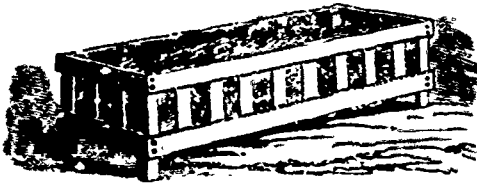


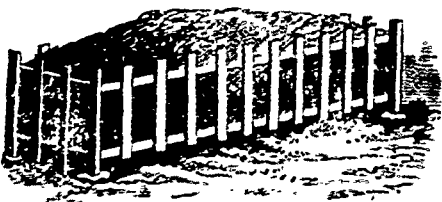
## Sheep Husbandry.

### Sheep Racks.



In feeding sheep and cattle through the winter, a large amount of fodder is wasted by being trodden under foot, for want of proper conveniences for holding hay and other feed while the animals are taking their meals. Beside the waste thus occasioned, discomfort and inconvenience are caused to the animals by their food getting into the dirt before it finds its way into their mouths. What tables, plates, and dishes are to human beings, mangers, troughs, and racks are to sheep and cattle. How to construct these conveniences, is a question often asked, and we doubt not many will be glad to receive suggestions how to get up neat, cheap, and suitable conveniences for economical and clean feeding. We proceed therefore to give a few illustrations and directions about Sheep Racks, beginning with one of the simplest and cheapest form which has been highly commended, and an illustration of which heads this column. Our cotemporary, the *Country Gentleman*, speaks favourably of it.

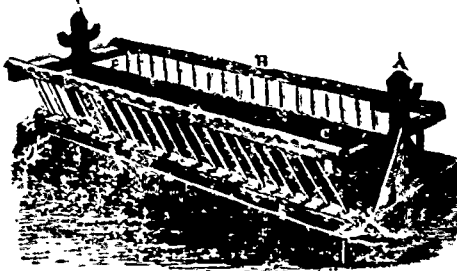
A brief description will enable our readers to understand its construction and use. The corner posts are about three feet high, and are made of 3 by 3 inch scantling, one piece twelve feet long making the floor. Inch boards are nailed on these posts, as represented in the figure, the top board being five or six inches wide, the bottom one about ten; the length of the rack may be about twelve feet, width two feet. On the horizontal boards are nailed short vertical strips, each five or six inches wide, and leaving spaces six inches wide, through which the sheep thrust their heads in eating. Boards are laid in the bottom on cross pieces, which connect the lower edges of the lower horizontal side board. These may be narrow strips with open spaces between them. The rack is now complete, hay being thrown in at the top



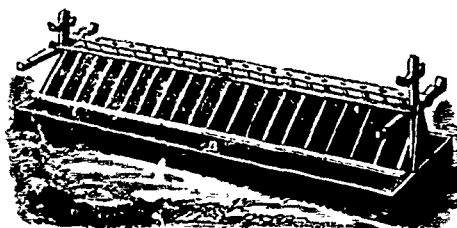
Here is another rack of a very simple and cheap character, which is much praised by the *Register of Rural Affairs*. It consists of four scantling posts about three feet long, (which should stand on flat stones,) into which the horizontal rails are let or mortised, so that the face of the rail shall be one inch within the outer side of the posts. Strips three or four inches wide are then nailed on, and should be far enough apart to admit freely the head of the largest sheep; and as animals vary in size, each farmer should first ascertain by measurement, before constructing his racks, the proper size. Six inches will be a proper distance in most cases. The advantages of this rack are its lightness; facility of construction; cheapness; compactness, rendering it easily packed away; it may be used for making sheep pens; and does not allow the hay seed to enter the wool, as is the case with all open racks inclining outwards. The only disadvantage is the want of a feeding trough; but for ordinary purposes these troughs are most convenient and most easily cleaned, if made separately. Troughs for sheep are usually made the shape of a common pig-trough, only longer. They are better, however, with flat bottoms. The V

shaped trough allows the grain or meal to get wedged down in a mass at the lower angle, and tempts the animal to eat too fast, while a flat-bottomed trough admits of the feed being strewn in a thin layer, and compels the sheep to eat more deliberately.

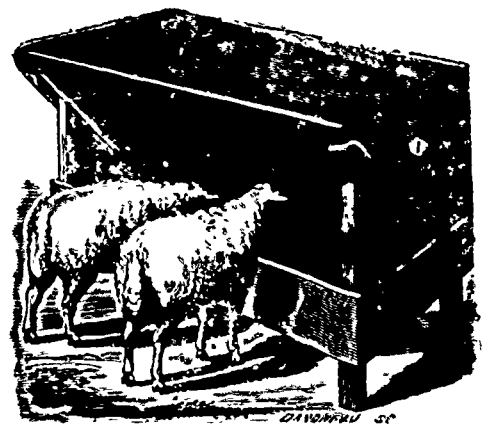
But little lumber is required for either of these racks. We specify what will be needed for the first, as follows—One piece of 3 by 3 scantling twelve feet long, two inch boards, ten inches wide and twelve feet long, two five inches wide and twelve feet long, four end boards, five and ten inches wide respectively, and twenty-five feet of slats: fifteen feet of bottom boards complete the materials—the whole of these would be about ninety feet, and would cost seventy five cents to a dollar and a half in different localities. Any farmer of fair ingenuity would make one in half a day—costing not to exceed two dollars for the whole—and paying for itself every month while in use in the amount saved.



We now come to something more elaborate, and give two illustrations of another rack which the *Wisconsin Farmer* pronounces to be "just the thing." While setting forth the merits of this particular rack, our Western cotemporary makes some excellent remarks on the general subject of conveniences for feeding animals, a portion of which we quote—"Whatever will contribute to the relish and good feeling, in a word, to the general satisfaction of an animal, will in the same proportion promote health and facilitate fattening. And yet nothing is more common, even with those farmers who take the trouble to provide racks and troughs, as herein urged, than to allow the depositories of provender to become foul and disagreeable to such an extent as to deprive them of a good share of the advantages they were intended to secure." In the above illustration, A is the standard or centre post, 2 by 4 scantling; height four feet. B is the rack, two feet wide, the slats 4 inches from centre to centre. C is the centre board, 16 inches wide, closes at the top, 8 inches apart at the bottom. D is the trough which catches the seed and fine stuff pulled out with the hay; space from bottom of rack to edge of trough 4 inches. E is the arm, 42 inches long, to support the upper rail of the rack when thrown open, the entire width of platform 42 inches, side pieces to platform 5 to 6 inches. When the hay has been placed in it, the upper rails of the rack are pushed towards the centre post into the groove which is seen near the post. The rack, when filled, lies pressing on the hay, thus preventing more hay being pulled out than is eaten. From the position of the feed to the sheep when eating, there is no dropping of seed and dirt into the wool and eyes, which is the case with racks inclined the other way.

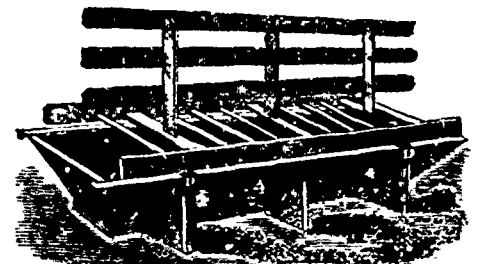


The rack is to be hoisted to the upper pin or notch when the long hay has been eaten; then the trough affords an opportunity for the sheep to eat the seeds and the fine hay. The trough is also a good place in which to feed grain or salt.



Our next illustration is of a new "PREMIUM SHEEP RACK," invented by an ingenious American named Eaton, and highly spoken of in a recent number of the *Scottish Farmer*.

The engraving represents one side, A, of the rack turned in, disclosing the feeding troughs, B, and the internal arrangement of the rack or box, more properly speaking. These feeders, A, are swung on pivots on the upright bar C, and when in the position indicated in the engraving on the side where the sheep are feeding, permit them to have access to the fodder at all times. When roots or fine feed are used in the feed-troughs, it is necessary to clean them out occasionally; and to do this, the feeder-boards, A, are turned up, as shown at D, and the attendant can go inside and sweep out the troughs through the door, E, without being hindered or delayed by the crowding or desire of the sheep to get at the feed. The feeding-boards can also be turned up in a horizontal position, so that by merely placing a bar underneath the two leaves, when so turned up, a table is made which may be used for shearing on in the spring; or by partially inclining the side in the form of a roof, and placing a ridge piece over them, the salt, with which it is usual to supply the sheep at certain seasons, can be thrown in the troughs instead of being scattered under foot and elsewhere to be wasted; the inclination of the roof serves to keep off rain and dew and is thus turned to good account in this respect.



We give yet one more illustration. The above engraving represents a Combined Rack and Trough for sheep and other stock, patented by Andrew Ralston, of West Middletown, Washington Co., Pa., in May, 1862, who thus describes his invention and its advantages:—

"A is the trough, B the rack, and C the railing placed on the rack to prevent sheep from getting on or over it. The rack is hinged to the trough, so that when thrown open it is easily filled and cleaned out. This rack has been extensively used and much approved. It obviates all the difficulties usually experienced in feeding sheep, such as wasting feed or hay, rubbing wool off the neck, getting hay seeds into the wool, strong sheep crowding out weaker ones, &c. &c. Wherever it has been introduced, it is regarded as a public benefit, and by its use thousands of dollars worth of hay and other feed may be saved annually.

These racks, constructed as above described, may be made portable, and so put under the sheds during the summer. In this way they will last many years, and pay for themselves many times over in the saving of feed.