

SHEEP AND SWINE.

DOGS VERSUS SHEEP.

Few people realize the fact—for such it is—that the dog tax is one of the costliest that society pays. The weight of this tax does not come in the form of the \$1 or \$2 which each municipality charges for the privilege of keeping a dog, but in the expense of sustaining a vast amount of useless curs, the damage inflicted on the sheep and wool interests by them, and the loss of human life by hydrophobia. It is very difficult to secure anything like a calm consideration of this subject, because multitudes have a sort of instinctive fondness for dogs, and, under its influence, regard anything that is said against them as the offspring of weak prejudice. To disarm this feeling, let it be said at the outset, that it is not intended to dispute the usefulness of any really good dog that may serve as an intelligent companion by day, or a trusty guard by night. There are some such dogs, but they bear a very small proportion to the myriads of worthless animals that are in reality beasts of prey within the confines of civilization. The expense of keeping these mischievous brutes, and the sum total of the losses they occasion to flock-masters, amounts to sums, the aggregates of which few have any conception of. In an article headed "The Canine Curse," the *American Agriculturist* gives a few startling figures bearing on this subject. As long ago as 1868, the Commissioner of Agriculture estimated the loss to sheep owners in the United States from the ravages of dogs at a million dollars annually, and the indirect loss in preventing sheep husbandry at two millions more. This calculation was undoubtedly far below the mark. In 1878, Massachusetts was reported as having 114,000 dogs and 55,000 sheep, the latter gradually decreasing, while the former made a noticeable increase. In Ohio the statistics show that the number of sheep killed by dogs from 1867 to 1879 inclusive was 459,437, valued at \$1,296,398; and the number injured by dogs during that period was 309,682, estimated worth \$497,132. In Illinois, the value of sheep slaughtered by dogs in 1876 was \$30,578; in 1877, \$63,752; in 1878, \$43,885; for the year ending May, 1879, the loss was 27,338, with a valuation of \$2.40 per head—low enough certainly—amounting to \$65,384. The new State of Kansas had 74,696 dogs in 1875, according to the State census; in 1881, when the State census was taken again, there were 143,650. Yet it is suspected that in this State, as elsewhere, not more than half the dogs are reported, from fear of taxation. It is estimated that there were not far from 300,000 dogs in the new State of Kansas. If we suppose them to get an honest living, how much does it cost the State to keep them? Will \$1 a year maintain a dog? Will \$5 do it? In the year ending March, 1879, there were 8,025 sheep destroyed by dogs in Kansas, in the year ending March, 1880, 4,369; and in the year ending March, 1881, 5,361. In four counties, where a million sheep might easily be kept, the assessors this year found only 1,377 head, and there were 4,276 dogs to watch them, 3½ dogs to every sheep.

Read the following paragraph about Kansas. "Observing men are of opinion that an

ordinary dog—and he is always hungry—will eat and destroy in a twelvemonth the equivalent of that which, if given to a well-bred pig, would make him weigh at the expiration of that time 300 pounds gross, 286,000 such pigs would aggregate 85,800,000 pounds of pork, now worth at the home shipping station more than \$4,700,000, requiring to transport them, more than 2,360 cars, carrying fifteen tons each, or a train more than sixteen miles long. This would represent nearly \$1,600,500 more than the entire amount paid in the State for 1880, for school, township, and State taxes combined, it would build 9,400 school-houses and churches, worth \$500 each, or would pay the average wages of 14,000 school teachers—twice the number now employed. A condition of affairs, of which the above is but a poor outline, is at the bottom of what is each year becoming a greater and more irrepressible conflict between the wool-growers and the savage brutes that keep in jeopardy, or destroy the flocks that, protected, would enlarge and increase to the extent of producing the wool for which we now send so many millions across the seas. If the dogs are maintained as a luxury, they are a luxury we cannot afford, and should give way to something less expensive and less productive of loss and misery."

The *American Agriculturist* mentions an Iowa farmer who had \$300 worth of sheep killed by dogs in a single night, and of another \$250 worth, and adds: "Iowa would have to-day \$10,000,000 worth of property within her borders, that she does not have, only for dogs; and the farmers are the veriest fools in the world for allowing such a state of affairs." So they are. They are what John Bunyan calls "penny wise, and pound foolish." Or, to quote a Yankee maxim, "they save at the spigot, and waste at the bung-hole." Thousands of farmers are rich enough to keep a useless dog, but too poor to subscribe for an agricultural paper. Of all the preventable losses and leaks on the farm, is there one to compare with that caused by dogs? Add to the injury done to the sheep and wool interests, the damage inflicted on dairying by the chasing and worrying of cows, the loss by maiming and kill of pigs, the scaring of horses on the highway, and the destruction of human life caused directly and indirectly by dogs, and the *American Agriculturist* is amply justified in denominating it "The Canine Curse."

Of what earthly use are ninety-nine per cent. of the dogs that are permitted to exist? For one really serviceable canine that honestly earns his living, there are ninety-nine good-for-nothings that should be treated to a dose of strychnine. After reading this article, probably many a dog-fancier will pat his favourite, and say, "O, my good Pomp wouldn't eat a sheep would he?" Perhaps not, but your "good Pomp" may be an unmitigated nuisance for all that. You take him with you wherever you go. He rushes into people's houses at your heels, or more likely ahead of you, scares the family cat, knocks over the baby, pokes his nose into the frying pan, intrudes into the pantry, and commits all manner of misdemeanors which you expect will be condoned because forsooth, he is *your* dog. It is, "Love me, love my dog." Or, if you have

enough manners to make him stay outside, he improves the time while you are doing your business, or making your visit, by rushing frantically around the garden, and doing no end of mischief there. A dog in the garden in the spring of the year, when tender vegetables and flowers are just starting into vigour, is worse than a cow. He will spoil a whole bed in a twinkling. One might easily write a book detailing the depredations committed on society by dogs. We have books recording their sagacity, and exploits of one kind and another; it is time we had a volume giving the other side of the picture. Until we have some repressive legal measures, a gun to shoot prowling dogs with, and a deep well into which to drop their dead bodies, would be highly useful institutions on every farm.

HOW TO SAVE THE SHEEP.

The New York *Sun* says the farmers of Hunterdon and Somerset counties, New Jersey, used goats to protect their sheep. It is claimed that two goats can and will drive away a dozen dogs, and thus effectually protect the flock from their ravages. As soon as a dog enters the field at night, the goats attack him, and their butting propensities are too much for the canine, and he soon quits the field, limping and yelling. Formerly, when a dog entered a sheep field at night (says the *Sun*), the sheep would run wildly around and cry piteously. Since the goats have been used to guard them, they form in a line behind the goats and seem to enjoy the fun. The idea of utilizing goats in this way came from the West, where they are put in sheep pens to drive away wolves.

SPECIALTIES IN SHEEP.

M. Fayon, who made extended observations on sheep that are tended for their milk, finds that the production of wool is in an inverse proportion to the production of milk. In those sheep yielding most milk, and having four or six teats, the wool occupies but a small portion of the body. The neck, the head, the breast, the abdomen, and a great part of the legs are merely covered with short hairs.—*J. M. M.*

THE most essential point about the preservation of pork is to have it thoroughly cool before salting. Any man who neglects that precaution will suffer from it.

MOVABLE hurdles are very largely used in England, chiefly for stretching across fields of turnips, vetches, etc., so as to confine flocks of sheep to a portion at a time until eaten up, also for winter shelter of garden beds and frames. Sometimes they are made of wattled willow, like coarse basketware, but oftener of stouter shoots split and held together by a few clinched nails passed through the erect end pieces and the diagonal brace; they having five bars, more or less crooked, and about two inches wide. Of course, these hurdles don't last long, but of late they have been rendered very durable as well as improved in appearance and handling by being dipped into heated tanks of tar. The gas-works, as lately stated, are now beginning to do this for the farmers and gardeners, to their great satisfaction.