

## THE POULTRY INDUSTRY.

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### APRIL WORK.

APRIL is a month of the year when the pullet must be depended on for the main egg-yield. The majority of the old birds are passing through the moult, and will not lay well till the latter end of winter and in spring. Obviously the main objective at the present time is to give the pullets every opportunity to produce the dear-season egg. They should, of course, be now well settled in their winter quarters, for changing pullets from house to house after they have commenced to lay is only inviting the moulting process. They should be receiving a plentiful supply of good food, with green material in abundance. The meat ration should, where possible, be given by itself at a regular time—say, at midday; though where meat substitutes have to be fed, these can be supplied with the morning mash. It is unwise, however, to provide the same proportion of meat food to every member of the flock irrespective of the individual egg-laying capacity. I have seen a pen of six record layers ravenously eat up a 1 lb. piece of boiled liver, while an adjoining pen of six poor layers would not touch the meat. This was a repeated occurrence not only with the pens in question, but with other pens of varying egg-producing capacity. In the case cited the heavy-laying birds ate up every particle of the 1 lb. weight of liver day after day without any harmful effect, and this in face of the fact that the hot morning mash was mixed with meat-soup. The result was that they established a record in egg-yield and were in excellent condition at the end of their season of exceptional production. In feeding meat substitutes great care is necessary to guard against ill effects following the feeding of the concentrated nitrogenous material. It is not to be supposed that only heavy layers have ovarian troubles, generally the result of an over-supply of blood-meal. I have seen one of the poorest layers in a flock affected with this trouble. She had been forced to eat in her morning mash a much higher proportion of blood-meal than her nature demanded, and with the inevitable result.

Green food is always a necessary accompaniment to healthy and vigorous stock, to say nothing of the rich yolk colour always to be found where the birds have a plentiful supply of green stuff. There is nothing better than watercress. The best-looking flocks I have seen lately have been receiving liberal supplies of this cheap food material.