

Stock.

Hurdling Sheep.

The system of hurdling sheep has long been practised in England by the best farmers, and is a most excellent method for preventing waste and utilizing the crops of grass or roots produced upon the land. A flock of sheep turned upon a field of rank grass will waste more by trampling it down than they will consume. This system is also largely practised in Great Britain in feeding off turnips, where the latter are left in the ground without pulling, to be consumed by the sheep. Turned in upon a field of several acres of flat turnips a large flock of sheep would nearly destroy the crop in a few days, by running over a whole lot, biting a hole into nearly every root, which holes would hold sufficient water to rot the whole crop in a short time.

In England hurdling sheep is also practised upon both winter rye and wheat, in the fall as well as in the spring, when the growth is found too rank for feeding in the ordinary way. Through this system sheep not only fertilize the land evenly and thoroughly, but also firm the soil around the plants.

As yet hurdling is almost unknown in Canada. We have no doubt much benefit could be derived from this system, especially when pasturing rape or clover. Profit is also derived from dividing pasture land into several parts and pasturing alternately.

The accompanying illustration shows how an Englishman fed his sheep on an irrigated pasture, by the use of hurdles of a peculiar description. They are twelve feet long and are made with a

vertical pole bored with two series of holes twelve inches apart. Stakes six feet long are put into these holes so that they project from them three feet on each side of the pole. One series of holes are bored in a direction at right angles with that of the other, and when the stakes are all properly placed they form a hurdle, the end of which looks like the letter X.

The engraving shows how these hurdles are used. A row of them is placed across a field. The field in which they are used consists, say, of six acres. A strip of ten feet in width is thus set out, upon which four hundred sheep feed. They eat up all the grass upon this strip. The hurdles are then turned over, exposing a strip of rather more than four feet in width at each turn. When this is fed off the hurdles are again turned over.

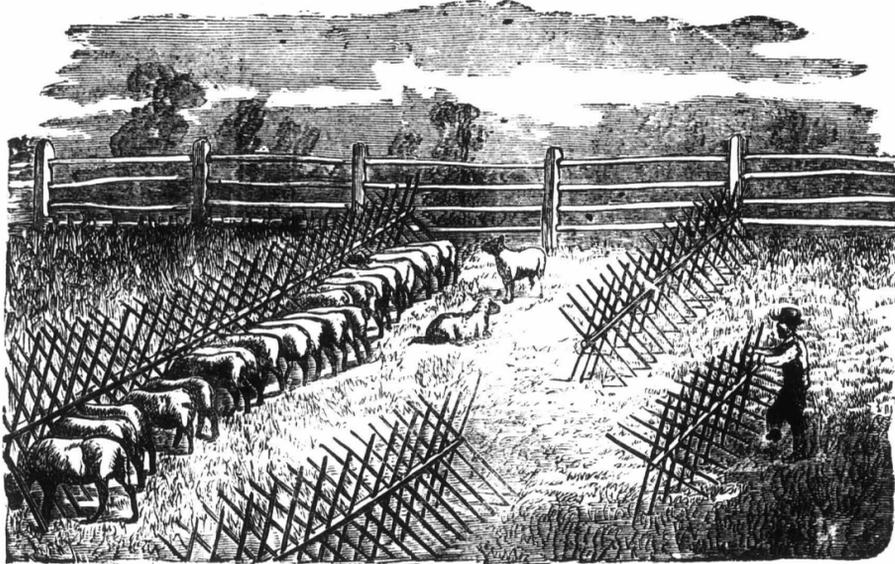
The *chevaux-de-frise* presented by the hurdles prevents any trespassing upon the other side of them, and by using two rows of hurdles the sheep are kept in the narrow strip between them. Their droppings are very evenly spread over the field, by which it is richly fertilized. At night the sheep are taken off, and the grass is watered. The growth is one inch per day under this treatment, and when the field has been fed over the sheep are brought back again to the starting point, and commence once more eating their way along.

The Coming Sheep—Shorthorns vs. Herefords.

Last month we gave an article on this subject which we copied from the English Agricultural Gazette. We think it of the utmost importance that Canadian farmers know the value of the different breeds of sheep and cattle, and for what purposes the different breeds are best suited. This month we make an extract from an article written by a special English correspondent of the "National Live Stock Journal." From what we know of the breeds spoken of by the writer we coincide with his views. We believe the time has come that the English down breeds of sheep will hold a prominent place, if not the first place among the mutton producing breeds of the Dominion.

The Hereford cattle are also attracting much attention, but we believe they are more suitable to the northern and western plains than the arable lands of the older provinces. The breeds which suit the purposes of the English farmer will most fully fill the needs of the farmers in our older provinces.

The writer referred to says:—



ENGLISH METHOD OF HURDLING SHEEP.

"In some of our agricultural journals of late there has been an attempt made to show that the Hampshire Downs are the 'coming sheep.' They may be, but I very much doubt it. They are excellent sheep to live between hurdles, and can stand more mud than any breed of sheep with which I am acquainted, and they are good mutton; but with a fair run of pasture or seeds, I should greatly prefer the Shropshires, which come between the Southdown and the Hampshires in point of size and quality. Shropshires are extending over a great portion of the Midlands, and generally find favor wherever they are tried. It is not likely they will displace long-wooled sheep on rank pastures, or the Hampshires in their district; but they are easily adapted to the general requirements of flock-masters in the shires, and are in great favor with butchers, their mutton being full of flesh, and not too large. I think, therefore, that they are more likely to increase in number than are the Hampshires. Next to Southdowns, they are the best mutton we have, and their area of usefulness in this country is very much larger than that of the Southdowns. I cannot, of course, offer any opinion as to how they would answer in America; but if the exportation of mutton to England is an object to breeders there, it would be worth while giving them careful trial. Their wool is of a good medium class.

I am pleased to see that the Herefords are making good headway in the United States. I always

thought they would exactly meet the requirements of beef producers there, and I believe they will become more popular—because more useful for that purpose—than the Shorthorns. At the same time I do not see that they are likely to displace Shorthorns in England. The stock kept on English farms, which consist largely of arable land, must be able to give more milk than will suffice to rear a calf, and must be easily converted into fairly good beef when barren. I don't know any breed of cattle which will suit these conditions so well as the Shorthorns do; and, therefore, I think the Shorthorns will continue to increase in number at the expense of other breeds; because the dairy industry must form part of British agriculture to a greater extent than heretofore. What is wanted here is an animal that can be bred, reared, used for a few years—if a heifer—and then stalled on arable farms; and for such work I believe the Shorthorn has no real rival. A writer in one of our agricultural papers says that the Herefords no longer 'top the market' in London, and declares that they have done so only in days gone by, when cattle were travelled many miles, on the hoof, from the grazing districts to the metropolis. I do not remember those days, as I was not then old enough to know anything about the cattle trade; but I can well understand that the Hereford should have proved himself a better traveller than some other breeds, just as he is proving a

better 'wrestler' in the United States. The other portion of the statement I take to be an erroneous representation of facts. The Hereford bullock in London is quite a season animal, and comes only as grass beef in the late summer and autumn; then it tops the market, for there is no better grass beef sent to London than the Hereford, except the West Highlanders, which are older and few in number; these generally make prices which are above the ordinary top quotations. The Polled Scotch cattle are stall-fed, and do not come under the same category as the Herefords, which have to compete with Welsh runts, Shorthorn bullocks off grass, a few Highlanders and Devons, Schleswig-Holstein cattle from

Tomning, and Spaniards. The supply from Christmas up to June consists of stall-fed cattle, home-bred and foreign; and of these the first cross between the Shorthorn and the Polled Scot is the best, then the Polled Scot and the Devon, and then the Shorthorn.

Directing the Growth of Horns.

Several devices have been resorted to for the purpose of remedying irregularities in the growth of cows' horns; but attempts at regulating the shape or direction of the horns can be carried out more or less successfully only when the animal is under three years of age. In young stock, the rasping should be done midway of the length of the horn, on the side towards which it is desired to have it turn, and not occupy more space than an inch and a half in length and about one-half the circumference of the horn. It should not be done with a coarse rasp, and great care should be exercised in the rasping, so as not to penetrate through the horn, or divide the horny fibres next to the vital parts; for, if blood is drawn, the horn is apt to be spoiled beyond remedy. It should be remembered that the horn is not one-eighth of an inch thick at the place mentioned. When the horn has been rasped down to an even thickness, all that is necessary to do is to keep the whole horn lubricated with an ointment made by melting together equal parts of tar and tallow.—Ex.