

The original sheep had horns, but these have been bred away, although abortive horns, called "snigs" sometimes appear on the rams. They have large heads and Roman faces. They may be described as larger and stronger than South-Downs, of coarser bone, and resembling them in general appearance, though not so symmetrically beautiful. Their faces and legs are blacker and their heads larger. The English breeders select rams with large heads and Roman faces, as being more vigorous and likely to beget stronger lambs. They are well woolled down to the eyes and over the cheeks. It is claimed that this is a protection against the fly, but one can scarcely see how it can be so. Their wool is of medium staple, something coarser than the South Down's. The average clip is six to eight pounds. The flesh is of good quality, with fineness of texture and fat well placed in the tissues. The Hampshires seem to be an exception to the rule that meat of close texture usually requires a longer time to deposit. The ewes are prolific and the lambs are very strong, being quickly upon their feet and ready for business. On this account the percentage of loss in lambing is small. They grow rapidly, the ewes being good milkers and they quickly take other food, whether it be in running before the hurdles in turnips, or in eating grain from troughs. They can thus be prepared for the butcher very rapidly. This is one of the strong points of the breed. It is claimed that a Hampshire-Down lamb is worth more than any other at any age under six months. What they can do under one year was strikingly proved at the Smithfield show, in London, last December. I quote from the London Live Stock Journal of that time: "In the sheep department the coveted distinction of champion was won by a trio of magnificent ten months old Hampshire lambs that were bred and exhibited by Mr. William Parsons; a victory which will do much to accelerate the growing popularity of this eminently valuable and practical breed of sheep. There can be no question that this breed of sheep is coming to the front as no other breed is at the present juncture * * * There were twelve entries in the lamb class. Here, Mr. Parsons carried off the first prize, the breed cup and also the champion plate. These three lambs were grandly even, substantial, and of the finest quality, and to have carried off the champion prize of the show was a striking credit, not only for the breeder but for the breed. In the two classes devoted to cross-bred sheep there were many excellent animals; all the best having Hampshire blood predominant."

The London Times' report contained the following: "The final competition for the £50 plate for the best sheep or lambs in the hall was extraordinarily keen, and the judges had much difficulty in deciding upon the best pen from among the splendid display of winners of breed cups. There went up a ringing cheer when the award was pronounced, and it was found that Lord Walsingham's South Down wethers, although nominated as reserved for the champion plate, were beaten by a pen of lambs—the really marvellous Hampshire-Down lambs of Mr. William Parsons. These wether lambs, at about ten months old, have the growth, appearance, backs, rumps and legs of adult sheep, their live weight being 214 pounds per lamb, representing probably a good way over 30 pounds per quarter of meat."

It should be borne in mind that this was a competition of fat animals of any age and all breeds.

The Hampshires are kept in the fields all winter and fed on turnips, with chaffed hay and straw, the ewes in lamb receiving some bran and malt dust and fewer turnips. The lambs are dropped in February, in the open field, sometimes exposed to severe snow storms, sheltered only by hurdles so placed as to break the force of the wind. One would suppose that in such exposure every lamb would die, but the loss is rarely

serious. On no farm in the district did I see barns or sheds for housing the flock. The lambs receive the best early grass of the water meadows, where there are such, and the last of the mangolds, and the first growth of the sainfoin until the vetches are ready. The object is to have them ready for the butcher as lambs, and not to wait two or three years for a scarcely more valuable sheep. "Quick money" is the Hampshire motto. JAMES WOOD. *Mt. Kisco, N.Y.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

EDITOR OF JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE.

Dear Sir,—At the Dairymen's Convention held at Richmond, P. Q., (last spring) I took what some were pleased to term, a novel view of the question of manure, but it was admitted by them to be worthy of investigation, and if my theory was correct, that the whole system of farming would be revolutionized by putting it in general practice.

I had neither the time, nor the opportunity at the said meeting to explain my position fully; therefore, by your permission, I will state my views to the readers of the Journal, and leave them open for criticism. I said that it would be a great economy to keep the dung in a pit until it was three years old, and then put it on the soil, and that the increased value of the same, would more than pay the interest on the investment.

I make a great distinction between the meaning of the words, "dung" and "manure." Dung is the excrement of animals, and is not manure until it undergoes a chemical change, which changes its nature, [for all substances are changed in their nature by chemical action] and dung is as unsuitable for manure as any indigestible substance is for human food. Manure, is food for plants, and the more perfectly it is decomposed, the more valuable it is for this purpose.

It is clearly shown in chemistry, that the chemical action which takes place in the process of decay, in all organic matter, produces a compound differing in its nature from what it was before this decay took place.

Hence, it does not follow that because *manure* promotes and stimulates vegetation, that dung will also have the same effect.

The whole question then lies in whether, it is better to haul the dung on the land at once, as many farmers do, or to haul it out after it has lain in heaps until spring and partly decomposed, or whether it is better than either to keep it in a pit until perfectly fitted for fertilizing purposes.

In the first case where the dung is hauled on the land at once and exposed, decomposition takes place more rapidly, and the gases are at liberty to escape into the atmosphere, and are lost forever, and the most valuable part is lost when the ammonia escapes. The second plan is an improvement, because the dung is partly decayed and is a plant food to a certain degree, and the ammonia and other substances have become partly compounded in the process, and hence there is less loss in the field; but there has been some loss in the heap, and especially where the heap has been kept outside the barn with no cover, as it is in a majority of cases. Now in the third case, where the dung is put in a pit and kept away from the action of the frost and the air, these elements do not act upon it to the same degree, the change goes on slowly, but perfectly, and when completed there has been scarcely any loss in ammonia or other valuable matter. This manure is as pleasant to handle as earth mould, and it is so soluble that its effects may be noticed in the color and vigor of plants within 12 hours after applying it to the roots.

There should be four pits on the farm, each pit large enough to contain all the dung, with plenty of absorbents for the liquid for one year. Those pits should be under the stable if practicable (if not, they may be constructed outside and well covered, and no manure should be taken out until perfectly decomposed, which by natural means will not be in much less than three years. Better have no manure for the first two years if by this means the value will be more than doubled for all years to come.

There are two or three very important questions growing out of this theory which must lead to untold benefits and a saving of