

their wool, and can't nurse their lambs: don't starve your inlambd ewes. Moderate keep, clover-hay, pea-straw, a little cake (linseed or cotton-seed) just a few days before and after lambing, will see you well through this anxious time. Half a pound of linseed cake, or 4 ounces of crushed linseed, per head, will save many a ewe, and the cost for, say, 10 days before, and 10 days after lambing, is trifling, compared with the immense advantages to be derived from the outlay.

Above all things keep your ewes quiet. The sudden irruption of a strange dog into the pen may work irreparable damage. Ewes will stand almost any amount of cold, but the wet fleece must be guarded against. Open sheds will do very well; in fact, I prefer them very much to close places; but means should be provided to keep the sheep under the shelter, as, from obstinacy or some other cause, they will not come in out of the rain when they can get a chance to avoid it.

You will soon learn to distinguish from her neighbours the ewe which is about to lamb: the parts under the tail grow red, and enlarge; she seems uneasy; walks about restlessly; and tries to get away from her sisters; in fact, she gets into, what we should call in a human being, a state of fidgetiness, deeply interested in the lambs of other ewes, which she tries often to seduce from their dams. The water-bag then protrudes from the vagina, then the two fore-feet, if the presentation be natural, and the mouth of the lamb will be seen lying upon them. The ewe changes her position, from time to time, rises to her feet and again lies down, straining forcibly to rid herself of her burden. Now is the time, when, if the ewe becomes weak, the careful shepherd assists her. Drawing out the legs as far as possible, and freeing the top of the head from the vagina with his finger, he pulls gently, in a downward direction, carefully timing his pulls with the straining of the ewe: he should never pull between the pains, as assistance at improper times, I am sure from long observation, puzzles the ewe, and makes her neglect her own duty. When happily extracted and placed in front of the dam, she will soon, unless very sick, recognize the lamb, nuzzling it, purring over it like a cat, and making such a fuss over the newborn wonder, as none but mothers can fairly appreciate. In the case of twins, the second should be got away as soon as possible, and it rarely gives much trouble, though sometimes the ewe is so much taken up with her first, that she neglects the pains that usher in the second. I have seen the second of twins born, as it seemed, almost unobserved by the mother.

In the case of a wrong presentation, the shepherd's hand, smeared with grease (goose grease remains moist longest), must be introduced, and the lamb extracted as quickly as possible. I believe among the Leicesters wrong presentations are not uncommon, but I have no experience in that breed; in Down flocks I never saw a worse thing than the doubling back of one fore-leg, a presentation which is early detected, and easily remedied.

Sometimes, particularly if the labour has been severe, the ewe seems careless of her lamb, and will not let it suck. The udder should be examined, and if found inflamed, should be bathed with a weak solution of saltpetre, or simply with hot water; but if there is neither inflammation nor hardness, the ewe must be tied up tight by the head, and the hind quarters held, until the lamb has sucked its fill; the difficulty will be soon overcome, and the couple be on good terms for the future. If a ewe loses her own lamb, one of twins should be assigned to her. Strip the dead lamb of its skin, and place it, while warm if possible, on the stranger, and with care, patience, and tying up as before, the ewe will soon take to it; but one lambing season will teach you how to proceed in such cases much better than I can tell you.

If you have superfluous lambs, they can be brought up on warm cow's milk. A bottle with an Indian rubber tube, such as children use, to suck from, will answer every purpose. But *cossets*, as they are called, are always a bore, blaring about, and running after every one they see, into the house, and, in some cases, getting into the garden, and doing all kinds of mischief. They should go to the butcher as soon as they are fit.

As to the castration of the male lambs, there is a great difference of opinion. The Sussex men cut theirs at a fortnight or three week old. The Hampshire men, on the other hand, who prefer a strong, masculine animal, postpone the operation till the lambs are four months old. The tail, however, in both cases, is docked as soon as the young one has strength to bear it. At whatever age castration is performed, fine, mild weather should be chosen for it. I regret to say that it is too much the custom of those who send early lamb to the Montreal market not to castrate the males. It may seem unnecessary to emasculate them at the age they are killed, but there is a certain reddish look about the meat, called by London butchers "foxiness," which is unmistakable, and injures the flavour amazingly. Lambs for this purpose should be castrated at 10 days old.

Our English flock-masters dock their lambs' tails much shorter than is generally done here; and I think with reason. The short dock certainly gives squareness to the hind quarters, and as the real reason for docking is to keep the sheep clear from filth and from the fly, which lays eggs which turn to maggots, the shorter the tail, in moderation, the better. The third joint is about the place.

Don't be afraid of the jets of blood after docking. They will soon stop, as general rule, and if not, a string tied round the tail will speedily arrest the flow.

If you do leave your lambs uncastrated till they are a few months old, you will have a chance of tasting that most delicious dish, delicately called in Hampshire "Lambs' Fry." Clean and split the testicles, but don't wash them; dry them thoroughly with a cloth, dip them first in egg, and then in fine, dry bread-crumbs mixed with dried and well chopped parsley, summer savory, chervil, lemon thyme, and the merest scrape of nutmeg, and fry them "of a beautiful brown," as Mrs Rundell says, in plenty of lard. The lard should in this, as in all other cases of frying, be quite boiling, and at least two inches deep in the pan.

Of course the lambs with their dams will, if you really mean sheep-keeping as it ought to be done, be put on the best grass your farm affords, as soon as possible after the sowing goes. This must carry them till the sown crops, rape, vetches, &c., are ready to take them. Of these sown crops I have spoken so lately, that I need not go over the ground again. But there is one thing I should like to impress upon you very strongly, and that is: a check to the improvement of the young lamb is more difficult to remedy, than a check to any of the other young animals on the farm. A lamb never recovers from a check, whereas a calf can, by care and attention, be pretty well restored, and so can a colt.

Lambs are troubled with few diseases as long as they are on the milk. A change from a barren pasture to a luxuriant bite of grass will sometimes produce diarrhoea. A dose of Epsom salt, say, half an ounce, with a little ginger to soothe the bowels, will commonly settle the question. Costiveness, on the other hand, rarely affects lambs running with their dams, and a slight aperitive will cure that complaint. Care should be taken, especially in a wooded country, to keep all the parts near the tail in a perfect state of cleanliness; the fly will play mischief with the flock, if this is not looked to. In our best managed flocks, just before weaning time, the wool growing between the thighs, *outside*, is shorn off, and