The Farm.

POULTRY FARMING.—There has been for several years a constant supply of advice from sections of the public who are blessed with more theory than practice upon the subject of poultry farming. Some who ought to know better have described systems showing how profitable the idea might be made, while others, who never kept more than a score of fowls in a back garden have ventured to teach the public and to mislead them. It is of no use for people to quote what is done in other countries, and then apply the idea to this, although, as a matter of fact, poultry farming is less often attempted than it is in England; and it would be difficult to find at the present moment any single undertaking in France which can possibly be termed a poultry farm. Just as there are fowls and fowls, so there are farms and farms—the one an establishment which has resulted from some hair-brained enthusiast, replete with fine buildings, machinery, systems of heating appliances, and all the pure races you can name; the other, which is not a poultry farm at all, but merely a farm on which poultry are kept, having nothing of the fantastic or expensive about it, but merely the plain, unpretending sheds and buildings which are found upon an ordinary farm, and which are converted for the purpose with as little expense and trouble as possible. The misfortune is that, in spite of all practical teaching, people will base all sorts of ideas upon the most elaborate calculations and come to the conclusion that a profit is certain and assured; whereas if a little trouble is taken at first to ascertain the probabilities of return, a better idea will be obtained. Presuming that an individual is able to place 1000 new-laid eggs in the market every morning, I would ask, where would he find a customer at a price which would remunerate him? I would undertake, at almost any season, to supply such a customer, if he could name him, at a lower price still, by means of a few large farmers, who would be only too glad to sell their eggs at anything beyond country prices. Inquiry at any large retail establishment has had but one result, such as would be enough to depress any but the most determined enthusiasts; for when they tell you that the best French eggs are quite as good as English new-laid and much cheaper, what is the answer to be? London shopkeepers do not care for English eggs, if they cost more than the French; and they are certainly not willing to pay new-laid prices, because they would be robbed of so much of their profit. For some time eggs have been in the country as low as 14d. a score, and I have no doubt that any dealer could place them upon the market at 15d. to 16d.

DRIVEN BEES.—Although a swarm containing from three and a half to four pounds of bees will in a good season be able not only to fill a large hive with comb and brood, but to store surplus honey and give off a late swarm as well, a moment's thought will make it evident that the same quantity of driven bees would not be able to do anything like the same amount of work, the reasons being that as the season is much later, the days are shorter and sometimes too cold, and there is much less time for the bees to work in getting their hive furnished and stored with honey for the winter. It follows, then, that to make up a good strong colony of driven bees we must put at least eight or nine pounds of bees in each hive, and they must be liberally fed with sugar syrup as a substitute for the honey which they are unable to gather so late in the year. For the purposes of this article we will assume that the weight of the bees in such skeps as are generally to be met with in Ireland is about four pounds, and two lots of driven bees will be required for each frame hive. To unite two such lots all we need do is, on the morning after driving, to turn them up and sprinkle them with syrup scented with a few drops of peppermint, etc., etc., and throw the bees out of one skep into the other, and tie up as rapidly as possible. If this is done properly the bees out of one stock will not be able to distinguish those from the other, and there will be no fighting amongst them. After being hived, the bees will require from twenty to thirty pounds of sugar made into syrup, which, supposing them to have been driven not later than the middle of August, will enable them to store the hive with sufficient food for winter consumption. Stocks built up in this way almost invariably turn out well in spring, and are, as a rule, ready to swarm or store honey earlier than old-established stocks. Its cheapness will make this plan commend itself to persons who wish to begin bee-keeping in frame hives with the smallest outlay. To make this clear, we will suppose that for eight pounds of bees we pay six shillings; for twenty-five pounds of sugar six shillings and three pence, we have, at a cost of a little over twelve shillings, a good strong stock of bees, the only drawback being that no return of profits need be looked for till next spring. It is unnecessary to point out that the cost of the hive itself has not been taken into account, as its price may be anything from ten shillings to almost as many pounds, according to the length of purse and taste of the purchaser; but as a hive should be bought in any case the cost will not effect our calculation. It must be understood that the bee-keeper cannot utilise his own bees as described for the simple and sufficient reason that the different lots of bees forming the stock would, on returning from the fields after their first flight, separate, and the bees of each lot would return to their respective stands, where, as there were no hive to receive them, they would hover about till they became exhausted and fell to the ground. As bees at this time of year do not fly very far from home, two bee-keepers living a couple of miles or more apart might exchange bees, and each lot would then keep together. If a frame hive is not at hand, the best plan will be to advertise the bees for sale, and plenty of customers will turn up. The frames of the hive in which the bees are set to work must be fitted with sheets of comb, foundation from three to seven inches in depth. Although the first cost of the full sheets will be double that of the smaller ones, it will be more economical in the end to use them if possible, but in case they have to be fixed in the frames where the hive is bought, it will be safer to use sheets not more than three inches deep, as larger ones sometimes get broken from the frames by the knocking about which the hive undergoes while on its way home.—*Dublin Freeman.*

EGG-PRODUCING.—"Fanny Field," whose exceptional achievement in egg-production during the cold months has been heretofore chronicled in these columns, reports to the *Prairie Farmer* her methods of feeding, about which some of our readers have inquired. Hens must be supplied with egg-making material, and this must not be consumed as fuel to keep them warm. Success presupposes comfortable and clean quarters. Corn is fattening, but on this ration alone, even in abundance, "there will not be eggs enough to pay for the shelling of the corn." "My way of feeding fowls in winter—and it works wonderfully well—is to give them a warm breakfast every morning just as soon as they can see to eat, a few handfuls of grain at noon, and a full feed of grain at night. The warm breakfast is made of vegetables, turnips, beets, carrots, or potatoes, boiled and mashed up with wheat bran; or oatmeal scalded with skim milk; or refuse from the kitchen boiled up, and the soup thickened with bran; and when sweet apples are plentiful, we boil them and mix them with cornmeal—sometimes one thing and sometimes another. We don't believe in feeding on one thing all the time, and the hens don't believe in it either. I don't think that my biddies need the noon food because they are hungry, but I give it to them to make them scratch—for exercise, and to keep them out of mischief. I scatter it around among the litter under the shed, and let them dig it out. This 'lunch' is generally oats or buck wheat, and once in a while sunflower seed. At night I generally feed with corn; but if I could get wheat cheap enough, I should feed that at least half of the time. My fowls have water or milk by them all the time, and green food is supplied by fastening cabbage-heads up where the fowls can help themselves. Sometimes, when somebody has time to attend to it, we give them a change of green food in the shape of raw turnips or sweet apples chopped fine. Two winters ago I took a new departure on the meat question, and now, instead of fussing to cook it and deal out a little at a time, I just hang up a piece and let the fowls eat all they want. When they have meat within reach all the time there is not the slightest danger of their eating too much. I get cheap meat from the butcher, and I am sure I am paid twice over for the outlay."—*The Field.*

NOT IN THE BACK WOODS.

THE scandalous practice of selling advowsons, with "next presentations to the livings," has given rise from time to time to extraordinary scenes, but never, perhaps, to one more extraordinary than that of which a report now lies before us. We shall not say just yet where it occurred, but will summarise the description for the benefit of our readers.

There was an advowson to be sold by public auction, and, according to the auctioneer, whose name was Tewson, many advantageous circumstances were attached to the "property." In the first place the incumbent was 66 years of age—had, in fact, reached a time of life when it might be a tolerably safe speculation to discount his death. Then the purchaser would be allowed 4 per cent. on his money while waiting for the old gentleman's retirement to another and better world. Besides, whenever it should please Providence to create the expected vacancy in the living, the reverend purchaser would find that he had obtained excellent value for his money in a variety of ways. He would not, for instance, be subject to rates or taxes for the farms included in the living, for the obvious reason that the tenants were saddled with them. He would come into possession of "a commodious family residence," with stabling for five horses, with coach-house, harness-room, granaries, greenhouse, forcing-house, kitchen garden, orchard—all very desirable things for a man who wanted to live sumptuously—and, in addition there were tennis and croquet lawns in which he could amuse himself if he were young enough, and in which his sons and daughters could amuse themselves, supposing he had a family. Finally, "the neighbouring society was good"—a decided desideratum to a man with grown up sons and daughters; and there was "fair shooting over the glebe," to suit the tastes of the incoming parson should he have a turn for field sports.

Notwithstanding the manifold advantages thus set forth, there was a Protestant curate present in the auction room who seemed to entertain strong objections to simony. The auctioneer asserted that by his brogue it was evident he was an Irishman—which, indeed, is probably enough, seeing that his name is Hennessy. Mr. Hennessy, before bidding commenced, respectfully protested against the sale. An interchange of a couple of civil questions and answers followed; when Tewson suddenly burst forth with a declaration that the curate was seeking to introduce the system of terrorism and obstruction which prevailed in Ireland. Thereupon, though the relevance of the auctioneer's remark was not particularly clear, the intelligent and sympathetic audience chorussed "Hear, hear." Encouraged by these manifestations of approval, the auctioneer shortly afterwards descended from his rostrum, like Judge Lynch from his improvised bench engaged in a struggle with the curate who preposterously objected to simony, and, with the assistance of his clerks, eventually succeeded in ejecting the obnoxious curate from the public auction room. After this feat, with a coat that had been rent in the fray, he returned to his rostrum in triumph, and sought for bids for "the property."

This disgraceful scene did not, as might be hastily supposed, take place in the back woods of America. It occurred in a land whose public writers are never tired of lauding the staid and sober civilisation of their countrymen—the calmness of demeanour, the reasonableness, the respect for law and order, and all the rest of it, which have been so long vaunted as the characteristics of the English people. The Pharisaical cant is now pretty well exploded even with foreign nations upon whom at one time it imposed, and to delude whom, chiefly the shocking false delineation of the English national character was wont to be painted. The incident above briefly described is but one of the numberless proofs furnished weekly by the English papers themselves of the true English nature.—*Nation.*