

no sooner do the plants appear above ground than they are devoured. Frost causes the flies to desist; but in the genial days of spring they come forth again. They lay their eggs in the interior of the stem, which is so weakened that it cannot support the ear when the grain begins to swell, and consequently the plant falls and perishes. "All the crops," says Mr. Kirby, "as far as it extended its flight, fell before this ravager. It first showed itself in Long Island, from whence it proceeded inland, at about the rate of fifteen or twenty miles annually, and by the year 1789, had reached two hundred miles from its original station. I must observe, however, that some accounts state its progress at first to have been very slow, at the rate of about seven miles per annum, and the damage inconsiderable; and that the wheat-crops were not materially injured by it before the year 1788. Though these insect hordes traverse such a tract of country in the course of the year, their flights are not more than five or six feet at a time. Nothing intercepts them in their destructive career, neither mountains nor the broadest rivers. They were seen to cross the Delaware like a cloud. The numbers of this fly were so great, that in wheat harvest the houses swarmed with them, to the extreme annoyance of the inhabitants. They filled every plate or vessel that was in use; and five hundred were counted in a single glass tumbler exposed to them a few minutes, with a little beer in it." This is Mr. Kirby's account; and an interesting description of the fly itself is given by Mr. Curtis, in the papers previously adverted to. We have only to hope this mischievous insect will never appear in England, and have great reason to be thankful that hitherto it is unknown in our island. In the next chapter, a description will be given of the antidotes to the mischiefs of the midges, both natural and artificial.

AGRICULTURE OF NORMANDY.

SHEEP.—The kinds of sheep maintained on the uninclosed farms of Normandy are large and short-wooled, a cross for the most part, but in ever varying proportions, between the German, Dutch, and Merinoes; they have long, white faces, generally without horns, with a tuft of coarse, hairy wool on the top of the head; long, heavy-boned legs, but broad backs and round bodies; their tails are allowed to grow, and they have almost as much *action* as a Shetland pony. Breeding is not attended to, nor are any lambs reared in this district; indeed the flocks are principally composed of wether sheep, purchased at the large fairs in the interior. Their tempers are most docile, and one old man, with his gem of a shepherd's dog, has no difficulty in managing a flock of two or three hundred, although there is neither bank nor rail within a dozen miles of them. On a piece of clover, or summer fallow, a moveable fold is pitched, where the sheep are kept at night, and an hour or two during the heat of the day. The shepherd has a little covered cart, upon two wheels, placed outside the fold, in which he sleeps, and, in fact, lives the whole summer season, when not on his legs with the sheep. His dog, as intolligent but more vigilant and active than himself, has another little house, also placed on wheels, close by. The fold is changed every night, and amply repays, by the rich legacy it bequeaths to the land, all the trouble attending it. In winter the sheep are closely housed in the "bergeries," or other stables, which are always erected in the orchard, upon all large farms. The sheep are neither tied nor staked, but classed in separate houses, according as they are "just put up" to fatten, or are "finishing" for the butcher.

The floor of the building, which is paved, or hard-rammed, is thickly littered with fresh straw, and down the centre of the house ranged troughs, in which water, with oil-cake dissolved in it, and thickened with crushed oats, barley meal, or Indian meal. Around the wall are low cratches or racks, in which oat straw and sometimes hay are placed for the sheep to pick over.

These houses are almost without ventilation, and the heat of the internal atmosphere, when entered on a winter's morning, is enormous. We must leave it to others to determine

how far this excessive warmth is desirable; but it is said that the wool is of far greater value, after this winter treatment, than if the flocks were left exposed to the wet and cold of the pastures; and we have certainly never seen any indication of ill-health among sheep housed upon this system. It should also be remarked that the shepherd invariably sleeps in the "bergeries," in a kind of bed or hammock, suspended from the ceiling, which is, of course, placed in the warmest statum of air, and the health of the man is said to be no way affected by this custom.

Immense quantities of the richest manure are made by this plan of house feeding sheep, and we have the rather dwelt upon it because we believe it to be a system which may be acted upon (as, doubtless, it partially is) in Ireland, and with the happiest results. Indeed, very small farmers, who cannot readily command the means of purchasing lean horned stock, might house-feed a few lean wethers, upon this plan, (which is, however, susceptible of much obvious improvement,) with great advantage and profit. Women and young children generally attend them, and fat spring sheep are good ready money to any man. But the Norman sheep-dog, who shall tell all his excellencies, or appreciate his almost super-canine intelligence. The best pictorial representation of it to which readers can be referred is the old Irish wolf-dog, of which a description and illustration was given by that intelligent and interesting naturalist, Mr. Richardson, in the Gazette, of last year.

The Norman sheep-dogs are black, slightly shaggy, and larger than our "colleys," with ears erect, tail long and curved upwards when excited, but pendent when at rest, an eye keen and vigilant as that of an eagle, limbs strong and in every restless motion except when the animal is chained to his "chenil" or moveable kennel. The countenance is elongated and placid, and very similar to that of our own dogs. The race appears evidently descended from the wolf, and is known by the distinctive name of "chien-loup" or wolf-dog. They are brought from the south of France, and as they approach the Pyrennees increase in size and in resemblance to the wolf. They are but poorly fed, and being always in motion have a lean and "tucked up" kind of look. At night they will hear the most distant foot-fall, and will instantly alarm the shepherd.

The sheep appear to regard them as their best protector, and never seem scared or alarmed. Unlike most other kinds, this dog is very impatient of castigation, and, probably, would not submit to it, if inflicted by a strange hand. Indeed, a good shepherd seldom strikes his dog, for by voice or sign he can easily obtain all the service he requires. He sulky towards strangers, and is above a bribe. His duties are not very various, but require almost perpetual motion. In collecting the sheep, or keeping them together, the dog is seldom wanted; for the domestic treatment and docile tempers of the flock induce them always to keep close to the shepherd, whom they follow, but never precede. When he takes any which may be ready for slaughter to the butcher, they will follow him from the farm to the slaughter-house, along a road which they have never travelled, and through the streets and alleys of the towns, with the sagacity of a terrier. Indeed, such is the affection existing between a shepherd and his flock, that, to a good Norman shepherd, his most ungrateful task is to conduct his pets to the slaughter.

The manner in which a large flock of wedders is managed, presents a string contrast to the brutality and ignorance of some of our own drovers, who, in the vicinity of the British metropolis, at least, are amongst the most ferocious of uncivilized humanity. The dog is seldom required either to catch or hold a sheep, for the shepherd had no difficulty selecting and quietly examining any one of the number which requires his attention, and without placing any restraint on the patient and intelligent bute.

We may add, that we have never seen, a "crosier" in use. The principal duty of the dog, then is to guard the crops among which the flock feeds, but upon which they are not allowed to trespass. At break of day, a shepherd will lead forth