

Considering it merely my duty to introduce the subject, I shall now leave to the meeting its further discussion.

The second subject for our discussion is, which is the best and most economical mode of wintering Sheep.

In relation to this subject, permit me to say, that I cannot speak with much assurance on account of not having practically tested the merit of any great variety of ways of accomplishing this desirable object. Still, there are some things connected with the subject before us, in regard to which we feel prepared to offer a few thoughts, which may not altogether be unprofitable, and I shall feel much gratified if the present discussion should have the tendency in any degree to lead some of the owners of those innocent and highly useful animals, to provide better shelter for them, and also to see that they are regularly and properly fed during the winter. For the way they are by some of our farmers left exposed to the cold piercing winds of winter, without shelter, and their feed thrown down under their feet, is a sad comment upon the intelligence and humanity of their owners. No plan that can be adopted for the purpose of wintering sheep will be found universally applicable, but must necessarily be local or sectional in its practical application; being dependant on the nature of the climate, and the capabilities of the soil, for the production of certain kinds of crops; and also upon the rotation or system which the farmer may adopt (all things considered) as being the best under the circumstances in which he is placed. Considering the length and severity of our Canadian winters, I think we may confidently affirm that, in order to winter sheep profitably it is absolutely necessary to provide comfortable sheds for them, and racks, and trough, for the reception of their food, constructed in such a manner that they may consume their allotted portion without wasting it, and with due regard to the keeping of their wool as clean as possible.

I shall now briefly lay before you the manner in which I have wintered my sheep for the last few years, and which has answered pretty well. In the beginning of winter I commence feeding them with pea straw. As the sheep will only eat a portion of it, I give it to them in larger quantities than if they were fed on good hay. I have my racks cleared of those portions of the straw which is left, after they have picked through it, once a day. When my pea straw has been good, it has been their principal food as long as it lasted. I say principal, because they also have had an occasional feed of hay. But when the straw has been injured by the weather, hay once a day in addition, and I would approve also of adding a few cut turnips. I would here state, that when breeding ewes are brought in to their winter quarters, in proper condition, it is not advisable to over feed them with turnips, or grain, or anything else, that will cause them to become over fat; for such a state is unfavorable to the production of strong, healthy lambs. When my supply of pea straw becomes exhausted, I then feed them with clover hay. As to quantity, as much as they will eat without wasting it. In order to prepare the ewes for the lambing season,

I have begun some time in February to give them turnips once a day, then as they become heavier with lamb, say about the first of March, twice, moderately, until they have lambed.—After that, as many good cut turnips, as much good hay as they will eat until the grass comes. By following this plan, my ewes have had a better supply of milk, and the lambs have done better than they used to do when I was in the habit of feeding them after lambing, with scalded bran, chop-stuff, or boiled oats. When they will eat the hay and turnips no longer, and the fresh and tender grass becomes abundant, to prevent it from scouring them too much, I consider it a good plan to give them about a pint of oats, each, for about a week or ten days.

Having, in my imperfect way, briefly introduced the subject, without enlarging upon it, I shall now be happy to hear others, that I may benefit by their experience.

Mr. Harland coincided in the statements made by Mr. Parkinson, remarking on the propriety of giving succulent food to the sheep in Spring till the grass was well up. The great object of the farmer was to raise the breed that would suit the climate and produce both wool and mutton. He was persuaded that, in the present condition of the Province, the Leicesters would give nearly double the average return of any other breed, and were consequently the best adapted for the locality. It was all very well for the wool-buyers to cry out for *fine* wool, while they would scarce give a penny a pound more for it.

Mr. John Carl was of opinion that the cross from the Leicester ram and the Southdown ewe came sooner to maturity, and was easier kept than the pure Leicesters. He was sorry the Agricultural Society had thrown the Southdowns overboard.

Mr. Harland said the Southdowns were no doubt well adapted for their native climate, and the short mossy pasture produced in some districts of England; but here, where we had no short downs, but long rank herbage affording a full bite, the case was different, and the full-wooled Leicesters were the best stock.

Mr. Card said that lambs from the cross he had mentioned were ready to kill off sooner and of greater weight than the Leicesters of the same age.

Mr. Harland said that in order to keep up such a breed, it would be necessary to import Southdown rams continuously. Would it be advisable to do so, merely for the purpose of procuring early lambs for the butcher?

Mr. Wright thought Mr. Card's object—to procure good lambs for the butcher—might be obtained, if, in addition to good Southdown rams, there were plenty of pure Leicester ewes in stock, but forty-nine out of fifty farmers had only grades, common Canadian Sheep improved by crossing with Leicester rams. There were several points in connection with the subject which had not been noticed, which he would wish to have discussed now, or which might form subject matter for another meeting, namely, What was the best time for having lambs dropped; whether early or late ones were most profitable; the best sort of food; and whether it were better to keep salt continually by the sheep,