

STOCK.

SHEEP AND WOOL.

W. D. Crout, in the *Ohio Farmer*, gives a very readable experience of his in the "Experience Items" in that paper. As there are many good hints in it, we reproduce it entire:

"The sheep boom, which reached its climax in 1872, was gathering its force in '71, and the excitement began to crop out in various ways. Would-be purchasers were on the alert to find some honest Granger who "did not take the papers," and trick him out of a part of his money. My mind now recalls an unsuspecting old farmer who had a flock of sheep and set his own price at \$2.50 per head, and has since repented in sackcloth and ashes for his ignorance; but, nevertheless farmer-fashion, I doubt whether he even takes his county paper, much less a good reliable city or agricultural journal. Like an old man who once lived near me, and was addicted to horse trading; one day he traded for a horse that had four ringbones which he did not discover till he arrived home. Sadly contemplating them in the presence of a horse jockey friend, he exclaimed, "I tell you what, John, hereafter the first thing I look for will be ringbones." The old gent above referred to is doubtless on the alert for sheep men.

The year 1871 my sheep only sheared a trifle over six pounds, and as I had passed through one boom I was determined not to be caught napping. As buyers were thick and urging me to set a price, I at length concluded that if any one wanted my flock, lambs and all, at \$5.00 per head, and would let me select five ewes, I would sell. Well, about November the man who wanted \$5.00 sheep came along, and the bargain was struck. No sooner had the news reached town that I had sold, than wool buyers told me I had *fooled myself*—that wool would be doubtless \$1.00 per pound, etc. But an old friend once told me to always sell when everybody wanted to buy, and that time seemed to have come. The result at least showed it, although the five sheep I saved sheared nearly forty pounds and raised lambs the wool from these five ewes bringing me an even \$24.

Well, my flock now seemed to be in a somewhat *homeopathic* condition, reduced to a small compass, and unlike the above system, not easily *diluted*. But on the principle of "large streams from little fountains flow," I commenced carefully breeding to suit my taste, which had been changing from the usual method of breeding fine-wool sheep. At this time it seemed to be the ambition of most breeders to see how many wrinkles could be produced on the least surface, and as I had been eminently successful in that direction and had a flock that all the sheep shearers disliked to shear, and frequently indulged in "*italics*" while shearing them, I concluded to change the programme and breed large smooth sheep. Consequently I procured a large smooth buck, weighing 165 pounds, and have since increased in length of staple, heavier fleeces, and less gum (tally one for Bro. Powers).

It will perhaps be as well to mention that some of the Cotswold rams bought by the farmers during the fever had failed to realize their expectations, and as many as I could use for shipping purposes were freely bought at from \$4 to \$7 per head. Two large farmers in Chesterfield had spoiled their whole flocks and sold out bag and baggage, to commence anew with fine-wools. I bought one flock of one hundred head, and I think for long-legged, bow-backed, slab-sided sheep they were the *ne plus ultra* of my experience. This was the

result of crossing Cotswold buck on fine ewes. The readers of the *Farmer* will perhaps remember that I once before alluded to this kind of cross, and warned them to avoid crossing in that way, but to cross Cotswold ewe with Merino buck.

In the year 1873 I sheared ten head—five ewes and five lambs—obtaining about seventy pounds. Of course my lambs did not shear so much as grown sheep the first year, neither does any grade of fine-wool sheep I know of. Coarse sheep, Leicester for example, shear more the first year than ever afterwards. I speak of this more particularly now in consequence of what Cephas says about S. E. M.'s flock in February 26 number of the *Farmer*. I find by referring to my wool book that I can not give the correct amount as to average for the years '74, '75, and '76, as I divided the fleeces as per direction of wool buyers who claimed that fleeces should be done up not to exceed six pounds. My health also being poor at the time, I did not take my usual interest in affairs that I do under other circumstances. A part of this time wool sold for only 27 cents."

HAIR is perhaps as little understood as skin, until observation in practical dealing with cattle teaches what sort of hair is the best for any particular breed to grow. The uninitiated in agricultural matters almost invariably take a sleek coat as their ideal of perfection. "A little learning" runs to the opposite extreme, and makes the novice describe, for instance, what he thinks the perfection of hair on a shorthorn, as "fully that length," marking off halfway down the back of one hand, with the fingers of the other placed across it, the length from that part to the tips of fingers, and exactly like the hair of the Highland Scott. Nearer the true conception of the best shorthorn hair was Mr. Hutchinson of Grassy Nook, when in a unique pamphlet he described Sockburn Sall as the cow whose "handling was rich and mellow, and her coat like glossy velvet, without a Highland hair." Velvet seems to our notions now somewhat too short to afford a happy simile, but we don't want anything like the shagginess in the coat of a shorthorn. The term "mossy," although not not exactly right, conveys to those who understand the idea of shorthorn hair of the right sort.—*London Agriculturalist*.

THE color of the horn, as much as its form or its size, varies with the breed. Horns of ebon hue are prized when the wearer is a black Kyloe, woefully disliked when, in too faithful testimony to the forgotten facts of years long past, they sprout from the frontal bone of a shorthorn. The shorthorn breeder, again, desired to avoid the chalky-white horn, which, in some breeds, is the right thing. The breeder of Herefords, while agreeing with him in liking a color free from black, does not admire the clear sea-greenish horn so much admired by some breeders of shorthorns. Small, narrow-set, upturned horns, white-rooted and tipped with black, have the approbation of Jersey breeders, and small but elevated horns, somewhat like the two sides of a parenthesis are the characteristic adornments of an Ayrshire cow.—*Agricultural Gazette*.

Never feed the young pigs on strong, concentrated food, such as ground corn, peas or other grain, alone. Give milk (if obtainable) or water, with equal proportions of bran, shorts and boiled potatoes, or other roots or vegetables; if the bran and shorts can be scalded, so much the better.

Toronto Oil Company are sole manufacturers of "Castorina" Machine Oil. Infringements will be prosecuted.

AGRICULTURE.

THE WEIGHT OF SOILS.

It is impossible to determine the exact weight of any soil, as it varies according to its porosity, amount of water contained, the per cent. of sand, gravel, clay, etc., present. No one handful or bushel of soil from a field is identical with any or every other like quantity. The following figures are from Johnson's "How Crops Feed":

Dry sand weighs about	110 lbs.	per cubic ft.
Heavy clay	75	" "
Half sand and clay	95	" "
Rich garden mould	70	" "
Peat	30 to 50	" "

A sandy soil which is spoken of as "light" is so because worked with greater ease than the "heavy" clay that weighs some 35 pounds less per cubic foot. "The resistance offered by soils in tillage is more the result of adhesiveness than of gravity." The specific gravity of a soil is its weight compared with the weight of an equal bulk of water. The water is taken as the standard of comparison, and its specific gravity (sp. gr.) is called (1). A cubic foot of water weighs 62½ pounds. By comparing the weight of various soils with this, their specific gravities are obtained. The sp. gr. of good agricultural soils is not far from 2.68—that is, such soils are two and sixty-eight hundredths times heavier than water. A cubic foot of it would weigh about 167½ pounds.—*Ex.*

DRILLING IN WHEAT.

A writer in the *Ohio Farmer* gives an interesting paper on this subject from which we take the following extract:

You may drill in wheat too deep to germinate at all; put it in a little shallower and it may grow, but with very little vigor; put it in still a little shallower and you will find that it will grow still more vigorously. Continue on at this until you have some covered barely one-half to one inch deep, and you will find that this shallow planting will grow with more vigor than any of the rest, provided always that the soil be moist and solid. Wheat will form two sets of roots. Suppose you drill your wheat in pretty deep. It will come up but feebly, forming one set of roots at the grain, another set at the surface; your wheat may grow and look pretty well in the fall, if it prove to be moist weather, but wait until freezing weather in March comes on, and thawing in daytime. Suppose you get a rain sufficient to saturate the surface soil, and at night get one of those sudden freezes, as we of often have in March. The ground will be frozen tight to the wheat at the surface, and in raising will snap the slender stem between the two sets of roots, and if this freezing and thawing should continue you will lose a good deal of your wheat. I have seen wheat in rich, black soil, in Wayne county, Ohio, so badly injured in this way that although looking pretty well in early spring, when the dry winds and weather would come on it seemed to fade, and upon examination it was found to be so loose that it could be brushed away with the hand. I have heard farmers say that the worms had cut off their wheat, when I was well satisfied that the frost had done the work. So well am I satisfied of the advantages of having the soil made fine and solid for wheat that I have come to value a good heavy, but small roller for that purpose. I would as soon think of doing without a harrow as I would without a roller. I think that making the soil solid for wheat is better, for at least two reasons: Your drill will not put the wheat in so deep, and it will keep moist enough

where the grains lie to keep it growing.

The first thing I use after a field is plowed is the roller, then harrow both ways, and roll again. Then I drill fine ground pure raw bone, putting on from 200 to 250 pounds to the acre, and running north and south. Now I roll again and drill my wheat rows east and west and across the bone, running my drill as shallow as possible, only so it will cover the wheat. I sow only 2½ bushels to the acre. I do not want more. Last harvest I had only two small fields; one piece of 4½ acres was clover sod; had been mown two years, then corn two years, then oats, then I put on a little barnyard manure where it was most needed, probably on half the field, then plowed and treated as described. Wheat drilled in on the 12th of September. The other field, 6½ acres, had been an old pasture field. Plowed and put in corn; in the fall corn cleared from two acres, corn stubs cut off below the upper roots with a sharp mattock and hauled off. Bone drilled in 200 pounds to the acre (ground not plowed). Then I drilled in the wheat 1½ bushels to the acre. In the spring the rest of the field 4½ acres, was put in potatoes, which made a fair crop. The two acres of wheat produced about 60 bushels. These two acres was then manured and the whole field plowed for wheat. The 4½ acres where the potatoes were had no manure for corn, potatoes or for the wheat. I used 250 pounds of bone to the acre. Wheat drilled in on the 22nd of September. One of these fields is near the barn, and as we keep a good many chickens, they destroyed a good-sized piece of it, and yet I had from the eleven acres 378 bushels of choice clean wheat, no cockle and no ches in it. This makes about 34½ bushels to the acre.

I will say here that about four acres of this ground has had no barnyard manure in twenty years. There has been great improvement in the handling of the soil in our (Washington) township in the last ten years. I made the prediction some five years since that this township would yet produce 50 bushels of wheat to the acre. I was laughed at for making the prediction and called foolish, at the time. But since harvest one of my neighbors, in speaking of it said to me, "I guess you were pretty near right for all," and I expect now to accomplish it if I live, as I had this year 47½ bushels to the acre, average, on one field.

AGRICULTURE can not be carried on by any rigid rule. The soil of no two fields is precisely alike, or would be alike benefitted by the same treatment. No two seasons are precisely alike. All is variety and change. Intelligent farming is learning to adapt methods to condition and circumstances. There are fixed principles that apply to each condition. The man who masters principles can become a master in practice.

AN Indiana farmer tried four different fertilizers for melons—poultry droppings, well rotted cow manure, barnyard manure, and old bones (gathered upon the farm and reduced by placing them in alternate layers with ashes the previous year) mixing all liberally in the different hills, which were eight feet apart each way, and he says: "such a crop of melons as came from the hills that had the bone dust I never saw before."

How sad when lovely woman show by outward sign,
The Death's dart wielded by the hand benign;
How glad when death relenting, sheathes its dart,
And when Spring Blossom's used, at once depart.
11451301