

Sheep Raising.

We give below an extract from the *Iowa Live Stock Gazette* on this important subject. The increased attention paid to sheep raising by American agriculturists should stimulate us in Canada to more attention to it as a source of national wealth than we have given to it heretofore. Our soil and climate are better suited for feeding mutton and producing the most valuable wool than any other country on the continent. It is not necessary to tell our readers of the great profits derived from a sheep farm. Mutton is no longer sold at prices ruinously low. It is now in good demand at remunerative prices. Wool also has been selling very well. Not only are the pastures of Canada well suited for feeding sheep, but we can keep them through the winter months in good condition, the soil yielding the best root crops and an abundant supply of the straw of the peas, for which the country bears a high name in England as well as America.

While we have reason to impress upon the farmers of the country the hope of a suitable market for their product of wool and mutton, we would at the same time lead them to the consideration of the fact that they must pay such attention to the rearing of the sheep as will enable them to compete most successfully with the world, and this they can do without any great degree of skill being required, or any very heavily increased expenditure in the formation of their flocks. We have before intimated that upon the character of the breed will depend the main success of the raiser, and the localities, whether suitable for the manufacturer or the shambles. But we must also take care to provide for the proper nourishment of the animals, by procuring the proper grasses and roots with which they are to be fed, without these helps it being useless to expect that full realization of profit which should be the basis of all our calculations. Wherever orchard grass, clover, and blue grass can be grown, and if properly cultivated (when is it that they cannot be?), the more robust, large and healthy will be the sheep, and the greater their prolificness, under proper care. In addition to the grasses, the provision of roots is not less desirable; in fact, in England the great success of sheep husbandry is due mainly to the use of the turnip, and the application of science in breeding from the most improved types suitable for their particular purposes; there, however, their great object is for meat, and the larger portion of the raw material required for their manufactories is received from Australia and other of their distant colonies. At home they have not the room, as we have, to raise all their supplies, hence the enormous quantities used are necessarily brought from a distance, while the reverse is the case with us, as we have immense tracts of waste lands which, it can be said, are fit for nothing else than the rearing of sheep.

One of the advantages of raising sheep on the cultivated farm is the killing of briars and weeds, which they more effectually accomplish than by any other means; another, the value of their manure when they are properly herded; and still another, the cheapness of transportation of the fleeces to a distant market, in comparison with grain and other heavy products, from many sections of the country.

An English farmer, reputed of great experience in the management of sheep and pastures, in a paper upon the subject gives the following advice: The housing of sheep at night will rob the soil of all the dung and urine voided during the night, which will be a good deal, for when I was a boy there were thousands of acres in every county in England which were well manured for wheat by folding the ewes during the night over the fallows in the months of August and September. There are two other considerations. All pastures intended for lying permanently in grass are benefited by being grazed by other stock as well as sheep; while, at the same time, sheep will do very much better if other animals graze with them, or alternately; but, as probably you prefer to keep the flock in one pasture, you should move them into another field for a week or two at a time, or say every other month, and put cows and horses, or colts and calves, on the said seven acres the while the sheep are away, and you will be struck with astonishment at the better thriving of the sheep in consequence of this change, for no animals

do well long when they have no grass but that which is stimulated only by their own droppings. As the blue grass is established, and as white clover always comes on well-grazed land, and such grasses as are natural to the soil will also keep filling up all the spaces not covered till there is one continuous thick mass of herbage, there will be no necessity for sowing any grass seed. But if you would like to sow any, you had better wait till next year, because the aftermath of last autumn will be somewhat in the way; and next spring (1876) some compost of mold and rotted manure might be spread on the surface, and some orchard grass, clover seed, and other varieties suitable to the soil could be bush-harrowed and rolled in as soon as the ground is in condition to have it done.

It does not injure the best grasses on any permanent pasture to graze close; for those varieties which will not bear to be eaten down may as well die out and make room for those that will thicken into a perfect mat like the sward so often met with in England, where there are as many as seventy distinct varieties growing on any square yard in a field. By paying more attention to our grass fields we can make them pay interest on a valuation of \$100 or \$200 per acre. Fill up every inch of surface with some perennial plant equal to blue grass, bent, or meadow fennel for grazing purposes.

How Long to Milk Cows.

Some cows settle this question for their owners, and such, unless they are fine, large animals, and calf raising is the chief use of the cow, should be fattened and killed at four or five years old, or sold. As a general rule, it is a poor cow that does not need to be dried off before calving. As to how little milk pays for the trouble of milking, that depends upon the number of cows and the amount required for family use or for sale. It will pay to milk every cow that will average two quarts a day; if less than that quantity is obtained, I would advise to sell off the cow.

The practice of half feeding dry cows is a poor system. All cows that are worth keeping should be well kept; and any animal with young should be as well fed as when giving milk, though the food need not be so rich or oleaginous as when the milk is set for cream or used for butter-making. The rapid taking on of flesh at this period is an indication of sound health.

If you expect to have a fine calf, stop milking at all events six weeks before the cow will come in again. Some cows will give milk the year round if you allow them, and it is hard to dry them before they make bag anew, but this should always be done. It will be found profitable to feed cows well, and curdy them twice a week thoroughly.

A New York Prize Dairy Farm.

An account is given by the *Utica Herald* of the farm formerly owned by A. L. Fish, on which he secured a yield of 846 pounds of cheese per cow in one year, and from which trade in cheese with England is said to have begun. It is now owned by a son of the former proprietor. It now contains 160 acres of open land, and 30 acres of timber. Especial pains have been taken to destroy all weeds. The *Herald* says:

We were interested also to learn Mr. Fish's system of cultivating his grass lands. He does not agree with those dairy writers who advocate permanent pastures. There may be certain favored localities where a permanent pasture will sustain itself; but he believes this is not the rule. He believes in the cultivation of grass lands, and when the soil becomes packed and fixed he would break it up, pulverize it as much as possible and make a good bed for re-seeding. And when he does this, and applies the manure and turns under the old sod, rich in manurial qualities, he does not believe in exhausting this richness by rotation of cropping before putting down to pasture again. He will take off one crop of corn or grain, in order that the soil may have a chance to lighten up and the old sod a chance to rot. But when this enriching reaches its best estate, and before it is exhausted, he puts in his grass seed again, and it finds the soil in the best condition for sending down grass roots to reach a deep foundation. Mr. Fish regards grass as a crop of itself and cultivates it as a crop. In this respect his practice is worthy of the imitation of many of our dairy farmers. He does not look upon grass as a cloak to cover exhausted soil. The result is that his fields look rather like fresh meadows than like the common pastures of the country.

As Mr. Fish does not believe in exhausting the goodness of the soil before seeding, so he does not believe in scalping it after the turf is fixed. He does not practice close cropping either with grain or with tith. Instead of overstocking his fields, he believes it more profitable to get the returns from fewer well-bred cattle and leave a covering on the ground for the protection of the grass roots and the enriching of the soil. There is one way to measure the profit of this practice with cultivation of grass lands and temperate feeding from them, that is, by experience. When the senior Mr. Fish took the land from his father, all the stock kept upon the farm was twenty-five head, counting in the working animals, and the yield of grain and winter feed only filled parts of two small barns. Now the farm furnishes summer and winter keep for seventy animals, and while it has been improving to this extent it has yielded from farm profits actual cash amounting to three times its value. This result has been attained by the system of cultivation and by the careful preservation of such manurial material as has been produced upon the farm. No commercial fertilizers have been purchased, no money except in plaster and labor has been given to the soil. The secret has been in a system of culture which has made the land better and more productive, and at the same time profitable in a business point of view. This is one of the secrets of success in farming, and if it had been more widely understood and applied we should not now have so much complaint that the farm is unprofitable, and we should not have so many strong young men languishing in overcrowded professions. The farm has not had a fair chance with the other business enterprises. It has not been tried often enough for all there is in it. But there is promise now, as better counsels are prevailing, that a more enlightened system of agriculture will become general.

The spirit of enterprise is everywhere apparent upon the Fish farmstead. The proprietor, Mr. Irving Fish, has now the complete charge and direction of affairs, and is bringing the strength and acumen of his manhood to the success of the farm. The dairy is in a promising condition. The start was gained from a fine lot of grade cows selected for their quality as milkers by the elder Fish. The present proprietor has introduced an element of improvement in the purchase of a thorough-bred Ayrshire bull. The cows are as fine a lot as we have seen of late. The buildings are being improved and extended. Mr. Fish has now nearly completed a capacious barn, which, with the space of connected buildings, will give him stanchion room 120 feet long. The upper stories of the barns are also connected, and the whole arrangement is admirable for convenience in the storing of forage and distributing it to the cattle. This barn will not cost its proprietor more than \$300 for purchased material, and, with little assistance, he has done the building with his own hand. It is an achievement to be proud of, and it will add much to the pleasure and profit of the farm.

American Cattle in London.

Much interest was created in the live cattle market yesterday by the presence of saleable fat beasts from New York. Considering they had journeyed about 3,000 miles by sea, and that on their reception at the Port of London they were very rudely treated, they were in marvelously good condition. The cattle arrived in the docks on Monday, all sound with the exception of one, which had suffered severe butting and bruising. The Inspector declined to allow any of them to pass until he had examined the one that showed symptoms of injury. This he did not do at once. He waited until the following day, the result being that the uninjured thirty-seven (thirty-eight being landed) were kept until Wednesday in a place not sufficient to accommodate half the number. When it was veterinarily decided that the animal supposed to be affected with chronic disease was all right, and it was sent up to the shambles to have the small offal condemned; the meat, however, being passed, and the others permitted to go, at a loss to their owners of at least a couple of pounds per head. Still they handled admirably, and the prices realized showed that they must have been extremely good ere they started on their long and "parlous" journey, as they made £26 to £36 per head, a good price even in this day of dear meat. The fact to be noted is this, that animals can be brought long distances by sea without suffering much deterioration in well-appointed vessels. The question to be considered is whether the freightage may not absorb the freight.—*Advertiser, London, Eng.*