

our Government in a practical manner by turning the mass of information it has placed at our disposal to a profitable account.

The Danes are held up to us as models to copy from in dairy matters, and they, in conjunction with butter-making, have taken hold of swine raising so vigorously and systematically that their hog products are fast acquiring a world wide reputation. In the British markets they are fast replacing the Irish bacon, so long held in such high esteem.

With the use of a silo and other improved methods of feeding, dairying is bound to make still more rapid strides than it has made in the past, and there is no reason why we Canadian farmers, with the assistance of free corn, cannot raise pork as cheaply as those living in the corn belt, especially when we take into account the vast numbers of hogs which succumb to the cholera. There is nothing to prevent us from raising a pound of pork to every pound of butter, or three to five pounds of cheese.

It seems to be a recognized fact that the days of heavy fat hogs are numbered and consumers are clamoring for lighter and leaner hogs. The weight that seems to be most popular among packers, is an animal weighing from 150 to 200 lbs. dressed weight, a weight which can easily be acquired at from six to eight months.

In conclusion, I would urge every member of this Association to be untiring in his efforts to place this very important branch of farming in its true light before the farmers of this Dominion. Let Canada hold the same proud position in the production of bacon that she does in the production of cheese.

Errors in Sheep-breeding and Feeding.

Read before the Canadian Sheep Breeders' Association by John Campbell, Jr., Woodville, Ont.

It has been well said that "he who never makes a mistake never makes anything," yet it is only as far as we are taught how to shun misfortune that the considering of past errors will be useful. I am sure every breeder present can recall some mistake in judgment or practice when dealing with the flock, which, though causing a present loss, has ultimately proved a cheap bit of experience; the lesson taught acted as a guard against more and probably worse mismanagement. No doubt it is more pleasant to think and tell of our hits, but valuable information can be had from recounting our misses, which may show the more fortunate, or beginner, how to avoid disaster.

The want of a definite aim is perhaps as common an error as is to be met with among would-be breeders. Some breed or other is fancied and the foundation of a flock purchased with little knowledge of the breed's characteristics, less consideration of the suitability of their farms for the fancied animals, and still less thought of what market will be found for the expected surplus stock in after years. Time passes and disappointment steps in; the flock is not up to an average standard, so sales have been slow and at low figures, many going to the butcher, and the particular breed is set down as a failure by owner and unthoughtful neighbors, while an experienced eye would readily trace the failure to errors in selection and management.

But the most practical and experienced men do not meet with unbroken success. We have here to-day as careful and successful sheep-farmers as can be got together in this country, yet is there one who has not regretted some time or other a step which was the source of vexation and loss? A ram was used which did not exactly please, but on the score of economy or convenience he was put in the flock with the result of the produce being far from what was wanted. Or a male has been used in form and character as near perfection as it is possible to get them, perhaps carrying show-yard honors, yet the outcome did not prove satisfactory. In this case the mistake was in using a superior animal when out of proper condition to repro-

duce and transmit his excellent qualities to his get. It certainly is a loss to many breeders that our fairs are held so near the coupling season when it is necessary to have sheep in too high condition for successful reproduction, because decisions are often given according to plumpness given by excessive feeding.

Placing a ram in the flock which lacks in some feature strongly wanting in the ewes will surely stamp that want more fixedly in the flock. It is well to have any point of excellence lacking in the ewes largely developed in the sire, while he should at least be fairly well proportioned in all points.

Apparently excellent rams in all respects have sometimes proved wretched failures as getters, simply because their good qualities were possessed by some chance, not being fixed by continuous breeding in one direction, so their mixed blood showed itself in offspring of many types. We should therefore pass by a ram of uncertain breeding, let his appearance be ever so pleasing to the eye.

When the increased value of one crop of lambs from twenty ewes, when sired by a choice male, may be many times the difference in price between a good and an inferior one, the error of being too saving of the pocket should be avoided when selecting the head of the flock. What has been said of using rams when out of condition from excess of flesh and fat, applies with greater force to breeding ewes when in show condition, and much more so when fitted for that purpose beyond the sea, where stuffing is practised without any limit, except the disability or death of the sheep.

How many present can report the investing in Old Country show ewes for breeding purposes to be at all as profitable as the use of those in store condition? Is it not an error on our part to continue bringing them here at a great expense for the sake of winning in the show ring? They should not prove a means of building up any one's reputation as a breeder, and the sooner we will ask fair officials to offer the best premiums for breeding animals for sheep bred by exhibitor the better will it be for us, as *breeding pure and simple* will be the more encouraged and not mere speculation.

Rams can with care be gradually reduced in condition from Old Country show fit so as to be useful, particularly if not older than yearlings, but ewes often never.

Though an occasional error in selecting ewes for breeders may not be much noticed it is by having each and every one right that the greatest success can be reached. Uniformity of form and fleece will often result in sales, when the intending purchaser in looking over a lot of varying characteristics, will, if he wants a good article, be satisfied with a short inspection. What an error then to begin a flock, or continue one, having no fixed standard of excellence to take the buyer's eye or contribute to the owner's reputation as a breeder.

At the same time a mistake may be made by discarding a ewe, failing in some unimportant feature, but otherwise of good quality. We should always bear in mind that mutton and wool which will bring the highest prices at the least cost are the profitable products in sheep-raising, so that fancies in the way of a much-covered head in this breed, or a bare head in that, should not be carried to extremes. Here I may say that at the Royal Show at Windsor last year a ram in one of the shearing classes was defective in a point which many judges in this country would so condemn as to leave him without an award, yet there he was given second place among some 140 competitors, and in a two-shear class one with a somewhat similar defect won second place also. But with all due care in selection and mating a very great deal depends on proper feeding. In years gone by I have had serious loss of lambs caused by the liberal feeding of roots to in-lamb ewes. While roots are so beneficial to the growing sheep and ewes after lambing, abortion or the dropping of weakly lambs, follows the feeding of roots, except in moderation, to lamb-carrying ewes, and mangolds are particularly hurtful. Of late years I have met breeders who could not account for the appearance of half-rotten lambs, or weak, puny things, with just a spark of life, which

soon died. In every instance the error was in too free a use of roots, and usually mangolds.

Loss of lambs, as well as of ewes, result from feeding much grain to breeding ewes previous to lambing, but it is a mistake to allow them to fail in condition, so that there is a scarcity of milk at a critical time. Overfeeding, which causes garget and other disorders, and underfeeding, soon seen in stunted lambs, are to be avoided. The alternate stuffing and starving occasionally seen would soon ruin the best flocks. It is the happy medium of so feeding as to secure a continuous growth from the birth to maturity, and maintaining a moderate and uniform condition afterwards, that will give us the best returns for our labor in producing mutton and wool, or sires to be used in pure-bred flocks, or to improve the grade flocks of our own country and other lands.

General Purpose Cattle.

A correspondent of the Holstein-Friesian Register says:—"The low price of dairy products in the West does not justify the average farmer to raise an exclusive dairy animal, neither does it pay to raise an exclusive beef animal." The writer, it is needless to say, makes this statement as a contention that the Holstein-Friesian cattle are the great general purpose cow of the day. We have no quarrel with him on the merits of the Holstein cattle; they are a useful breed, as any one who has watched their progress in America must admit. Booms may help a breed for a short time, but the last end is worse than the first; hence we say the Holsteins must have intrinsic value to have been able to reach the place they hold in the estimation of the American public. But is it as a general purpose cow she excels? Not by any means. While the present system of proving milk is in vogue she is the best of cheese cows to the individual farmer, whatever she may be to the cheese industry at large, and if the persistent efforts of the past five years are continued for a decade there is little reason to doubt that she will be equal to the best as a butter cow. But if a dairy cow, bred and developed for that special purpose, can not be made profitable, and a beef animal, bred and developed along that line, and for that purpose only, must be kept at a loss if kept at all, how in the name of common sense are we to unite these two losing productions and make them profitable. If an animal could be found that would produce as much milk and as good a quality as the dairy breeds and as much beef of as good quality as the beef breeds and at the same time cost the same to feed as one of these animals then we might claim a place for a general purpose animal, but at present they are, as a breed, a mite. True, on our prairies, where the pasture and hay costs usually little or nothing, almost any cattle will yield a profit, but what we claim is, that under any and all circumstances, where a general purpose animal yields a profit, a special purpose animal would yield a greater if the breed best adapted to existing circumstances were adopted. Who are our best mechanics? Are they not men who have made their trade or calling a special study all through life? We find handy men everywhere, but they never make a success of any line. Who are our most eminent divines? Are they not men who have not only studied theology but have thrown the whole energy of their lives into their work? True, there are men following the plough that can preach a very good sermon, but are they not far from the top of the ladder? Who are our best doctors? Is not the same reasoning applicable? There are many quacks or general purpose men, but when we are sick unto death we do not call on them—we want the special purpose man. Quack doctors, quack preachers, quack mechanics and quack cows all must take second place.