

### Scattered Thoughts about Sheep Farming.

Numerous experiments have been made in England and Germany as to the relative merits of the hog, the sheep and the ox as economical food consumers. Sir J. B. Lawes places their merits in the order above named, but the Germans place the sheep below the ox as an economic producer of increase. This probably only proves a difference in the English and German breeds of sheep. The hog far surpasses the other domestic species as an economical consumer, this being partly due to the more concentrated nature of the food consumed, and partly to the greater capacity of the hog for assimilation. In sheep we should be guided by the English experiments, our breeds being derived from the old country.

According to these experiments, a ton of food after passing through the stomach of the ox has greater manurial value than the same food, quantity and quality, after being dropped from the sheep. This is an important item in discussing the cry of the stockman that more stock must be kept in order to produce more manure. It has been the practice to feed sheep on poor land to restore its fertility, in preference to cattle, but this appears to be somewhat inconsistent with the experiments above quoted. However, as the sheep's droppings are spread more uniformly over the land than those of cattle, it is quite likely that, all conditions being considered, sheep are more economical as fertility restorers than cattle.

Is it necessary for the average farmer to keep sheep? Yes, and no. If he depends upon luck, it may be advisable for him to grow a little of everything; if he has hilly, unarable land, a flock of sheep is a useful branch of farming, and if his arable land requires enriching, sheep will save a good deal of mind-work; but as the non-studious farmer hates to lay out money for food, he cannot restore fertility in this way. He may, however, enrich one field at the expense of another. The exhaustion of fertility is dependent upon two leading causes, (1) the quantity and quality of the products sold off the farm without purchasing foods or fertilizers, and (2) the method of husbanding the manure. In these days of tendency to specialties, the farmer who has been successful in dairying or stock-raising will keep more cows and steers in preference to a flock of sheep, but there are many farmers who have been successful in sheep husbandry as a specialty, and they can profitably stick to the business. But there is one notable feature which gives greater stability to dairying, viz., our reputation in the foreign markets against the increasing competition with foreign countries in sheep and wool growing.

Farmers who don't know enough to keep comfortable shelter for their stock in winter will succeed better with sheep than with cattle. Sheep delight in dry, cold weather, which makes our climate well adapted to sheep, while other stock should be protected from cold as well as from dampness. However, if the lambing season is in winter or early spring, it is necessary to have comfortable quarters for the ewes and the lambs. During dry, cold weather, sheep, if liberally fed, will flourish out of doors during the day, and they need

abundance of exercise. It is against the nature of the sheep to be closely confined. It loves to be fondled, however, and no domestic animal is fonder of freedom. Its motto, if we may so express it, is "variety, kindness and liberty." The simple neglect of this fundamental rule often changes the balance to the wrong side of the account.

Sheep also delight in punctuality on the part of their attendant. Their expectations run high when meal time comes around. Lambs or growing sheep require bone and muscle forming food, and they should therefore receive foods rich in albuminoids and mineral salts, such as bran, peas or oilcake, not neglecting roots and coarse foods. The coarse foods are just as well uncut, but in this case the quality should be good. Full grown fattening sheep require more fatty foods, such as oat and corn meal. Give breeding ewes a variety of all the foods above mentioned. Sheep, though dainty creatures, are better without condimental foods; indeed, all domestic animals are better without them—except those fed for the show ring and for the production of flesh which is unfit for human consumption. Let there be free access to the food trough, in such a manner that there will be no crowding, the weaker suffering from the overbearing conduct of the stronger. Keep the beds dry, and let there be no waste from improperly constructed feed-racks.

If you have a hired man, your sheep may find out his character sooner than yourself. We will here let you into a little secret: Watch your man when he is in the sheep pen, and observe closely if the sheep tend to approach him or escape from him. This simple observation may often decide on which side of your sheep account the balance will be found. If he is in the habit of cursing and swearing, rest assured that he is bad tempered, and is not a fit companion for innocent sheep. He should take pride in the flock, should attend to his duties punctually, and should win the confidence and respect of every sheep and lamb in the pen. If you cannot give your man such a character as this, send him to the bush to chop wood, and attend to the sheep yourself.

Of course the scrub sheep, like the scrub cattle, should be weeded out every year; but be sure not to begin weeding out at the wrong end of the business. If your sheep business is a scrub (that is an unprofitable) industry, weed out the whole concern, and thus save yourself the trouble of testing your whole flock for scrub animals.

### Feeding Apples to Stock.

In a previous issue of the ADVOCATE we explained the feeding value of apples, pointing out that their composition compared favorably with that of the sugar beet, having nearly the same average percentage of sugar. Although apples are valuable chiefly for their sugar, yet their acids make them an excellent appetizer and a very useful succulent food. Although they are suitable for all classes of stock, they are specially valuable for milch cows, if fed with suitable foods and in proper quantities. It is out of the question to feed good, marketable apples, but every farmer has culls which can be more profitably fed to stock than applied to any other purpose—although a few

may be converted into cider for family use—the labor being much less.

In this article we shall dwell on the manner of feeding. The feeding should commence light, not more than 4 to 8 quarts fed once a day, and this quantity may be gradually increased. They should be run through a root pulper to prevent their choking the cows. They should then be mixed with bran, shorts or meal, any foods rich in albuminoids being the best, as they make up for the deficiency of this substance in the apples. A little experience will teach you the proper quantity to feed, care being taken not to feed too many. You will find them good for increasing the yield of milk in the autumn and winter seasons, when it naturally begins to fall off, and you will find an improvement in the quality of the butter. Horses soon learn to eat apples very readily.

### The Scrub Must Go at Last.

Before giving him his walking ticket, (red, blue or yellow) you should learn to define what a scrub is. There seems to have been a misunderstanding between us and many of our stockmen as to the meaning of "scrub." Their conception of the epithet has been an unregistered animal, which doesn't fill the eye, although it may fill the pocket—for all they know about it; one which has never seen the mother land, and cannot point to an ancestor which enjoyed this high toned privilege; one, in short, which doesn't carry blue blood and red tickets. We, in our extreme simplicity, have always regarded the "scrub" as a domesticated quadruped of the bovine race which proved to be unprofitable in the sphere of life in which its lot had been cast. For example, the Jersey—a very profitable breed for the dairy—is a scrub for beefing purposes; the Hereford, a most valuable beefeer, is a dairy scrub, and our native stock are scrubs for the butcher's block, while they have never been beaten in an honest contest at pail, vat or churn performances. Any general purpose breed is a miserable scrub on a 12 years' balance sheet. We peremptorily repudiate the idea that genuine profit consists in purchasing an animal at a fancy price and selling it at a fancier price. In such purchases somebody must suffer loss, sooner or later. True value can be based only on actual, honest performance.

These questions must now have great weight when pondering over the reports of forged pedigrees in the herd books of different breeds of cattle. The pedigrees now-a-days appear to be just as dishonest and unreliable as the records and performances, and the honest farmer does not know which way to turn in making his purchases.

In weeding out your scrub stock, whether by choice or government interference, you should endeavor to arrange matters in such a manner that the first attack be made on pedigreed scrubs, this being the lowest in the order for profits. We admit that the pedigreed animal is most apt to beget its kind, and this is the very reason why the weeding out should commence here. The pedigreed scrub is the most dangerous of all farm pests, and there should be a Chinese wall around the field which contains him, if he is permitted to exist, and be sure to bar the door of his winter quarters. A registered scrub is not so dangerous, for it may