

two fanciers have exactly the same taste, and consequently no two, in choosing and carefully matching their birds, prefer or select exactly the same. As each man naturally admires his own birds, he goes on continually exaggerating by selection whatever slight peculiarities they may possess. This will more especially happen with fanciers living in different countries, who do not compare their stocks or aim at a common standard of perfection. Thus, when a mere strain has once been formed, unconscious selection steadily tends to augment the amount of difference, and thus converts the strain into a sub-breed and this ultimately into a well-marked breed or race.

The principle of correlation of growth should never be lost sight of. Most pigeons have small feet, apparently caused by their lessened use, and from correlation, as it would appear, their beaks have likewise become reduced in length. The beak is a conspicuous organ, and, as soon as it had thus become perceptibly shortened, fanciers would almost certainly strive to reduce it still more by the continued selection of birds with the shortest beaks; whilst at the same time other fanciers, as we know has actually been the case, would in other sub-breeds, strive to increase its length. With the increased length of the beak, the tongue becomes greatly lengthened, as do the eyelids with the increased development of the eye-wattles; with the reduced or increased size of the feet, the number of the scutellæ vary; with the length of the wing, the number of the primary wing-feathers differ; and with the increased length of the body in the pouter the number of the sacral vertebræ is augmented. These important and correlated differences of structure do not invariably characterise any breed; but if they had been attended to and selected with as much care as the more conspicuous external differences, there can hardly be a doubt that they would have been rendered constant. Fanciers could assuredly have made a race of Tumblers with nine instead of ten primary wing-feathers, seeing how often the number nine appears without any wish on their part, and indeed in the case of the white-winged varieties in opposition to their wish. In a similar manner, if the vertebræ had