

famous extract of soap. At Letham Grange, in Scotland, on the other hand, an ordinary stock sold for £17 11s. 10d. for 41 head. At a combined sale of small drafts drawn from various herds, 70 head made an average of £23 3s. 9d. Several sales of Shorthorns have also taken place lately. In one case in England, Mr. Thornton got an average of £20 17s. 8d. for 59 head. In Scotland, 31 head of Booth and Bates blood made £24 16s. 6d. A fine Westmoreland herd made an average of £28 19s. 8d. for 34 head.

Clydesdales are still moving along. A great shipment of between fifty and sixty fillies was made by Mr. Hassard on October 1st to Canada. These were carefully selected and well bred. They should command a ready sale in your country. The annual sale of surplus stock was held at Seaham Harbour a week ago, when 37 head of Clydesdales, mostly foals and young stock, sold for an average of £45 5s. 4d. Three geldings made the fine average of £65 9s. The six filly foals drew £41 7s. apiece, and the six colts £38 13s. Five yearling colts made £48 6s. At a general sale held in Perth, nine head from Glamis made an average of £56, an equal number from Rosenhugh made £42, and thirteen head from Mertoun made £38.

Oct. 3, '04.

"SCOTLAND YET."

What are Shropshires?

A reader in South Australia enquires: "Regarding Shropshire sheep, are they considered among the Down breeds?"

Yes, the Shropshire is frequently called Shropshire Down. As a breed the Shropshire is a sheep originally composite in character, the improvement of which has been chiefly effected during the last century. The original breed from which they are descended were chiefly known as "Morfe Common" sheep, from an extensive tract in Shropshire on which they fed, but some are descendants of sheep that fed on Cannock Chase, in Staffordshire, and on Whittington Heath, and the blood of all these strains now mingle in the improved Shropshire. Improvement has been effected very largely through crossing and selection, and also through better care and food. The blood of the Southdown, Cotswold and Leicester breeds has all been freely used in their improvement, but not in a regular or settled order, although since the middle of the century but little outside blood has been used, and for many years none at all. Originally, the Shropshires were horned, had black or brown or spotted faces, and were an active and hardy race. They produced about two and one-half pounds of wool per fleece, and about forty pounds of mutton to the carcass. Improvement was effected by a number of breeders working simultaneously and not always in the same lines, hence the lack of uniformity in types which characterized the breed for many years after improvement had commenced.

Shropshires first gained marked distinction at the Royal Society's Show at Gloucester in 1853, and again at Salisbury in 1857. They were first recognized in the prize lists of the said show in 1859. In 1884, at the Royal Show at Shrewsbury, 875 Shropshires were on exhibition, or more than twice as many as were brought forward of all the other breeds combined.

While the central home of the breed is Shropshire, they are now bred numerously in more than half the counties in England. They are also bred in considerable numbers in several counties in Scotland and Ireland. Excellent flocks have been established in Canada, more especially in Ontario, where they are more numerous than any of the other pure breeds. And they are found in considerable numbers in various countries in Europe and the continent of South America.

Leading Characteristics.—In size, Shropshires are considerably larger than the Southdowns, but are not so large as the other Down breeds. Their wide diffusion and increasing popularity are sure indications of their general adaptability. They are best adapted, however, to surfaces not violently undulating, and to sections where a fair proportion of the land is arable. They mature quite as early probably as any other breed except the Southdown. This property in the Shropshire is peculiarly valuable, owing to the extent to which they are used in crossing.

The grazing qualities of the Shropshires are good, but it requires better pastures than the Southdown and Merino. Its docility also adapts it well to folding.

Shropshires feed very well under suitable conditions. The closeness of the fleece enables them to be fattened where the shelter is very moderate, and they give an excellent return for the food fed.

The quality of the meat is excellent, about equal to that of the Southdown, while the quantity furnished is considerably more, and, like the Southdown, they dress well in proportion to the live weight.

For crossing upon grades and common stocks generally, the Shropshires have shown themselves as possessed of especial value. They also cross excellently upon the grades of the long-wool varieties, and for that purpose they are now being

used more extensively in America than any other variety.

The claim has been made that Shropshires are the most prolific of all the breeds, but this claim is certainly extravagant. It would be correct, however, to say that in this respect they are at least average.

Founding a Flock.

The acknowledged shortage of sheep in this country, and the general revival of interest in this industry, owing to the active demand at present for breeding sheep for the United States trade, suggests the timeliness of some hints regarding the founding of a flock and its general management. There is no question about the suitability of almost any section of the Canadian Provinces for the successful raising of sheep. Our generally dry climate and the variety of forage crops that are easily grown are distinctly favorable to the handling of sheep, and a moderate-sized flock can be profitably kept on nearly every farm. There is at present a good demand for sheep of all the breeds, so that if one decides to invest in pure-bred stock he need only act upon his own preferences as to which variety he starts with, but he will do well to first make a study of the most approved type of the breed he espouses, and be reasonably sure that he is starting right. If he concludes, after enquiry, that the foundation for a pure-bred flock will cost more than he is warranted in investing, let him secure good grade ewes, and by the use of a pure-bred ram proceed to improve the quality of the flock, until it has the character and type of the breed of his choice firmly fixed, so that they will breed reasonably true to that type. There is no better season of the year to found a flock than in the autumn, as at this time the ewes are generally in good condition and free from the incumbrance of their

time, which, if early in the spring, will necessitate the closing of the front of the building, or the part of it devoted to the breeding ewes. Where peas and clover hay are grown, the pea straw, if well saved, and the clover, may constitute the principal winter feed, though, in the case of the lambs coming a year old, they should have a daily feed of oats, or oats and bran, and if roots are provided, as they certainly should, for best results with most farm stock, a daily feed of these will keep them growing and thrifty. In the absence of peas or clover, corn ensilage in moderate quantity, with bran, oats, and such hay as is available, will carry the flock through in good condition.

A New Disease of Cattle.

Down in the Maritime Provinces cattle are sometimes affected with what is called Pictou cattle disease, a complaint that frequently becomes quite serious, destroying many of the stock affected by it. So far, veterinarians have been handicapped in the treatment of the disease, it not being known to any extent by the profession, but this year the Health of Animals Branch of the Dominion Department of Agriculture began a thorough investigation into the cause, action and treatment of the disease, under the direction of W. H. Pethick, V. S., at Antigonishe, N. S. In a letter to the "Farmer's Advocate," dated September 30th, he says: "The experiments have not yet been extended over a long enough period of time to warrant us in forming definite conclusions, which, if too hastily arrived at, may, later on, be found incorrect and misleading. At present, I am only at liberty to state that the strongest suspicion rests on the plant ragwort (*Senecio Jacobaea*) as being directly or indirectly the cause of the disease, and even should further investigation

prove the plant innocent of the charge, it is still a most troublesome weed. Many of the best farms in this district have depreciated in value from twenty-five to seventy-five per cent. on account of this pest. I presume that it is found in your Province only as a stray plant; if so, I would strongly advise your people to start early and eradicate it, for, being a "free seeder," it spreads rapidly, and soon becomes extensively naturalized."

The ragwort mentioned above as being the probable cause of the Pictou cattle disease is one of the order Compositae, in the sub-order Tubuliflorae. Spotton describes the genus *Senecio*, to which ragwort belongs, thus: Rays (the outside

rows of the parts of the flower) yellow, scales of the involucre (bracts at the bottom of the flower) in a single row, heads corymbose (having a flat-topped flower-cluster, with pedicels arising at different points on the stem), leaves alternate. The plant itself is thus described: flowers golden yellow, the heads forming a spreading corymb; stem erect; two or three feet high, branching glabrous or somewhat cottony, leaves numerous, lyrate, bipinnatifid; that is, having two quite large lobes at the end of the leaf, the lower with broad segments, the upper with long, narrow divisions, both ends being alike, and all smooth. The weed is quite rare westwards, and the advice offered by Dr. Pethick should be borne in mind.

By the Way.

Find enclosed \$1.50 for my subscription for 1905 for the "Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine." It is one of the best papers we take.

York Co., Ont.

FRED MILES.

I have been a reader of the "Farmer's Advocate" since I began farming, and find I could not afford to do without it.

Waterloo, Ont.

J. S. SHANTZ.

Your paper is certainly the "Farmer's Advocate," in every sense of the term.

Waterloo, Ont.

M. C. HERNER.

I find the "Farmer's Advocate" one of the best papers I can get in every department in our home.

Wentworth, Ont.

ANNIE C. HORMING.



Four Very Choice Tamworth Sows.

Winners of diploma for the best herd of four sows, any age, owned by exhibitor, at the Dominion Exhibition, Winnipeg, Man. Owned by Bertram Hoskin, The Gully, Ont.

lambs, and as, in pure-bred flocks, the ewes will have been bred to good stud rams, one may secure ewes that are already in lamb, and thus avoid the necessity of buying a ram for the first year, and may select a good ram lamb from his own that may answer his purpose well for the next season's mating with all the flock except his dam. It is not wise to breed the ewe lambs the first year, but to mate them at about eighteen months old, to have their first lambs at about two years old. As a rule, it is decidedly advisable to buy yearling ewes, if they can be secured at a reasonable price. If not, then a good selection of ewe lambs may be had at less cost, and if well kept through the winter, their fleeces, which are heaviest the first year, will nearly, if not quite, pay for their first winter's keep, and as they will do well in the summer on the shortest pasture, and will consume many weeds which other stock discard, their summer kept will hardly be missed. Cull ewes from pure-bred flocks may in some cases be had at this season for little more than the price of grades, and if their teeth are reasonably good and their udders sound, one may, in this way, come into possession of the foundation of a flock at little cost, as if these ewes are good for two crops of offspring, the female produce of the two years being retained for breeding purposes, will give one a very good start.

For their winter care, a dry, open shed, with permanent one-sided racks around the walls of the building, or portable two-sided racks placed to suit, and with a roomy yard attached, enclosed with woven wire fencing, as a protection from dogs, will answer the purpose well until lambing