not so much in their way as the train of the Peacock. It is true that it consists, or ought to consist according to the fancier's rule, of three times the number of feathers which other pigeons can boast of; but it is an excellent aerial rudder notwithstanding. Like other pigeons, Fantails, if taken from home, will attempt to fly back to it again; and their qualifications as parents and nurses are far from being despicable.

Fantails are mostly of a pure snowy white, which, with their peculiar carriage, gives them some resemblance to miniature swans. Their neck is long and taper, and curved into a serpentine form. From the very backward position in which their head is held, it often touches the tail, and even is thrust behind it occasionally. The more this peculiar mode of strutting is exaggerated, the more valuable the bird is considered to be. Rarely, Fantails are quite black or slate color, and also yellow; now and then they are seen white with slate-colored patches on the shoulders, like Turbits. Fantails have a very short beak, and are exceedingly full-breasted. The most singular habit which they have is the tremblin; motion of the throat, which seems to be caused by excitement in the bird. The iris of the Fantail is of a dark hazel, the pupil black, which gives to the eye a fullness of expression quite different to what is seen in most other birds. Colonel Skyes, in the "Transactions of the Zoological Society," makes the color of the iris an important guide in determining the affinities or dissimilarities of species, believing it occasionally to manifest even generic distinctions. Now amongst fancy pigeons the iris varies greatly, and is thought of much consequence, as is known to every amateur. The cere at the base of the Fantail's bill looks as if covered with a white powder.—*Pigeons and Rabbits, by E. S. Delamer.*

Snoor's boy heard him say the other day that there was "money in hens," and he proceeded to investigate his father's poultry. He had gone through a dozen fine specimens, when the old gentleman came upon him, and the boy now wonders if there is any balm in Gilead.—*Bulletin.*

Shows and Breeding.

The word exhibition! How often are we gulled and taken in by it! Just as though any article or animal was any the better or more worthy of attention because it had been once exposed to public notice contending for a meagre prize! More especially is this held true where live stock is concerned; particularly fowls, where there is no recognized or correct standard whereby to measure their qualities. Of what account is it that a bird wins a paltry prize at an agricultural show? Does it make any the more pure or thorough bird, the bird or birds thus obtaining the small figure usually awarded? The highest prize is seldom over three dollars, and yet how many there are that spend dollars in obtaining what are represented to be choice eggs for hatching purposes, for the single object of competing in the fall show for this small sum. It is no benefit to any one breed, for rarely do there come any fine specimens or choice birds to these exhibitions, and if by chance there be any found in this position, they are generally overlooked and the mongrel claims the preferences. Judges upon such occasions are too often incompetent; have rarely noticed a fowl, and can hardly discriminate between the Guinea cock and turkey hen. Yet such are too often the men called upon to pass judgement on birds, perhaps some of our very choicest. The prize goes greatly by favor, and largely by bribery—small petty bribes, oftentimes no larger than a ten-cent whistle to blow the praise or blame on a whiskey-tuned palate.

For all this we labor the whole summer through and raise our chicks. For this vain hope the boy spends his ready cash for a dozen of eggs (that perchance come out of the country store at eighteen cents per dozen, while he pays three dollars) to gain what he desires—a few nice fowls to take to the county fair. If failure, what then? Disappointment makes heavy the little fellow's heart; his summer's labor has been in vain; his sole object has been to beat, and it is not always small boys that are contending, but boys of larger growth that are carried away. It is this class that detract from the breeding of poultry its greatest ornament. They pretty generally deal with one another, and the one that can carry on the largest deception is the best fellow. Aside from this there are respectable poultry breeders who take pride in their choice flocks, and scorn to send out anything but a first-class article. Such demand a price that remunerates for the trouble and expense of breeding and rearing, and are barely paid at that, and upon this is based the charges of bogus dealers—dealers that infringe upon the insignia of honorable traders, and defraud them of their rights. The prizes usually awarded at these shows seldom pay the