

and talk to them, at the same time snap your finger and thumb together, this will teach the birds to show off. Each bird should be kept in a separate pen and should not be allowed to see any others while being trained.

Fantails and Pouters should be judged in a walking pen, as a judge may easily be deceived by a Pouter standing on a block. Blocks should not be allowed in any coops in the show room. If a Pouter has not legs long enough to carry the length of tail-feather without a perch then he should be made to take his place in awards accordingly.

Fantails very often crouch in one corner of the coop and look as though they carried their tails in pot-lid fashion, but when made to strut up and down in a walking pen behave differently.

Wash all dirty birds five or six days before the show in a little soft luke-warm soapy water with a little soda added to it. After thoroughly scrubbing the feathers to and fro rinse the bird in luke-warm water without any soap in it, after this rinse a second time in cold water with the chill taken off, put a little borax in this water, it will help to web the feathers. After washing, wipe the bird off with a flannel cloth until all the drippings are off, then put it in a coop with an open front, before the fire.

Carriers' wattles are very much improved by washing a week before the show, after washing keep them out of dust and dirt. Fanciers sometimes use chalk for improving the bloom on the wattles.

The eye-wattles on Barbs sometimes require a little washing before being exhibited, the washing stimulates the skin and improves the color. This should be done just before the show. Some fanciers use a little butter on the eye-wattles after thoroughly washing them—this makes them a very bright red.

Jacobins require considerable attention before a show. The hood may be made to lie closely to the head by pulling a feather or two which very often stand up against it and sometimes run through it. This is a very bad fault. I have seen some birds which had their skull feathers cut with a scissors just in front of the hood, but a judge with any sense could easily detect that. Sometimes there is a foul feather here and there in a really good specimen, which is taken out without any compunction. This is not considered wrong so long as it is not carried too far.

Jacobins require plenty of fresh air and should be fed on hard grain, but not too heavily, as when they get fat their feathers become loose and ragged. Many fine specimens are spoiled for show purposes by too much feed.

All black pigeons look better if the bloom on the plumage is wiped off with a damp cloth.

The condition pigeons are shown in is half the battle in an exhibition.

## CAGE BIRDS

### THE BREEDING OF NORWICH PLAINHEADS.

The first thing in starting breeding is to get some good breeding cages, say four of the following sizes for preference, 21 inches long, 16 inches high, and 11 in. deep, that is back to front. They are the best with a loose wire front, being so much handier for cleaning and washing out.

Having got your breeding cages ready you now want the birds. I would advise the beginner to place himself in the hands of one of our best and most respectable breeders, inform him exactly what birds you require, and the price you have decided to limit yourself to, say £5 for two pairs of birds, for if you wish to breed good birds you must have good reliable stuff to start with.

Now, having got your birds to your satisfaction, you must get them ready for breeding, and to do so you must keep the birds separate. It is a good plan to have your breeding cages two deep, as that will allow your birds to see each other through the seed holes.

Keep them so until the last week in March or the first week in April. You must not commence any earlier than the above on account of the east winds at that time. Whilst the birds are separate they must be kept well supplied with seed and egg food, this applies more to the cocks than the hens. You want to give the cocks a good supply of egg food, mixed with a little new seed and a little hemp seed meal every other day, and the hens say twice a week; this is to keep them in good condition, and make them as proud as possible to start their household affairs. At this time it is as well to throw a little niga seed on the bottom of the cage, also to put a bit of Demerara sugar in the hens egg food. This is to prevent egg binding. And don't forget at all times to always keep your birds well supplied with good gritty sand and clean water.

When you have introduced the cock into the hens cage, you must put them a nest pan. You will find those with the perforated zinc bottoms to be the best, as they have a