

### Shall We Increase Our Flocks of Sheep?

It is to be regretted that during the past few years the sheep industry of the country has been greatly neglected, the result being that the number of sheep has rapidly decreased. The Bureau of Industries reports that the number in the Province of Ontario has declined from 2,022,735 in 1895 to 1,849,348 in 1896.

In a recent Farmers' Institute address, Mr. Andrew Elliott (of Waterloo Co., Ont.), an excellent authority, pointed out that there are large areas in Ontario that, on account of the quality of the land and its isolated position, are not adapted to profitable dairying, and there are many farmers who, for the lack of help in the house and other reasons, will not adopt dairying nor cattle raising as a specialty. To those, sheep breeding and feeding must recommend itself as an easy means of recuperating the soil exhausted by grain growing, and at the same time giving a sure profit from year to year.

In the newer parts of the country, Mr. Elliott went on to say, sheep can be kept and be made to pay their way by assisting in subduing the undergrowth of hazel, raspberries, etc., which so rapidly spring up when the land is stripped of the large timber. They are such excellent scavengers, too, that no farm can afford to be without them. It has been found that sheep consume over seventy per cent. of all noxious weeds and partially destroy fifteen per cent. more. The profits of sheep are largely made up from cheap pasture and comparatively inexpensive winter foods, instead of the high priced foods of dairying or cattle feeding. Sheep are easily retained and housed. Any farmer with lumber, hammer and saw can in a few days build a house as good as is necessary for their successful management. The returns from sheep are quick and sure, there being two in the year—wool and lambs—and these returns will bring the cost of the ewe at any time. The chief care necessary is required when other branches of farming are slack, and of all farm stock they need the least time to attend to them. Sheep or lambs can be more cheaply winter-fed and with less labor than the same value of any other farm stock. The amount of money invested is small, and if properly handled they will easily return their value in the year. Sheep and their products have suffered less from the past drop in prices than any other farm product. They pay as well to-day as they did twenty years ago, and the prospect now is very bright indeed for Canadian sheep. During the past two years we have shipped large numbers of sheep to Britain, though fewer in 1896 than in 1895, partly, perhaps, because of the embargo. The average American does not take kindly to mutton sheep, and his system of feeding is not up to the mark. U. S. flocks, like those of Canada, have within the past few years been largely reduced, and with the unequalled reputation we have for superior breeding stock and lambs of the right stamp to suit the best class of customers, we should for years to come find a profitable market for all we can raise.

Mr. Elliott has a substantial groundwork for his contention, and there need be little hesitation in giving a decided affirmative answer to the question at the head of this article. But for whatever market the sheep raiser caters, we would remind him that the great consuming centers are well supplied with "second-class" mutton, and if top prices are wanted, breeding, feeding, and management must be such as to produce a still more superior article. That is the rule with every farm product, mutton and lamb not excepted. Canada is the country *par excellence* for quality. Let us make the most of it. In this connection we believe the series of letters on "Wintering Sheep," begun in the January 1st issue of the *ADVOCATE*, will be of practical service.

### The Future of our Boys and Girls.

BY JAMES ELDER.

Never did this question force itself more prominently to the front than at present. There has been, and still is, a tendency on the part of our young people to seek the lighter employments, and no one will blame them much. We all rather like to be spruced up and look clean and tidy—quite a desirable preference. The young man or woman needs not to be very observant to notice the difference, commonly in this respect, between the farmer's son or daughter at work and the store clerk, school teacher or office hand. We cannot put old heads on young shoulders, and the young head cannot be expected to look much beyond the present enjoyment, neither can we expect them to look much below the surface and estimate appearances at their true value. But it becomes an absolute necessity for them to look the stern facts fairly in the face. "Things are not always what they seem." Very often the fancy clothing indicates not plenty of money, but, on the contrary, a very small bank deposit. The lighter employments are now flooded. A business man a short time ago told me that being in need of another clerk he advertised, and was at once answered by over two hundred applicants. A few weeks ago our school district advertised for a

second-class teacher, and was answered by one hundred and one applicants, including many first-class certificates and B. A.'s. Had the advertisement included third-class certificates I have no doubt we could have had double the number.

At least two bad results follow:—(1st) A great many thoroughly capable young people, after spending both money and time, find themselves out of employment, and (2nd) the agricultural profession is robbed of many who would not only have been its brightest, but also its most successful representatives. A great many of these will have to go back to farm life, where there is plenty of room for them. I know that just here I will be told that they will be all the better farmers on account of the high education they have received. I will discuss that question later on.

Let us now consider some of the causes which lead to this flooding of the lighter employments. Two of these we have already noticed, viz.: love of ease and love of dress, both quite natural to more than young people. Another is the idea that these employments are more lucrative. This idea has its source in the fact that we are apt to notice only the successes—these float on the surface—whilst the failures, which are "legion," drop from sight and drag out a miserable existence in obscurity. Another cause for the prevalence of this idea is that thousands are compelled to put on good appearances though sick at heart. Thousands of our town ladies wear fine bonnets and dresses whose predecessors perhaps of several generations are not paid for, and their poor husbands are driven to their wits' end to know how to pay an installment of interest or to stave off for an eighth or tenth time a long-suffering creditor.

Certainly in the last few years there has been comparatively little money made by farmers, and the salaries paid to many in the professions, teachers, clerks, etc., and the profits claimed by business enterprises, etc., have been out of all proportion to the farmer's earnings; but these things are changing. High salaries are disappearing before excessive competition, and farmers, having contracted the habit of sending large sums of money to the departmental stores, are compelling our merchants to cut their profits in two. I know that many speak of the awful sin of patronizing these departmental stores on account of the "sweating" process indulged in by them. Well, there are two sides to this subject. Why are there so many subjects of the sweating process? Chiefly because there are so many who prefer the needle to the cow's teat. Many of these "sweated" girls would curl their noses in contempt at the noble farmer's daughter who, with hearty laugh and rosy cheek, they see milking a cow or hoeing a flower bed or a row of vegetables in the garden.

This brings me to another cause of this flooding of the lighter employments, viz., the idea that manual labor is dishonorable. Some seem to have the idea that labor was the curse of man. Not at all. The three first laws given to man in his unfallen state were: 1st. The law of the Sabbath—Gen. 2: 3. 2nd. The law of labor, and farm labor at that—Gen. 2: 15. 3rd. The law of marriage—Gen. 3: 21-24. In other words, the first Sabbath observed on earth was by a representative farmer and his wife. On the other hand, the curse of Canaan (Gen. 9: 25) was that he should be "a servant of servants." I fancy this comes pretty near the case of the store clerk, who, notwithstanding his stylish appearance, has to wait upon all grades of society, hand down roll after roll of goods, simply to be looked at by people who have neither the intention nor the ability to purchase. How much more honorable is the position of the farmer who, with sun-browned face and plain clothes, "bows but to God alone."

## STOCK.

### The Care and Winter Feeding of Cattle.

In these days of close margins of profit in beef production, we are anxious to assist our readers in learning the most profitable method of carrying yearlings and two-year-olds through the winter, and in finishing cattle for the block. We therefore ask the co-operation of practical and experienced men in replying to the following questions:

- 1.—Do you prefer to tie yearlings during the winter months or allow them to run loose in pens with a view to economy of labor and well-being of the animals?
- 2.—How long each day do you allow yearlings and two-year-olds to run in the barnyard?
- 3.—What is the character of your coarse fodder, and do you consider it economical to feed hay to young store cattle?
- 4.—Should such animals receive any grain; if so, of what sort and how much daily?
- 5.—Assuming that you feed fodder, roots or ensilage and grain, do you prefer feeding them separately or mixed? If mixed, kindly explain how you prepare and feed it?
- 6.—At what age do you aim to sell your fattened cattle?
- 7.—What ration would you advise for fattening cattle from the beginning of February until shipping time?
- 8.—Do you consider it well to keep fattening cattle continually housed all winter? If not, how often should they be turned out?
- 9.—What plan of watering do you employ?
- 10.—How much importance do you attach to currying fattening cattle?

### Fattening Cattle.

- 1.—Prefer to tie yearlings, for the economy of space and that each may get his proper share of food.
- 2.—We allow yearlings and two-year-olds to run two hours of the day in the yard—long enough for

exercise and not long enough to exhaust them.

3.—Our coarse fodder is cornstalks, oat sheaf, and ensilage (one-third each), mixed twenty-four hours in advance. We feed young store cattle all the hay they will eat once a day, at night. We consider it profitable, and add to that millet once a week.

4.—In grain, we feed two pounds a day on the mixture of ensilage and cut feed. Our grain consists of oats, one-quarter; corn on the cob, one-half (ground); and bran, one-quarter, added and mixed.

5.—We always feed grain mixed with cut feed. The roots are fed in the evening, before the hay, the advantage being that it is a partial drink if the cattle have been watered early in the day.

6.—We aim to sell fattened cattle at the age of two and one-half years.

7.—In fattening cattle, from February to shipping we add about four pounds grain to the above mentioned rations. Do not think it economy to feed any heavier.

8.—We prefer letting fattening cattle go to the water trough about one and one-half hours each day, provided the water is just at hand and the cattle dehorned.

9.—We have a trough in each yard running water, and do not know of any better way.

10.—We clip about three inches wide along the back and use thereon oil, applied with a stiff brush, to prevent vermin. We curvy their backs one-third down the side. We think this profitable, and have practiced it for years. The oil mentioned above consists of linseed and coal oil in equal proportions.

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### The Value of Corn in Cattle Feeding.

1.—I think yearlings are better tied. There is generally one in a lot that will boss the rest and give them too much exercise. Also when fed some will get more, others less than their share.

2.—About an hour's run in barnyard.

3.—Straw and cornstalks with ears on. Yes; feed hay in April and May.

4.—I think young store cattle should get some grain—corn on the stalk, about the produce of three hills.

5.—I am not settled on the mixing question. Meal, though, should always be fed mixed with cut feed or chaff.

6.—Three years.

7.—I feed fattening cattle corn (ears and all), the produce of eight hills each in two or three feeds; roots, a bushel or less, same number of feeds, and oat straw daily until middle or end of March. After that roots, a diminishing quantity; meal (ground peas, oats, etc., with a little oil cake added) mixed with cut straw or chaff and hay three times a day. Amount of meal can not be specified, animals differ so. So far as I can judge, about ten pounds of meal per day for each beast is what can be profitably fed, but some will make use of much more, some not so much. No beast should get so much meal that it will not eat also a reasonable quantity of hay. But it pays, I think, to feed up to that point.

8.—Have tried both ways. Think that on the whole it is better to turn them out daily. They may not look so fat, but they weigh better for their looks, gain about the same, health better.

9.—I water cattle at the trough outside.

10.—When cattle are turned out they don't need to be curried. If you have a long, heavy, knotty pole fastened low at one end and higher at the other for them to curvy themselves on, they will make the hair fly faster than you can, and take great comfort in the operation.

I would add to the above that I think the ideal way of caring for young stock in winter, if they are quiet with one another or are dehorned, is to have them running loose in a yard or pen, eating straw at will, but tied up while eating grain or roots. I do that with my two-year-olds. Saves cleaning stables; manure in perfect condition.

I also want to draw attention to the value and cheapness of corn and roots as a food for fattening cattle. The produce of half an acre—one-third of it roots, two-thirds of it corn, with the addition of what oat straw he will eat—will fatten a steer for five months.

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### The System of a Veteran Breeder and Feeder.

1 and 2.—Yearlings intended for any purpose are better to run loose in boxes or pens. Their feed trough can be constructed in such a manner that they cannot possibly get thrown into it, and the exercise is very necessary in young growing stock, and will on same amount of feed make a greater gain than when tied up and let out each day for an hour. If they are in loose they need not be turned out if water is before them. I am a strong advocate of turning cattle out for half an hour each day when tied up. Then, the manure made in box stalls I consider much better than when cattle are tied, inasmuch as it gets thoroughly incorporated together, and none of the liquid is lost.

3.—Coarse fodders are cornstalks and straw; very little hay. Hay is too expensive.

4.—Yearlings—Roots and a few pounds, say ten, of ensilage, with coarse fodder, will keep them in good growing condition. Two-year-old steers should all be fed for beef in spring or for the July market. Coarse cut fodder, 10 lbs. roots, 15 lbs. ensilage, and