

disturbed were much smaller though of greater number.

Reference must now be made to the plants that were removed and transplanted to that spot wherein "potatoes of a diseased character were found in 1861." The unfavourable fact must be declared, that not only the symptoms appeared, but in a great degree, and a number of these tubers were found in a highly diseased condition. The fatal truth of a failure both in the usually planted tuber, and also in that of the young plants, placed there in a perfectly healthy state, is an important matter for consideration, and which I shall endeavour to explain.

To be continued.

DECLINE OF SHEEP HUSBANDRY IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

It is satisfactory to find that warlike operations are not occupying the whole of the attention of the American people. Agriculture and pastoral occupations, which should be their mainstay, still crop up occasionally in discussions and the public journals. Let us hope that the sword may soon again be converted into the ploughshare, and the industrial harvest of the soil may be reaped instead of the bloody harvest of warfare. We have lately received at the hands of Mr. Johnson, the secretary of the New York State Agricultural Society, a copy of a very interesting paper on Fine Wool Sheep Husbandry, read before the society last year by Henry S. Randall, LL.D., of Cortland Village, New York. The subject is an important one, and very elaborately treated, as may be seen from the following digest of the points dealt with:—The origin of the Merino; its varieties; its introduction into the States; the circumstances which have affected its success; the comparative profitableness of its varieties; the expediency of crossing between varieties, and the effects of in-and-in breeding; the proper mode of selecting a flock; the art of breeding; the present course of breeding in the United States; and suggestions as to the future of the fine wool husbandry there. These subjects are much too voluminous to be treated of in a short digest, and we shall therefore content ourselves with directing attention to the last, which is indeed that in which our readers are most concerned. The observations it may be remarked, refer almost exclusively to the State of New York.

Dairying seems to be wholly driving out wool-growing in the grazing portion of the State, and grazing cattle preferred to sheep on probably a majority of the grain farms. The remarkable decrease of the latter in proportion to the population is apparent from the census returns. In 1840 there were 5,118,777 sheep in the State to 2,428,921 persons. In 1860 there were but 2,617,855 sheep to a population of

3,888,728. Cattle in the same interval had rather increased. The weight of wool obtained was, however, about the same from the lesser number of sheep as from the larger, the clip of 1860 being returned at about $9\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds.

While the vastly higher priced lands of England carry nearly two sheep for every inhabitant and within a fraction of 590 sheep for every square mile of territory, it thus appears that the State of New York has now less than one sheep to every inhabitant and less than 56 sheep for every square mile; and it further appears that the sheep have steadily decreased for twenty years, and are still continuing to decrease.

The explanation offered for this decay is, that the great flocks of the State kept for wool growing purposes anterior to 1840 were mostly of Saxon blood, and when they were abandoned as unremunerative in 1846, no other wool-growing sheep proper was left to supply their places. For the few improved American Merinos left in the country in the hands of breeders, comparatively large prices were asked. But the farmers were wholly disinclined to venture on any new and costly experiments in fine-woolled-sheep. The destruction caused among sheep by dogs has also essentially contributed to the prostration of sheep husbandry. It not only has inflicted serious, and, in the aggregate, enormous losses on the people, but it has of late years, as population and cubs have increased, driven multitudes of persons out of sheep husbandry, and prevented still more from embarking in it.

Dairying took the place of wool-growing. It proved a steadily and highly remunerative department of industry. Dairying under the best circumstances is far more profitable than sheep husbandry with inferior or middling animals; but the best sheep are as productive as the best cows, and require far less labor. By means of the rapid increase of sheep, and the great facility of promptly improving inferior ones, they will stock a farm more expeditiously, and with far less outlay, than other animals. The ordinary processes and manipulations of sheep husbandry are also simple and readily acquired. On no other domestic animal is the hazard of loss by death so small. It is as healthy and hardy as other animals, and, unlike all others, if decently managed, a good sheep can never die in the debt of man. If it dies at birth, it has consumed nothing; if it dies the first winter, its wool will pay for its consumption up to that period; if it lives to be sheared once, it brings its owner into debt to it; and if the ordinary and natural course of wool-production and breeding goes on, that indebtedness will increase uniformly, and with accelerating rapidity, until the day of its death. If the horse