

About the Breeds of Sheep.

The Sheep's Early History: How the Different Breeds Originated.

The history of the sheep differs from that of other domesticated animals materially, in that, while we have records to the earliest ages of the latter animals in a wild condition, together with pre-historic evidence of their evolution, sheep seem first to have appeared shortly after the advent of man. The domesticated flock was his first charge and care, and the one that met the most fully his primitive wants. There were at the same time, as now, many wild varieties of sheep in different parts of the then known world, but few of them would show a very close breed relationship to our domestic sheep, and, in fact, the writings of ancient authorities, such as the poet of ancient Rome, who, when he "tuned his harp to a slender oaten straw" wrote of the sheep, its care, and particularly laid down theories of breeding so sound, on selection and mating, that it seems quite plausible that our various breeds of domestic sheep have

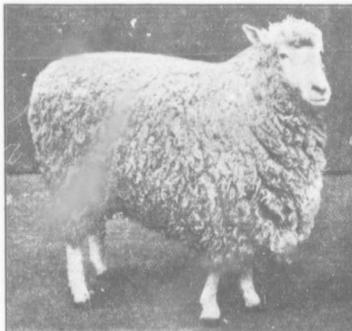
exhibit more or less tendency, when left to themselves to roam. This is particularly noticeable in the different branches of the Merino family.

From the earliest times can be found an appreciation of the importance of whatever tended towards the improvement of the flocks of sheep, and even royalty considered the subject as worthy of their attention. Roman Emperors paid large prices for representatives of improved breeds, and many of the kings of Europe considered a present of such an one quite as befitting to Royalty as the princely gift of the Arab steed from the stud of the munificent Sultan of the Orient. Ages ago, it was a crime punishable with death to export breeding sheep from England, and during the reign of the Imperial Tudors, it was the gift of a flock of sheep from the Emperor of Spain which laid the foundation for the English Cotswold, and all breeds descended from them.

and strong with heavy bone, and good sound feet that are not easily subject to foot diseases. The Cotswold has proved an eminently successful sheep for crossing on the Down breeds, and they figure in the original breeding of several other breeds of sheep.

LINCOLNS

Lincolnshire has for ages been celebrated for its breed of sheep. At one time a race of big, rough, scrawny, but hardy sheep, the breed was like the Cotswold and other breeds, much improved by crossing with rams from the flock of the immortal Bakewell, which gave to the race somewhat smaller size, but combined with improved quality, tendency to fatten, with earlier maturity. However much the breed may owe to this, it is certain that the basis for these improvements was a good one for the breed has proved a most popular one, especially in countries where plenty of good pasturage can be found. The Lincoln is the largest breed of sheep, frequently weighing over three hundred pounds. The face is free from wool and the head from horns, large, and the forehead narrows sharply backward. The neck is of about medium length, and well "set" on the shoulders, the back



A prize winning Lincoln ewe.



A prize winning Cotswold.

been developed in different localities, and from selections of type found locally the most suitable.

Two breeds of sheep are claimed, however, to have been the progenitors of our present flocks. These are the Argali of Asia, and the Musmon of Europe, the former being claimed to have been the original progenitor of the Oriental sheep, while from the latter descended the European breeds. A few of these wild sheep are still to be found in the mountains of Greece and in the Cretan Islands. Some shade of "ausability" is afforded to this theory by the records of ancient writers, particularly Pliney, who tells of the Musmon being crossed on the domestic sheep of his day. The early culture of the sheep was necessarily in the hands of the wandering, nomadic tribes and races, rather than the peoples who followed the tillage of the soil, their flocks constantly moving from place to place in pursuit of suitable pasturage. The shepherds following, constantly on the watch against marauders, sometimes, too, devoting part of their time to the performance of the same none too neighborly office on the flocks of others, made the keeping of sheep a less peaceful occupation than other branches of agriculture in the olden time; and thus it is, also, that many breeds of sheep

Some writers, indeed, claim an even more ancient origin for the Cotswold, averring that the first importations of this old breed of long wool sheep was made during the twelfth century, and that there are records of representatives of this same breed being exported back to Spain in the year 1467 by the royal permission of King Henry IV.

THE COTSWOLDS

are celebrated for their hardness and size, but it was not until after the time of Bakewell that the greatest improvement was effected in this breed by the judicious crossing of Leicester blood, and this happily gave greater smoothness, quality, and tendency to fatten without at the same time impairing their natural hardness, and has made them a very popular "combination" wool and mutton sheep. Their characteristics are a face of grayish or white, with a fleece that will comb eight to ten inches long, well adapted for the manufacture of heavy goods, and clipping from nine to sixteen pounds. Weight from 250 to 275 pounds. The head is strong and large, no horns, with a forelock or tuft of wool hanging over a somewhat "Roman" face the entire body except the face is well covered with long wool that hangs in curly ringlets, and the limbs are large

is straight and not quite so broad as the Cotswold, the fleece is the longest of all long wool breeds, is fine and lustrous in character, and sometimes corries to twelve inches in length. As high as fifteen pounds of staple wool has been clipped from a Lincoln. The legs are long and strong.

(To be Continued.)

Tonics for Hogs

It is well to keep constantly accessible to both pigs and old hogs some material that supplies lime and salt, to aid in bone-building, as an appetizer and to remove intestinal parasites. This mixture should be kept in a strong box, protected from rain; the quantity and frequency with which pigs will visit and eat of the mixture will often be surprising. The following is a mixture recommended: Charcoal, one and one-half bushels; common salt, four pounds; hardwood ashes (not logwood nor any dyewood), ten pounds; slaked lime, four pounds. Fresh water, good shade, additional food when on grass, and a dry bed free from filth, shelter from rain; and above all when confined have the area immediately large so that it will not become foul with droppings and filthy mud. These are the essentials for successful hog raising.