



SF 467
.T95
Copy 1

SQUAB CULTURE.

PRICE 10 CENTS.



Class SF 467

Book T95

Copyright N^o _____

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

SQUAB CULTURE.



AN HONEST AND PLAIN TREATISE ON
SQUAB BREEDING FOR PROFIT.



Tells the Ins and Outs of the Business, How to
Manage a Large or a Small Flock, When
to Buy and Who to buy From.

By C. E. TWOMBLY.

(Editor of The Pigeon News.)

Twenty Years a Practical Breeder, Exhibitor, and
Expert Pigeon Judge.

PRICE TEN CENTS.

Published and For Sale By

C. E. TWOMBLY.

32 Hawley Street, Boston.

SFA-1
795

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
Two Copies Received
APR 20 1905
Copyright Entry
Apr. 1 1905
CLASS a Xxc No
113703
COPY B.

SQUAB CULTURE.

COPYRIGHTED. 1905

BY

C. E. TWOMBLY. BOSTON

U. S. A.

(All Rights Reserved.)

Squab Culture.

INTRODUCTION.

IN presenting this little work or pamphlet on Squab Culture, we have in mind one principal object: a true statement of facts, founded on many years of practical experience. There is no denying the fact that Squab breeding for profit has taken a tremendous boom during the past few years. The general public are asking for additional information, that they may more intelligently decide the advisability of embarking in the industry. Our daily mail is swelled with hundreds of letters from people in all quarters of the United States, asking questions such as it would take us many hours to answer in detail.

We are asked to verify the many statements and wonderful claims made by an army of unscrupulous dealers springing up in all sections. Circulars, books and other forms of printed matter describing the vast profits to be made in Squab breeding, sent broadcast over the country is having its effect. The claims set forth in these circulars are in nearly every case misleading and in a majority nothing less than scandalous.

That any reasonable man or woman will believe that from an investment of \$2.00 a net profit of \$4.00 can be made in one year is most amazing, and there are thousands who have bitten most greedily at this alluring bait. Worse still a great many have figured, "If I can make \$4.00 profit on one pair per year, then I must of course make one thousand times \$4.00 on one thousand pairs." Hundreds of people who never heard the word "Squab" three months before have purchased one thousand pairs of breeders on just such arithmetic as the above. Hundreds of other victims have invested in smaller numbers ranging down to three hundred, one hundred and fifty pairs each. The inevitable and only result has been the consequence in nine out of every ten cases. Where one succeeds, ten fail in all walks of life, and why not in Squab breeding. Have you ever stopped to think of this? We naturally all make up our minds to be the one in ten to succeed.

That there *is* money in Squabs can be easily proven. Many have tried to prove it on paper and failed. Others have spent

large sums of money to prove it and failed, but there is not the least question of doubt that a great many breeders are making good profits from their flocks of Homer-Squab breeders. We know of several near Boston whom we are convinced are making money.

The object of this little book is to tell those who wish to know, in as few words as possible, what to believe and what not to. We have not time to go into all the detail we would like to, and such subjects on which we have the least to say, our readers can take it for granted we partially agree with what has already been written by others.

From the beginning, we shall not try to disguise the fact that the writer has birds to sell or that he is trying to make all the profit he can out of the business. Neither are we writing this book for our health. We do wish it understood, however, that under no circumstances shall we knowingly make a statement in the following pages that cannot be verified by actual experience. We have stock to sell, and one of the objects of this work is to help sell it. But believing that a plain statement of facts will pay best and that in the long run honesty is the best policy, we leave our readers to judge the rest.

HOW TO BEGIN.

Beginners as a rule learn too quickly, or in other words think they know it all before they have really passed the A B C division. Being quite familiar with all the Squab books on the market, and there are not a few, and knowing as we do that no two writers agree on most points, except where they have copied from one another, we do not wonder that so many learn the business so quickly. It is quite natural for the beginner, after reading "Bill Jones's" Squab book, to imagine that the thing is easy, and that all he has to do is to fit up his house and buy some stock.

Half the people who have started Squab breeding have not stopped to consider whether the fellow who wrote the book they got their education from, ever raised pigeons himself or not. They took it for granted he did, but there is a possibility he only imagined the biggest part of what he wrote and copied the balance from some other book, that in turn may have been compiled in the same manner. One of the worst drawbacks to the

Squab business is the fact that so far there have been more writers on the subject, than there have practical breeders. Some will ask—what guarantee have we that C. E. Twombly is any better posted than some of the others? We do not expect every reader of this book to agree with us on everything we state, but every sensible man or woman who contemplates taking up the Squab breeding industry, should first take steps to find out who is right and who is wrong, before parting with their cash for an unknown value. People without a little judgment of their own, will never make a success of Squab raising. Show us the person who is following the hard and fast rules laid down in any book and we doubt if he will be found successful. The best breeders will be found among those who have done a little thinking for themselves. More information can be gained by studying the methods of a successful breeder, than by reading all the books that were ever written.

The beginner should look into the Squab business just as thoroughly before embarking in it, as he would any other investment. Do not consider that you know it all until you have tried it for a while. The most successful breeders are those who started on a small scale and worked up. Purchase your stock from the firm or breeder who in your best judgment will give you just what you pay for. Do not spend all your money for the first purchase. You will have a grain bill to pay before you have any squabs to sell, no matter how successful you may be. Study the subject carefully and make as many deductions as you see fit. Visit all the breeders you can, but do not make up your mind to improve on the methods of others until you have tried their way.

Further on we shall mention a number of improvements on methods advised in some of the books you have read. These suggestions we feel sure will well pay those who decide to follow them. The writer has been censured more than once, for advising beginners to go slow and has lost many good sales through telling those who have asked him, of the numerous pitfalls along the road to successful Squab Culture. The secret of success lies in the beginning. Be sure you are right, then go ahead.

BUILDING THE LOFT.

Naturally, before purchasing stock, one must fit up his house or loft and it is a very good plan to have everything in readiness

for the birds when they arrive. So much has been written on this subject that we shall not give it much space. Practically speaking no two breeders are situated alike, and a loft or pigeon house should be constructed more according to circumstances than anything else. We do not advise any greater expense for lofts than is absolutely necessary, and if one is starting in the business for profit alone the item of lofts and fittings will figure quite extensively. If, however, it is necessary to construct an entirely new loft, the following advice may prove of value.

First, select the site and have the loft face South if possible. We prefer a one-story pitch roof, the high side for the front. This allows the sun to penetrate the entire building. Have no windows in the back or North side, as these walls are for the nests. The floor should be at least one foot from the ground, and if a double floor is decided upon, the first boarding can be of very cheap lumber, with then a layer of heavy paper and finished with matched boards. One of the common faults in the construction of lofts is, to our mind, a needless number of upright joist. These uprights can just as well be made of 2x3 lumber as of 2x4, which is generally used; this saves one-fourth the cost. Then again, four feet apart is just exactly as good as two feet, and here is another 100% saved. The dimensions of a loft of course is determined by the space available. A good width for a loft is twelve feet. We should advise six feet high behind by nine feet in front, and the rooms inside ten feet long. Thus a building forty feet long by twelve wide would make four ideal lofts 10x12. We do not advise an alley as some do, as this only takes up room, adds expense and gets you nothing. Have doors from one loft to another, and if no better place is to be had, an extra room at one end can be kept for grain, mating coops, killing room and a great many other things.

The divisions or partitions between the lofts can be made of boards or wire, just as the owner sees fit. Nests are to go along the back and up both sides as far as the door. This building can be simply boarded with good match boards or papered outside and clapboarded according to the amount of money to be expended. Have at least one large window in the front of each loft, and outside the wire aviary or fly can be as large as one sees fit to make it. We consider a wire fly twice as large as the inside room quite sufficient. This we would build to the edge of the roof, making it 9 feet high by 20 to 24 feet wide and extend the length of the building. Have partitions to correspond with inside. As on the inside, doors should lead from

one aviary to the other. This we consider an ideal and cheap pigeon loft. One can use these same lines and add as much elegance as desired, but the dimensions cannot be improved upon.

HOMERS THE BEST BREEDERS.

Nearly every writer tells you that pure bred Homers are the best breeders. This is very true and it is also a fact that from pure Homers there is a smaller percentage of infertile eggs, sick, puny young ones, and less sickness in general than in any other breed. The pure Homer is the most prolific of all breeds of pigeons. Many breeders are experimenting with crosses of Runts, Maltese Hen Pigeons, Duchesse and several other breeds to increase the size of the Squab. This practice does very well as an experiment, but we are told that these breeders realize no more for their Squabs at the market than do those who bring in the plump, fat, pure Homer Squabs weighing ten to twelve lbs. to the dozen. Twelve pounds to the dozen is what may be termed the ideal Squab, and to average this, breeders must cull their birds many times. It can be done with pure Homers if only the largest breeders are selected year after year. We think the shorter route to the twelve pounds per dozen Squab is through the careful selection of large pure Homers rather than crossing with other breeds as some are doing.

Extra large Homers are not easy to get at all times. The hens will run small under the best of conditions and quite often a good sized cock mated to a small hen will breed extra large young. The small tight feathered hens are usually much heavier than they look, and it is not safe to cull the small ones too closely. Many have found themselves with a lot of odd cocks on their hands through this procedure. We know of one large firm which advertises two grades, and in many cases those who purchase the best grade get a majority of cocks, while the hens are shipped to those who decide to try their luck with the cheaper grade. The firm which we represent has but one grade. The pairs are matched by an expert, and every bird that shows signs of old age or lack of condition is either sent to market at once or put in a special loft to rest and recuperate. Especial care is taken not to overwork our hens, for they play out much sooner than the cocks, and our reputation is being built on the condition and quality of the birds sold to our customers.

ONLY MATED BIRDS BREED.

Pigeons are sold in pairs, but the word "pair," with a great many dealers, means two birds and nothing more. Some claim to sell only mated pairs, others advertise to sell an equal number of cocks and hens and do not claim the birds they sell to be mated. The latter however, lead their customers to believe that the mating process is easy and say just as little as possible on this subject. Here again is where a great many have made their first mistake. We consider a thoroughly mated pair of Homers worth to the amateur three times as much as an unmated pair, even though they be cock and hen. The novice, as a rule, knows nothing about mating nor even how to tell a pair that is mated. We know of nothing worse than selling a novice a lot of pigeons purported to be mated pairs, when in reality there may not be a single mated pair in the lot. Quite often these birds are caught from large flocks by some hired man sent to the loft with a basket. He picks what he supposes to be as many cocks as hens and grabs the first bird he can get his hands upon. When he gets the required number, off they go to the customers. There may have been a hundred or a thousand mated pairs in the loft he picked from, but every bird you get may be the odd one from some broken up pair. If you get an equal number of cocks and hens you are in luck.

This is the way we know most dealers do business. They tell you to put them in your loft and they will all mate up and start breeding at once. This is where you lose. No breeder can ever become successful with birds purchased in this way. To get results from a flock of pigeons they must all be mated thoroughly. Birds that are not mated will never breed, and cocks in a loft without mates will cause all kinds of trouble. Odd hens are equally as bad. To become successful one should learn at the beginning how to distinguish a mated pair. Mates will most generally be found close together. In the day time they will hang around their nest, and at night will be found roosting close together. When nearly ready to lay, the cock will usually be seen following the hen from place to place. This is a sure way to tell a mated pair. If the breeder is not sure all his birds are mated he should take steps immediately to mate them up. The best way, however, for the novice is to by all means buy mated pairs.

The Eastern Squab Company, which we represent, has, in many instances, refused to accept large orders for mated pairs, owing to the fact that their facilities have not enabled them to mate their birds as fast as required. It is no small matter to mate up one hundred pairs of pigeons and do it so thoroughly that they are sure to stay mated. We know of no other firm that spends as much time and money or gives as much attention to mating as the Eastern Squab Company. We have an expert in our employ whose sole duty it is to mate, band and register the mated pairs. When we sell mated pairs we do so with a guarantee that they are mated. Every bird leaving our establishment is banded; each pair is registered, and we give a certificate for each pair on which is written the number and color of the cock and the number and color of the hen he is mated to. All this system and detail costs us money, but we know from experience that it is the only way we can give our customers full value for their money. It costs us just one hundred times as much to mate, band and register one hundred pairs as it does one, and for this reason we have but one price, no matter how large the order.

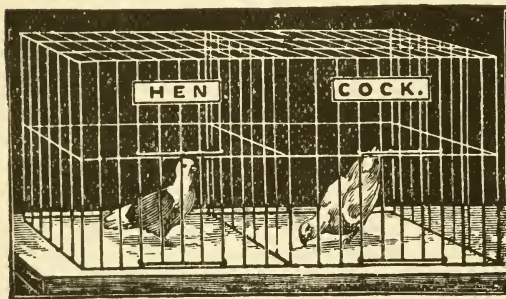
In shipping, we use every precaution to prevent the birds becoming separated or mismated on the way, and have constructed special wooden crates with small compartments just large enough for one pair of birds. These crates hold six pairs each, and in this manner we ship any number of pairs so that they reach our customers in such a way that there is no possible chance of mixing, or the mates becoming parted. From the above, our readers can gain an idea of the difference between a really mated pair and the so-called mated pair or an equal number of cocks and hens picked at random, with guesswork for a guarantee.

SEX OF HOMERS AND HOW TO MATE.

A great deal has been written on how to tell the sex of pigeons, but all wind up by admitting that there is no known method by which the true sex of a pigeon can be told at first glance. To an expert it is generally quite easy, but in many instances the expert has to guess. Usually the cocks are larger and heavier than the hens. When the bird feels plump and hard in the hand it is more often the cock. Hens generally have a softer feeling. Experts can in many cases tell the sex

best by expression of the eye. This is our method and it is very seldom we make a wrong guess. Cocks usually have a much bolder eye than hens; the expression of a hen may be termed as modest.

The difference is best learned by experience, and some breeders learn the knack of distinguishing cocks from hens more readily than others. Many breeders depend upon the action of the bird and in this case two are put together in a cage. If they begin to fight, (hammer and tongs fashion) at once it may be depended upon they are two cocks. Two hens will fight, but usually not so roughly as cocks. If a cock and hen are put together they will quite often fight, and only when it is seen that one does the cooing and the other stands in the corner and nods its head or flirts its tail and shys up to the other, can one feel sure of a pair. The one doing the cooing is the cock and



A Good Style Mating Cage.

the other the hen. That little nodding movement is almost a sure sign of a hen ready to mate. The best method we know of for mating a flock, and the one used by the Eastern Squab Company with best success, is

the double cage plan. Cages about one foot square are constructed with every other partition made of wire. Place what you think is a cock in one side and what you should judge a hen in the other, then watch them. When you see what you think is the cock, get close to the wire and coo and if the one in the other side flirts its tail and rushes up to wire, you may then feel sure you have a pair. Let them remain this way for a short time, then quietly put the hen in the cock's cage. If they seem glad to get together and do not offer to fight, let them remain together a day or two, then band and put in your breeding loft. When birds placed in these coops do not show signs of mating after a few days, we advise changing them as you have probably

picked two of the same sex. Under no circumstances put any birds in your breeding loft until you are sure they are mated. Have the band numbers registered in a book kept for the purpose, for in case anything should happen to one of a pair, you will want to know the number of his or her mate in order to get it another partner.

The idea of trap nests for mating is becoming quite popular with some breeders, and we claim the honor of being the inventor of this method of mating, or rather separating the mated pairs from the unmated birds of a large flock. The idea is to have a trap so arranged on your nest boxes that when a mated pair enters the nest they cannot get out until the breeder enters the loft, takes the birds from the nest, bands them and removes them to the breeding loft. This scheme is a good one and is being worked successfully by many. Trap fronts can be made to just fit the nests, with an opening in the centre, pigeon-hole fashion. Have a bob wire constructed so that it can be easily pushed in but will not push out. This bob is made of wire, bent over so as to have two prongs with about two inches square at the top. Hitch it inside the hole so that the prongs just pass the bottom. Two little staples at the top will do. This allows it to swing in easily, and if a small perch is placed just outside the hole the mated pairs will soon find their way in, but the bob only working one way will not admit of their leaving the nest until taken out by their owner.

NESTS AND NESTING.

Our idea of nest construction differs from most writers. Nearly all books on Squab breeding, advise the egg box style of nest. This style we have learned by experience is not consistent with best results. In lofts where all the nests are alike, and but one foot square, there are always a great many unoccupied.

Instead of using up space to tell the many objections to the egg box nests, we will describe what we have found to be the most practical and ideal nesting place for pigeons. We will take for example the ideal loft described in a previous chapter. The back wall in each loft is left 6 feet high by 10 feet long. Place 10 inch boards, shelf fashion against this wall, start 1 foot from the floor and stop 1 foot from the roof. This will take 5 boards and make four shelves, not counting the top which is left for a lighting board. Now place partitions so as to divide the 10 feet into three compartments, three and one third feet long. This

done on the four shelves gives you 12 compartments, each of which will make a lifelong home for one pair of birds. Place an earthen nest pan in each end of each compartment and then construct a front in such a way as to darken each end over the nest pan. The best way we know of is a swinging door for each section of four nests. Have an opening in the centre of each nesting place, the rest either wired or dowed up, so as to give the birds a sort of secluded feeling when inside. When the nest pans are 3 feet or more apart, the young in one nest do not as a rule disturb the old birds while setting in the other corner, but should they do so, a partition four inches high can be placed in the centre.

On the sides of the loft the same style compartments can be built. Leaving room for the doors, about the same number can be made on each side, as at the back. This allows 36 nests for each loft 10 x 12 and by all means do not try to breed any more than this number in a loft 10 x 12. Hundreds of breeders have failed through no other cause than overcrowding. Large dealers advise putting just as many pairs in a loft as there is room for nests, for no other reason than to secure large orders for birds. We know that more Squabs can be raised from thirty to thirty-six pairs in the size loft we have described than from twice that number. In fact, we would advise but twenty-four pairs until such time as you have learned to understand your birds thoroughly. Twenty four pairs are enough for any loft and one must be an expert to absolutely control more than this number in one loft.

We strongly advise the use of earthen nest pans. Do not be humbugged into using wooden ones or those made of paper. The old-fashioned earthen nests are the best; experienced breeders laugh at the idea of wooden nests. The original idea of the earthen nest was to provide something that would absorb the moisture from the droppings of the young. Wood or paper will not do this; earthenware will. The earthen nests cost a trifle more, but the others are dear at any price. The Eastern Squab Company have these earthen nests made in large quantities, just the proper size for squab breeding. They supply them to their customers at the rate of \$6.00 per hundred, packed in straw, ready to ship anywhere.

For nesting material we advise the use of coarse sawdust or plane shavings. Pine needles from the forest are very good, and once in a while a handful of twigs not over four inches long

can be thrown in the flying pen. We do not use the long, coarse tobacco stems so highly recommended by most writers, for the reason that some birds will build a nest from them so large that their eggs will become lost or broken. The idea of tobacco stems is to keep lice from the loft. This can be accomplished just as well by a handful of tobacco dust or lice powder thrown in the nests once in a while and will be found much more convenient. If tobacco stems are used however, it is a good plan to break them up in small bits before placing them in the loft.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM MATED BREEDERS.

A thoroughly mated pair of Homers will instinctively begin hunting a nest or corner they can call their own, as soon as turned loose in a new loft. For this reason it is well to have the loft ready for the birds before they are put in it. The nest boxes should be all arranged, nest pans in place, feed and water dishes, etc. in working order. If you have purchased mated birds, the best method is to liberate as many pairs as you intend breeding in a loft, all at the same time. When this is done, each pair have the same opportunity to select their nest and they will settle very readily.

If part are placed in the loft ahead of the others, the first occupants have the advantage over the new arrivals, of being acquainted with the place and the result will be considerable fighting before all are settled. These remarks are governed by the supposition that your birds are all mated pairs. If you buy from the right party you can get them this way. The mated pairs will all start looking for a nest and one by one, settle in what is to be their future headquarters.

Once a pair settles on a nesting place, (the kind described) mark the nest and mark the pair. In this way you can easily keep a record of just how many young you get from each pair of breeders, the date they laid, etc. We have breeders' nest cards, made to tack on the front of the nests, for this purpose. These cards are very handy and cost but 75 cents per hundred. Your birds all settled you do not have long to wait for the first eggs. We have known six pair out of twelve we sold a party to have laid their first egg on the seventh day after being put in their new loft. This is not uncommon, especially in the early Spring months, at which time pigeons mate and breed most readily.

In 17 days after the last egg is laid they hatch, and in four weeks from that day they are ready for market. Some books have told you that pigeons breed once a month, the year round. This idea we advise you to forget at once. We have known a pair to breed and rear two youngsters every five weeks, three times in succession. The next nest took 7 weeks and a little later the hen took a rest for six weeks. An average of one pair every six weeks, for nine months out of every twelve is about what we estimate a fair average. This allows six pairs of young

per year from each pair of old birds and most breeders are satisfied with this number. Some pairs will probably do a little better, while others will not do as well.

As stated, the Spring months are the best for breeding. We do not believe in breeding from a pair the year through and strongly advise separating the old breeders for a month or two during the winter, in order that the hens may rest and get ready for another season's work. Our plan is to start the old breeders about February 1st, and save all the strong youngsters hatched during the months up to July 1st. These youngsters will all be ready to start breeding by the last of September, and can be set at work as fast as they begin to show an inclination to pair up.

These young pairs are the ones to get the winter Squabs from. They will breed well all through the winter and following season, up to moulting time. We advise marketing all Squabs hatched after July first. These youngsters will not as a rule be ready to breed before the following Spring. About October 1st, or perhaps a little later, start separating the old breeders for the winter. Put the cocks in one loft and Lems in another. If they have done well since February, they deserve a rest, and will pay for it later on. If this rule is followed your hens will last longer and your Squabs grow larger. Those early young birds that mated a year before will need a rest by this time. They too should be parted, as another young crop will be ready to take their places.

In this way you can have an endless chain, with fresh breeders all the year through. As fast as the old ones play out send them to market or do away with them. Do not do as one writer advises, and sell them to some other fellow to start a Squab plant with. If they are worthless to you they will only help discourage some one else.

MARKETING THE SQUABS.

There is a ready market for good squabs and always will be. The lowest market price for best squabs is seldom less than \$3.00 per dozen. During the winter, the price ranges up to \$5.00 and \$6.00 per dozen. Some of the most successful breeders have found a private hotel or club trade for themselves. One party we know of has been realizing \$5.00 per dozen the year round from some leading Boston hotel. Breeders living in the country, or far from a big city, are of course obliged to depend on the commission man. The New York market has, as a rule, been paying higher prices for prime Squabs than could be obtained in Boston.

HEAT IN A LOFT.—DISEASE.

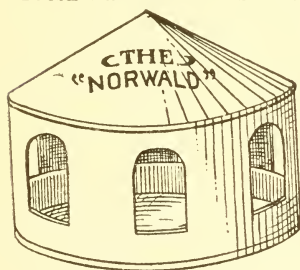
Most writers claim that pigeons require no heat in winter, but some of the most successful breeders we know of, who make a specialty of breeding in winter, have provided their lofts with a heating plant. The idea that pigeons will breed just as well in zero weather, without artificial heat, as they will in the

summer, is another of those claims made by the fellow who has never tried it. It is true that a percentage of the eggs will hatch, and part of the youngsters reach a marketable age in the dead of winter in a cold loft, but it stands to reason that a much larger percentage can be raised if some provision is made to keep the loft moderately warm during the coldest days.

Extreme cold does not seem to have any effect on the old birds if they are in a dry loft with plenty to eat and drink. It is claimed that the blood of a pigeon is two degrees warmer than that of a human being, which may account in some measure for the amount of cold they can withstand. Diseases are less prevalent in winter than at any other season, in lofts where the breeders are separated, but in the breeding loft diseases such as canker and roup are quite frequent, and extra precaution should be taken to prevent dampness or too frequent access to the bath pan.

DRINKING FOUNTAINS.

Fresh water should be kept before the birds at all times.



Much disease is caused by a neglect to provide a proper drinking fountain, one that can be easily cleaned and kept clean.

We have lately invented a style called the "Norwald" fountain, which comes in two parts. The hood or top fits over the pan as shown in the drawing and the birds drink through holes in the sides. All who have used these fountains, say they like them very much.

Bath pans are a necessary adjunct to the pigeon loft, but we do not advocate so much bathing as most writers do. Once a week, and then only on a warm bright day, is all that is needed. The idea of keeping a bath before the birds daily is a mooted one and we feel sure that a great deal of sickness comes from this practice.

FOOD AND FEEDING.

Great care should be exercised over the quality of grain fed to pigeons at all times. Nothing will cause sickness and destruction in a flock quicker than unsound grain. We are not so fussy about what kind of grain to feed, so long as it is clean, hard and dry. Most breeders feed a mixture of peas, red wheat, cracked corn, Kaffir corn, millet, hemp and buckwheat. These are the staple pigeon grains. We have had good success feeding a ready mixed pigeon grain composed of a special formula from all the above. This is called the Imperial Mixed Pigeon Food and is sold by the Eastern Squab Company at the rate of \$2.00 per 100

R4-2
pounds or \$40.00 per ton. This mixture is made of carefully selected grain, and we think makes the most economical food for pigeons obtainable. It is shipped in any quantity f. o. b. Boston.

Grit should be supplied at all times, and probably the very best on the market is Foust's. This grit is made of some kind of sea shells and salt sand, and is eaten readily by pigeons. It is claimed to help keep the birds in good condition. Another grit that we recommend to pigeon breeders is the Winrest Sand-gravel. This gravel comes in 100 pound bags and is, to our mind, a natural pigeon grit. We have seen pigeons eat Winrest Sandgravel in preference to grain many times. Fine ground oyster shells should be kept before the birds at all times. We have had prepared for us a special pigeon size which has met with a very ready sale among pigeon breeders. A great many breeders do not realize that crushed charcoal is one of the best conditioners and appetizers that can be fed to pigeons, but this fact has been amply proven by those who have used it. It is sold in barrels, crushed the proper size for pigeons, and should be in every loft. Partition grit boxes will be found very convenient in which to supply these different kinds of grit, etc.

Pigeons like salt and we have had prepared for us a Salt Cat, put up in brick form, which retails for 15 cents per brick or \$1.25 per dozen. This form of salt is all that will be necessary, if the Foust and other grit mentioned in this book, are kept before the birds.

PRICE OF BEST BREEDERS.

Homing pigeons are advertised all the way from \$1.00 to \$3.00 per pair. Many dealers offer them at any old price, according to what they cost, or how badly some unsuccessful breeder wanted to sell. We have always advised our customers to look more closely after the quality and kind they are buying than the price. What you want, if you are a beginner, is strictly mated pairs and these you cannot get from any reputable breeder or dealer for less than \$2.00 per pair. At this price you can feel assured you are getting full value, provided you get only mated birds and secure a guarantee of mating, list of band numbers, etc.

We have adopted the price of \$2.00 per pair as our standard value for every pair of thoroughly mated Homers. This is the price the Eastern Squab Company charges, no matter what quantity you buy. Our birds are carefully banded with numbered rings, the cocks on the right leg and hens on the left leg. A certificate of mating is sent with every pair, and each pair is shipped in separate compartment crates in such a way that you can make no mistake, and you know the minute you receive the birds which are the mated pairs. Our crates hold six pairs each and we like to receive orders in such numbers as pack evenly.

C. E. TWOMBLY, Manager,
EASTERN SQUAB CO., 32 Hawley St., Boston.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 002 855 936 7

