

# On the Land

## MARKET REPORTS.

The yarding of fat cattle at Burnside for last week's market numbered 265, a fair proportion being prime quality bullocks, with a few pens of good cows and heifers, the balance being made up of plain steers, with a good number of fair cows and heifers. Prime beef sold at a slight advance, while medium was firm at previous rates. Prime heavy bullocks made £15 to £18 7s 6d, extra to £21 12s 6d, prime £11 15s to £14, light to inferior from £6 10s, prime heavy cows and heifers made from £8 to £10 2s 6d, others from £4 10s. Fat Sheep.—The yarding consisted of 1889 the half of which were prime quality wethers, with a few pens of prime ewes, the balance being made up of light ewes, with a truck or two of unfinished wethers. The market opened on a par with the previous week's rates, but prices weakened towards the end of the sale to the extent of 1s to 1s 6d. Prime heavy wethers made 44s to 49s 9d, prime 38s 6d to 43s, unfinished from 31s, prime heavy ewes 39s 6d to 43s, prime 32s 6d to 35s 3d, light from 24s 6d. Fat Lambs.—654 were yarded, prime lambs maintaining the preceding week's rates, while graziers were keen buyers for all unfinished lots. Fat Pigs.—A small yarding, the previous week's prices being fully maintained.

There were heavy yardings at last week's Addington sale. Fat Lambs, store sheep, and fat sheep improved in price, whilst fat cattle, were a shade easier. Fat Lambs.—An entry of 3600. A keener sale, with an improvement in prices. Prime made 42s per head, which is equal to 12½d per lb. Extra prime lambs to 47s 7d, prime 40s to 44s, medium 37s to 39s 6d, light 34s to 35s 6d, store 31s 3d to 33s. Fat Sheep.—A small yarding of eight races and a-half. It was a slightly firmer sale, exporters being unable to buy much at prices ruling. Extra prime wethers made up to 51s 3d, prime 43s to 46s, medium 39s 6d to 42s 6d, light 36s to 39s, extra prime ewes to 42s 7d, prime 37s 6d to 40s, medium 34s to 37s, light 31s 6d to 33s 6d, old 29s to 31s. Fat Cattle.—A large entry, and an easing by 20s per head. Extra prime steer beef made up to 45s per 100lb, prime 40s to 43s, medium 37s 6d to 39s 6d, light 33s to 37s, and rough down to 25s. Extra prime bullocks to £20 17s 6d, prime £16 17s 6d to £19, medium £13 15s to £16 15s, light £9 10s to £13 10s, extra prime cows to £14, prime £9 to £12, ordinary £6 to £8 15s, aged £3 to £5 10s, extra prime heifers to £15, prime £9 15s to £12 5s, medium £6 10s to £9 10s. Vealers.—A fair-sized entry. Prices were a shade better than on the previous week. Runners to £7 2s 6d, good vealers £3 12s 6d to £5 17s 6d, good calves £2 2s to £3 5s, small 15s to £1 2s 6d. Fat Pigs.—A medium entry. The demand was only fair. Choppers £2 10s to £5 15s, light baconers £3 10s to £4, heavy £4 2s 6d to £4 15s (average price per lb 5½d to 7d), light porkers £2 8s to £2 14s, heavy £2 16s to £3 5s (average price per lb 7½d to 8d).

## BURNT EARTH.

This is a valuable fertiliser, as well as improving the texture of most soils, and heavy ones in particular, and now is the time to start the fire.

Start the fire with wood, and when burning nicely put on a good layer of rough clods, or turfy lumps, with some small coal or slack, between them, and when this burns through again, add more, until the heap is sufficiently large.

The product of such a fire is rich in potash, one of the most valuable of all plant foods, and is almost unequalled as a food for fruit trees and bushes of all kinds, as well as for most root crops, etc., etc.

The best way to dispose of garden refuse, such as dead weeds, the haulm of exhausted peas or beans, cabbage stumps, etc., is to burn the whole as soon as it can be got into a sufficiently dry condition.

The fire destroys all the seeds of the weeds, as well as any insects or their eggs, germs of fungoid or other diseases, and the product is perfectly sweet and wholesome. This is very useful to add to the soil when planting fruit trees.

## ON HOUSING POULTRY.

It is a grievous mistake (writes a contributor to a Home journal) to think that any kind of a house is good enough for poultry, because it is not. When we remember that all through the winter much more than half of the time has to be spent indoors the necessity for good housing is obvious.

Not only should the abode of the feathered flock be wind and water-tight: there are various other points that have to be considered.

In the first place, size and accommodation has to be taken into account, and the house should be rather understocked than overstocked, for there is no surer way of ruining the health of the birds than by overcrowding and overheating.

I know of hen houses on some farms where the wonder is that the birds live, so dark, so dirty, so unhealthy are they, and yet the owners of these flocks wonder why the hens don't lay better. They would be insulted if you told them that the conditions under which they were keeping their birds had much to do with it.

## Ventilation.

This, in the house, should be provided for in some sort of way, and that near the roof so that when the birds are on roost they are not exposed to draughts in any way, the ventilation arrangements being well over their heads.

Impure air is just as bad for poultry as it is for human beings, lowering vitality and predisposing to ill health.

There is not the same necessity to have openings for the inroad of fresh air as there is for spaces being provided for the exit of foul air, because foul air, being lighter, rises, and will pass through the ventilation arrangements, while, when a vacuum is created by the exit of the foul air, fresh air will come in anywhere and everywhere to take its place.

## Sunlight.

This fine germ destroyer should have free access to the poultry-house, windows being provided both in the house and in the door, which, if possible, should face the south, so that every available ray of sunshine may enter. For this purpose and for the inflow of the health-giving wind, doors and windows should be kept open during the day, unless a driving storm should threaten the house with wet. To prevent this, however, some arrangement can easily be made.

## Perches.

Seeing that the birds are compelled at this season to spend quite a long time on roost, it is necessary that their resting place should be comfortable and reposeful. To avoid fighting and scrambling for the highest perch, the roosts should be made of a uniform height, not too far from the ground.

High perches not infrequently lead to troubles that with attention in this respect might well be avoided. In the heavy breeds especially such troubles as rupture of the oviduct and bumble-foot, with others, are caused by the use of high perches. From one and a-half to two feet is high enough for any of the breeds.

The best sort of a roost is a flat one, though many use round ones. There is, however, much more support for the bird on a flat perch, and to allow the toes of a firm grip the edges should be rounded. Tiling battens are very satisfactory for the purpose. Perches should not be fixed in a permanent manner, but should be made so that they can be moved for cleaning purposes.

## Flooring.

One of the best floors for a hen house is just the natural earth, on which there need be no litter, and it will keep clean quite a long while where the necessary dropping boards are used and kept daily freed from excrement. For the sake of cleanness and freshness it should be renewed at intervals.

Where the floors are of wood it will be necessary to have them well raised up from the ground to prevent damp and the decay of the floor. These must be provided with plenty of clean dry litter in the form of chaff, peat moss, straw, or dried bracken.

Of all floors cement ones are the least to be recommended, for they are responsible for many ailments, such as cramp, leg weakness, bumble-foot, etc.

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