

past four or five years; many flockmasters have sold out, while others have greatly reduced their flocks. Especially in the United States has the depression been keenly felt. The Americans claim to have the best sheep country in the world, and yet they have almost succumbed to competition from other countries. Some parts are exceptionally favorable, but they have almost ruined their business by their high taxation policy. Bottom appears to have been struck, however, and the recent rise in sheep and wool has given tone to the market, which must react upon the business in our country. You should, therefore, proceed actively, but cautiously, not permitting anything like a boom to sow the seeds of future disaster.

We believe that it is desirable, even in times of the greatest depression, to keep a few sheep, for they yield greater returns for the food consumed than any other domestic animal, excepting the hog, and they possess many other advantages which render their presence necessary on every farm. But some soils and climates are better adapted to sheep growing than others, so that every farmer cannot be equally successful in the business. Many farmers should make a specialty of sheep and wool; we know of no other occupation which is more pleasant, and, taking a series of years, more profitable. Our climate is well adapted to sheep growing. Above all, the sheep specialist should possess a thorough practical knowledge of his business, and be specially well posted in the characteristics of the various breeds. He must be backed up by a heavy, rich, dry soil, for it is the soil that makes the flock. On poor soils, however, there is nothing more profitable than sheep to increase its fertility, and many flocks are utilized almost exclusively for this purpose. This is done by hurdling the sheep on your poorest patches of land, feeding rich foods for the purpose of getting a large quantity of rich manure, the hurdles being moved frequently from one patch to another. With reference to the quality of wools, Bakewell says that clay produces the best, sand second, and lime the most inferior quality. In cold climates wool has a finer texture and a superior quality. High stimulating foods act injuriously upon the quality. The best soils for wool are also the best for mutton, and it is necessary that the land be dry, for damp soils are a fruitful cause of such diseases as liver rot, fluke and foot rot.

Perhaps the most important consideration is the selection of the ram. In order to make the best choice, a comprehensive knowledge of the breeds and of the market tendencies of breeds, wool and mutton, is very essential. It is a ruinous practice to base your calculations on booms or boom prices, for such are often very far removed from intrinsic values, and experience so dearly gained should never be forgotten. There will always be a demand for all the leading breeds of sheep and for all grades of wool; but specialists should manipulate in those lines where the greatest fluctuations are liable to exist. The ordinary farmer should confine his operations to means, and not rush to extremes. There are certain qualities which are in steady demand, and he should not, as a rule, overstep these limits. Such are medium wools and a fair quality of mutton, both of

which can profitably exist in the same breed or grade. During the past few years there has been a great deal of talk about the Merino, and we think this a great improvement on the average boom. So long as fat stock shows continue to humbug the farming community, the public cannot consistently reject mutton of the Leicester and Cotswold quality and accept any tinged with Merino blood. But these prejudices are rapidly disappearing, and although nobody as yet wants Merino mutton, still the carcass of the Merino grade is thoroughly enjoyed by all who possess unvitiated palates. The wool of the Merino grade—that is, the product of the Merino ram crossed upon our grade sheep—will never fail to be in good demand. Failing this, the Southdown and Shropshire grades will fill the bill very well, and very little can be urged against the Oxford grade. We do not wish to urge too strongly the advantages of the above named breeds; many farmers have good common sheep, both the wool and the mutton being in good demand, and it would be very undesirable for them to pay fancy prices for thoroughbreds with the intention of improving the carcass or the fleece. The impression is too prevalent that great weights of fleece and carcass are the most profitable, forgetting that the larger animals require a greater quantity of food to produce greater results. It is high time that the relative quantities of food consumed, proportionate to the live weight, be thoroughly investigated.

It has recently been found by Dr. Jas. Cameron, that cows may suffer from a peculiar, hitherto undescribed, infectious disease, and that the consumer of the milk of these cows may get scarlet fever. The symptoms are known to many farmers as "sore teats," "blistered teats," etc. The disease is said to be more common in newly calved cows, and is capable of being communicated to healthy cows by direct inoculation of the teats with virus conveyed by the hands of the cowman. The disease usually continues four to six weeks, during which the patient suffers general constitutional disturbance, a short fever, a dry, hacking cough, sometimes quickened breathing, sore throat in severe cases, discharge from the nostrils and eyes, an eruption of the skin round the eyes and hind quarters, vesicles on the teats and udder, alteration in the quality of the milk secretion, and well marked visceral lesions.

John Marshall, of Sebastopol, Cal., writes: "One summer, four or five years ago, I was milking two cows. I used to milk as I had seen some, and suppose most all do, with both hands, one hand up while the other was down, alternately. One of the cows had been in milk about a month; her teats were very sore and made her quite restless. I changed my way of milking, bringing both hands up and down together, instead of alternately. The change had some effect, so I kept it up. In about a week afterwards I found there was an increase in the flow of milk. The increase was probably eight or ten percent, and without any change in the pasture. I was surprised; did not understand it, so I tried the same plan on the other cow, which had been in milk for four or five months. There was an increase in her milk, but not so great, maybe not more than three or four percent. Now, Mr. Editor, will you not ask some of your milking friends to try the above plan, and to let you know how they may succeed?"

The Vairy.

Seasoning Butter with Brine.

BY PROF. L. B. ARNOLD.

The best butter makers in England, Ireland and Jersey, as well as in this country, are gradually dropping the practice of seasoning butter with salt, and are using brine in its place. Those who are far enough along to appreciate the difference between gathering butter in a lump and handling it in granules, are in a position to adopt brine seasoning with ease and a decided benefit. All that is necessary for such a butter maker to do is, when his butter has come, to wash in the usual way with water till it will run off clear, and then immerse the granules of butter in brine as strong as it can be made, and let the butter lie in it the same length of time he would to have the salt dissolve if he had used dry salt, and then press the butter into a solid form, avoiding any friction or grinding motion while reducing it to a solid. In this way all working will be avoided, and the butter left in the best possible condition for keeping, and have an even color and the highest flavor it is possible for it to have. By lying in strong brine a few hours, the brine will draw the water out of the butter the same as dry salt would.

Brine makes a more even distribution of the saline flavor than dry salt can do, and it will relieve the butter of any excess of water it may contain just as readily as salt in crystals can, and put it in readiness for packing in as little, if not in less, time. It is by some supposed that salt strikes into butter better if dry salt is worked into it than it would if covered with brine, but this is a misapprehension of the action of salt—neither salt nor brine strikes into butter at all. There is no affinity between salt and butter or brine and butter. In seasoning butter with either, the salt remains in butter only as a foreign body mechanically mixed. It seasons only what it touches in any case, and brine will touch more of it than salt can. It is not enough to apply brine or salt and pack the butter at once, for the reason that newly churned butter often (but not always) contains more water in its composition than is desirable or safe for the welfare of the butter or that of the consumer. Salt will not go into the butter after its water, but when close to it the salt will draw the water to itself, and because it is more fully in contact with the butter when in granules, salt will draw out the water more effectually when in brine than when in crystals.

Another advantage of seasoning with brine is the certainty of uniform seasoning in different churnings. One would have to take special pains to get one churning saltier than another when he seasons with a saturated brine, and he can do this without weighing or measuring if he will keep a little excess of salt in the brine, so that its strength will not be reduced by the water which it drains out of the butter. When butter is gathered in the churn in granular form it is never overchurned. Pounding it after it is in a lump or large masses is what overchurns it. In seasoning with brine it is never overworked, as it is not worked at all. Working out buttermilk and working in salt is where the overworking comes in. In fact, working at all is overworking, because, by the improved method, none is needed, and