

## Pigeon and Pet Stock Department,

—CONDUCTED BY—

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### Pigeon and Pet Stock Department.

It is our intention to make this portion of the Review as instructive and interesting to its many readers as possible. Under the above heading we purpose noticing from time to time many of the minor pets, giving short, practical articles on their care and breeding, gathered from the pages of the leading English and American pet stock papers, and from our own personal experience. We will be glad to receive from any of our friends any items of news, breeding experience, &c., which may be interesting to readers of the Review, and will also be happy to answer any inquiries on these matters through the Review.

In conclusion we trust that fanciers one and all will strive to help us in our effort, and unite in trying to make the Review more successful in 1884 than it has ever been before.

We hope to meet many of the readers of the Review at some of the winter shows.

In a private letter from our friend, Mr. A. E. Fuller, Pouter fancier, of Bath, England, he says, writing of the great Crystal Palace show:—"The show was unprecedentedly large; entries over 5000 pens. Pouters started well with 250 pens. The quality was marvellous, and quite took the fancy by surprise." This show must have been something well worth seeing. The Crystal Palace show is the greatest exhibition of poultry and pigeons in the world, and of course attracts birds of unequalled quality.

### Color in Pigeons.

Color was my first point of fancy; it strikes the less trained eye, and is the admiration of most beginners. I knew little of frill except that a Turbit must have a frill on the breast, or, as in the phraseology of older fanciers I call it, "a purle." The rich color of red had much attraction for me. From a fancier in the north about to retire I bought a few birds—among them a young cock—at least so it was reputed to be, but it turned out a hen. However, whether it be a cock or a hen it mattered little, for it was destined to be worth to me as many pounds as I gave shillings. It had a speck on its face, and this I then thought a most serious drawback to its use as a stock bird, in thinking which I need hardly say I thought

wrongly. On account of this blemish I got it for 10s. or 15s—I now forget which—and believed it dear at the price. In time, when its real sex was obvious, a cock was required. Good fortune again attended my purchases. A fancier in London wished to sell some of his stock, and among them a red cock, father of most of his winners. Why he sold this bird for £1 1s I have often wondered since, for to the best of my recollection, it was a remarkable specimen. However, to shorten my story, these two birds were mated together, and for two seasons they produced a most numerous progeny, mostly very rich in color, but nearly all with foul feathers somewhere. This my small knowledge told me was wrong, and I sold most of them cheap. Of course, their purchasers (who had the foul feathers fully described) grumbled at them but all sent for more; indeed, one came nearly one hundred miles to see my little stock, and proposed to carry all away with him at gradually increased offers. These I did not accept, but mated up two or three pairs of the best brothers and sisters. There seemed no ill effects to ensue from their relationship.

### MARKINGS.

Color was still my desideratum, and very nice it was, and very accurate the marking in some of the birds in the next generation. I selected the best again, and in about a year's time I thought I would be adventurous. I sent a pair to a show! It was at Southampton, and the Turbit class was large—twenty pairs or so, and my favorites were the first. I sent them to one or two more shows; the result was the same, they were always first. The next year I even risked them in the competition of Birmingham, and again came out first. My attempt to get beautiful color and good marking had succeeded. Of course, the birds were very fair in points of form, from the two ancestors having both come from good strains, evidently long well bred; but I had not troubled myself with a multitude of desired points. Had I done so very probably I should not have obtained any. There came a day when those birds and their descendants were not attended with such unvarying success. Meanwhile fanciers had improved, at any rate changed, the standard head of the Turbit; it became necessary to engraft a superior form of head on my strain. I need not say that the fresh birds necessary for this further step were by no means to be obtained at the cheap rates the earlier were. A fancier who has won any reputation is made to pay for it when he wishes to become a purchaser. He is a dangerous competitor, and can only be supplied at prices which will repay the vendor for possible defeats. However, by judicious matches of my own pigeons, I managed to get pretty good head properties without losing any of my origi-