

a fine, open, and sprightly countenance with every indication of hardiness. The legs are moderately long, clean and fine, the hind quarters full and well proportioned; the rumps full; the tail neatly set; well covered with wool."

There is a tendency to lightness in the fore quarters, though this is a defect which careful breeding is doing much to obviate. The neck and chest should be full; the ribs rounded, and well filled up behind the shoulder. The pelt thin, and covered with uniformly fine wool, free from dead hairs, coming well down on the quarters, forward on the neck, and completely covering the belly; the fleece weighs from three to four pounds; according to the nature of the pasture on which the sheep is raised. The character of the wool as well as of the carcase of the Cheviot sheep was considerably different during the last century from what it is now.—Quantity is now more eagerly sought than quality to raise the value of the wool, and the carcase has been brought to exhibit the features which was known to indicate early maturity; and a ready disposition to fatten. Hence, instead of the close staple of former times, denoting a fine but light fleece, that of the modern Cheviot has become longer and more open—considerable heavier, but has become better proportioned, and that developement of chest has been obtained which at once indicates a disposition to fatten, and a vigorous constitution—that grand desideratum in every domestic animal, thus the most valuable properties of the Cheviots have been obtained by an intelligent application of the true principles of breeding, without any mixture of foreign blood. This, indeed, was unnecessary; for the Cheviot being confessedly the most valuable mountain sheep, contained in itself the best material to work upon, while great danger was to be apprehended from any cross, which should produce the desired qualities at the expense of that hardiness of constitution, without which a breed is useless for stony hills."

While on this part of my subject I shall say a few words about the weight of the common Cheviot sheep, a friend who owns this class of sheep writes to me saying: that common hill fed sheep (that is with nothing but grass) will weigh 15 and 16 lbs. per quarter exclusive of tallow, and on the farms of Moolaw or Fingland or Cassock, they are commonly 20 and 21 lbs. per quarter, but these stocks are above an average, he further adds, Cheviot wethers killed at two years old, that have been fed on grass in summer and turnips in winter average from 24 to 26 lbs. per quarter, and their wool pulled from the pelt will weigh from 5 to 6 lbs. and their tallow from 10 to 12 lbs. and further that if they are kept to two and a half years old, say killed in August they, when fed on good clover grass, with a liberal allowance of crushed oats and oil cake they may be brought to weigh from 30 to 33 lbs. per quarter, and their wool pulled from the skin will then weigh from 7 to 8 lbs. At some of the Highland Societies shows Cheviot wethers three years old have been shown that weighed 40 lbs. per quarter, but these would be from the best stock, and of course with the most liberal feeding.

I have already dwelt too long on this subject, but before closing permit me to notice briefly the crossing of this class of sheep the crossing of the Cheviot ewe with improved Leicester ram, has within the last thirty years been carried to a great extent. When speaking of their management I neglected to state that the Cheviot ewe is never kept for breeding on hill stocks, after she is six years old, and it is to these ewes for the last crop of lambs, that the Leicester ram is put as the ewes are seldom used for breeding afterwards.

This has much enhanced the value of the Cheviot sheep as they are much hardier, and better nurses than the Leicester ewes, and their progeny produces as heavy, and finer mutton than the pure Leicester, this crossing is most extensive in the counties of Dumfries and Roxburghshires than any other, but it is general over all Scotland and the North of England. These half breed lambs (as they are called) are weaned in July and August, that is such of them as have not been already sold to the butchers, for they are extensively sold near towns, to supply the markets with lambs, the best sorts will then weigh 40 lb. of mutton, they are carefully kept on fine grass till October when they are put on turnips, and fed through winter, and are sent to market as they become fat, at from 60 to 80 lbs. mutton. In May or now even some times in April, those that are not already sold are clipped, the wool of the best sorts of cross at one year old will weigh about seven pounds of washed wool per fleece and sells as high as any British wool (at present 1s. 5d. to 1s. 6d. per lb. in average years 1s. 2d). The mutton of this cross sells nearly at as high a price as pure Cheviot, and about a penny per pound higher than the coarser Leicesters.