

INTRODUCTION

Sheep raising has always been an important feature of agriculture in this province. At present, fully one-quarter of the sheep in the Dominion are to be found in Quebec, and the sheep industry was never in a more vigorous condition. Extremely high prices for wool and mutton have placed the sheep in the first line and the growing tendency on the part of farmers to enlarge and establish new flocks has now become a settled policy.

In the better farming sections, including arable areas along the St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers, the St. Lawrence plain and the more fertile parts of the Eastern Townships, where diversified agriculture has been permanently established, the small flock of ten to twenty-five ewes fits in to best advantage with farm practice. Where good farming sections abut rough country, and in rough country where sufficient winter feed can be grown, even larger flocks are kept to advantage, although greater skill is necessary in handling them.

The Laurentian Highlands, north of the St. Lawrence, the Gaspé Peninsula, and newer sections to the south, include immense areas of cheap land that is well watered, affording plenty of shade and producing short, fresh herbage that is much relished by sheep. Much of this country is still wooded and lumbering is the principal industry. In time, however, most of this land will be agricultural country. While it is not best adapted for the more intensive methods of agriculture, on account of its rough broken nature, it is however, well adapted for sheep raising, and the sheep is likely to become the most profitable farm animal in these districts.

Why sheep are profitable.

Until recent years the sheep has been handicapped owing to the fact that its products sold at relatively lower prices than were offered for other farm products. This condition of affairs is now practically reversed. Both wool and lambs have almost doubled in value and owing to increased consumption the supply of both is not equal to the demand. This, in itself, is sufficient to place the sheep on an equal, if not superior footing to other farm animals, but in addition, its natural attributes give it an even greater advantage. The sheep is usually the last animal to be housed in the fall and the first to go to pasture in the spring. Owing to the protection which its fleece affords, it does