

The Dignity of Agriculture as a Pursuit.

[PART OF AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE HAYSVILLE FARMERS' CLUB.]

FARMING may legitimately claim the high attributes of a manly, honourable, and independent pursuit. Manly, because it evokes the physical requisites of endurance. Hence the hardihood which has ever made the peasantry of a country its best defenders. Honourable, because its pursuit compromises not the dignity of the most eminent of our fellows. Independent, because the farmer solicits no man's patronage or protection. History indicates that the first symptoms of the decline of nations can be traced to their neglect of agriculture; and it is but fair to assume that the past may be regarded as a tolerable index of the future. Now, without prognosticating aught so disastrous to Canada, it is pitiful to observe a too prevalent dislike, in many of our young men, to become yeomen of the soil,—a contempt for the occupation of their fathers. The truth of these assertions is best illustrated by the swarm of improvised M. D's., and school teachers, who cannot even astound with "words of learned length and thundering sound," inundating the land. Add to these a host of young fellows behind shop counters, occupied in doing that which their sisters could perform equally well, and certainly much more gracefully, and you have a state of things to contemplate far from satisfactory. We are quite aware that all professions and trades are the essentials of communities. But Canada must claim for agriculture the first place in that economy. We can only trust that the children of the soil who desert it for, probably, less honourable pursuits, may inherit the patient industry, energy, and fortitude which enabled their sires to conquer a homestead from the wilderness. Probably several professions demand higher intellectual attainments than is absolutely needful to the farmer; but there is no pursuit in which a sound discriminative judgment is more necessary. The science of chemistry, to a certain extent, is indispensable to the farmer, and I would suggest the propriety of our common schools teaching, at least, a simple elementary course of that science. A boy might be made conversant with the constituents of the air he breathes, something of chemical affinities, the gases caused by fermentation, the different chemical acids for their retention, evaporation, formation of dews, &c.

A Curiosity in the Plough-Line.

The following somewhat sensational item of Agricultural intelligence is communicated to the *Iowa Homestead* by a correspondent:

"I have thought it would be interesting to your numerous readers, and especially the farming community, to learn of a late invention of L. B. Hoyt, of Cedar Falls, Iowa, which consists of a glass mould board for a plough. Among the numerous inventions for the benefit of the farmer, and labour-saving machines, this plough promises to be a greatest blessing. This plough was patented Jan. 9th, 1856, and promises to effect a great reform in tilling the soil, as the experiment on its trial last fall is proven by many witnesses, and in soils of various conditions it exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its friends, and it is thought will supplant all other ploughs now in use, especially in the Western and Southern country. The inventor claims among other things for this plough, that it will scour under all circumstances and in all soils—it will run one-third easier, cost less money, never rust by the rain or dew, or other exposure; hence is adapted to all soils where metal boards will not scour or clean. It has been said that some farmers have left the Des Moines Valley, for the reason that they could not till the soil with such ploughs as were in use, and if so, this is just the plough for them, and all they can desire in a plough."

The idea is certainly a brilliant one!

PROFITABLE FARMING.—A friend states that Mr James Peacock, of Walworth, Wayne Co., N. Y., grew last season, on four and one-half acres of orchard, \$3,384.90 worth of fruit. He offers \$50 reward to the farmer who will beat that. This is hard to beat, in a season when apples are scarce, but read this:—Messrs. J. & G. Greenway & Co., of Syracuse, N. Y., harvested last season from four acres of hop garden, \$900 per acre—making \$3,600 from four acres. This beats the fruit orchard—and in a season when hops were a failure.

Stock Department.

Lambing.

As the season when sheep produce their young is fast approaching, a few remarks on the subject of lambing will not be deemed inappropriate:

Among the principal causes of the fatality that so often affects ewes at this critical season, ranks foremost what is understood by the term "*bad condition*." Not emaciation necessarily; as bad condition may be associated with plethora, but a general unhealthy state of the system, brought on probably by neglect and deficient diet for some time past; shortness of keep is one of the misfortunes which no foresight can always obviate; but the farmer should always strain a point to keep his ewes in good order, not by any means to fatten them, but to preserve what is well understood by "*healthy condition*." A moderate quantity of good hay, with a fair proportion of well harvested pea haulm or straw, cut and steamed when practicable, will compensate for a bad supply of roots, and should always be liberally used in connection with them. The enormous percentage of water in roots renders them objectionable as the almost sole article of diet, particularly as the time of parturition approaches, when the bulk necessary to furnish the requisite nourishment is inconvenient to the animal, and a drier food, proportionately nutritious, is desirable.

No amount of care, to insure a high state of health, can be deemed superfluous, as under the most favourable circumstances the period of parturition is a crisis in the animal economy. The extraordinary excitement, nervous and muscular, with the necessary exhaustion, tell always most injuriously, and often fatally, on debilitated constitutions.

The ewe continues in labour longer than most other animals; hours are frequently passed without any progress being made, while the pains occur at frequent intervals, not so strongly as in those animals in which the act is more rapidly performed, and weakly subjects frequently succumb during labour, or immediately after it, never recovering from the collapse. In other instances, excessive reaction follows, resulting in fever, which is almost uniformly fatal. This vascular excitement has its centre in the uterus, the lining membrane of which, after death, is found nearly black and rotten. The affection may be designated "*inflammation of the womb, or puerperal fever*," and virtually consists in an extension of the uterine irritation to the whole nervous system, and an excessive vascular action is a natural consequence. Subjects of the disease die at various periods, from four or five hours to a couple of days, after lambing; the symptoms are—uneasiness, panting, and alternately grinding of the teeth; the external parts continue red and swollen, and the discharge of dark coloured fluid, partly composed of blood, is constant.

The extreme fatality which commonly attends this disease, and the rapidity of its course, render any of the ordinary anti-inflammatory plans of treatment practically useless, as none but powerful agents have the slightest chance of acting in time to avoid the usual results. Aconite, a valuable remedy in all inflammatory attacks, is the only one, perhaps, that can with confidence be suggested for these cases; and if employed when the first appearances of uneasiness are seen, its effects are marvellously rapid. In Europe, Fleming's tincture of aconite is mostly used, and the dose carefully apportioned. The most simple course is to put one drachm into a pint bottle, fill up with pure water, and give a small table spoonful, say three times in the course of two hours, or even every half hour, until a quiet condition follows, after which an occasional dose will suffice to keep up the sedative effect; a single dose has often arrested the excitement at once; and since in very decided cases not more than two would be necessary to produce a

marked sedative action. During the treatment, the ewe should be housed and kept warm, dry and particularly quiet. Sheep are especially sensitive to interference, and, at the last gasp, will struggle to escape the touch of a stranger.

Unnecessary violence is a fruitful source of loss among ewes. When unmistakable symptoms of lambing are observed, the ewe should be carefully watched, but not interfered with, as the possibility is that nature will finish her work without extra aid, which, when prematurely and injuriously rendered, will be sure to do harm, sometimes to a fatal degree. If, however, after a reasonable time, no advance of the fœtus takes place, the shepherd may carefully examine its position, and if all be right, leave matters alone; if the mother be exhausted, or the fœtus wrongly presented, judicious assistance is then indispensable. But this should be done with much care, with a view to aid, rather than force, nature, and everything approaching to violence (so often fatal) should be studiously avoided.

Inversion of the womb, generally produced by straining, sometimes by unskillful handling, is occasionally fatal, and always permanently injurious to the animal, especially for breeding. The protruding viscera should be carefully cleaned and returned, the animal's hinder parts being subsequently propped up, to facilitate its retention, and a dose of the aconite mixture will usually prevent a recurrence of the straining efforts. Where the womb is obstinately everted again and again, a strong suture is sometimes placed across the external opening, with success; or in the event of this failing, a ligature may be placed round the neck of the organ, close to the quarter, and the protruding part excised. This operation is often successfully performed, although there is more reason to fear the result of inflammation after excision, than difficulty in returning the uterus to its situation again. Ewes that survive these operations should be at once fattened for the butcher.

After delivery has been effected, and the ewe is apparently doing well, there are occasionally some minor difficulties to be surmounted. Among them are swelling and hardening of the udder, with the formation of abscess. This disease often occurs in cold, wet seasons, and though seemingly of trifling importance at first, a considerable number of animals die from the irritation, and many are very seriously injured. At the commencement, when the swelling is first observed, the shepherd should apply fomentations; the animal suffering should be placed under shelter, and have plenty of dry straw to lie on; a small dose of Epsom salts (one ounce) may be given, and as soon as the swelling and heat have subsided, a little stimulant may be used with friction; an ointment composed of iodide of potassium with twelve parts of lard, is very good for the purpose. If the sheep be suffered to remain on the cold, damp soil, the circulation in the gland is ultimately arrested, and the part becomes a dead mass, that rots by degrees away, gradually impregnating the system with a quantity of decomposed matter. In such cases, a free dissection of the diseased part is the only course that promises a chance of success; most commonly, however, the subject sinks, from the weakness engendered by the combined irritation and poisonous influence of the diseased organ.

A successful lambing season, in a great measure depends upon a properly constructed, well defended ewe pen, a sufficient quantity of nutritious food, and, above all, a careful shepherd, well acquainted with his duties, and conscientiously desirous of performing them—one who will watch for symptoms of a possible mischief, and hasten to repair it, who is scrupulously clean, and light and tender in his touch in rendering needful assistance. Furnish such a man with a bottle of aconite mixture, material for gruel, a few simple comforts, and facilities for heating abundance of water, and there will be no need to apprehend adverse circumstances out of the question—any very "*bad luck*," during the lambing time.

MANGE OR BARN ITCH.—This is often a troublesome disorder. It is contagious and liable to run through the whole herd if not arrested. It makes its appearance more frequently about the head of the animal, but extends to other parts of the body, causing much annoyance to stock and giving it a very unsightly appearance. The disease is very easily cured, by mingling sulphur with oil or lard, and applying the mixture to the diseased parts. Sulphur is a sovereign remedy for many diseases of the skin, and is used internally with success by many stock-men for promoting the health and thrift of domestic animals. When used for this purpose it is mingled in small quantities with salt and is readily taken in this way. Animals kept upon dry food for six months of the year are more liable to contract diseases on such food than while at pasture, and sulphur fed in the way suggested, serves an important purpose in purifying the blood and in promoting health.—*Utica Herald*.