AGRICULTURAL.

USEFULNESS OF MOWING WEEDS.—In the month of June weeds are in their most succulent state, and in this state, especially after they have lain a few hours to wither, hungry cattle will eat greedily almost every species. There is scarcely a hedge, border, or nook, but at this season is valuable, and it must certainly be good management to embrace the transient opportunity; for in a few weeks they will become nuisances.

From the New York Farmer

HINTS ON SHEEP HUSBANDRY

It is obvious that housing sheep at night, and providing them, during the day, a shelter from the rain and sun, must preserve and improve the wool; and also essentially conduce to the health, comfort and preservation of the animal.

I would have sheep winter fed, to the degree of commencing the grass seed in good store order and without having sustained any check, in carcases or wool; and sheltered in yards or sheds, as much as the sheep may themselves affect, throughout even the mildest climates of Britain, for neither merino, nor half breed merino lambs, nor indeed those of any other breed, ought to be exposed without some kind of shelter, to the rigours of the winter and early spring; and the sheep, when arrived at their maturity or full strength, will still require the same, with regular and good feeding, if it be intended to force the growth of their fleece, to its utmost weight, and to preserve the quality in its highest degree of condition and fineness.—*Lawrence.*

One of the completest sheep yards I have seen is that which Mr. Thurlow has made at Gosfield, partly by means of stubble stalks, but the space well enclosed; a large flock may be under cover or exposed, at their pleasure. In the centre is a thick stubble stack, which forms a double shed. He finds it of incomparable use, inasmuch as he intends to convert all the straw of his large farm into dung, and to leave off buying bullocks for that purpose.—*Arthur Young.*

The late Gen. Murray's standing folds were equally well contrived, enclosing an area of 57 yards in length, and 20 broad, containing 1,140 square yards. Above 700 ewes were folded in it at night, and for that number it is more than a yard and a half for each sheep. All round it was a shed nine or ten feet wide, and also across the middle, which latter was open on both sides. A rack for hay, placed against the wall, which was boarded, surrounded the whole, and another which was double, to be eaten out of on both sides, stood along the central shed; under the rack was a small manger in which the food was given.—*Ib.*

A cool moderate temperature is more favourable to the production of fine wool, than excessive heat; and were the sheep of Spain, like those of England, unprotected against the effects of climate, I should have no hesitation in saying, that the situation of that country would be, in some respects, worse than that of our own island, and more unfriendly to the growth of a fine even staple. But to the other qualities, the soundness and softness of the fibres, our frequent rains are very prejudicial, unless the sheep be sheltered and protected from their effects.—*Bakewell.*

To preserve all the best qualities of wool in the Spanish breed of sheep, it will be necessary to attend to the three following objects: The first in importance, is the purity of the breed. The next, that the fleece be covered by nature with a copious yolk, or being deficient that it be supplied by art; nor should the unctuous covering of the wool be absorbed by a mixture with the soil on fallows, or washed away by the rain. Lastly, that the sheep be kept dry, sheltered from the extremes of heat and cold, and their quantity of nourishment regulated.—*Ib.*

The bad effects of water upon the pile, while growing, may be owing to the readiness with which it mingles with the yolk, and carries off a quantity of that animal soap, which is so necessary to the good quality and even existence of the fleece; for if care be taken to prevent this, by the skillful application of tar mingled with butter, which act as repellants to the water, the wool part of the staple which after the mixture was applied, contains a sufficient supply of rich and nutritious yolk, and is much a superior sort of wool to those parts of the pile which have been exposed without protection, to the dripping wetness of the wintry season.—*Luccock.*

Mr. Bakewell is so fully convinced of the utility of greasing, that he advises it immediately after shearing, and again in October. In his opinion, the trouble and expence of it, twice a year, will be well repaid by its beneficial effects upon both the carcase and fleece of the sheep, in every part of Britain. He observes, by the first greasing, the wool will be covered and defended from the action of the soil, when the particles are most pulverized and active, and it will be kept soft and moist during the parching heat of July and August; and that he has reason to believe, that the top of the staple of a greased fleece would not become harsh and discoloured, which is frequently the case with English wool. Additional and very powerful inducements to spring and summer greasing, are the following: The ointment destroys the sheep tick, and has a tendency to prevent cutaneous distempers, and to preserve sheep from the stroke of the fly. Farther, a considerable quantity of wool will be saved, which is torn off by sheep when rubbing themselves, in order to allay the irritation of the skin, occasioned by those causes. The ointment resists the action of the moisture more powerfully than could the natural yolk of the wool; and Mr. Bakewell gives an example of the superior warmness and dryness apparently enjoyed by greased sheep, on the mountain sides, where greased and ungreased browsed together.

The following is given as the Northumberland preparation: From 16 to 20 pounds butter are placed over the fire and melted; a gallon of tar is then added, and the mixture is stirred until the two substances are well incorporated, and form a soft tenacious ointment. The care always necessary in the application of ointments to the sheep, is especially so in this case; for, says Mr. Bakewell, *if the ointment be rubbed on the wool, it collects on the top of the staple, attracts and mixes with the soil, and is rather injurious than beneficial to the fleece.* The staples of the fleece are to be divided with one hand, and the ointment applied to the skin with the finger of the other hand, by which means the ointment is softened by the warmth of the skin, and equally diffused throughout the fleece. The quantity required will in course vary with the size of the sheep, but generally, and in the lighter mode of greasing, one gallon of tar and 20 pounds of butter will be sufficient for forty or fifty sheep. —*Lawrence.*

An unfavourable change takes place on shorn wool, kept long in a very warm and dry temperature; the fibres become indurated, rigid and elastic, and acquire the properties of the hard wools. The greater the degree of warmth, the more speedily will the effect be produced. Wool which has been shorn three or four years, will not spin or fill so well as when kept only one year. A dry situation is necessary for the preservation of wool, which however at length loses its natural moisture, and becomes hard, like wool of limestone districts.—*Bakewell.*

Sheared sheep turned into a newly mown pasture, their coats attract the short ends of grass left by the scythe, and remain sticking in the bottom of the fleece, until in the end they are rolled up with it. These, with any dried vegetable particles, such as hay seeds, or chaff, falling from the rack into the coat of the sheep, occasion much extra trouble and expense in the manufacture of the wool, since, if left, they would be wrought into the substance of the cloth, whence they may be extracted by holes made, to be afterwards repaired at the fulling mill, or by the fine drawer. Hay in racks should be upon the level with the heads of the sheep, and the staves by no means too wide apart, since some sheep, particularly the Spanish, are the most wasteful animals in the world of their provisions.—*Luccock.*

The wool grower is counselled to place no dependence upon accidental and external circumstances, for the production of good fleeces, but to rely entirely and with confidence upon the properties with which nature has endowed his sheep, the perpetuity of animal properties, being scarcely any where more strikingly exhibited, than in the certainty and regularity with which the parent sheep convey to their offspring their own distinguished characteristics. Breed is of the utmost consequence. It is the basis upon which all the improvements of the flock must be founded; the only source of hope that attempts to produce fine wool will be followed with success. The kind of wool depends entirely on the species of sheep which bears it; and the soil and its products, or other external circumstances, have no other effect than to vary the quality of the sample, the wool itself still remaining true to its species, long, short or mixed. Long and universal experience has established the fitness of heavy, coarse wooled sheep, for rich grazing grounds and marshes, confining the light and short wooled stock to the hills and higher pasture. Nevertheless, fitness and propriety, not absolute necessity, have given birth to such arrangement: since short and fine wool might be grown in the low grounds, and long wool in the upper, with an additional expence of winter keeping.—*Lawrence.*

IMPROVED METHOD OF SALTING BUTTER AND MEAT.—Best common salt two parts, saltpetre one part, sugar one part; beat them up together, so that they may be completely blended. To every sixteen ounces butter add one ounce of the composition; mix it well in the mass, and close it up for use.—It should not be used for a month, that it may be thoroughly incorporated. Butter, thus cured has been kept for three years perfectly sweet. Keep the air from it, or it spoils. Cover it with an oiled paper, and a board on that.

To cure meat, add one ounce of the above composition to every sixteen ounces of meat. It must be *very well rubbed into the meat.* You cannot have it too finely powdered, nor too well rubbed into the meat.

METHOD OF CURING BAD TUB BUTTER.—A quantity of tub butter was brought to market in the West Indies, which, on opening, was found to be very bad, and almost stinking. A native of Pennsylvania undertook to cure it, which he did, in the following manner:—

He started the tubs of butter in a large quantity of hot water, which soon melted the butter; he then skimmed it off as clean as possible, and worked it over again in a churn, and with the addition of salt and fine sugar, the butter was sweet and good.

TO FARMERS.—Plant no more ground than you can well manure and cultivate to advantage.

Keep no more stock than you can keep in good order, and that of the *best* kind.