

they strike out whenever the foal's nose touches the flank. A fidgety mare and awkward or weakly foal will often seriously try a man's patience for many hours, until the foal is got to suck; and to save the foal it must be raised and thus fed at least four times a day. Such help may continue to be requisite for a week; the mare's bag the meanwhile, if tender, must be rubbed with oil, and the teats damped with some mild astringent lotion. As to the examination of the milk, its physical, and even its chemical characters, do not always tell whether it will agree with the young foal, whose thriving will, however, soon indicate the condition of the milk. If faulty on one side, it will be so on the other. Foals sometimes scour and die from the milk of mares in high condition, being too rich for the young animals, and in such cases it is wisdom for a week after parturition to withhold the corn or other such concentrated food, or greatly reduce its amount, and feed the mare mainly on mashes, hay or grass. Occasionally the milk of beautiful mothers disagrees from its being secreted in larger amount than the young foal can take it; it gets stale, and if the udder is not emptied several times a day the foal scours. When the mother's milk disagrees, the first thing to be done is to change her food; if on dry fare, give her grass; if she has had mainly grass, give her dry food. A pint of barley supplied to the mare sometimes arrests scouring of the foal. If change of feeding, and removing night and morning any milk remaining in the udder, does not mend matters, and the foal does not thrive, or continues to purge, it must be tried with other food. Fresh cow's milk, diluted with about one-fourth part of water, and sweetened with an ounce of sugar to the quart, is a safe substitute for the mother's milk. Where the patient gets weak, a little wine and water, brandy and water, egg flip or beef tea, is requisite. Whilst the foal is thus nurtured artificially for a week or ten days, endeavor should be made to keep up the secretion of the mare's milk by milking her at least twice daily, or getting the bag emptied by another foal with which the milk may not disagree. The natural food, after an interval of ten days, may be found not to injure the foal, especially if return to it is made gradual.—*North British Agriculturist*.

### Stock.

#### Oxfordshire Down Sheep.

No breed of sheep has grown more into public favor in Great Britain, or has more rapidly extended in numbers, within the last fifteen or twenty years, than the Oxfordshire Down. It is now about fifty years since a few enterprising English breeders undertook the construction of a new breed of sheep, that should, in great measure, possess the weight of the Longwool with the quality of the Down. It is the opinion of the best authorities in such matters that the Cotswold gray-faced ram and the Hampshire Down ewe were the chief, if not the only, materials which by judicious blending and careful selection have resulted in a class of sheep which, under suitable conditions, are probably as profitable as any that can be mentioned, where size, weight of wool, aptitude to fatten, hardy character and valuable meat are desired.

The success of the early promoters of the project led many others into the field. It was not until 1850 that they were styled the Oxfordshire Downs, the county of Oxford in England being their stronghold. Previous to that date they were properly regarded as cross-breeds, and known as Down Cotswolds, under which designation they achieved successes at the Smithfield shows. As soon as the breed became established, some of the most successful breeders began to exhibit their sheep at the Royal Agricultural Society's show, and though at first they had no special class and were shown with short-wooled sheep and cross-breeds, their great merit soon secured them a class to themselves. The Royal Society decided on a separate class, and the Oxfordshire Downs made their first appearance as a recognized breed in the exhibition year of 1862 at Battersea. At the Smithfield Club show in 1872 the Duke of Marlborough took the champion prize with his splendid wethers of this breed, as the best pen of sheep in any of the classes.

Among the characteristics of a good type of the Oxfordshire Downs should be a nice dark color, the poll well covered with wool, adorned with a top-knot on the forehead; a good fleece of wool, thick on the skin, not too curly; a well-formed barrel on short, dark legs (not gray or spotted); with good,

firm mutton. The weight of wool for a whole flock will average about seven pounds per sheep; rams have been known to cut as much as twenty pounds when shearing. Great numbers of shearlings and ram lambs are now sold in England by public as well as private sale. Most satisfactory prices have been realized recently, rams having changed owners at from \$200 to \$300 each. The cross with the Hampshire ewe for early fat lambs for the London market is much in favor. In this breed the weight of the fleece and of the carcass, generally the characteristics of the Cotswold breed, are, combined with the quality of the mutton and the wool, the characteristics of the Downs.

The Oxfordshire sheep are adapted more particularly for mixed soils, and stand close stocking and confinement: that is, they can be kept entirely in hurdles, and will probably do better so than if allowed a range. Different sorts of food are commonly grown on the mixed soils, as kohlrabi, swedes, turnips, mangel wurzel, winter oats, rye and trefoil, vetches, cabbage and clover, so as to keep the sheep as much as possible on the arable land. The stock ewes are generally divided in August, and rams selected to suit each lot. They run over the stubbles, and are penned on rape or cabbage at night; in some instances a few beans are given. They then clean up the pastures till Christmas, having bean or pea straw at night. It is considered unwise to give them many turnips before yearning. They are then brought into the fold yard for lambing, and are fed on hay, cotton cake and a few roots.

They are found to be very good mothers, being strong and prolific, producing a considerable proportion of twins. The lambs, when taken into the turnip field, have a fold in front of their mothers, where they are supplied with hay, grain, and, as the case may be, cut swedes, or crop off the grass. The ewes with twins are also supplied with corn. The lambs are usually weaned when about twenty-two weeks old. They are a healthy class of sheep, and cases of giddiness are seldom known in any of the flocks. Great attention is bestowed by the best flock masters during the young stage, and an early acquaintance with suitable artificial food, and a frequent change of the natural produce, are esteemed as points of great importance. A check to the young system is often bad to recover from, and it is a great argument for the folding system, especially in a country where land is dear and good mutton commands great prices, that the sheep are so frequently under the eye that any marked change may be noticed at once.—*American Cultivator*.

#### We Must Breed and Feed for Quality.

More constitutional vigor and growth, and even fat, from this time onward, will not fill the requirements of the times. Our foreign market so suddenly and unexpectedly opened up to us, also opens up a new class of customers—English and Scotch—who have devoted as much attention to the quality of the food inside of the bullock's hide as the most exacting fruit culturist and epicure in our own country has to the quality of the flesh under the skin of the apple, pear or peach. They cannot be put off with dry unsavory meat when they know so thoroughly that breeding from carefully selected animals—that have come of stock known by frequent trials upon the butcher's block to have fine grained flesh, with a minute mingling of the tissues, this latter condition constituting what is known as marbled flesh—will uniformly produce the character of meat they seek, and are willing to pay a round price for.

When our organizations for the advancement of the live stock interests shall devote as much critical care to the discussion of the modes for improving the quality of our meats, as the fruit and dairy-men do, looking to the more general cultivation of the finer fleshed apples, and the making of the higher classes of cheese and butter, then will we have made an important step forward, and one now needed more than any other. Heretofore it has made but little difference what quality of flesh a bullock showed, when cut up and put in the pot or on the spit. But henceforth prices are to be governed largely by our success in pleasing the British palate. We must look well to the distinction which they make between marbled, savory flesh and that which is lean, with patches of fat here and there in the carcass, not mingled with the muscles as it should be to make it pass as high class meat.

The Texan and Cherokee, in their habits, temper and flesh, partake in no small degree of the nature of the wild vegetable eaters of the moun-

tains and plains, in that the muscles are dark colored, with closely knit fibres, and are noticeable for the absence of adipose matter—fat—from the muscles, this, when present, generally being accumulated where it will least impede locomotion, and is merely stored in convenient places for future use, to be taken up by the absorbents, to again pass into the circulation if by accident or the coming of winter the beast be cut off from food.

So far as our common cattle are concerned, and the same holds true of the Texans, no thought has been given or effort made to improve the quality of flesh or hair. We speak of the latter because it is in no small degree an index to quality of flesh, and in the case of the Texan—which are none other than the old Spanish cattle, descendants from the importations made at various times by the Moore—the hair is proverbially coarse, as the form is also ungainly and the meat cannot by any known rule be expected to be better than these accompanying conditions. These cattle are noted for the long journeys they can make in search of food, and this very ability to travel comes of undue use of a frame and muscles rendered coarse, harsh and rigid in every part, from excessive travel and exposure, and by being fed upon a coarse herbage in its season, the muscles being shrunk down upon the bones from lack of succulent food during the winter.

So it is not all of improvement to make the outer surface shapely and attractive. An excessively coarse apple or potato may be the same, yet it will be despised of men. When we go into the fruit, vegetable or butter market, we say "less is it we care for the cost; we do not want poor quality at any price." This is what our English friends say to us now. If you expect the better class of English buyers to use your American grown meats—generally bred and fed so differently from what they breed and feed—you must improve. Get rid, by a different system of breeding and feeding, of your coarse unsavory product. Throw in a little oil cake and roots with your inevitable, ever-present corn. This latter gives feverishness and dry flesh.

The cost of transporting low-priced beef is the same as for the better kinds, and so also are the commissions the same, and the cost for care and feed not any less. Hence all these expenses combined eat up the sum total obtained, or so nearly as to leave no profit to the one to whom the profit should mainly accrue. As an intelligent Englishman has said, the beef which grows upon the bones of a Texan, or upon the frame of our common American cattle, is not of such quality as will command buyers among the Britons, and the farmers of this country will have made a long stride when they so reorganize their herds as to uniformly produce the better qualities of meat, both for export and for home use. When they become as studious about these things as they are in seeking new-fangled and oft-times trivial improvements in farm machinery, they will quickly learn how to grow and feed steers that buyers will want at six cents a pound, where formerly only the local butchers wanted their stock at three cents.

And in this connection we see much to regret in the onslaughts recently made upon certain strains of blood. These have not been in the interests of the higher classes of cattle, properly interpreted, for while little attention has heretofore been paid to quality, other than to mere mellowness of skin, it will now devolve upon us to breed quality that will be recognized as such in all the parts beneath the skin. This is the kind of quality our English customers seek, and the only kind that is worth a whit anywhere when the hide is off. Some of the slandered cattle, notably the Louans, have come from a base possessing the highest finish known among horned cattle beasts, when we estimate the body through and through, for high quality of marbled flesh was an early distinguishing feature, and still remains, where not bred out by coarse admixtures. Some other off-shoots from the same base have proved equally meritorious. Of course this fine grade of flesh is not confined to any particular family, but for the reasons given, when found, it should be propagated with as much care as we perpetuate any other thing which has merit within it, and has the power to reproduce its like.

—*Western Farm Journal*.

Dorset sheep are kept in the vicinity of several English towns for the purpose of raising lambs for the market. They will raise two lambs each season, the flesh of which is held in high esteem. The sheep have long horns and are very hardy.