

pound mare, if mated right, will produce an exceedingly heavy colt; but, as a rule, if we would raise a big colt, the mare must be a big, roomy mare, and a good milker. There are several breeds of draft horses, and from among them a sire must be chosen, and it may be well to look at them separately, and review their different characteristics, avoiding prejudice as much as possible.

The Clydesdale is the most popular draft horse in Canada. And while he has many good qualities which tend to make him so, it is probable that the large Scotch element which exists in this country has much to do with it, for there is no doubt about it, Scotchmen like things which are Scotch, and not least among these they like Scotch horses. This breed has been bred most carefully for many years, great attention having been given to the quality of their bone, and their feet and legs generally, and in these points they certainly excel. Their weak point in conformation is the middle, flat ribs, large backs and weak loins being common among them. Of course there are specimens that have splendid middles, but a deficiency in the middle is characteristic of the breed. They are, however, grand animals, and their splendid feet and legs make up for a multitude of defects. To the use of them as sires is due the very superior class of light draft or agricultural horses which are found in Canada. As a sire for breeding heavy draft colts, he may be serviceable, but many of the Clydesdale breeders say that in breeding so much for quality they have lost size, and though this is denied by others, I think it may be taken as a fact, for we know that great size and great quality combined are rare in any animal, and in breeding for one we almost invariably lose in the other. It is also significant that in the heavy work in the English cities there are comparatively few horses of Clyde breeding, and it is for this reason the Clyde breeders say they have made a mistake, they having lost this market owing to their horses being on the small side to suit the demand.

In the Shire we have a horse of very much the same type; so much so that many cannot tell them apart, but a little observation will show certain characteristics in which, in most cases, they differ. The Shire is the cart-horse which originated in the Midland Counties of England, and has now been carefully bred for a long period, in which size has been one of the principal objects in view. As compared with the Clyde, he has not the same quality of feet and legs, but we almost invariably find him with a good middle, well-sprung ribs, a short back, and strong, muscular loins. The Shire is the largest breed of horse that we have, and for that reason, if we would export draft horses to England, he is the sire we must use in producing them. By far the largest percentage of English draft horses are of Shire breeding; in fact, there are few of other kinds, and this alone tells us the breed our sires should be if we would raise horses for that market. It will no doubt be claimed by some that without good feet and legs a horse is no good for the city pavement, and therefore the Clyde is the best sire to use, but I would remind you we should not breed for feet or legs, but for the market.

East Buffalo Stock Letter.

The cattle trade, generally speaking, is (May 8th) in a little better shape than it was two weeks ago. The demand for dressed beef is improving, and, taking it all around, we may have a little improvement in prices. The bulk of the offerings here this week are not the very best kinds. Good, dry-fed cattle are scarce, and the few we have been getting are selling readily, if not at very high figures. The light mediums, which have heretofore been selling the best, sold dull and draggy and fully twenty-five lower than the week previous. Cow and heifer stuff, though, has been selling strong for some time. Milk cows and springers were \$2.00 to \$3.00 per head lower, and veal calves steady. Stockers and feeders, for good kinds, showed no change in prices. Bulls, oxen and rough stuff, if not good quality, sold low; yet good stuff of any description is in much better demand than it has been. The outlook, generally speaking, is more encouraging.

Hogs have ruled slow and trade has been draggy for the past week, with good mediums and heavies \$4.75 to \$4.80, and Yorkers and light stuff, \$4.65 to \$4.70. The bulk of the offerings have been from Illinois, and are generally good quality; in fact, there is no complaint on this line. The only trouble the packers have seems to be heavy stocks of provisions in the cellars, light demand for it, and two many hogs.

Sheep and lambs have been acting in the same way, namely: Light supplies and higher markets; increased receipts and lower markets. There is no change to this rule, and it has been working so for the past six months. Clipped lambs sold up as high as \$5.65 a week ago, and are now down to \$5.25—all due to liberal marketing both here, in New York, and Jersey City. The markets in the East are not in the best of shape, which, with heavy supplies at some Western points, are causes of the decline here. Sheep have been selling rather slow, and the demand for them is very irregular, export grades particularly being in no demand at all till the 7th and 8th, when there was some inquiry. The few that were here sold fairly well, some 120 selling for \$4.50; common and cull stuff going very low. There has been as yet no evidence that the supply in the country is exhausted.

ERICK BROS.

Immense quantities of Australian poultry find their way to the British market.

Sheep Washing.

BY JAS. BOWMAN, WELLINGTON CO., ONT.

The question, Does it pay best to wash or not to wash? is now frequently heard among farmers. The farmers we mean are those who look to the wool crop from the standpoint of getting all they can from it, with no regard to preparing sheep for show, etc. To such, from our experience, I would say *Yes*. To enlighten ourselves in this matter we selected two high grade Shropshire ewes, which would be called medium-wooled sheep; they were about as near equals in fleece, size, condition, age, etc., as they can be got; we washed one and left the other unwashed. The washed one clipped five and a half pounds, the unwashed one, seven pounds. Dropping one-third on the unwashed fleece, which is the rule buyers generally follow, leaves a balance in favor of washing, of about five-sixths of a pound, or about seventeen cents when wool is worth twenty cents per pound; this will pay quite well for the washing operation. The writer is of the opinion that the profit of washing would be greater in long-wooled sheep, but, in the case of very fine-wooled sheep, such as Merinos, thinks there would be more money in leaving them unwashed; and with South-downs it might just come out about even, as there is so much more yolk in their wool. I would be pleased to hear from some of the fine wool breeders, and also from the coarse wool breeders, as this is a subject worth discussion. Let us find out the best plan and stick to it. Perhaps our obliging Experimentalist at the O. A. C. could give us some valuable information on this point. I may say for Mr. Zavitz, that I believe he is intensely interested in carrying out thoroughly every detail of any experiment that he takes in hand; and it is our privilege, as farmers, to suggest to him experiments that we would like to see tried. One thing I can assure all enquirers is that he will use you courteously, and do the best he can in your case. In case of an expensive sheep in high condition, would say that it does not pay to run the risk of washing; have known of a ram of this kind dying in washer's hands.

The Washing.—How to manage when a stream is not convenient, as we do not believe in driving a long distance on a hot day over dusty roads: It is much better to have a good-sized trough, filled with water, and let it stand until it has become partly warm. Eight or ten sheep can be washed in this way without changing the water, and it will be found that after two or three are washed that the operation is greatly aided by the yolk that has come out of the fleeces already washed, as water will feel quite soapy. When each sheep has been thoroughly washed in first water, there should be rinsing water on hand to pour over them while they are in a standing position, and the wool well-squeezed out until the water runs off the wool clear, when they will be finished. There is a great deal less risk from washing in this way, as sheep are cooler than when driven a distance to wash. In cases where a stream is convenient, it is a good plan to have the washing place so arranged that water will not flow away too quickly, as the yolk, when mixed with water, aids the operation greatly. It must also be provided with a clear place to rinse.

After Washing.—A clean pasture should be provided for sheep until clipping is done, which should be in from a week to ten days, to allow the yolk to get back into the wool, as it not only improves its texture, but adds to weight of same, which is a very important consideration in these times of keen competition and low prices.

Clipping.—There are many ways of clipping, and in cases where a large flock is kept, it is a matter of considerable importance to have contrivances to make the work as simple and comfortable as possible on both shepherd and sheep. I would suggest a contrivance for setting the sheep on, with holes for each of its legs to go through, made so as not to chafe the sheep. First set sheep on end and clip neck and all belly, arms and thighs, then set into the frame before mentioned, and it will be quite a comfortable operation for both parties. In cases where no frame is at hand, leave sheep on end as it was in doing neck and front, and clip right around back. If done carefully and not in too large a clip to each round, it will leave quite a nice job. Either of these methods keeps the sheep reasonably comfortable and prevents much struggling.

Doing up Fleece.—In first place, take off all dirty wool and any cotted portions, because, if buyer does this for you he will perhaps not use so much economy as you might, then spread the fleece on a clean place, the part that was next the sheep down; turn in the edges until it is about eighteen inches wide (or less in a small fleece), then start to roll at tail, and keep the roll tidy and compact; when neck is reached twist the neck-piece into a rope to tie around the bundle, and fasten the end securely. If well done it will stand a good deal of handling without coming undone, and if well washed and kept clean from burs, chaff, etc., will present quite a tempting appearance to a buyer, which means money every time. Nothing pays better than a *real good finish*, in almost every marketable product.

Marketing.—Many farmers have fine and coarse wool, and in taking to market it is better to keep each grade separate, so that you will get proper price for quality.

The Wool Crop.

BY "FLOCKMASTER."

By the time the May 15th ADVOCATE reaches its readers, most of the high-class, pure-bred flocks, especially all yearlings and rams, will have been deprived of their fleece. The owners of such flocks understand their work well enough, and are usually careful enough about it, to require no further instruction, but to many of the less particular sheep farmers a word may not be out of place. In the rush of seeding, planting, etc., the poor sheep is too often allowed to go out upon the new grass without being docked, and before a week many of them are carrying a disgusting load, which only a very strong-stomached lamb will approach to take nourishment. This is one of several neglects in connection with the care of wool.

Washing.—When there is a running stream within a mile or two, a few of the neighbors club together to hold a sheep washing, which is usually done in a rough, careless style, and the wet flocks are driven home along a dusty road, arriving there in little cleaner condition than they left it; but the sheep have been "washed," which insures a better price per pound for the wool than if they had not passed through this trying ordeal. Now, is sheep-washing an advantage? Yes; if properly done, in a suitable place. There is no more suitable place than in a running stream, which can be dammed about waist-deep, so that the sheep cannot touch the bottom with their feet. The flock should be penned in a yard beside the water, and one man should remain among them to hand the sheep to the washer. There is no need of throwing them in over head, and pulling them about as though they had no feelings. The sheep is one of the most timid of animals, and can be seriously injured by rough, careless handling in water. In washing, the wool should be taken in handfuls and squeezed, and moved until the water leaves every part of the fleece clean. The animal should then be taken to an easy landing-slope, and helped out upon the green grass, where it will drip dry enough to walk home comfortably. In this walk care should be taken to keep them on the side, walking quietly, out of the dust. They should be kept in a clean grass field up to shearing time, which should not be done until from a week to ten days following, so that the yolk will have time to rise anew to make the shears run nicely, and also give the wool a better feel, and a trifle more honest weight.

If there is no convenient means of washing the sheep, the wool can be taken off in creditable condition by removing all burs, chaff, tag locks, etc., before commencing to clip. Because a certain dockage is made for unwashed wool, there is no excuse for allowing filthy locks to remain in the fleece. If a buyer is reasonable he will pay more for clean, unwashed wool than for filthy stuff; at least this has been my experience.

Shearing.—Sheep should always be brought in from the pasture and housed on clean straw the night before they are to be clipped. There is then much less danger of hurting them, and they will not be in danger of being rained upon, which will hinder the shearing until they have become dry. A very suitable place to shear is a clean, airy barn-floor or the like. Some shearers use a platform about two or more feet high, so that the back of the shearer has not to be bent so much in clipping. Whether on a floor or platform, it is well to make a cushion to rest the sheep upon, by tacking an old piece of carpet or sacking over a layer of straw or hay; this will tend to keep the sheep quieter, and give the shearer more comfort. Occasionally one sees a man shearing without fastening the legs of the animal operated upon. Unless sheep shorn in this free condition are exceptionally quiet, the fleece usually has to be gathered up from different parts of the surroundings, and the shearer loses his temper many times in a day. It is a much better plan to strap the fore and hind feet of the under side of the sheep together; that is, while the right side is being shorn, the left legs should be tied, and *vice versa*.

Tying Fleece.—When the fleece is off it must be tied up in some fashion, and the neater this is done the less room it will take in storing, hauling, or shipping to market, and the better will it suit the eye of a dealer. I have found it quite satisfactory to spread the fleece inside down on a clean floor, then gather all the ribs and place them upon it; next, turn in the sides and ends, laying them flat until the fleece has the form of a strip from twenty to twenty-four inches wide, and almost as long as when first laid down. Now, commence at the tail end and roll up until the whole fleece is in the form of a light, compact bundle. If preferred, a wool rope can be twisted out from the fleece to wind round and bind it together, or, as binder-cord is so cheap, it may be used, putting it around end-wise and sideways, as a parcel of sugar is tied up.

Marketing.—In almost every town and village there is some one who buys wool, paying so much for washed, and so much for unwashed, but too often regardless of quality or condition. The careful wool grower does well to avoid that individual, and look round for some one who can appreciate superior wool well put up, and who will be willing to pay a little more for what suits his fancy than for inferior or ragged fleeces. It is well to sell direct to a manufacturer, or to a reputable dealer, who appreciates the merits of a shipment, and will pay for it according to its value.

As soon as shearing is over, take or send him a fair, average sample of your wool in a letter, mentioning the breed, and you will soon receive his quotation in return.