

SHEEP AND SWINE.

THE WINTER PIGS.

Notwithstanding it is conceded by most breeders and farmers that winter is not a desirable season in which to have sows farrow, there are, from one cause and another, a considerable number every year that have their pigs in the most inclement portion of the year. So far as our observation goes, the pigs born in November, December and January do not, on most farms, pay for the extra feed, labour and vexation expended on them; February pigs are not very desirable, though in many cases, if they are inevitable, vigilance and judicious care will make them, to some extent, profitable. Aside from the great risk of losing the pigs farrowed in winter, owing to their extreme sensitiveness to cold and of being overtaxed, there is the great drawback of having the sow in such a condition that she cannot possibly produce a litter of pigs in that most desirable of all seasons, *early spring*. To those who may be so unfortunate, or fortunate, as to be booked for a consignment of juvenile porkers within the next sixty days, we would say, make the best of a bad bargain and endeavour to save all the best of them, bearing in mind that six that are well suckled and kept in vigorous growth are worth more than nine or ten frost-bitten and poorly nourished.

The sow should be provided with a comfortable nest, made so, not by a great pile of long and tangled bedding, but by having it well roofed over, and so banked up or otherwise enclosed as to ward off wind, snow, and rain, though so arranged as to admit every ray of sunlight possible. Sunshine is life, and cold and dampness in winter are death to a well-bred pig. A scantling rail or pole should be fixed six to twelve inches from the floor, according to the size of the sow, and six or eight inches from the wall, to prevent the pigs being crushed against the wall. Somebody—the owner if possible—should be on hand to see that the pig when born does not wander in the wrong direction, but at once finds where it may get a draught of its mother's milk, which will do more towards tiding him over the first and most critical thirty-six hours of his whole life than can be done by all the science and ingenuity of man. The sow, when she first leaves the nest, will be feverish, and should have some thin slop to drink, which, after a few days, may be made thicker with more bran and meal. Dry corn is poor feed for a sow suckling pigs, though a small ration of it answers well to make up a variety. Care should be taken to avoid over-feeding the sow, or causing her appetite to become cloyed, as the flow of milk is thereby much diminished, and the well-doing of the pigs proportionately checked.

The bedding should be changed as often as it becomes foul, and the pigs kept as much as possible from mud and filth. If all goes well with them they may be as large and thrifty by the following Christmas as those born in the smiling spring-time.—*Breeder's Gazette*.

BREAKING PRAIRIE WITH SHEEP.

Do you hitch them up? No, sir, we fence them up. Five sheep will break an acre in two years, or 500 sheep will break 100 acres in two years, besides manuring the land and keeping themselves during the summer, all they need is a fence to enclose them and water to drink. They do the best kind of work, can't be beat. Our experience in this kind of work is as follows:

My flock consists of about 500 sheep. Two years ago I fenced in about 150 acres of wild prairie and used it for sheep pasture. The pasture was good until last summer. I did not think for one moment but the blue joint grass was all

right (it has immense and numerous roots which are sent down deep in the soil) and I supposed was good for ten or fifteen years pasturage, but I accidentally discovered last fall that the close pasturage of the sheep had killed it, the roots were rotted and on putting in the plough the mallowest soil a farmer could desire was turned up. My sheep in two years had broke over 100 acres, I am now (March) having it ploughed, and in hiring some done I found the party would prefer ploughing in this pasture, than "back-setting" last summer's breaking. I estimate the value to the one hundred acres added by the sheep at 600 dollars; 200 dollars in killing the prairie grass, and 400 dollars per acre in their manure. I suppose it is of greater value than this, but it is certainly this. Of course breaking prairie with sheep is another and new source of profit in these most valuable animals on the farm, and I place it on record to their credit. I have just pulled down and removed over two miles of 6 wire, 3 smooth and 3 barbed fence, and just as soon as the frost is out, I shall fence a new pasture on the wild or unbroken prairie for my sheep. On looking it over I find my fencing costs me about 250 dollars per mile. In two years I have got back 300 dollars per mile by pasturing my sheep on the land fenced. Looking at it in this light it seems to be quite a profitable thing to pasture sheep. I suppose the wire will last ten years yet. I must confess this adds a new value to sheep and is a new idea to me. My farm is on the "Slope" in Western Iowa.—*Cor. Iowa Farmer*.

OVERFED PIGS.

When young pigs are sick it may be pretty certainly understood that they have been overfed. The general treatment of pigs seems to be based upon the idea that they are naturally greedy and gluttonous animals, and that this habit should be encouraged as much as possible. Hence all the diseases which so frequently affect pigs. When young a pig is a tender animal, with a stomach not much larger than that of a human infant about as old, and yet people will cram the little creature with sour slop, grease, milk, and corn meal until it can swallow no more. And when the pig is sick one wonders what is the matter. We do not feed lambs or calves, or colts, in that fashion, hence these are rarely diseased. Cough and difficulty of breathing is caused by indigestion, and the common disease of which partial paralysis of the hind parts is the chief symptom, and which is cerebro-spinal meningitis, is caused by indigestion and malnutrition, which cause disturbance of the circulation and congestion on the brain and spinal marrow, with loss of nervous power. The treatment is to give a dose of salts and one scruple of saltpetre daily afterward, and feed very sparingly.—*Dublin Farmer's Gazette*.

INCREASING MUTTON PRODUCTION.

To increase the element of mutton production in those flocks that have hitherto been devoted primarily, if not exclusively, to the production of wool, need not be a difficult or unprofitable venture. The form, size, and covering of the sheep, are so readily controlled by the intelligent breeder, that but a few years will be found necessary for developing good mutton under just such fleeces as he finds it most profitable to grow. This may necessitate a reduction in the number of animals on farms already heavily stocked, and will certainly require more "forcing" than many feeders now practice; but if intelligently pursued will make possible a profitable future to owners who are already complaining of the unfavourable margin between the cost and selling value of flock products. American flock-owners have demon-

strated that Merino sheep are entitled to high consideration for their mutton-yielding capabilities, and hence the blood of such flocks need not be changed in the process of carcass development. Other types have an advantage in precocity, and are exempt from the prejudice that the Merino is forced to encounter in markets where its merits are not known and appreciated at full value. While confidently leaving the kind of sheep to be kept to be determined in the light of intelligence and experience of breeders, *The Gazette* but seeks to emphasize the fact that the sheep husbandry of the near future cannot profitably maintain itself in all sections of the country without due regard to economic facts herein hinted at, and which will become more apparent every year, until they cannot be ignored by the most indifferent observer.—*Breeder's Gazette, Chicago*.

HOGS ARE GRADED.

The following is the grading of hogs when they are assorted for market:

Pigs are light and thin, averaging 60 to 150 lbs., and are really but light stockers.

Skips are better in quality—fit to kill—and weigh 120 to 135 lbs., too thin and light for Yorkers.

Yorkers are fat and smooth, and should weigh 170 to 210 lbs., and to sell well should be uniform.

Mixed packing hogs are irregular in weight and in quality, from rough to smooth, and from 210 to 300 lbs. in weight.

Butcher hogs are uniformly fat and smooth, usually selected for these qualities, and run from Yorker weight, or 200 lbs., to 300 lbs., or more.—*Farmer's Review*.

VALUE OF SALT FOR SHEEP.

Mr. Russell, of Horton, England, says the *London Farm and Home*, provides salt as well as fresh water, so that his sheep may have access to it whether the weather be wet or dry. If this were done generally those wholesale losses which are now suffered would not be experienced. Salt acts as a condiment, and is no doubt an appetizer; but it also does something more in quickening the action of the internal organic system, and preventing the generation of internal parasites.

Two small hogs, maturing early, are more profitable than one large one.

It is said a dip, of water one gallon, benzine eight ounces, and cayenne pepper two ounces, will kill vermin on sheep.

A HALF-BLOOD Cotswold ewe belonging to a Tennessee farmer lately dropped four lambs, all of which are living.

A good preparation to mark sheep without injury to the wool, is said to be thirty large spoonfuls of linseed oil, two ounces of litharge and one ounce of lamp black, all boiled together.

CORN can be made to reach a good deal farther by grinding before feeding, as the experience of careful feeders will testify. The gain by adopting this plan will much more than pay for the trouble if any quantity of stock is fed.

Born for its effect upon fattening and upon health, a small amount of leached wood ashes should be given to swine. The food without this is rich in phosphoric acid, but has little lime, and the equivalent should be thus supplied.—*Ex*.

To cure rot in sheep the following salve is recommended: Gradually dissolve four ounces best honey, to which add one half ounce Armenian bole; then stir in two ounces of burnt alum reduced to powder, and add as much fish, or train oil, as will convert the mass into a salve.