

Stock.

Pasture Lands.

In Ireland sixty-four acres in every one hundred acres are seeded down for pasture purposes. In England forty-two acres in every hundred are seeded to pasture. And pastures in the old country are pastures in reality, seeded to several varieties of grasses, so that when one variety passes its greatest vigor another takes its place, and this continuation is kept up throughout the season. The pastures are well fertilized, and weeds are eradicated mercilessly. If the farmers in this country would pay better attention to pasture lands it would pay them well.—*Rural World*.

Prevention of Animal Disease.

The New York Times takes up the subject of the prevention of disease in animals, and gives some valuable hints worthy of the attention of all live-stock owners. After alluding to the damage caused by disease, the article says:—

There is no doubt that the losses of sheep, swine and cattle, that might be prevented by proper precaution and care, amount to one-fifth of the whole value of these classes of stock. One hundred million dollars yearly would not more than cover these losses. The great misfortune is that much disease is spread by infection and contagion among herds and flocks that would otherwise escape. Animals are subject to all the dangerous influences which affect the health of human beings. Miasma, malaria, exposure to sudden and severe changes of temperature; the consumption of innutritious or indigestible food, or impure water; overfeeding, underfeeding, or irregular feeding; exposure to foul air or filth—all these affect a man's beasts as quickly as they would injuriously affect himself. The instinct of self-preservation, and the well-known results of these causes, tend greatly to secure mankind from danger from them; and where the individual fails to preserve himself, the public safety prompts effective legal measures to compel him to observe proper precautions. But as regards our domestic animals, when an individual fails to preserve his own property it is only in a few cases that any legal provisions are in force for the protection of that of his neighbors. Thus disease among cattle of all kinds may spread unchecked through an extensive district from one seed-bed of pestilence and contagion. It is time that this risk which farmers are obliged to encounter should be removed. We do not propose, however, at this time to consider this view of the case, but only to offer suggestions which are pertinent at this season for the preservation of the health of animals that may be exposed to danger.

The present season is peculiarly full of risk. It is one when sudden changes of temperature occur; when the surface soil is highly charged with decomposing vegetable matter, the gases from which are absorbed by water or mingled with the atmosphere, and thus have an active effect upon the systems of animals; and also a period when the herbage is hard, innutritious, indigestible, or positively hurtful, from partial decomposition. The stratum of air resting upon meadows and pastures, either drained or undrained, but more particularly those in the latter condition, is filled with miasmatic or malarial germs which are breathed by animals and enter into their circulation. The water they drink is also highly charged with these minute destructive organisms. Although these may not of themselves in all cases induce disease directly, yet they enfeeble the vitality and create a more sensitive condition, in which animals become an easy prey to contagion or infection. Human beings under these circumstances avoid all dangerous or deleterious articles of food or drink; they ventilate, disinfect and purify their dwellings; they observe caution as to changes of clothing, and fortify themselves with medicines or tonics against the approaches of disease, and avoid with the greatest care all danger of contagion. But what owners of animals observe these precautions? Very few, if any. Nothing is done until the animal is stricken, and then the worst has already happened. To treat an animal that gives no sign until it is at the point of death is useless.

There is no help in these cases but in precaution. If such sanitary rules were observed in the stables and yards as are practices in dwellings, the danger of disease would be greatly reduced. If the precautions as to food and water were taken,

if unwholesome pastures were left unoccupied, if cleanliness in feeding were practiced, and no animal was permitted, much less obliged, to drink or eat filth of any kind, the natural robustness and hardiness of our cattle would carry them safely through a multitude of milder dangers. At this change of the seasons, when so much dead matter is going to decay, it is necessary to exercise great watchfulness in regard to these things. Not only so, but the animals themselves need close watching, that the first indication of something amiss may be observed and immediate treatment be given. In case anything is observed to go wrong the first thing to be done is to clear out the bowels by an active saline purgative—8 to 16 ounces of epsom salts is generally the most effective and safest that can be given. After this, copious drinks of very thin gruel of bran, linseed-meal or oatmeal, may be given with benefit. As a rule, bleeding is to be strictly avoided as a dangerous resource, and an almost, if not altogether, fatal mistake.

Breeding Sheep for Mutton.

We have various inquiries upon this subject. How to breed for mutton will depend upon what branch of the business you propose to follow—whether to rear sheep to sell to the butcher or for breeding purposes, or (which, in our opinion, is generally the most profitable practice, as well here as in breeding cattle) to rear your stock with a view to both objects. With the best blood, as we have frequently had occasion to show, there will always be some individuals below the standard of merit that should be required in breeding stock, and these should go to the butcher.

If you select good, strong, compact ewes of the common sort in your neighborhood and breed them to a Southdown ram, the lambs will probably show dark faces and legs, and to a large degree the fattening properties and the quality of flesh of the sire, and meet with a ready sale in the market, as the Southdown is the best, as to qualities of mutton, of all our cultivated breeds. If a Shropshire-down ram can be had, he will get you larger stock, with a heavier fleece of wool, though both fleece and flesh will be coarser than in the Southdown. However, it is probable that the produce of Shropshire, being larger, would be the most profitable. If neither of these breeds (nor the Hampshire-down, regarded as next to the Southdown in quality and larger in carcass) is at hand, or if the long wool is preferred, we would choose a Cotswold or a Lincoln—both very large, with fine and valuable fleeces for combing. But these large breeds require, to make them profitable, high feeding and more attention than the smaller varieties. All these breeds are ready for market at eighteen months, and it is not believed profitable to keep the wethers to a much greater age. They are sheep for dear lands, where there is a good demand for mutton.

In rearing sheep to sell for breeding purposes, of the mutton races, we would prefer the Southdown, and next to them the Shropshires. To begin with, get a good ram, compact, stout and short necked and well covered with wool, of as uniform staple as possible. Don't be particular about the price if the ram suits you; any man who breeds sheep can afford to give a good price for a good ram, but no man can afford to breed from a poor ram—in proportion to the investment, nothing will make or lose money to a farmer like a ram. After securing the right sort of a ram, look about for a few good purely-bred ewes of the same breed. It is not necessary to get many to begin with; if you are without experience in the business, feel your way. To these you may add the common ewe as before suggested, and breed your ram to them for stock to the butchers. Breed early, not later than November, and get your lambs stout for the early grass. Grow your lambs—this is the true system in growing mutton as well as pork. The more you feed bran, oats, etc., the higher will be your profits. The ewes, too, must be kept in condition to give plenty of milk.—*National Live Stock Journal*.

HOW TO FEED CATTLE.—Stock doing well; have exercise and sunshine (when there is any) every day; no abortions, and losing no calves, so far; young stock growing like weeds in a corn field in June. Six bushels meal, two bushels mill feed, two bushels light oats, seven quarts oil cake meal, and one pint of salt, mixed with three times as much cut hay as there is bulk of grain, making one day's rations for seventy-five head of cattle, young and old. Feed is dampened, and stands (when weather is not too cold) twelve to twenty-four hours before feeding, and is apportioned to the stock according to age and condition.—P. N.

Shropshires.

The Shropshire has a dark brown face and legs, and the wool in the centre of the forehead and around the ears tinged with brown, larger than Southdown, which it much resembles, and the fleece, which weighs from five to seven pounds, is much longer in staple and heavier than the Southdown, but still a carding wool; there is, however, a lack of uniformity. In samples taken from last year's lambs the fleece had precisely the appearance of Cotswold wool, while a sample from an imported buck of same age, which was nearly as long, was a carding wool, which was much like the Southdown. The meat resembles the Southdown, being marbled with fat, but perhaps less delicate. While the Shropshire, as a breed, are superior to the Southdown in size and weight of fleece, still it is much to be doubted if they will prove equal to the Southdowns for improving the common breeds of our country. The Southdown being a very old and distinct breed, impresses its characteristics with great certainty; the Shropshire being a cross-bred animal, and as the most cross-bred animals are superior to either of the breeds from which it is formed, is not so likely to impress its progeny with its own type.—*American Farmer*.

Abortion in Cows.

W. D. P. writes to the *Mass. Plowman* as follows:—

The milkmen near Boston have found a satisfactory remedy in the use of lime. They give it to the cows by sprinkling a spoonful at a time over their food, two or three times a week; or sometimes they sprinkle lime among the hay as it is stowed away in the barn. A neighbor of mine who keeps about 20 cows, and who was formerly much troubled by abortion among his herd, informs me that for the last three years, since he has made use of lime, he has not had a case, and that very many of his acquaintance have had similar experience with their herds. Whether the well-known lack of lime in our Massachusetts soil has anything to do with this, is an interesting question for the man of science. The farmer will be most interested in escaping a serious cause of loss and disappointment.

Care of Ewes.

A correspondent of the *Agricultural Gazette*, England, gives the following in relation to the care of sheep, which is applicable here as there, except that we do not have to counteract the effects of watery food, as they do from the feeding of large quantities of turnips:—

If there is no permanent yard, a temporary one can soon be erected by setting down a double row of hurdles and stuffing them between with straw. We begin a month before lambing to remove our ewes every night from the turnip pen to the yard, where they have a foddering of straw, night and morning, in the cribs; the yard is supplied with fresh litter daily. Here they have a dry, comfortable bed. Ample breathing-space, uncontaminated by noxious vapors, gentle exercise and moderate supply of pure water, are conducive to health. It is surprising the quantity of barley or oat straw a flock of ewes will consume; the dry food has a salutary effect in counteracting the watery influence of the turnips. When the food of the breeding ewe consists principally of turnips during the last six weeks of gestation, the difficulty and consequently the danger of yearning is greatly increased. During the latter period of gestation the nutriment derived from the food is principally expended in increasing the size of the fetus in utero, instead of being stored up by the mother, hence the increased difficulty and danger of parturition. In order to strengthen the ewe and enable her to safely withstand the trials through which she must pass, a mixture of oats and maize—half a pint to a pint per day—should be given for a month before lambing.

Says the New York *Graphic*: "So far we have enjoyed our boasts of increasing beef trade with England. But no rose is without a thorn. A dismal wail is commencing to be heard at home. Our own prime joints and roasts are giving out, and even now are difficult to procure. Only the best cattle are shipped to England—none go under 1,400 pounds weight. Forty-five thousand of such cattle have already crossed the Atlantic. John Bull is literally taking the fat of our land and leaving us only the lean, and the trade is only in its infancy."