

land; and it was never wet, as drainage went away at once. The birds were fed with the best corn and other seeds, sopped bread with water, cabbage, and lettuce. The water used for the birds was always rain-water, and no other birds were with them. No meat, liver, or milk was given them as food. They were in a private part of the Museum grounds, and the public could not get to them. The only creatures we ever saw in the aviary were sparrows and rats. Could the rats communicate the disease? I should add that after the birds had been here one month a hen died, and later on I lost a cock-bird, but unfortunately, I am sorry to say, I made no examination of either. I have since heard that other societies who imported the Reeves pheasant lost all by death before turning out.

ART. XIII.—*Crossing with the Muscovy Duck.*

By COLEMAN PHILLIPS.

[*Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 11th July, 1899.*]

THE specimen before members was bred by crossing some pure-bred Muscovy ducks, imported from Sydney about the year 1892, with, I believe, a pure-bred slaty-blue Andalusian drake (if that is the proper name of the breed, being of the same colour as the Andalusian fowls), which are often brought into Wellington from the neighbouring coast ports and sold by the auctioneers about February and March in each year. I only managed to rear one of this cross myself, but a sitting of the eggs I gave to Mr. W. J. Martin, of Huangaroa (in the Wairarapa), about October, 1898. He was lucky enough to hatch out three drakes, one of which is now before the meeting. On the 29th March, 1899, being about four months old, this duck weighed $4\frac{1}{2}$ lb. without the skin, &c. It appears so excellent a cross that Sir James Hector has very kindly had the bird stuffed. Great credit is due to Mr. Martin for the admirable manner in which he has reared this drake. The result shows what good feeding and a good cross will do—he reared it chiefly upon pollard and soaked wheat. As we are anxious to breed good poultry for the English market this specimen may prove useful as a guide. The weight of the dead bird at so young an age should recommend it to breeders, although it might have been killed one month earlier with advantage, but Mr. Martin thought it better to keep it until the neck-feathers had obtained their proper colouring. I think it would have been in more prime condition and a better weight than at present had it been killed at three months old.