

butter to from 30 to 40 lbs. of milk. We therefore expressed a doubt as to the exactness of a statement therein published, given by Mr. Ritchie of St. Ann Laperade, to the effect that his 24 months old Holstein heifers, giving (soon after calving no doubt) 33 lbs. of milk on poor pasture alone, had made one lb. of butter to 17½ lbs. of milk?

We have since received from Mr. Ritchie on this matter several letters and statements which he now requests us to publish. However, as they contain no proof of our error in the above expressed opinions, we do not feel justified in giving up more space to such questions in the *Journal*.

ED. A. BARNARD.

#### MARKET NOTES.

What could the world do without the potato? It is the standard vegetable and always will be. Cut off the potato supply and we should be a nation of malcontents. I remember one winter, years ago, on a little New England farm, when the potato crop failed. It was a household calamity. We lived on turnips, carrots and a few beets, with of course, the ever-present baked beans. It was the most unsatisfactory winter I ever spent. It is hard to say just why the potato is so popular an article of food. At least 75 per cent. of it is water. Rice tastes just as well, is cheaper and more nutritious, and can be prepared in numberless ways. Last year over 200,000,000 bushels of potatoes valued at nearly \$90,000,000 were produced in this country. This is equal to nearly one-fourth of the hay crop, one-half of the oat crop, one-third of the cotton crop, twice the tobacco crop, four times the barley crop and five times the rye crop. Over 75 per cent. of the total crop is raised in the manufacturing States, where a large city population affords a ready market, and fertilizers are cheapened. The average cash value per acre for potatoes was \$38; for cotton \$15; hay \$10. In New England the average value per acre for potatoes was \$57. The markets at present are crowded with potatoes, yet they seem to "go as fast as they come." Potatoes everywhere—in boxes, barrels, bags and tubs. Potatoes small, large, long, round and flat, smooth and "scraggly." There are about as many potatoes in sight as there are of all other vegetables combined. Most of them come into market in barrels with a piece of old bagging tacked over the top. It is possible that it would pay to pack the nicest and most shapely tubers in crates by themselves for quick sale. Let somebody try this and see how it will work. The Early Rose about revolutionized the potato business. I can remember the old days when the Jackson White and Davis Seedling had the monopoly. We never see them now, though there are old farmers who still stick to them. They were good old friends, but they had to go down before the march of civilization. The Early Rose, like all reformers, will probably have to go to the wall eventually, though it still holds its own wonderfully well. Even to-day the Early Rose stands among market potatoes about as the Concord stands among grapes, so far as quantity is concerned. It is the "old stand-by" still, though dealers handle the newer kinds, scores of which, however, are sold as Early Rose. One never sees a red potato now. Why do people object to a dark color? No one can say, not even those who call for white tubers. It is charitable to call it a species of mild superstition. There are plenty of people yet who say that butter from a white cow will not be yellow, (1) that a black cat brings good luck, that a yellow tomato is not fit to eat. What potato sells the best? It is light in color, medium in size, compact in form, not long and round—more of the shape

of a man's fist, and, more than all these, it is "mealy." People do not want a potato that they must cut in two and serve in halves. Far too many of the potatoes at the market are disfigured by the scab. The man who shall discover some way of lessening the ravages of worms and the fungus that cause it will be a national benefactor. Very many potatoes are damaged by careless digging. Great gashes and holes are cut into them. (1) These are sure to injure the sale, and they might be, for the most part, prevented.

Hired Man.

#### WEANING LAMBS.

Weaning-time is an important epoch in lamb life. It is, so to speak, the date when they are sent into the world to shift for themselves; and judging from the bleatings of the old as well as the young of the flock, the change is doubtless a severe interference on the part of man. But, as a matter of course, the flockmaster is compelled to follow what he considers the most profitable system of maintaining both ewe and lamb, whatever his feelings about animal nature. When the lambs arrive at a certain age, it is a more economical method of feeding to separate them and the ewes. The amount of nourishment which the ewe provides at her own expense can be supplied in a cheaper form by artificial means, and maintaining the condition of the ewes is always an object to be studied in breeding flocks; as without good, strong, and lusty ewes we can never have good lambs.

There are, therefore, two points to be considered in weaning; but as the change affects the lambs more immediately than the ewes, the problem is how to accomplish it so as not to arrest their progress or growth. Whatever may have been the condition of keep previous to weaning, it is afterwards necessary to improve upon it if the lambs are to prosper. The better-conditioned lambs are at the time of weaning, the better they require to be kept, and in most cases the food provided should exceed in richness that which they previously received, including the milk of the ewes. It is usual to shift the lambs on to some hained pasture, which affords a clean and enticing bite; but even then, though the quality of the new pasture is immensely superior, the lambs do not always thrive so well as could be wished. For some days after being taken away from the grazing they have long been accustomed to, they seldom settle to feed, and after they do begin to eat, from being so very hungry, they are apt to indulge too freely in the fresh grass, with the result of some serious ailment.

Our correspondent, Mr. Trethewy, of Silsoe, Bedfordshire, recommends that, instead of taking the lambs from the ewes, the ewes should be taken from lambs. Wherever such a plan can be adopted, it is doubtless a sensible one to follow, as the lambs will not be so liable to hang about the gates, or to suffer from a too sudden change of diet. When the ewes are removed, a little trough food should be given the lambs, and, as they are well acquainted with their pasture, and know where to find a plentiful supply of water, they will not be so liable to sustain a check; and any changes that may afterwards be necessary can be overtaken with greater benefit and less risk. (2)

Eng. Ag. Gazette.

#### IS ENSILAGE FATAL TO HORSES?

EDS. COUNTRY GENTLEMAN—Your very intelligent correspondent from Aiken, S. C. Mr. Dibble, on page 556 expresses his surprise when he finds, on page 394 of the book

(1) If people would give up using the hoe in getting up their potatoes!

A. R. J. F.

(2) Good sound sense, but not new. I made the same observation seven years ago in this Journal.

A. R. J. F.

(1) Bosh! There are plenty of white cows with skins as yellow as a guinea, and that give the richest milk, and the best coloured butter.

A. R. J. F.