

STOCK.

The Winter Care of Cattle.

When the farmer has provided good, warm, comfortable stables and sheds for his live stock, he is apt to think that he has done all that is necessary for their comfort, forgetting that, perhaps, in his anxiety to keep his animals warm, he has neglected to provide proper ventilation, and has thus shut in his stable, in the form of impure air, a more dreaded enemy than even Jack Frost. Mr. Smith, in Hoard's Dairyman, writes the following on the care of cattle:—

Those who have built good, warm barns and sheds have taken one of the most important steps in order that their cattle may have healthful winter quarters. Yet good buildings are not all; cleanliness about stables and sheds, and all other buildings in which animals are housed, is just as important to the health of the animal as cleanliness about the house is important to the health of the family. The ventilation of stables and cattle sheds should especially receive attention. Dr. N. S. Townshend says: "No disease is spreading more alarmingly among our better bred and most carefully housed cattle than tuberculosis. No cause of this disease is believed to be more potent for mischief than keeping the stock where there is insufficient air space, and where the air must of necessity be breathed over and over again. Yet how rarely do we find a shed or stable where the whole air of the interior is not laden with animal odors, the products of respiration or of other secretions." About most farm buildings throughout the winter, means of disinfection need to be used occasionally. Sulphurous acid gas, obtained by burning brimstone upon shavings, is given by those of experience as probably the best disinfectant for all buildings that can be tightly closed, although chloride of lime will, in some cases, be more convenient and perhaps equally effectual. To prevent the spread of contagious diseases, not only must disinfectants be used, but rigid separation and isolation are necessary.

Again there are hundreds of farmers whom it will pay to spend some leisure time in refitting their barns and sheds, nailing on loose boards as well as fastening up cracks about the stables to shut out the cold and make them comfortable. There are still others who own large herds of cattle which they do not expect to shelter, and will feed sparingly. This class make no pretence at winter dairying, and are not able to do much at it in the summer. It is sad to witness the suffering of the animals, and it is strange why some practices are continued where they are not only cruel to the stock, but the owners lose by them thousands and thousands of dollars. It is hard for the western farmer or herdsman to realize that, although the dairy cow may live through the winter, unprotected from the winter's blast, and poorly fed, yet she cannot be of profit, for the shivering cow cannot produce a bountiful flow of milk, neither will the little that she does give contain the amount of butterfat that it would if the donor was warmly kept.

The importance of having stables ventilated in accordance with correct principles of hygiene is generally admitted. That the supply of fresh air should be ample is frequently insisted upon, but the need of the abundance of light is not so generally recognized. On this subject the London Live Stock Journal has the following pertinent remarks:—

Some stables are at mid-day in a state of semi-darkness—a condition, to say the least, anything but conducive to the well-being of the horse. No animal enjoys the light of day more than he. In his wild state he frequents the open plain or mountain side in the full light of day. Wild horses are never found to inhabit gloomy forests or dark ravines. The horse is a child of light, and he should be treated accordingly in domestication, if he is to be kept in perfect health and spirits, with his eyesight unimpaired. The frequent transition from a dark stable into the full glare of day cannot fail to act prejudicially on his visual organs, and so also must almost permanent gloom and darkness. If we studied only his comfort, we would give him at all times a stable full of cheerful light as well as refreshing air.

Mr. A. L. Crosby, in a recent article, makes some pertinent remarks. In connection with feeding dairy cows, he says: "It is easier to tell what a dairy cow does with her feed than a steer, for we have the milk as a daily guide, and when we find that one of our cows is a heavier feeder, and puts most of her feed into rich milk, that is the cow to tie to. She is a steam boiler that can be worked under heavy pressure, and if we watch the gauge and try the cocks we can afford to shovel the fuel into the fire box, knowing that there is no danger of loss of fuel or of bursting the boiler."

The Export Cattle Trade.

Mr. Robert Ironsides, M. P. P., member of the well-known firm of cattle exporters, recently favored us with the following interesting letter in reply to an inquiry as to the past season's cattle trade:—

"We have shipped 9,665 cattle to the Old Country market from Manitoba and the Northwest, the season of 1893, and paid on an average 3½ cents per pound for choice export cattle, weighed off cars at Winnipeg. The cattle were from two years and six months old up to five years old. Cattle, after they are six years old, are classed as oxen in the Old Country markets, and sell the same as bulls, stags and cows, etc. I believe this trade, as yet in its infancy in this country, is bound to grow to enormous proportions. As to the "embargo," I maintain, as I always did, that it will benefit Canada in the long run by compelling farmers to stall-feed and fatten their stock at home, and by applying the manure to enrich their land. Take, for instance, the experience of N. W. Balwin, Manitou, who feeds considerable stock every season. Last winter's manure from the stable was put out on part of a field and barley sown on the same. The yield of the portion manured was forty bushels per acre, while that part of the same field not manured only yielded twenty-five bushels per acre—an increase of fifteen bushels per acre from the manured portion, and if followed with wheat will show as great a difference in the yield, besides being of better quality. Therefore, I contend that it will pay a farmer to feed, even though he gets no more for his labor than the manure. One load of such manure is equal to a barn-yard full of rotten straw. Farmers are alive to the situation, and intend feeding large numbers for the spring trade. They are safe in stall-feeding, and will get 3½ cents per pound weighed off cars at Winnipeg (buyers to pay freight), for all choice export cattle in spring of 1894. I strongly advise them to do so, as they will make at least sixty cents per bushel out of their wheat, if fed, and receive the benefit of the manure on the land, which will yield ten to fifteen bushels per acre more grain with the same work, seed, etc. We would like to hear from the farmers (during the winter), in all portions of the Province as to numbers, feeding, and quality of same, so that we can arrange for handling them to best advantage when navigation opens in the spring. In conclusion, I would suggest that every influence be brought to bear on the Dominion Government to induce them to make an effort to have the senseless quarantine regulations existing between Canada and the United States removed, so that Manitoba and the Canadian Northwest may have the benefit of railway competition in shipping stock."

Canada's Export Cattle Trade.

The following item is clipped from a review of the past season's cattle export trade in the Montreal Witness, and will be read with interest by our readers:—

"The live stock export trade has been a disastrous one to the cattle shippers, many of whom have already gone under in consequence. There has been a heavy falling off all round. The failure of crops in Great Britain forced the British farmers to put their stock on the market just at the time that the best class of our cattle were going forward. This resulted in a reduction of prices and a consequent loss to shippers from America. The embargo which put a stop to the stocker trade is also responsible for the season's failure. It was not possible under this regulation to send over any lean cattle to be fed, or to send any fat cattle to be held for good prices. Our cattle, like those from the United States, had to be slaughtered at the port of debarkation. The result of this system was a loss of several hundred thousand dollars both to the Canadian shippers and the British farmer."

The falling off in the export of sheep has been much more marked than the cattle. This is owing to the large quantity of frozen mutton from Australia, which is being offered in the British markets. The following figures show the differences in the shipments for the last four seasons. It will be noticed that there has been a steady decline:—

	Cattle.	Sheep.
1890.....	123,136	43,372
1891.....	109,150	32,042
1892.....	98,731	15,932
1893.....	83,322	3,743

There has also been a decline in the shipment of horses and hogs, and of the latter what were sent across were shipped at a loss.

The great importance of the live stock trade may be understood when it is stated that \$6,312,572 were turned over in the business this year. Of this amount \$5,414,760 was paid to the farmers for their cattle, \$230,000 went to the railway companies for transportation, and the stock yards received \$41,650. Over \$50,000 was paid for attendance to 3,380 men shipped during the season. There was disbursed for feed \$125,100, most of which went into the pockets of the Quebec farmers. The cost of labor for putting up stalls, etc., reached the sum of \$145,782, while the steamship companies received nearly \$1,000,000."

Southdown Sheep—Their Claims to Public Favor.

[Read by Mr. John Jackson at the meeting of the American Southdown Breeders' Association, Chicago, Ill., September 27th, 1893.]

It has been said of sheep that they are the most valuable of all the animals that contribute to the wants of man, and are closely associated with his history, vicissitudes and progress from the earliest time. The origin of sheep is unknown; it may be traced back through vast ages into the mist of time's dark obscurity, and probably before the advent of the human race upon earth, for we find it associated with the son of the first created man—"Abel was a keeper of sheep." Search the Scriptures, and how closely we find it associated with the material and spiritual welfare of mankind, adopted as a symbol of purity in Christian belief, an emblem of patience, docility and forbearance. A careful observer, who would calmly survey the vast world of animated nature, would note the teeming millions of sheep, which contribute so much to the wants and comforts of mankind.

The thoughtful mind wanders from the scene around him, when contemplating this useful animal, how it has been developed and adapted to conditions opposite and extreme: be it upon the high, bare, desolate mountain, or the scorched plains of Africa, sheep are found suitable to the conditions of soil, climate and man's requirements.

Modern civilization has not rendered sheep less important now than they were at earlier periods; they form the most essential of all food, and their wool is one of the most important materials connected with trading, manufacturing and pastoral industries of mankind. If this applies with more force to any one breed of sheep than another, I think it is the Southdown.

To realize the largest margin of profit should be the aim of every keeper of sheep. There are several breeds of sheep that are valuable for mutton and wool, and owing to the fact that different classes of wool are required to manufacture different sorts of fabrics, it will be necessary to continue to breed the various kinds of sheep.

What would seem to me the strongest claims which any breed of sheep can make for public favor would be their ability to return the largest possible value in mutton and wool for a given amount of food consumed. The question is not what a single fleece of wool or carcass of mutton will bring in the market, but rather how much is realized per acre when the product is fed to sheep.

The late Mr. Jonas Webb, who did so much to improve the Southdowns and bring them into public favor, built upon this very solid foundation. Before deciding upon which of the different kinds of sheep he would breed, he made careful and extensive experiments with the leading breeds of his day, till he was fully satisfied in his own mind that Southdowns would return more money in wool and mutton for a given amount of food consumed than any other sheep. This was what led him to breed Southdowns. It gave him unbounded confidence in the breed, and gave him encouragement through all the years in which he did so much for the breed, and to make for himself a name that is familiar wherever the Southdowns are known.

Southdown sheep may claim public favor by reason of several points in which their superiority can be shown. It is a well-established principle that the best results are obtained from animals that are given to early maturity—one of the predominant characteristics of the Southdown. They also produce a superior quality of both wool and mutton, which command a higher price per pound than that of other breeds.

By their early habits of having to travel long journeys in search of food on the rather bare hills in Sussex, they developed a high degree of endurance, with a strong constitution and plenty of muscle, and on account of their thick, even coat of wool they will stand exposure to storm, let it be rain or snow, better than most other breeds. In fact they are not hot-house plants. They were brought up to endure hardship, and to-day many of the flocks in England are exposed the year round to all the inclemencies of the weather, winter and summer, without shade or shelter.

They are prolific breeders; mature earlier perhaps than any other breed; will make a pound of flesh with as little, if not less, food than any other, and more of it on the most valuable parts of the carcass. This is where the profit comes in.

The fact that Southdowns possess all the most valuable points in a mutton sheep, coupled with unquestioned purity of breeding for centuries back, makes them most valuable for crossing on common sheep to improve their mutton qualities.

They have played an important part in improving all the other Down breeds, and the valuable qualities they possess largely depend on how much of the Southdown blood courses through their veins.

Southdown sheep, when placed in competition with other breeds on either side of the Atlantic, have more than held their own. In this country, however, the superior quality and value of Southdown mutton, as compared with that of other breeds, is not as well understood as it is in England, where the different mutton breeds have been so much longer known.

I shall, therefore, refer to the records of that country to establish beyond question the correctness of what I have claimed for this breed of sheep, and will quote as my authority the prize list of the Smithfield Club for 1891, in which there is published