

## Which Shall we Rear, Cattle, Horses, or Sheep?

The question which is the most profitable stock to grow, is one of the greatest importance to the farmer, and one which has not received an amount of investigation and experiment commensurate with its importance. I was greatly interested during the last year in watching the progress of an experiment made by a friend of mine, one who is ever alive to all that pertains to the best interests of the farming community, with a view to satisfactorily settle this question for himself. He divided his pastures into three lots, and placed in each \$320 worth of stock, as follows:—

First, 40 prime ewes at \$8.....	\$320 00
Second, 16 two-year old heifers.....	320 00
Third, 4 two-year old colts.....	320 00

He estimated the pasturage of the sheep per week at 3 cents, of the heifers at 12½ cents, and of the colts at 25 cents. The hay consumed was reckoned worth \$10 per ton, and the oats fed at 60 cents per bushel, and the care of the stock was balanced by the manure. Through grazing time they had good feed and all the salt they wished. He cut his hay early in the season, and put it into the mow in excellent order, using no salt in the process of mow-curing. Early in the fall he drove the colts and heifers to their respective stalls, and the sheep four weeks later to their shed. When he commenced feeding hay he divided a large mow into three unequal portions, and measured the contents of each division, allowing 7 cubic or 343 feet per ton. In the spring he found the account with his stock to stand thus:—

40 sheep in account,	Dr.
To 30 weeks' pasturage, at 3 cents per week.....	\$36 00
To 5 tons hay, at \$10.....	50 01
To 60 bushels oats, at 60 cents.....	36 00
To cost of sheep at \$8.....	320 00

Amount.....	\$442 00
40 sheep in account,	Cr.
By 140 lbs. wool, at 60 cents.....	\$112 00
By 50 lambs, at \$2 75.....	137 50
By 40 sheep, worth \$10.....	400 00

Amount.....	\$649 50
Net profit on sheep.....	\$195 50
16 heifers in account,	Dr.
To 26 weeks' pasturage, at 12½ cents per week.....	\$52 00
To 23 tons of hay, at \$10.....	230 00
To cost of heifers, at \$20.....	320 00

Amount.....	\$652 00
16 prime heifers coming in,	Cr.
Cash value, \$40.....	\$640 00
Net loss on heifers.....	\$12 00
4 colts in account,	Dr.
To cost, at \$80.....	\$320 00
To 26 weeks' pasturage, at 25 cents.....	26 00
To 11 tons of hay, at \$10.....	110 00
To 45 bushels of oats, at 80c.....	36 00

Amount.....	\$492 00
4 prime colts, well broke,	Cr.
By cash value, at \$125.....	\$500 00
Net gain.....	\$9 00

It will be observed that no charge was made for breaking in the colts; had that item been added, no profit would have accrued. A charge for shearing the sheep would also have deducted slightly from their credit.

Had the experiment been made with good dairy cows the net profit would probably have been nearly or quite equal to the margin in favour of the sheep. I have no data from which to determine what the results would have been, had the stock estimated in the three divisions, been reared on the place and an exact account kept for the three years. If any person who reads this article can furnish the writer, through the columns of the *Rural*, or otherwise, careful statistics on this subject he will confer a great favour on many interested.

Some few years since I purchased several yearling steers, and kept them two years, keeping an exact account of all they consumed, and when I sold them, to make my ledger balance, I had to add a loss of five dollars per head. At the same time, though butter was low, my cows paid me each over twenty dollars per head of net profit annually. In conclusion I will only observe that, from such data as I have been able to gather, on a good sheep-farm, with the money invested and the labour involved, sheep give by far the best returns; while on a dairy farm, if the farmer has a *working* family, good cows at present prices for butter, cheese, pork and veal, give even better returns than sheep.—E. P. VAIL, in *Rural American*.

**BLACK TEETH IN SWINE.**—Last year this disease was somewhat prevalent and destructive in New England, and those having swine should be on their guard now that the season for hot weather has again come. Con-

finement from the ground is believed to be one of the causes of this troublesome disease. Its commencement is indicated by loss of appetite, tumours and weakness in the hind legs, and frequently in the loins, with staggering and vertigo. As soon as these symptoms appear, administer a dose of brimstone or flour of sulphur. Frequent applications of buttermilk to the back and loins, and gentle rubbing with a cob, will generally bring relief, and frequently entire cure. The animals should also be allowed a liberal supply of loam, rotten wood, and fresh, cool dirt. If there is a yard attached to the piggery, the animals may be permitted to run out if the weather is clear and pleasant. No hog should be kept entirely away from the ground, and none without access at all times to a dry bed, entirely away from the wind and sun. Another great oversight in keeping swine is in not giving them *all the pure, fresh water they will drink*, and especially in hot weather. Once each day, at least, a bucket of cool water should be turned into a clean trough, where the hog can drink what he pleases. The opinion seems quite common that swine do not need much drink. Perhaps they do not require as much as some other animals, but unless they get it in their will they should have access to water every day.—N. H. Farmer.

## Sheep Husbandry.

### Sheep Farming in Canada.

BY J. B.

It must be that our farmers in Western Canada know not the real value of sheep husbandry, that so comparatively little attention is paid to it, and but few cultivate their lands with that end in view. If, however, they will turn to the writings of men like Randall, of New York, they will soon discern what a source of wealth is being neglected. Now, as a very imperfect illustration of what may be done, we propose to make some extracts from various sources touching this point. First, with regard to cost. Randall says:—

"The cost of producing wool depends upon that of keeping sheep; and this necessarily differs greatly in different localities. On the highest-priced lands in New York and New England, on which sheep are now usually kept for *wool-growing* purposes, it, under a judicious system of winter management, reaches about \$2 a head per annum. In some of our Western and North-Western States, where sheep have the run of lands belonging to government, the cost is about \$1 per head. We must be guided by the cost, therefore, at New England and New York States."

Improved merino flocks of breeding ewes should average five pounds of washed wool per head in large flocks. Medium wool has sold on an average for 42 : 8-10 cents per pound for the 35 years preceding the high prices of the present war. This gives \$2.14 to the fleece, which should pay for the cost of keeping *anywhere*, and leave the owner the *lambs and manure* for his profit. The increase of lambs will average about 80 per cent. on the whole number of breeding ewes. 400 South Down sheep are sufficient to fold 20 perches a day, or 45 acres a year, the value of which is therefore about £90 a year, or 4s. 6d. per sheep. 300 sheep have in this manner, with a standing fold on some dry ground, and convenient spot, well littered with straw, produced 80 large cart loads of dung between October and March; and in this manner, after the expenses have been deducted, each sheep has earned 3d. per week. 100 merino sheep given abundance of bedding, will, between December 1st and May 1st, make at least 42 cart loads of manure, and if roots are fed to them, considerably more. The value of the lambs and the manure is the minimum profit. That profit increases just on the *market value of land*, and the cost of keep decreases.—Estimating 80 per cent of lambs and 50 cents a head for manure, each sheep would thus average in both products \$2.10, just about the equivalent of the fleece, so that it would be equally well, on *high priced* lands requiring fertilizers, to say that the lambs and manure pay the cost of keeping, and the fleece is to be reckoned as the profit. According to the first computation, lands worth \$50 an acre would give their owner a profit of seven per cent., if they would support a little over one and three-fifths sheep to the acre; and that would be indifferent grazing land where the domesticated grasses are grown, and under proper

systems of winter keeping, which would not support three sheep to the acre. In many districts of Canada the want of a good *system* of farming has rendered it scarcely possible to ensure a remunerative return from wheat, and the only hope remaining to the agriculturist to reclaim the soil, is by keeping as many sheep on his farm as he can successfully provide for. With increasing city and town populations, and in view of the rapidly-increasing demand for wool, and for mutton, we feel confident that sheep husbandry will be more extensively introduced. But, under even the best circumstances, some lands and certain situations will always afford better conditions for the maintenance of stock than for raising wheat, so that certain districts must ultimately become the centres of this particular husbandry. Sections of the Niagara district to wit, and the front portions of Etobicoke, are illustrations of tracts in which sheep would now more profitably supplant grain; so that under any circumstances the number of sheep farms would be regulated by the *nature* of the soil, climate, and general conditions. We do not know a more desirable kind of information than that which would let both our own people and the "old country" folk know where such lands are to be had. We send home fine maps, full of scientific research, and overlaid with geological red and brown paint. Would it not be well if an agricultural map were published, marking the lands as to their fitness for one kind or another of agricultural industry?

Assuming that our farmer is convinced of the value of sheep keeping, the first question he is to decide must be, "wool or mutton." In the present condition of Canada, we may safely say that, in the majority of cases, the latter will be the decision arrived at, and for the reason, that our holdings are seldom over from two to four hundred acres, and many, very many, only 100 acres. We are not likely to compete successfully with the best wool-producing countries *we may successfully with the best mutton-producing countries* of the world. But although not growing the *finest* or *first-class* wools, we may nevertheless give to the markets our quota of *excellent quality taken even from mutton sheep*. Already Canada has furnished facts to show that we are in possession of stock surpassed by none on the continent, and have the facilities for embarking in an occupation which cannot fail of being remunerative. In the improved English breeds introduced into the Province by Stone, of Guelph, Miller of Markham, and other able and now distinguished agriculturists, we may develop resources lying dormant, and only awaiting the magic touch of industry to burst into activity. Of the breeds now in Canada, *three* are specially interesting, and it may with truth be said, that the choice of either must depend on the thrift of the farmer, the quality of his farm, his style of farming, the position of the farm, quality of soil and climate, and facilities for winter care. The more capable the farmer is, both in respect of his means and of his knowledge, the more certainly may he seek to obtain the best sort of sheep, and by diligence and undeviating attention, hope to keep his flock to the highest point of productive value; but as with *every other* business, there must be grades of perfection, so whilst one is developing a noble breed of animals of ever-increasing excellence, another with less means, and under less favourable circumstances, must be content to get along with breeds of less perfect form, and which will be more slowly improved. Of the three varieties of sheep referred to, viz., the Cotswold, the Shropshire, and the Leicester, perhaps the Shrops are the one most likely to be generally useful in our climate, as experience shows that they are more hardy, and are better "workers" for their grub than either of the others. It may be, however, that these sheep will require to be some time longer in the hands of known breeders of skill and repute, in order that their constitutional peculiarities may be the more *securely* rooted; and for this reason, those who desire permanently to retain, and even to improve, their flocks, would do well to go back for rams, and even ewes, every three or four years, to some distinguished flock. With this precaution, we certainly think that Mr. George Miller's estimate of the Shrops deserves to be carefully considered by our people. We infer that the townships of Scarboro', Markham, Pickering, East York, North York, and such like situations, would afford conditions under which the Shropshire would maintain all his excellencies. If we place the Cotswold before the Leicester, it is for the same reason that induced us to place the Shrops before them. In this sheep we have no doubt a singularly fine animal, and one which, with a more settled constitution, is only less hardy than the Shrops. More hardy than the Leicester, and an equally efficient wool-bearer, we think it deserves to be preferred. Mr. Stone, of Guelph, is the master of these splendid creatures, and Moreton Lodge will long be remembered as the home of the Cotswold on this continent. His celebrated ram, Pilgrim, just off his winter feed, weighed 250 lbs., and yielded 18 lbs. of