

The History of the Cheese Business in Oxford County.

We will have to go back to the time of Jordon roads, stumps, log cabins and forests wild, when Mr. Hiram Rannay, (now deceased) the pioneer in cheese making of this county, if not of Ontario, left his home in Vermont in 1831, to brave the toils and hardships of a new territory, and such a home in the then wilds of Canada. On his first removal from Vermont he settled in Derham, in Lower Canada, where he remained four years, but somewhat doubtful of success there he again in 1835 took wing and started towards the setting sun. This last journey was no small undertaking in those days of lumber wagons and open stage coaches, but not being easily discouraged, he, together with his wife and family, started on the long tour of seven hundred miles. After several weeks they arrived safely at their destination, Derham Township, County of Oxford, where he settled on fifty acres of land, and being acquainted with dairy business in Vermont, he concluded to try it in his new home, and was among the first to introduce into Canada what has since proved to be one of the great enterprises of the country. Like all successful men in new undertakings he commenced in a small way, starting with only five cows, increasing his dairy and adding to his farm in proportion, his market prices and reputation improving in the same ratio, till one hundred cows constituted his dairy. His first efforts were in making small cheeses from 15 to 20 lbs. each, and selling one or two in a place on the way, and in the towns of Ingersoll, London, Brantford and Hamilton, often on the road a week at a time in disposing of a load, sometimes bringing a portion of it back, unable to find sale for it in those days at 6 to 7 cents per lb, the markets being so limited that one small load was more than it required. But how changed is all this now, when buyers in the small town of Ingersoll alone stand ready to purchase their hundreds or

thousands of tons of the precious article at prices almost double those obtained when Mr. Rannay was making his first efforts in building up a cheese market in "this Canada of ours." As his dairy grew, so did his cheese, and he sometimes made what was then considered mammoths, weighing from one hundred to one thousand pounds each. At his death he left to his family what would be considered, for a farmer, a small fortune of some seventy thousand dollars.

Mr. James Harris, of West Oxford, whose residence is here shown, another of the pioneers of Oxford in cheese making, commenced, as his father-in-law, Mr. Ramsay, did before him, in a small way, and has been equally successful on a rented farm and dairy of nine cows in 1848. The ensuing year he purchased one hundred acres of land, going in debt for it, and afterwards year by year adding to his dairy and farm till the former comprised 60 to 70 cows, and the latter some four hundred acres. He made on the old dairy system for seventeen years, but in 1865, finding the demand increasing, he discarded the dairy for the factory system, and erected what is well known now as the Ingersoll Cheese Factory, one mile south of Ingersoll, it being one of the three first factories built in Canada. He was also the first to introduce the branch factory system into Canada,

having built in 1866 his first branch factory in Derham. In 1867 he formed a joint stock company, the Canada Cheese Manufacturing Company, with a capital of ten thousand dollars, on the branch system. This company erected five factories, among them the Harrietsville Cheese Factory, in the county of Middlesex, which is amongst the best known and most successful ones in this country, making as high as one hundred and fifty tons per year. In the year 1866, Mr. Harris made the world renowned mammoth cheese. It took 35 tons of milk or one milking of 7,000 cows to make it. It weighed 7,000 lbs., and cost to manufacture, including value of milk, \$2,000. It was kept at the factory on exhibition for two years, and was visited by thousands there, who came to see the largest cheese ever made. It was exhibited in the principal cities in Canada and the United States. Mr. Harris sold it in New York to be shipped to Liverpool, where it created a great sensation, was escorted through the principal streets by a large procession, with bands of music, &c., and was exhibited in that and other cities in England, and on being cut proved of excellent quality. There is no doubt this Canada mammoth helped in no small degree to develop the factory system in Canada, and



POULTRY YARD

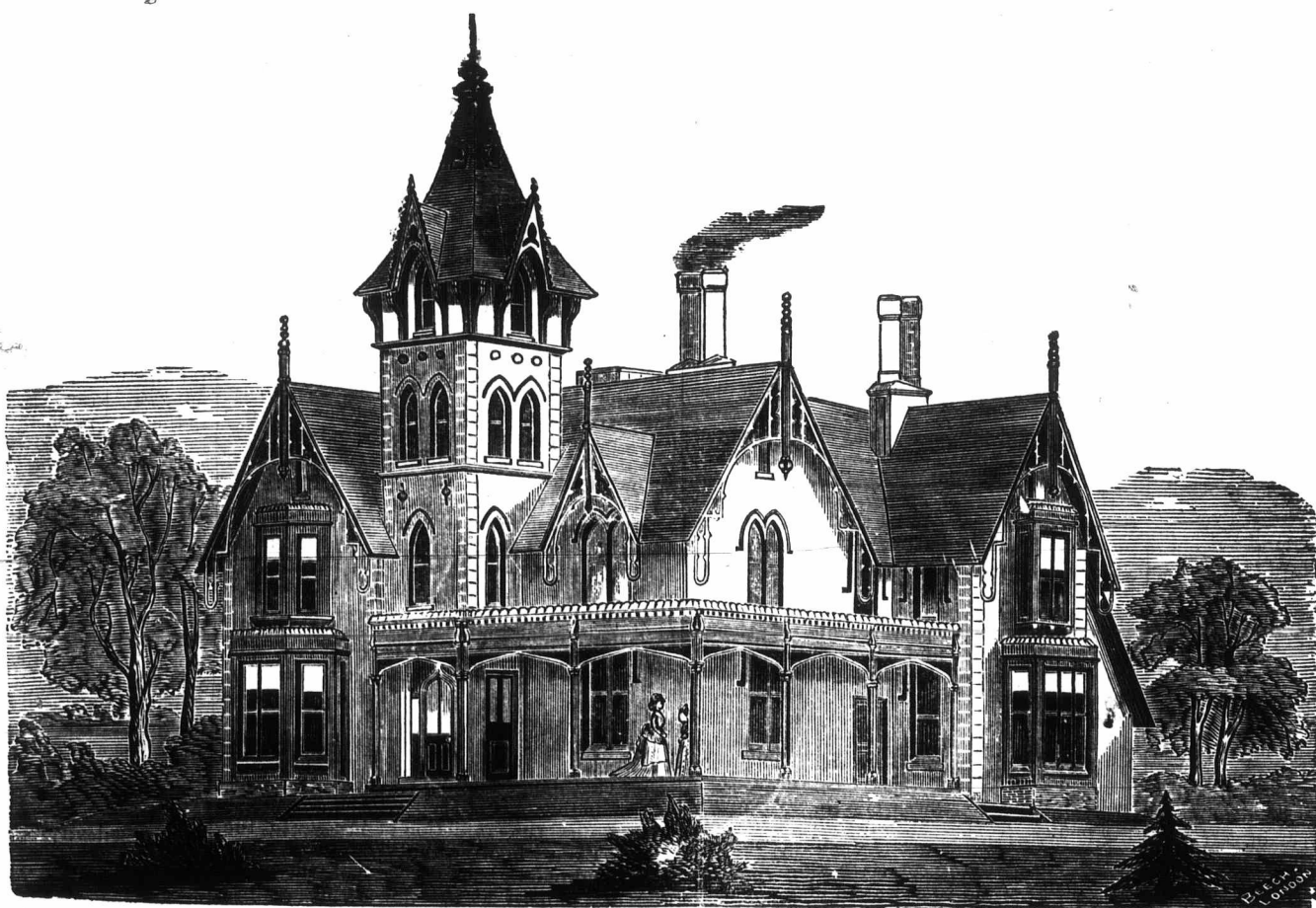
BREEDS OF FOWLS.

The following is from a very able review of the new addition, just published, of Tegetmeier's "Poultry Book," which appeared in the London SATURDAY REVIEW for Sept. 20th:

"Assuming that, directly or indirectly, it is for the table, for home consumption, or the market, the poultry are reared and fattened, it is not hard to glean from Tegetmeier's, with whose dicta most henwives and practical poulterers will agree which are the likeliest and least costly birds to keep. Two data on the subject are that 'a table fowl should be all breast, with short limbs and small bones,' and that fowls are only in perfection for the table before they have attained their full development. This guides us to the choice of birds of a broad full-breasted type, and also having an aptitude to ripen early and to repay attention to their keep. A good many sorts

in had a claim to consideration, but inquiry will prove that this is only for home consumption. Its yellow skin, its tendency to put on fat, and most of all its development of leg at the expense of the finer—though it should be said in extenuation, that the Cochins, a leg is much less tough than that of other fowls—disqualify it for a first class table fowl, though it has very high merits, such as hardihood, winter profligacy, docility and quick growth for household purposes. Mated with the large French fowls, the Cochins produce chickens of rapid growth and large size fine, fat, white skinned table birds though not of course admissible for exhibition, or for stock purpose. Of non-European birds, a category in which we may safely place the Brahmas, though it is a vexed question whether they are Asiatic or American in their origin, there can be no question that the most useful importation for all purposes has been the Brahma, the largest and finest of domestic fowls. With full broad, prominent breast, a back short and broad between the shoulders and across the hips, a curved or slender neck, and wings small and tight, the true Brahma is a good fatterer, a first-rate table fowl, early ripe, and, at maturity, of enormous proportions. Whether tenderer or juicier than the Cochins, it is equally as docile, and will

keep itself better. It is also very hardy, will stand wet and cold, and is a good layer, especially in winter. Mr. Tegetmeier introduces into this addition a hint to the judges in poultry shows designed to avert the deterioration of this excellent breed. The tendency, it seems, is to award prizes to size, and not as the schedule directs to high condition, beauty of plumage, cushion and fluff above the thighs, purity of breed, and other characteristics. And if this be persisted in, the danger is that we may get, in the place of the true Brahmas, 'gaunt, flat sided, tapered, sternal, short feathered' creatures, far removed from the ideal which has till recently been very nearly realized in the best prize-pens. A thorough John Bull will go in for Dorkins, and small blame to him. They grow very quickly, and put their flesh, as they should, on the breast, wings, and merry-thought. The



RESIDENCE OF MR. JAMES HARRIS, WEST OXFORD

to draw the attention of English shippers to our markets. All credit is due to the pioneers of this now fast becoming one of the great staples of our country. Contrast the early efforts of those beginners with the great cheese interests of the present day, when Canada alone ships this year four hundred and fifty thousand boxes. There was shipped at Montreal up to the close of navigation, 382,000 boxes, which will be almost if not quite equal to one-third of the whole shipments of cheese from the United States the present season.

TO MAKE HENS LAY PERPETUALLY.

Give your hens half an ounce of fresh meat each chopped fine, once a day, while the ground is frozen, and they cannot get worms or insects; allow no cock to run with them, and they will lay perpetually. Try it. They also require plenty of grain, water, gravel, and lime.

In Bandera county, Texas, the past season has been one of disaster to farmers. Grasshoppers and early frosts are spoken of by one correspondent among the causes of this state of things. In Lampasas county great floods are reported; in Lampasas town forty houses were washed away and many greatly injured or destroyed.

may be put out of the question. The build of the Malay fowls, with their great height, long snaky neck, and elongated shanks, promises little in appearance; yet, because it combines a large and plump breast with a good flavor of flesh when killed early, it has some pretensions as a table fowl. The Spanish breeds, second to no fowls for great production of large eggs, limited however to summer season, are out of the question for table purposes, on account of their black legs, which the cooks and poultry dealers object to; though the Minorca breed, which is akin to them, and has taken strong root in Cornwall, Devon and the west of England, is a better and plumper table fowl, besides equaling its relations in laying. The game fowls have the drawbacks of the yellow skin, though their flesh, is well flavored; the Polish are a delicate race, very sensitive to damp, though useful as interminable layers; and the Hamburgs, though excellent in flesh and flavor, and having more flesh than you would expect from their size, are also somewhat delicate, and not what might be called an early fowl. None of these, though each has some characteristic merit, realize what we designate—"a large-sized, hardy breed, which will yield, without trouble or coddling, a good supply of large early chickens." At the first blush it might appear that the Coch-

colored breeds are best for size; but all the Dorkins, colored, white, or silver grey, are remarkable for delicate white flesh, symmetrical shape and equal distribution of fat. As they are apt to suffer from over-feeding, it is in their favor that they like a good large grass run, and do best with a fair amount of liberty. Where this is not feasible, the cross between a Dorking and a Brahma will be doubtfully desirable, for the result will be very hardy, quick-growing chicks of great weight first-rate table quality, the Brahma introducing domesticity and adding stamina. Such cross-bred chickens are not equal to pure bred Sussex or Dorkins as first-class market fowls, but from the greater number that can be reared on an ordinary farm-yard, where no very special care is given to them, they will be much more profitable. But we must not forget the cream of the French breeds, the Houdan, worthiest of its fellows in rank with the Brahma and the Dorkin as the most meritorious of fowls. Larger, heavy, short-legged with small and light bones, and a minimum of offal, like the colored Dorkin, they are hardy and quickly reared, and mature with rapidity. The chickens are fit for the table at four months, and the flesh is fine and white. The eggs, too, of the Houdan are numerous, and general fertile. It must be added that