

The
Australasian Racing Pigeon.

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HAT our pigeons will not again be discarded as useless by the military authorities of Great Britain is strikingly emphasised by the advertisement appearing in the latest editions of the English fancy papers to hand. The advertisement asks for applications from men willing to enter the national pigeon service, and states that such applicants must be prepared to sign on for twelve years. We take this as evidence that the military and naval authorities intend keeping the pigeon branch of the service as part of the defence scheme of the nation for all time.

Racing pigeon fancy is booming in the Old Country, and we are sure that it will boom here when our military and naval services establish their pigeon services, and establish them they will. Then the general public will wake up to the fact that keeping homing pigeons is not a kid's game, but a thing of national importance.

We hear rumors of endeavours being made to draw our two Associations in Sydney together, and hope before our next issue comes out that these rumors will have grown into facts. For your own sakes, fanciers, give a helping hand to bring about the desired result. Think how much more weight one great controlling body would have when we find it necessary to approach the Government for railway concessions, grants, etc. We as a family are going ahead from now, so let us go ahead as one happy family. Remember the motto, "Union is strength."

Again the grim Reaper has been busy among our ranks, and it grieves us to chronicle the deaths of Messrs. A. Sheffield, F. Sappsford, of the Sydenham Club, J. Griffiths, of the Glebe Club, well known as a convoyer on many occasions, and J. Becks, who at one time

recorded the doings of our birds in the "Sun" paper. We extend our sympathy to their bereaved families.

Although guaranteed May delivery, our A.R.P. rings have not yet reached us, but no doubt we will get them first mail in June. Of course the mails are so few and far between, that it may have been impossible for them to reach Sydney last month. However we hope to be in a position to despatch the large numbers already ordered, before the ink is dry on this. All those who have ordered rings, may rest assured that the rings will be posted the moment they are available. Remember every ring carries the right to win our A.R.P. Prizes, which will grow in size and number as the years go by.

Our Stud and Loft Record Book is in the printer's hands, and will be ready in a week's time. Every fancier will enjoy reading the articles in this book, and will find many an hour's interesting study in the stud register section. We are incorporating with the above loft record sheets that were found so useful last year by many fanciers, also some sheets for noting the training done by each bird. We feel sure that the little book will be found useful, and appreciated by the fancy generally. We have made the selling price, 2s 6d, as low as possible; in fact, it just covers the net cost of the book, but we are satisfied if we get our own money back, feeling sure that a stud book will help the fancy onward, and that we shall reap our reward later on.

Monro and Son, 166 Thomas Street, Sydney, will have a supply of A.R.P. rings on hand for local fanciers as soon as they are available. It will pay to slip one on every squeaker, even if you have to double ring it. You will kick yourself next season if you miss an A.R.P. prize through neglecting to use a threepenny ring. They will also have a supply of Stud Register Books.

THEORIES AND QUERIES.

This month sees the Sydney fanciers hard at it conditioning and training their birds for the various races which commence on both routes on 21st instant. Already some of the eager ones amongst the clubs have organised training races from short distances, and their members have enjoyed some sport amongst themselves. The beauty of these races is that one soon knows the result, birds home in an hour or two, and there is none of the long waiting that attends the longer races.

There seems to be a prevailing idea among a great number of fanciers that condition means thinness, and that they have only to get their birds fine enough and they will win races. This is one of the biggest mistakes it is possible to make, and to my mind accounts for a great many of the losses experienced in the middle distances. These poor birds have managed to struggle home from the shorter distances, and some may have won a prize or two on an easy day, but put them up in a head

wind, 200 miles from home, and it is a case of good-bye.

Let the novice take note of the birds owned by a man whose name appears consistently well up the list season after season, and he will see they always look lively and bright, a sort of comfortable look about them. Of course, I don't mean to have your birds so fat that they open their mouths and gape if asked to fly for half an hour around home, but let them have a round, firm feel when taken in the hand. I like them to feel solid, something to hold, not just a loose bundle of frame and feathers. If a fancier intends laying himself out for the short races it is necessary to give his birds plenty of short tosses, even if it is only a mile or two single up it gives the bird confidence and gets it accustomed to homing by itself. In 1907 I had a very good young bird season, and it so happened that I was in a position to give my birds plenty of single up work. Whenever I went out I took a basket of birds under the seat of the pony phaeton, and every now and then let go a bird single up. They were taken any and every direction, and learned the country all round home. This evidently stood to them in the races, as I was placed in every young bird race.

Some of my friends will smile when they read my advice on training, but my tip to them is to do as I write, not as I do, for if I lived a mile nearer the railway station I should not take the liberties with my birds that I now sometimes do. And again, out of it in the short races never worries me.

Old birds that have been over the course before can be given good long jumps, provided they are fit. I don't think it is necessary to worry them with a lot of preliminary training tosses.

TRIER.

ADVERTISERS' NOTES.

Messrs. Ward Bros. are compelled to dispose of all their birds owing to the ill health of Mr. R. M. Ward. Unfortunately he is feeling totally unable to give the birds the required attention, and rather than see them neglected has decided to dispose of the whole lot, and thus leave himself free to follow his doctor's advice and take a long rest in the country. No expense has been spared in getting together the best birds possible from Australian and English lofts. A great number of prizes have been won in Fed. Club races, and a perusal of the list will show that many of the actual winners and also the stock birds that have bred the winners are offered. When I tell you that the loft these birds are housed in cost over £100 to build, and is recognised as one of the best in Victoria, it will give you an idea of the enthusiasm and thoroughness of Messrs. Ward Bros. Mr. Penry tells me that the birds are worthy of the loft they are housed in. They are a beautiful lot, and I am sure will be snapped up eagerly, so take