

successful breeder of Pouters in the world, informs me that at present (1858) the standard length of the body is not less than 18 inches; but he has measured one bird 19 inches in length, and has heard of 20 and 22 inches, but doubts the truth of these latter statements. The standard length of the leg is now 7 inches, but Mr. Bult has recently measured two of his own birds with legs $7\frac{1}{2}$ long. So that in the 123 years which have elapsed since 1735 there has been hardly any increase in the standard length of the body; 17 or 18 inches was formerly reckoned a very good length, and now 18 inches is the minimum standard; but the length of leg seems to have increased, as Moore never saw one quite 7 inches long; now the standard is 7, and two of Mr Bult's birds measured $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length. The extremely slight improvement in Pouters, except in the length of the leg, during the last 123 years, may be partly accounted for by the neglect which they suffered, as I am informed by Mr. Bult, until within the last 20 or 30 years. About 1765³⁸ there was a change of fashion, stouter and more feathered legs being preferred to thin and nearly naked legs.

Fantails.—The first notice of the existence of this breed is in India, before the year 1600, as given in the 'Ayeen Akbery,'³⁹ at this date, judging from Aldrovandi, the breed was unknown in Europe. In 1677 Willughby speaks of a Fantail with 26 tail-feathers; in 1735 Moore saw one with 36 feathers; and in 1824 MM. Boitard and Corbié assert that in France birds can easily be found with 42 tail-feathers. In England, the number of the tail-feathers is not at present so much regarded as their upward direction and expansion. The general carriage of the bird is likewise now much valued. The old descriptions do not suffice to show whether in these latter respects there has been much improvement: but if Fantails with their heads and tails touching had formerly existed, as at the present time, the fact would almost certainly have been noticed. The Fantails which are now found in India probably show the state of the race, as far as carriage is concerned, at the date of their introduction into Europe; and some, said to have been brought from Calcutta, which I kept alive, were in a marked manner inferior to our exhibition birds. The Java Fantail shows the same difference in carriage; and although Mr. Swinhoe has counted 18 and 24 tail-feathers in his birds, a first-rate specimen sent to me had only 14 tail-feathers.

Jacobins.—This breed existed before 1600, but the hood, judging from the figure given by Aldrovandi, did not enclose the head nearly so perfectly as at present: nor was the head then white; nor were the wings and tail so long, but this last character might have been overlooked by the rude artist. In Moore's time, in 1735, the Jacobin was considered the smallest kind of pigeon, and the bill is

³⁸ 'A Treatise on Domestic Pigeons,' dedicated to Mr. Mayor, 1765. Preface, p. xiv.

³⁹ Mr. Blyth has given a translation

of part of the 'Ayeen Akbery' in 'Annals and Mag. of Nat. Hist.,' vol. xix. 1847, p. 104.