

Stock.

Care of Young Stock.

At no time is the stock breeder so liberally rewarded for his care and attention as he is for that bestowed upon his young animals during their first winter. The treatment a calf or colt receives the first year of his life always shows afterwards. Take either, and let it be exposed to the cold rains and snows of winter, on scant food, and it will, as long as it lives, bear the ineffaceable marks of such treatment; it matters not how good the care and attention bestowed upon it afterwards. True, they will "pick up" and "come out" with generous feeding and good care, and even make good animals, but it matters not how good they may become, they would have been better had it not been for the first hard year of their life. An instance of this kind came under our observation a few days ago; we were looking at two promising young thoroughbred fillies; both had been left the first winter of their lives to pick up a living pretty much as they could. They afterwards fell into the hands of a liberal feeder and began to improve from the day they went on his farm; now for untried three-year-olds they are as promising as any in the State, and in all probability both of them will make successful race animals. "It hardens 'em and makes 'em tough to let 'em rough de first winter," said the old darkie who had them in charge when we were looking at them. "Do you think so?" we replied; "would you not change them in some respects if you could?" we asked. "Oh, yes, sir, I would make 'em a little bit heavier in the muscles, and I would stand 'em up a couple of inches higher." "Just so," we replied, "and if they had received proper treatment when young no fault could have been found with them; but both were stunted when yearlings and will not recover from it."

A short time back we were looking over a herd of shorthorns in this county, and were shown two calves, a yearling and a two-year-old by the same bull and out of the same cow; the only likeness they bore to each other was in color. We expressed surprise at the great difference in the form and finish of the two sisters. "Not at all strange," remarked the proprietor. "That calf," pointing to the two-year-old, a long-legged light-bodied and ragged-hipped heifer came in October, before I bought the cow, and evidently was half starved the first winter of her life, but this one," turning to the yearling, a fine specimen of the shorthorn beauty, "was bred on my place, and was well housed and well fed—both have received the same attention since I have owned them, both, as you see, are equally fat, but there is no comparison in the form, and the yearling at two years will weigh a third more than her sister." We are reminded of the above circumstance by the present cold snap, and the knowledge that farmers generally attach so little importance to the care of their young stock during the winter. No provision is made for them separate from the older animals—they are left to take their chances of getting their share of food (which they never get) out of the common feed-rack.

Leicester Sheep.

Among the imported breeds of sheep in Great Britain, the first rank belongs to the Leicester, which is the largest type of the long-woolled sheep in that country, and is more widely met with than any other. A few years since, when the whole number of sheep in Great Britain was 34,532,000, their numbers and classification were as follows: Leicester and their allies, 12,933,000; Downs and allies, 6,130,000; Cheviots, 4,368,000; Blackfaced, 5,101,000; Welsh, 2,000,000; and Irish, 4,000,000.

The Leicesters are not a more ancient race than either Lincolns or Cotswolds, but in the hands of Bakewell they were modelled into a type of animal that eventually impressed its qualities more or less upon every other variety of long-woolled sheep. The rams of the breed are in high demand for the purpose of crossing with other breeds; and the Leicesters possess remarkable fattening qualities, while arriving at maturity at a very early age. Bakewell was first heard of in connection with this breed of sheep in 1760, when he commenced a system of letting rams, as distinguished from selling. In less than twenty-five years he achieved great success. Probably no better proof of the value of the Leicester could be afforded than the fact that in England they have superseded a vast proportion of the sheep of the country, while they

have also been extensively used to improve almost every other breed.

The Leicesters do not present in their outline the form of a parallelogram on four legs, as is often adduced as the best, but rather the ovate form. The fore quarter of the Leicester is remarkably well developed, the shoulders are wide and sloping, the animal stands close to the ground, the neck is short, so that the head is raised but little above the line of the back; the ribs are well sprung and the carcass very true, the hips well covered, but not wide and tapering to the rump, which is small; the back is covered with fat. With great capacity for external and rapid development there is little inside fat, hence Leicesters are not favorites with the butcher. Their great point is early development and accumulation of weight on a given amount of food. The forehead is flat and generally bare, or covered with short hair. Formerly a great point was made of bare heads, but now most breeders prefer to have close, short wool, which protects from the fly. The eye is full and prominent, indicating docility of disposition, the head is tolerably long and fine, while the ears are thin and rather long. The legs of mutton are not large, and there is a deficiency of meat. The skin is thin and very supple, while the wool is fine and fairly long.

The Leicesters are not a prolific breed, though they are fair nurses and generally affectionate mothers. In early days too many lambs were regarded as a great evil, and if the breeder left off with an equal number with the ewes they were well content. In these days more fruitful sorts are desirable. Leicester sheep, however, are esteemed for their value as ewes, and it is on account of the extraordinary influence they have exercised on most of the leading breeds that they merit a high place. This breed of sheep is not adapted to inferior soils, nor to wander far in search of food, nor to suffer occasional scantiness or deprivation of nourishment; but on all soils of moderate and superior quality and in good pastures they are extremely profitable to the breeder. The lambs are inclined to be tender and weakly, and are not quickly covered with a coat of wool. The fleece is also inferior to the largest weights of wool. Delicate temperaments, arising from over refinement, were the only signs of the above deficiencies. The actual weight is various, owing to the larger and smaller varieties and of the treatment received. The fattened wethers of two years old will average from twenty-five to thirty-five pounds per quarter. The wool is of medium length, six to eight inches, and the fleece about eight pounds. The length does not enter into the first-rate combing wools, and for the purpose of worsted it is inferior to the wools of other breeds; but, being evenly grown, soft and of good color, and possessing several properties of long wool in perfection, it commands the highest price in England, and is quoted as the regulating standard. —*American Cultivator*.

How to Have Good Lambs.

A very reprehensible practice like the following prevails in some parts of this country: A farmer has a flock of ewes, and when the time comes round for lambs to be marketed, a butcher comes and the sheep are brought up to the homestead and he handles them so as to pick out all that are nice and fat. In about two weeks he calls again and does the same, and so the summer passes, when perhaps about a tenth of the lambs are left, being too thin for slaughtering, as they and their dams were too unthrifty to become fit for market. These lambs are kept in the flock, and the following year the ewe lambs become young ewes, the ram lambs having been killed for mutton, excepting perhaps one that may remain for use. This is no fancy picture; it has been done yearly in hundreds of cases until the lambs would not fatten and the flocks became so worthless that sheep were given up as not paying. The right way to manage a flock of sheep and have fat lambs is to look the lambs over before the butcher has seen them, and put about half of the best ewe lambs away with their dams and reserve them for breeding ewes, so that a corresponding number of old ewes can be fattened. By doing this every year the flock will rapidly improve.

With regard to the management of ewes and contriving suitable food, a farmer must look forward and provide what is necessary without being reminded of it by the bad condition of the flock. Of course, in the Northern States, where the winters are so long and severe, it is best to grow turnips so that some can be given daily, for there is in turnips or other roots that which keeps sheep

round in shape. But there are many who expect to have sheep do well without any forethought, and when the lambs are found fault with because they are not round and fat, they attribute it to any cause but the right one.

Doubtless, in a few years enough heavy well-fatted mutton will be produced in the United States for supplying the families and hotels in New York without obtaining it from Canada, as is done to a great extent at present; and when really good mutton can be had without so much extra trouble, the flabby young mutton which at this period is called lamb will not be eaten so much.

As England is taking so much of the best Canadian mutton at good prices, it is probable less and less will come from Canada to the United States in future, and there will be such a wide difference between the price of good and bad that our best farmers will aim to have the best breeds of sheep for mutton and lambs, as well as for wool. —*G. G., in Country Gentleman*.

Shorthorns and their Prices.

The Michigan Farmer, in reviewing the prices of seven important sales of thoroughbred Shorthorns, and considering the prices then paid for what constituted the ordinary farm Shorthorn and the Short Horn of the breeder, says:—

These sales seem to prove that all those bred from the early stock, and the individuals selected, crossed and mated by the still of the owner, still enjoy a consideration among breeders that no change can destroy. Within the past year there have been sold in England, heifer calves taken from this country at over \$22,000 each, or 4,200 guineas. Why is this? Because the breeding men get enough for their progeny to remunerate them, and because it is found that the size, early maturity, perfection of form, and excellence of constitution are so combined and so deeply bred in, that they are reliable for the improvement of all other cattle in these respects. They occupy the same position as the pure Hammond sheep do amongst the Merino breeders of breeding stock. Those who have given attention to this business and are expert in the science, will perfectly understand why these cattle rank so high and bring so much money. The breeders for the market use it whenever they can get it, because they find they can grow the beef they want to send to market the quickest, and get the most money with the least expenditure of feed, labor and time, the three elements out of which all money is made in any kind of business.

Impotence from Food.

A correspondent of the *Country Gentleman* gives an experiment by which a bull was rendered impotent, as follows:—"The effect of almost wholly carbonaceous food upon the breeding power of animals is very marked. Some years ago, having a bull three and a half years old, which I did not desire to use longer, I concluded to try an experiment upon his procreative power (which had been very strong), by feeding him as largely as prudent upon cheap molasses. His rations were made up at first of one quart of molasses, fed upon cut oat straw, but the molasses was soon increased to two quarts per day. A quart of molasses was put into six quarts of water, and this water was used to moisten a bushel of cut straw. This sweet water rendered the straw very palatable, and the bull did very finely upon the ration. He appeared to lay on fat rapidly, and at the end of three months he became entirely impotent, manifesting no desire to serve. All strictly fattening foods should be avoided in the rations of bulls."

Canadian Cattle Exports.

From the *Liverpool Evening Express*: "Mr. Dyke, the Canadian Government agent at Liverpool, reports that 5,211 head of cattle, 401 horses, 3,318 sheep, and 838 pigs have been brought to Great Britain by the Canadian steamship lines during the six months ending June 30th. In consequence of the available space in the steamships being secured until September, 2,761 head of Canadian cattle, 963 sheep, and 386 horses have been conveyed by steamers sailing from Boston and New York, also 38 head of cattle and 213 pigs by sailing vessels from Montreal, making a total of 8,010 cattle, 4,281 sheep, 911 pigs, and 707 horses. The imports from Canada in the year 1876 were 2,767 cattle, 2,607 sheep, and 332