SHEEP AND SWINE.

GOING INTO SHEEP.

A new beginner, who has had no experience with sheep, asks us whether it would be safe for him to buy 200 or more sheep after shearing, with a view of feeding them for market. He has pasture for them, and thinks of feeding them in winter, for spring sale. If our correspondent wishes to take a lesson in dear-bought experience, which will make a most lasting impression, then his project would probably be entirely successful. We generally advise taking lessons at a lower figure. Sheep feeding requires a good deal of judgment, founded on experience, to manage profitably. We have known one instance where "New Beginner's" project was tried successfully, and a fair margin left on the transaction, but the circumstances were exceptionally favourable—he had an experienced Mentor at his elbow in the purchase, and at frequent periods in the feeding, as well as in the sale at the time of marketing. These three things are important landmarks in the sheep business—to know how to buy, how to feed and, lastly, how to sell. A slight mistake in each part is sure to result in a loss. It is generally thought to be more risky for a new beginner to attempt the feeding of 200 sheep than a proportionate number of cattle, but he is not likely to be successful in either. If our correspondent has a liking for sheep, or thinks he would have, it would be safer for him to try a small number—say ten to twenty—and then feel his way up to greater numbers. Let him visit the nearest sheep market and leisurely inspect the different grades, and see how each stands when brought to sale; keep his eyes open to all the points, and remember them in his selections. This will be cheaper than his large experiment, for a new beginner. Again, if he should spend a little time in visiting some successful feeders, and get an insight into their way of doing it, he will be taking practical lessons at what they are well worth to him. It may be considered somewhat strange that farmers do not visit each other more in search of the practical experience of those who have succeeded in any specialty. This is in the natural line of those who do not believe in book-farming, but even this sensible way of gaining information is not much pursued.

We would suggest that "New Beginner" might find a flock which he might pasture through the summer, at so much per head, and thus gain some information in handling them. A flock of 200 sheep, well bought, the latter part of June, to be pastured through the remainder of the season, with a view of feeding for sale at the most favourable period, should be judiciously fed from the start. If the pasture is good the sheep will do well on that alone, but a little extra feed will be liberally repaid in fattening. As fattening is the object sought, let this be done in the most economical way. A little grain on pasture will pay much better than the same amount of grain in winter. As we have often advised, economy requires that animals intended for meat should be pushed in the warm season. A quarter of a pound of corn and oats, or corn and wheat bran, or corn and linseed meal, mixed, for each sheep, will produce a greater result than twice that amount of feed in winter with good hay. The time to give a start to fattening sheep is in summer. If these sheep become fat in the fall, so much the better are they for feeding in winter. Such sheep will stand the cold, and gain on a much smaller ration than if they were thin in the fall. The best western feeders of cattle wisely give corn on pasture. Sheep feeding should be done in the same way, except that it is better to give some more nitrogenous feed with corn. The rule should be to push the sheep in warm weather, and then feeding in winter will be comparatively easy.—*National Live Stock Journal.*

THE RAZOR-BACK HOG.

To the traveller through Texas and elsewhere, one of the strangest and most peculiar features of landscape is the razor-back hog. He is of Swiss cottage style of architecture. His physical outline is angular to a degree unknown outside of a text-book on the science of geometry. His ears, or the few rags and tatters of them that the dogs have left, are curled back with a knowing, vagabondish air. His tail has no curl in it—but it hangs aft, limp as a wet dish-rag hung out of a back window to dry. The highest peak of his corrugated back is six inches above the level with the root of his tail. He does not walk with the slow and stately step of the patrician Berkshire, but usually goes in a lively trot. He leaves the impression that he was late starting in the morning and is making up for lost time, or that he is in doubt about the payment of that cheque, and is hurrying to get it cashed before the bank closes.

The country razor-back prowls around in the woods, and lives on acorns, pecan nuts and roots; when he can spare time he climbs under his owner's fence and assists in harvesting the corn crop. In this respect he is neighbourly to a fault, and, when his duty to his owner's crop will allow, he will readily turn in and assist the neighbours, even working at night rather than see his crop spoil for want of attention.

He does not know the luxury of a sty. He never gets fat, and from the day of his birth, sometimes two years roll into eternity before he is big enough to kill.

Crossing the razor-back with the blue-blooded stock makes but little improvement. The only effective way to improve him is to cross him with a railroad train. He then becomes an imported Berkshire, or Poland-China hog, and if he does not knock the train off the track, the railway company pays for him at the rate of one dollar a pound, for which they are allowed the mournful privilege of shovelling the remains off the track. The ham of the country razor-back is more juicy than the hind leg of an iron fire-dog, but not quite so fat as a pine knot.—*Western Plowman.*

CLOVER FOR HEALTHY GROWTH OF HOGS.

It came in my way last summer to frequently pass a field of clover which had been fenced off for a hog pasture, and noticing the amount of feed and the thrift and the general appearance of the hogs, I called upon the owner of the farm for an interview.

"Oh, yes, I can give my opinion and the results. That lot we call 20 acres, including the small grove and spring in one corner. We sowed it with oats last season, and stocked down with clover, part Medium and the balance Mammoth. The first of June, this summer, we turned in 90 hogs, but this made no impression on the clover, so we turned in ten colts, 15 head of young cattle, and 50 sheep, and altogether they managed to keep it within bounds. About the first of August we took out the cattle and commenced feeding corn."

"Could you discover any difference between the Medium and the Mammoth clover as to its food value?"

"Yes, the Mammoth was much the best, it kept green longer, and would have yielded a large quantity of hay. Now as to the results: A few days ago I took a car load of these hogs to Chicago, and the average weight of the 42 to fill the car, was a fraction less than 400 pounds, or in other words, the 42 hogs weighed 17,940 lbs., netting the snug little sum of $1,078; and I received five cents per hundred more than any hogs sold in the market that day, because they were in a nice, even splendid condition for the Philadelphia market. The balance of the lot will be ready to ship in a few days."

Nothwithstanding this farmer cannot give us the exact weight of the hogs when turned into the clover pasture, nor the gain in pounds on the first day of August, yet I am sure that the facts as given will warrant the oft-made assertion that a clover pasture is the most profitable feed for young hogs. One of our large breeders of Poland-China hogs, who has been breeding fine stock for years, says that he has never had a single case of hog cholera on his farm, and he attributes it to the fact that he always lets his breeding stock run to clover pasture. The fact is, a large majority of our farmers and breeders are breeding for fat and show, and the warp or muscle is not sufficient to hold the filling, and hogs are getting organic disease by this continued cramming process.—*Swine Breeders' Journal.*

TRICHINA IN SWINE.

We have heretofore stated, without reservation, our belief that when the full array of facts were known in relation to the cause of trichina in swine, it would be found that the difficulty arises from the animal eating garbage and vermin. Experiments which we made some years ago fully satisfied us of this. We made the statement then, and now reiterate it, that trichina will not be found in corn-fed hogs. This late outbreak at Minneota, Minn., by which a large number of persons were stricken, some of them fatally, was traced to the eating of raw ham, and it was found that the swine, forty in number, were fed in a pen adjoining a slaughter-house upon the offal of the slaughter-house. The buildings were also overrun with rats, one of the most prolific sources of the disease. Subsequently the establishment and swine were removed to another place, where there less rats, but still fed on the offal. There should be laws passed by the legislature of every State, forbidding the feeding of swine, for human use, on the offal of slaughter-houses, and also against the selling of the meat of such swine. It is true, this pork, if thoroughly cooked, is not dangerous, yet so long as people will eat raw or half-cooked ham, the warranty should have legislative endorsement.—*Chicago Prairie Farmer.*

An incorporated company for sheep-breeding has been formed in southern Missouri, with the purpose of bringing under cultivation 30,000 acres of land on the side of the Ozark Mountains, fencing it and starting with 4,000 sheep, providing them with shelter and winter feed.

At the sheep shearing at Middlebury, Vt., the first week in April, fourteen rams, aged three years or over, cut 377 pounds twelve ounces of wool, or a small fraction less than 27 pounds each, sixteen two-year-old rams cut 381 pounds three ounces, average 23-15; fifteen yearling rams cut 262 pounds three ounces, average 17.7; fourteen two-year-old ewes cut 242 pounds two ounces, average 17-4; fifteen yearling ewes cut 199 pounds twelve ounces, average 13.5 of wool each. Among the sheep was a ewe three years old, with a lamb by her side, which was sheared the next day after the exhibition, before witnesses, yielding 21 pounds nine ounces; carcase weighing 65 pounds, a per cent. of 38.1 of wool to live weight—864 days' growth of wool.