

States and in Russia. In Scotland sheep-washing was very much on the decline, and there was a larger proportion of unwashed wool put in the market every year. The question naturally arose—Were the northern farmers wise in keeping up the present system of placing their wool in the market in the washed state? With the experience of other countries before them, he was inclined to think that, if sheep were benefited by washing, it was absolutely indispensable that they should be washed. The next important question for the northern farmer to consider was—If he did not wash his sheep, could he find a ready market for his greasy wool? and if so, did it pay him better to have his wool washed or greasy? Here again the experience of other countries, where sheep were grown for the sake of the wool, pointed to the answer that it was not better to wash the wool.

He had the result of several local experiments before him, and in only one case had the result been unsatisfactory to the grower, who was the Rev. H. Fox, of St. Bees. But against that he put the experience of Mr. Mitchell, of Howgill Castle, who said he made more for his fleeces in the greasy state than in the washed; and he had divided his clip, washing one-half, and leaving the other greasy, and putting it up for sale by auction.

The next question was a most important one. Did the actual consumers of the north wool prefer to buy it or use it in the washed or in the unwashed state? He adduced the opinions of several of the largest consumers of north wool in the country on the subject. Messrs. W. and H. Foster preferred to use washed wools. Messrs. Robertshaw and Sons, of Bradford, said, in their opinions, so far as bred wool was concerned, it was better both for farmers and users to wash the wool before clipping. Messrs. Anderton and Sons said their experience favoured washing, as wool in the grease, if kept any length of time, became discoloured, and harder to the touch, than the same wool in the washed state; and in the north, where there were so many beautiful streams to tempt the farmers to wash, there ought to be no hesitation or two opinions on the matter. Messrs. Oldroyd and Sons said they used all their Cheviot wool unwashed. Mr. Thomas Lea, M. P., said that as a rule it was best to wash sheep before shearing, unless the wool was to go into consumption as soon as it was off the sheep's back. In England clips were often held for one, two, and three years—a very bad custom—and if it remained in the grease, the colour would be destroyed, and if unwashing became universal, the market would be filled with bad coloured wool. This opinion referred more to the better class of wool than to the rough, strong wools. He was convinced it would be a bad thing for the entire British clip to be an unwashed one. Messrs. John Shaw and Sons preferred north wool in its greasy state, providing it could be kept white. Kemp was a great objection in north cross-fleeces, and on this account was totally unsuitable to many woollen manufacturers. Messrs. Biggart and Co. said that they could point to no decided advantage in either mode, though each had its advantages and drawbacks. Messrs. E. Boden and Co. stated that they had always been in favour of unwashed wools; the manufactured goods always looked better, the colour was better, the material better to handle and to wear. In their opinion the method usually adopted by farmers and others at washing time was both cruel and clumsy. Mr. John Reddihough said he preferred half-bred wools unwashed, providing the sheep had not been on turnip, ploughed or clayey land, which wools he would not buy at all, if unwashed as it was impossible to judge their yield.

Here, Mr. Hargreaves said, there was divided opinion, but all were based upon long practical experience. All wool, whether clipped in the washed or greasy state, before it could be combed, spun, and manufactured, must be well scoured by

soap and hot water, and the scouring machines in all factories were a very important and expensive plant. The wool buyer for a manufacturer in valuing and purchasing wool had to estimate what the wool would cost clean scoured. Farmers must not run away with the idea that if they did not wash their wool they would get as much for it per pound as they would if it was washed. Take for example an ordinary washed half-bred hogg-fleece, which would lose in scouring 15 to 20 per cent. This would cost clean scoured about 1s. 1d. per lb. If the same wool was unwashed, as the greasy fleece, it would lose about 40 per cent. The buyer would then require to purchase it at 20 per cent. less than the washed wool, namely at 8d. per lb., and at this it would come out clean scoured at the same price, 1s. 1d. per lb. Briefly put, a farmer would be as much in pocket by selling, say, a mixed clip unwashed at 7d. per lb., as he would be by selling the same clip washed at 9d. per lb. They should also take notice that the finest-haired wools lost the most in scouring. There was no doubt wool lost colour if kept too long either in the greasy or washed state.

He went on to condemn the practice of farmers hoarding up their wool year after year. He spoke from a wool point of view, and also with the view of helping forward Lady Bective's movement. They should make a rule never to commence clipping their sheep until the previous year's clip was sold and turned into money. That was the kernel of the whole question. Think of the great good to be derived by adopting the policy of selling their wool every season! It found its way to the manufacturer and the spinner, and if not made into ladies' dress goods, it was used for carpets, tweeds, knitting yarns, and other articles which took up an enormous quantity of wool. If wool was sold at low prices, they would find the benefit of low prices in clothing. By selling the wool every year, they kept the prices more regular, and there would not be so many fluctuations, and so farms would be kept more regular in the rents.

He had been often asked by farmers for advice. He would say if he was a northern farmer, with the clean grassy lands of the district, he would never wash sheep. His experience as a salesman was that unwashed wool met with better competition than washed wool. To those who could not make up their minds on the question he would say—Wash half of their sheep, and leave the other half unwashed, and then they could judge for themselves which was the better course. In any case, whether they clipped their sheep washed or unwashed, see that the wool was well got up; in all cases, improve the breed as much as possible. In the better bred flocks, it would be advantageous, he thought, to introduce a merino cross. To the fell farmers he would say there was still room for improvement in the blackfaced breeds; let them abolish the use of salve, and do not mix their dip with bad oil or tar or anything that discoloured and stained the wool. Do not, he said, wrap locks inside your fleeces before rolling up. All ribs and dirty pieces must be taken from the fleece and kept separate, as they strain and injure the wool if rolled up with the fleece. Also, avoid large tar marks. Mark the sheep on the ear or the face. Careful attention to these details would give them a better market for their wool, and in these days of keen competition it was desirable in the interests of the British wool-grower that the production should be first-class.

Manuring on Dairy Farms.

The opinion is held by some some that dairy farming is an exhaustive system; and we have even known landlords to ob-