

TREATMENT.

As to treatment, I have little to say. My observations during the past year confirm the opinion that the strychnine and iron treatment (outlined in my last season's report) will, in many cases, prolong the life, and in incipient cases, may enable the owner to get the animal into marketable condition, but medicine cannot repair the morbid changes in the liver, and it is very doubtful if much practical benefit can be derived therefrom.

PREVENTION.

Eradication of 'Ragwort' is the first essential. I believe, sir, that you are of the opinion that sheep and perhaps goats, will prove a most valuable aid in the fight that should at once be made against this plant. I heartily concur in your opinion, and firmly believe that if sheep were confined in sufficient number upon weedy farms and concerted action taken to cut the weed wherever found, in a few years the land will be free from 'Ragwort,' and, consequently, from cattle disease.

The following experiment helps to confirm this opinion. Four sheep were confined since April 1, 1905, on four acres of very weedy pasture. The field as will be seen from the photograph which I have the honour of sending you) is entirely free from 'Ragwort,' while it is bounded on all sides by a luxuriant growth of the plant. More extensive experimentation, however, along this line is necessary before sufficiently reliable information is gained.

While it is generally admitted that sheep will destroy 'Ragwort,' the opinion prevails that the plant has an injurious effect upon the sheep, first by causing sickness and death, secondly by staining the tissues and rendering the flesh unmarketable.

All these are points of vital interest to the farmer and stock owner, and I am glad to learn that you have under consideration a series of experiments which I believe will be of most practical value.

In conclusion, I am glad to be able to say that no contagious disease has visited this country during the year, although I have investigated the usual number of reported outbreaks. I have, however, caused to be slaughtered sixty head of cattle, these being infected with Pictou Cattle Disease. Detailed accounts of each case have been forwarded to you.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. H. PETHICK,

Inspector.

The Veterinary Director General,
Ottawa.