

by the operation of undetected causes. Repeated trials under circumstances well understood and defined are quite necessary to a correct general conclusion.

SHEEP HUSBANDRY IN CANADA.

[We copy from the *Cobourg Star*, the following excellent essay, read at a recent meeting of the members of the *Hamilton Farmers' Club*, by Mr. Hume, one of the members. The present extremely low price of grain renders the subject particularly opportune, and we are sure that our readers will thank us for giving Mr. Hume's paper without curtailment. We must grow more wool, and make more cloth in Canada, in order to prosper. We hope the farmers of other districts will copy the useful example of their enterprising and intelligent brethren of Newcastle, and hold occasional meetings for discussion and mutual improvement during the comparative leisure of winter. Want of space compels us to abridge the observations of several of the speakers;—John Wade, Esq., President of the Club, occupied the Chair.]

Turning my attention more particularly to the subject chosen for discussion at to-day's meeting, its importance at the present moment has been forcibly impressed on my mind, and I feel sorry that the preparing of this paper was not accorded to some hand more able to do it justice; whilst doing my best, however, to open the subject, I trust that my remarks will merely be received as the basis of a more thorough investigation.

Late changes have much affected our position as Canadian Farmers, and whilst, with the rest of the British Empire, we are brought under the operation of Free Trade, we labour under peculiar difficulties induced by the heavy Tariff of our nearest neighbours, acting along with a very restricted currency at home, which paralyzes the efforts of our native industry in its attempts to establish a home market. Industry Canadians have, enterprise too, though, by some, their possession of the latter quality has been denied.

Whence else arises the rapidly increasing exportation of our breeding stock to even the older States of the Union. Whilst those of our neighbours who venture to visit our barbarous shores, seem astonished at the advanced state of cultivation where they had expected to find only a half reclaimed forest. With the political remedies for these difficulties we have nothing to do in a meeting like the present; but as men who have to earn our bread from the soil, it behoves us to watch the course of events and follow up such channels as may lay open to us, a means for profitably employing our capital and labour. In the present crisis, circumstances seem to have directed the public mind rather in the course embraced by to-day's discussion.—an increased demand for breeding sheep seems to indicate a considerable desire to invest farming capital in

this line, and certainly entering on a more extended sheep husbandry, it is of the utmost importance that a proper selection be made of the class of stock and mode of management best adapted to yield us a profit both individually and as a community.

The sheep has from the earliest times furnished a source of profitable occupation to mankind. Abel was a keeper of sheep, and through succeeding generations, both before and after the deluge, the tending of flocks formed the employment of a large part of the population of the earth. That this business was a source of profit in early times cannot be doubted, but their flocks ranged over extensive plains without an owner, under climates where a plentiful supply of food was at all seasons provided by nature, little manual labour was required, and pasture was easily renewed by a constant change of place. From this mode of life, under a beneficent climate, arose the songs of the poet of the ease and happiness of a pastoral life. An age advancing, amid refinement and luxury—look back with envy on the ease of more simple times when refinement and luxury were unknown. Unknown also was the anxiety and labour entailed by their gratification. But such a mode of management can only be realized in the earlier stages of society, or when population being small, the market for the surplus produce of your flocks is at a considerable distance. Such a style of husbandry is now realized in Australia in a certain degree, it is yet continued in the interior of Spain by these amid a numerous population, it is now only maintained in a somewhat sickly state by vigorous governmental enactments.

We know of no animal so capable of enduring a great variety of climate and situation as the sheep. And this he does not by turning to the elements a stubborn front, but, with the meekness of his tribe, he entirely alters his character and habits under the influence of varied localities. We find him in every diversity of situation from the storms and ice of Cape North to the parched sands of Sahara. The sheep of the mountains of Tartary, covered with a coat of shaggy hair, scarce seems the same animal which produced our fine merino wool, and it would be difficult to trace the blood of our Leicester and Teeswater in the hump-backed Persian, or the fat rumped sheep of the Cape. whose tail alone, we are told, forms a joint large enough for the table. This singular facility of adaptation peculiarly fits the sheep to be the friend of man—a companion under his ever varying circumstances, and forms the ground work on which we have to build our present observations.

It would be well, probably, to consider what class of this animal is adapted to various localities, taking into our estimate both the character of the sheep itself, and the sources of profit likely to arise in certain positions. And by examining the capabilities of our own country, to come to an approximate opinion as to how far it is adapted to a sheep husbandry, and to what class of that animal its resources are most fitted. First, then, let us take those countries which at the present day may be called pastoral—as for example