

cloth, and let it rise again. When it is quite light put into a good hot oven, and keep the fire just right. It should bake in an hour if the loaves are not too large. I think small loaves are better than large ones. If the oven bakes better at one side than the other, turn the bread when about half done. Do not leave it to dry up in the oven after it is done, but turn out of the pans, wrap in a clean cloth, and leave it to get cold before putting it away in a covered box or boiler.

Brown bread can be made in the same way by using half graham and half white flour, and adding a tablespoonful of sugar. Brown bread is more wholesome than white, but as it dries so quickly, I prefer to make soft biscuits of it. Besides, I always like to see nice white bread on the table, and do not worry if we don't get time to bake pies and cake very often; and we regard good bread and butter, with fruit, as more digestible than pastry. Do not regard the subject of bread-making as unworthy of your attention, nor be discouraged by one or two failures, but take the motto of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, and "Persevere and Succeed."

Special Contributors.

The Shropshire Sheep.

BY WM. GOODWIN PREECE.

The Shropshire sheep descended from a breed which has been known to exist for about two centuries in the county of Shropshire and part of the adjoining one of Stafford, but no attempt at its improvement seems to have been made until within the last half century, since when it has received greater attention from the more extensive farmers on the cultivated districts of the county. The present developed perfection and uniformity of character is the result of improvement by selection from the best of its own species, and not from the introduction of any other breed. Some breeders have tried an infusion of the Southdown blood, but the result was a total failure, the produce being animals of a nondescript character, and which had to be entirely removed from the flocks practised upon. For several years the breed was called or known by the name of "Grey-faced sheep," and it was not until the year 1850 that it was distinguished by the title of "Shropshire;" the name being given to them by the writer of these remarks, who evinced great interest in the breed, and assisted the owners generally in obtaining uniformity and developing the inherent perfections of the sheep, also in providing a class for their exhibition at the meetings of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, where, at Gloucester, in the year 1853, they made their successful debut. The Shropshire has exterminated all other breeds of sheep in the counties of Salop and Stafford, and many other parts of the adjoining districts, and has been adopted by tenant farmers generally in the midland counties of England. Several flocks have also been established in Ireland, where it thrives remarkably well as a breed, and is also used for crossing purposes. Foremost among its patrons in that country are J. L. Naper, Esq., of Longheren, who has been most successful at the meetings of the Royal, both in England and Ireland; Mr. Lambart, of Braw Park, and the Marquis of Headfort. It has also been most successfully introduced into Scotland, where some fine flocks are now being bred by the Earl of Strathmore, Mr. Crawford, Lord Polworth, and other enterprising agriculturists, and from its highly profitable and rent-paying qualities, it is certain to rival, if not entirely supercede, most other breeds, where the production of first class mutton and wool at an early age is a desideratum. It is a recognised fact that the Shropshire is hardy of constitution, and prolific; the fall of lambs averaging about 160 per cent. The ewes are good nurses, and a well kept flock will average a clip of wool, of the best quality adapted to general purposes, of about 8 lbs. per fleece, and wethers at fourteen months old will produce a carcass of mutton weighing 80 pounds and upwards, free of offal. It is also acknowledged that the Shropshire is a light consumer, with great powers of assimilation, arrives at early maturity, renders a heavy amount of flesh in proportion to rough offal, and that its mutton cannot be excelled in value by that of any other sheep. The greatest determination

and spirit is exercised by the leading flock-masters to maintain the high character of their sheep, having hired rams for a season at sums varying from 40 to 250 gs., and purchased them in some instances for as much as 500 gs. Ewes from noted flocks have also been purchased at sums reaching to 39 guineas each, and when it is remembered that these high prices are given by men who breed for profit, and not for fancy only, and whose selections are backed by sound judgment, it is an indisputable criterion that no means are being spared to make the Shropshire the most profitable, popular and perfect of all breed of sheep.

A Chatty Letter from the States.

[FROM OUR CHICAGO CORRESPONDENT.]

Of late there have been a good many people in the sheep business who seem dissatisfied with their flocks, and the business in general, owing to the unsatisfactory state of the market for wool, as well as for mutton. Not a few wool growers of the States have expressed themselves thus, and come to the conclusion that raising hogs, cattle, horses, and other like pursuits, will in the future be more profitable than sheep raising.

While it is a fact worthy of note that the persons who have gotten out of conceit with sheep growing, are mainly those who have never conducted their operations on sound business principles, and who have trusted rather to luck than to a judicious application of common sense—while all this is true, the fact remains that in the Western States, in particular, there have been a great many serious drawbacks with which the mutton and wool growers have had to contend. Among the chief difficulties encountered, especially by the sheep-raisers of the plains, where sheep are allowed to run in a semi-wild state, similar to the way cattle are grown on ranches, is the difficulty of keeping the flocks free from disease. A ranchman may be careful as he will to dip and care for his own sheep, but is comparatively helpless when a neighbor, whose sheep are diseased with scab, allows them to invade the range of the healthy animals; and when nomadic flocks spread disease as they go. In some sections precautions have been taken by the authorities, making it illegal to drive infected sheep through the country, and a great many public dipping vats have been established, and county and state inspectors appointed, which of course is a considerable safeguard against this very common enemy of the western sheep raiser; but in thinly settled sections, and in more thickly populated parts too, it is one thing to make laws, and quite another to enforce them. If it be true, as a Colorado ranchman asserts, that the disease commonly called scab, is taken by Jack rabbits, and carried from one range to another, then the matter is made doubly bad, for even a wholesale slaughter of the nuisances would not remedy the evil in a great many years.

Western wool growers are stoutly complaining of the reduction of the tariff on foreign wools, and are asking for a restoration of the old high protective tariff. They will probably not succeed in securing even a modification of the act relative to that subject, which was passed by the last Congress, but the matter will doubtless continue to be a theme for much discussion in farmers' clubs and papers. As political matters now stand, there can be no special legislation for the relief of any particular branch of industry. In all probability, however, farmers will suffer a great deal more from their own negligence in improving and properly taking care of their flocks, than from any reduction of tariff on foreign wool. Thus far, indeed, the lowering of the rates of duty has had no material effect upon the wool market of the country, but, on the other hand, the difference in the market since the law went into effect has been in

sellers' favor. Manufacturers, however, have endeavored to use the new rule as a cat's paw for reducing prices.

Probably the true reason why manufacturers have manifested so much indifference in the wool market, is more on account of the vast amount of matter other than wool which has been manufactured into clothing to take the place of all wool goods.

Says an observing wool grower: "The wool grower has less to fear from the importation of wool with the present duty, than from the increasing amount of goods manufactured and sold as woolen fabrics, that are made from rags and other articles of like character, that cost the manufacturer less per lb. than the duty on raw wool, in manufacturing goods. Statistics show that about 62,000,000 lbs. of the articles referred to have been used annually in making shoddy goods, which amount is ten times the quantity of raw wool imported in 1882."

It truly seems that everything is adulterated or counterfeited in some way these days, and the farmer is hedged about on nearly every side by the misdirected efforts of inventive genius. So well are many of the farm products imitated by bogus articles, that none but experts, and not always they, can detect the fraud. This being the case, there seems to be but one alternative for the farmer, and that is to produce articles of such high and uniform merit that people can readily distinguish the genuine from the bogus. If there is anything under the sun that the farmers of this or any other country, but particularly this—if there is anything against which they should be protected, it is manufacturers of spurious goods of all kinds.

To some, dire catastrophe seems to threaten the farming and other interests, in the way of free trade spectres, but how insignificant is the government protection against legitimate and fair competition from foreign countries, as compared with the protection that is needed by farmers against makers of spurious goods! There should at least be laws providing that all goods be sold on their merits for what they are; then if consumers prefer to buy "bull butter" because of its cheapness, as compared with the genuine article, then it would be all right; only let everything be properly named.

A custom too prevalent, and one that seems to be rather on the increase in this speculative age, is the disposition to abandon certain kinds of crops and stock as well, when there happens to be a period of dullness in the market for them, as a result of temporary over-supplies. Farmers in one locality have been known to devote nearly their whole attention to a certain kind of product the year after exceptionally high prices have been realized for it. It is a mistake to change one's plans every time the wind blows from a new quarter, yet, of course, it is proper and profitable for one to be open to conviction and not be so strongly conservative as to refuse to make a change from beaten ruts when the times clearly demand it. Extremes should be as much avoided on the farm as anywhere else.

Mr. John McCulloch, of Dumfries, Scotland, was at Chicago recently to receive 56 head of remarkably fine imported Polled cattle, just from the Montreal quarantine. The lot comprised 30 Polled-Angus—7 two-year-old heifers, and the remainder yearling bulls; and 26 Galloways, with 3 heifers and the rest yearling bulls. These fine specimens are destined for duty on the plains. All of the Polled-Angus and a few of the Galloways go to Oelrich Bros., of Cheyenne, Wyo., and the others go to Kansas City.

At a recent Shorthorn sale by Wm. Stevenson & Sons, of Virginia, Ill., a Young Mary cow sold at \$1,000; an Oxford cow at \$840, and a Rose of Sharon bull at \$450.

Volume 25 of the American Shorthorn Herd Book, of which L. P. Muir, of Chicago, is editor, will contain entries of over 4,800 bulls, and 6,000 cows and heifers. The fees for the volume, which is the largest ever issued, will amount to about \$10,000. Entries are said to be already coming in for volumes 26, or that of 1884. This shows great activity and unflagging interest among Shorthorn breeders.

On August 16th, Messrs. Pickrell, Thomas & Smith, of Harriestown, Ill., sold at Chicago a draft of good breeding cattle from their well known Shorthorn herd. Owing no doubt to the fact that countrymen were busy with harvesting, the attendance of buyers was small. Thirty-nine cows and heifers brought an average of \$219, and sixteen bulls made an average of \$166.