

### Value in Manure.

He would be considered very foolish who declared that there was no value in manure. Equally foolish would the man be who discarded barnyard manure and took in preference any of the various fertilizers sold as a substitute. Not that these are not valuable, but that it is now very generally conceded that better value for the ordinary farmer will be realized from the use of good, well-made farmyard manure. Yet, it will be found very difficult to put an exact commercial value on this article. The value placed on the ordinary fertilizers by those who produce them does not seem to be endorsed by the farmers in general, judging by the amount annually purchased by them.

The value of manure will largely depend upon what use is made of it. If it can be placed upon the land in such a manner as to produce an additional yield of a marketable product, then its value will depend upon the price realized for the increased product. Its value cannot, however, be computed on any given crop for one season, because the value of the manure is not lost in a single crop.

In one of the last bulletins issued by the Ontario Department of Agriculture, the profit in the feeding of several hundred sheep at the College Farm is largely made up by the value of the manure. Out of an actual gain in the transaction of \$599.75, \$577.12 is placed to the credit of the manure made by these animals.

The value of this manure appears to be based on a calculation made by comparing it with the various commercial fertilizers which are upon the market. The manure has been carefully analyzed by the college chemist and a computation made of the value of the various ingredients when compared with the prices of the same ingredients as found in the ordinary fertilizers.

This may be the best way of arriving at a probable value of such manure. Whether it is actually of that value to the farmer who thus feeds his sheep will depend as stated previously upon the use he is able to make of it.

If this manure is placed upon land which is given to the growth of rape the following season, it will be seen that the only return likely to be received from it will be an additional quantity of manure. Any farmer following such a course would find that his family would not be able to live comfortably on such proceeds of the value said to be in the manure.

To the practical man it would appear that such calculations are very often misleading. It can easily be shown by a careful calculation that the man who feeds a number of steers each year on his farm is actually feeding them at a loss, when the calculation is made as it has been in the bulletin referred to.

If the market price in any of our towns and cities of the hay, roots and grain which is being fed to these animals is computed, in nearly every case it will be seen that the animals are sold at a loss. Yet, every observant man knows that the farmers who have adopted this practice (?) for years have been the men who have prospered, who have, in some cases, become wealthy, who have added to their lands, and who have been successful in supporting the young men of their families on additional acres.

If this work had actually been done at a loss, how can this be accounted for? The real truth is that these computations are erroneous. The man makes his money because he is able

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in his stable to sell his hay, his roots and his grain at a fairly remunerative rate. The profit is in the sale of these articles, through the medium of the steer, which he would probably find it impossible to sell in any other way. The manure which is thus made upon his farm enables him to produce his grain crops in much greater abundance and of superior quality, so that an additional profit is made in that way.

It is no doubt true that the man who is not a farmer who buys lambs (as was done for the College experiment) and who is compelled to buy grain, hay and roots on which to feed them, will find that the transaction will show but little profit. But the farmer who grows these articles on his own farm will find that in the feeding of them to sheep or cattle in the manner suggested,

he will be enabled to make considerable profit on their growth when thus sold through the medium of his live stock. If he does not produce the hay, etc., but buys from his neighbor, it is clear that the transaction will not be sufficiently remunerative to warrant its continuance.

If this be granted, how will the farmer be able to secure better prices for the articles thus consumed in the feeding of his live stock? It will not matter to him at what price these are sold on the market; his are not sold in that way, but through the animal which he is feeding; so that, in order to secure increased prices, he must give close attention to the quality of the animal through which it passes. There is much more profit in a good steer which, receiving the same feed and care and sold at the same age, brings \$70, than one of the scrub variety, which, while receiving the same attention, brings only \$40. He who has the better steer will certainly get more for his hay and roots through the medium of that steer than his neighbor will through the medium of the inferior one.

In the same way the value of the manure made upon the farm must be computed. He who is able to use his manure on land which produces thirty bushels of wheat, to be sold at one dollar, would make more money than he who grows seventy bushels of oats sold at thirty cents. Manure in the one case would appear to be worth more to the farmer than in the other case.

The conclusion to be reached in both cases is that, in order to secure the best returns for these products thus consumed, it is necessary to select the best specimens only. If manure only is sought, then the scrub steer or the inferior sheep will be able to produce it in the same quantity as one of much better quality; but we think that it would be found impossible to feed these animals simply for the amount of manure produced.

The farmer should not only seek to obtain profit in this way, but to feed such a quality of live stock as will give profit in the production of the food consumed.

### Sheep Breeding for Mutton Purposes.

When the adaptability of Canadian pastures and Canadian farm management for sheep breeding is considered we are at a loss to understand why this line of stock farming is not more generally practised, especially as it has proved so remunerative. The export of Canadian sheep at one time was increasing faster than that of cattle, and only diminished when the supply fell away, caused by sheep breeding having been abandoned on many farms, which made it difficult for buyers to purchase sufficient for the home trade. It is certain that in a general way this industry has never been pursued with a view to bringing about the popularity of Canadian sheep in the British markets. While cattle breeding and feeding has made great progress in Canada since the export trade opened, and farmers have made special exertions to produce what is suited to the wants of the market in the line of export cattle, nothing has been done to foster the trade in Canadian sheep. We have been content to ship baggy ewes and old rams instead of properly prepared shearing wethers. Although frozen meat may tend to lower prices in England, yet this product will never be well received by the better class of British consumers. The trade facilities that are enjoyed by Canadians with the mother country, together with the unlimited area at our command for sheep production, should enable this country to supply the British market with a large proportion of the best mutton required.

The following article from a contributor to the Farmer's Gazette deals with this subject from a British standpoint:—

The extraordinary development of mutton imports during the last ten years was probably undreamed of by any one in 1875. Previous to 1882 the imports of mutton were not separately distinguished from any other kinds of imported meat; but in 1882 the quantity of mutton imported into the United Kingdom was only 189,847 cwt.; whereas in 1890 it had increased to 1,734,828 cwt. It would be rash to predict that the imports will not yet be largely in-

creased, though the future increase will probably be slower and steadier than it has been during the last ten years. The refrigerating process of preserving meat is now about as perfect as it is ever likely to be, so that no fresh stimulus need be looked for in that direction. Many other processes of preservation have been and are being tried, of course; but public prejudice against meat preserved by chemical agents is not easily overcome, and frozen mutton is preferable even to tinned mutton. What our farmers have to look forward to, however, is the possible reduction of home-grown mutton to a retail price of about 6d. per pound. The inexplicable thing is that no matter how much the price of mutton is reduced to the farmer, the consumer never seems to get the benefit of it. It is more than hinted, too, that some of the frozen mutton which is imported at 4½d. per pound is retailed here as home mutton at 9d.

The most marked change in our home production of mutton is the earlier age at which sheep are now sent to the butcher. The old idea that prime mutton could only be had from three or four-year-old wethers has been fairly exploded within the last dozen years or so. One-year-old sheep are fast becoming the staple mutton supply of the country, notwithstanding it was once thought that sheep of that age could never be made fit for the butcher. But every sheep breeder now goes in for early maturity, and it is only by so doing that mutton-making can be made to pay, except, of course, in the case of old ewes, which make up a considerable proportion of the fat sheep killed every year, and which may at times leave a good profit on fattening. Owing to improved breeding as much as improved keep, the age at which sheep can be fattened is being constantly lessened. During recent years the fat stock clubs have been compelled to entirely re-cast their prize list and the arrangement of classes, so as to put themselves more in touch with the requirements of the times and be of greater service to feeders of stock. The numerous illustrations of early maturity which have been brought forward from amongst all breeds are too strong logic for old style feeders, who hold that an animal must have completed its growth before it can be profitably fattened. It has been demonstrated that the meat produced from sheep delivered to the butcher at one-year-old is quite equal in quality and costs just half the expense of mutton from sheep kept a year longer before being fattened. By feeding from birth we also reduce risks and time, which in this, as in everything else, means money.

To a certainty the great fight amongst the mutton breeds of sheep henceforth must hinge on the matter of early maturity more than on anything else. Contest after contest has demonstrated that when all are highly fed from birth there is little difference in the quantity and quality of mutton they are capable of producing the first twelve months—probably less difference in quantity than there is in quality, if the quantity of food required to produce one pound of mutton in the various breeds is exactly determined. This practically marks the limit of competition between the various breeds; for it is only by producing young mutton that our home farmers can now hold their place against New Zealand and Argentine sheep breeders in British markets. It will be many years before the colonial sheep sent here in the shape of frozen mutton can compete with our own in point of early maturity, and in this fact lies one of the few crumbs of comfort now left to the British sheep breeder.

### Ontario Veterinary College.

We have received the annual announcement of the Ontario Veterinary College, Toronto, for the session 1892-93, which opens on October 19th, and call the attention of our readers to its advertisement which appears in our columns. This well-known institution attracts a large number of students from the United States as well as from all parts of the Dominion of Canada, the success of its teachings being marked by the high standing its graduates have attained, who are scattered all over the continent of North America. The tuition fees are remarkably low for the advantages offered.