

the feed-hopper and drinking-fountain except to exercise his patience. Quiet and freedom from intruders is the rule of the loft in the breeding season. Good food, suited to the requirements of the time, and in abundance is not of less importance. If food must be sought by the parents they must necessarily be long from the nest, and the young, though their crops are kept filled, will suffer from the loss of the vital animal heat they receive from the hovering parent. Stale bread (Graham is best) crushed fine is an excellent feed at this time. Small corn is the best grain. Wheat is good, so also are oats, pease, and beans. Buckwheat may be fed sparingly for the hull's sake—for the same reason and that it is not so heating paddy (rice in the husk) is better. Add to these lime, old mortar, gravel, salt (codfish or rock salt), good clean drinking water and green food, and the necessaries to health are all told.

The Trumpeter.

There is no variety of pigeons which within our own memory has so much changed, and, from a fancier's point of view, been as much improved, as the trumpeter. We say from a fancier's point of view, for, looked at aesthetically, we think the old English type of trumpeter was decidedly a prettier bird than those of the Russian style at present exhibited. The origin of the trumpeter's name is not so obscure as that of most fancy pigeons. Before playing to the hen the cock bows himself down and makes a long hoarse coo not very unlike the sound of an indifferent trumpet. We have had small African doves whose gestures and notes are very similar. We possessed a flight of white English trumpeters in childhood twenty years ago; extremely beautiful they were, active on the wing, like their relations the swallows, and altogether much lighter and more agile than the exhibition trumpeters of to-day. They bred well and were good mothers, indeed a variety which might well be kept for their prettiness and useful qualities as table birds combined. Some time later, about fourteen years ago we think, a wonderful importation of Russian trumpeters arrived in England, and were, we understood, brought with the greatest difficulty across the Steppes from Siberia. Strange it seems that so savage a region should afford a race of birds which must undoubtedly have long been bred with care up to an artificial standard of merit! Many of them perished on the way, but those which arrived on English soil perfectly astonished pigeon fanciers with their size and their wonderful development of trumpeter points. As soon as they had sufficiently recovered from their travels to be exhibited they at once drove the old type of trumpeters out of the field. For a time it

was attempted to have separate classes for birds of the two types: but this plan soon failed, inasmuch as there was no real distinction between them, the only difference being great development of already acknowledged points in the new birds. The Russian breed has now quite superseded the other as exhibition birds, and those shown and seen in good lofts all mainly owe their origin to this or some other importation. The points of the trumpeter are not many; but to be understood it should be seen, and almost defies description. The trumpeter is a heavy bird and now by no means active, for the feathers of its rose, like those of the Poland fowl's tuft, much impede its vision. It has a shell or crown at the back of its head, such as we have described when speaking of the nun, which should come as much round the head as possible on each side. One of its most distinctive points, however, is the rose—a tuft of feathers rising from the root of the beak. This in the old birds merely formed an irregular tuft, but in the modern trumpeter it is of immense size and completely circular, almost covering the beak and the whole of the head within the crowns. Great weight is given in judging to the size and regularity of this rose. The other most characteristic point is foot feathering. A good trumpeter is heavily feathered or hocked on the leg, and then has beautiful flat feathers extending like little wings from the feet. These two latter points should in our opinion be equally considered, and not all given to rose, which we have frequently seen some good judges do. The colors of Trumpeters were formerly many, the whites being the best. The great Russian importation were nearly all mottled—*i. e.*, black and white, or black; these two colors have consequently become the most popular, which we regret, for the whites are extremely beautiful. At the last Crystal Palace show, however, two magnificent whites were shown, and quite held their own against all colors. It is not easy to imagine much more beautiful pigeons. As with some other white pigeons, we believe that young birds are often speckled, and only moult out pure white after two or three years. Of course this is not the case with such old-established breeds as white fantails, but the trumpeters and jacobins, the various colors of which have been much interbred, are seldom pure white their first year. Yellows and reds were formerly known, and we have seen a blue trumpeter depicted on a very antique mosaic; but they have now disappeared, and to reproduce them of a type to compete with the wonderful mottled birds which we now see in the prize pen, would take much time. Of course, care is requisite to keep the foot feathers of trumpeters in nice order and condition, which adds greatly to their beauty, and which is often not sufficiently appreciated by judges. Trumpeters are fitted