

unfruitful wood. We presume that yours are the ordinary bushes, but whether they consist of several main stems, or only one to form standards, it is the centre that should first claim attention, it being decidedly wrong to commence hacking the outside branches away. This only makes matters worse, causing a thicket of stout shoots to form next spring. Use a sharp pruning saw to thin out the centres, removing whole branches if need be where they cross or interlace each other. The actual size of the bushes need only be reduced where space will not permit of their extension, or when they become too close to each other. A free-spreading habit, with plenty of room between the branches, should be observed, when cultivated as ordinary bushes, taking care that they are not robbed by sucker growth, which naturally springs from the ground, but which cannot produce fruit owing to its shaded and crowded position. To shorten back all the shoots would mean the pruning away of the female flowers, and then the crop is sacrificed. Some successful growers follow a system of training and pruning where by each shoot forms a cordon of fruiting-spurs from base to summit. To do this young plants must be treated properly from the first. A given number of shoots are brought up from near the ground, and for the first few years hazel hoops are used to train them in the form of a basin. The side growths are kept pruned back, so that each leader forms a cordon. Light and air can then act freely on all parts, and heavy crops of fine nuts are obtained.—R. P.]

The Flock

DIFFICULTIES IN JUDGING SHEEP.

In judging sheep considerable latitude has to be allowed because the hand has to aid the eye and impressions made by handling are not interpreted in the same way by all judges. This difference in reading the results of handling combined with difference in ideas of what constitutes the correct type of a breed, leads to some very interesting decisions being given at exhibitions, where only one judge is employed. It was most strikingly illustrated at the last Illinois State Fair, where Professor Curtis, of the Iowa Agricultural College,

was the judge. He, as a teacher of ideals in sheep husbandry, and as a man who has seen the best flocks of sheep on the continent and in Europe, should be a capable judge, but, when we read the following report of his judging at this fair, we wonder whether he has a hobby, or whether the breeders of Shropshires, as they are bred and judged in their native home, are not up to their business. An agricultural exchange, in speaking of the Shropshires at this fair, says :

"Probably the most noticeable feature of Prof. Curtis' work was the way the imported sheep, Royal winners, most of them, fell back before home-bred sheep. Selecting as his type the medium sized sheep, with especial regard to breed type and quality, and discounting those that seemed to encroach upon the Oxford, Prof. Curtis worked steadily to this ideal and succeeded in overturning some of the decisions previously made. Indeed, the difference in standpoint is clearly indicated by the fact that the exhibit from Folly Farm, strong in Royal winners, that won the flock prize at the three leading Canadian exhibitions this fall, was not in the first flight on this occasion, and that, too, without having suffered in condition to any appreciable degree from their extended journeying."

Such difference of opinion must always occur in the one judge system. Prof. Curtis is a man of no mean ability and in his work at Ames has steadily kept in view the utility or dollars and cents aspect in his experiments with live stock. Has he come to the conclusion that the English and Canadian breeders of Shropshires are striving to attain too much size in their sheep, and has he taken this striking and forcible way of teaching breeders of this continent that the somewhat smaller and more compact animal is the more profitable one to handle? Mere size should not count unless accompanied by quality, no matter what the breed. Such decisions as given by Prof. Curtis are always disquieting, however, as they tend to unsettle the minds of many breeders as to the true type of their sheep. A single judge with a hobby will work harm, but a man with a strong conviction of what is the right thing will do untold good to the interests of any breed in moulding a correct ideal.—N.-W. Farmer.

