Stock.

Money in Sheep

A correspondent says in the Homestead: As I have continuously kept several hundred sheep in this county the past 18 years, and before that time in the East, and have found them fully as profitable as the high grade Shorthorns and the best Poland China hogs, which I have kept at the same time, you will probably indulge me in a few words relative to sheep.

Several causes have combined during the past three years to finally bring about a great reaction in the price of wool in this country and in fact all over the world. In this country from 1871 to 1883 the wool clip increased from 146,000,000 pounds to near 325,000,000, the great increase having been chiefly in Texas, California and the territories. We come to produce nearly all that was needed by our manufacturers except the coarse carpet wools, so that the wool growers finally received little benefit from our tariff, which, since 1883, has been ten cents per pound on unwashed fine and medium wools. Wool thus came to stand about like wheat or any other commodity we did not heed to import. No matter whether the tariff was large or small, it did not help the price.

This now is all changed. The low price of wool the past three years has discouraged the business in the Eastern and Central States, and the terrific winters have swept off half the sheep in the West and Southwest. In Central and Western Texas undoubtedly two-thirds of the sheep are gone. I speak from personal observation and the most reliable information.

In Australia, the greatest wool-producing country in the world, the sheep have met with almost equal disasters from drouth. The result is that, owing to scarcity, wool has advanced in London the past four months 40 per cent, and Iowa farmers that could get but 17 and 18 cents for their unwashed wool last June, are now selling for 35 cents, and undoubtedly are selling too soon, for foreign wool cannot be imported and pay the duty without a further advance here of five or six cents, and our home clip being greatly short, our factories must have the foreign wool. I may say, too, that Europeans have no idea that wool there will soon be less.

As to the mutton—ewes and wethers,—for the past six months the Chicago prices have averaged fully up to the beef prices, including both fat cows and steers, and it is probable that with the increased desire to hold on to sheep, mutton will become more scarce and will advance.

I have found 10 sheep weighing 100 pounds each to consume about the same feed in summer and winter as one average size cow. If well bred and cared for Merinos and their crosses average 10 pounds of wool per head; this at present prices, with a fair per centage of lambs, is much more profitable than keeping cows and making butter at 8 to 20 cents, and the labor of keeping the sheep is much less.

What we want in Iowa is to increase the number and size of our flocks, and at the same time to grade up the quality. We may be assured that the Southwest plains will not again be densely populated with sheep until we shall have a succession of milder winters and that wool and mutton in the United States must be produced by help of some shelter and feed, provided for winter use.

The Hair and the Hide.

We hear much these days about breeding for non-essentials, and from much that is said one would infer that the hair and the hide were among the non-essentials. Undoubtedly points of minor or no importance are too strongly insisted upon; but there is danger of breeders rushing to the other extreme, and ignoring matters which should receive attention. Breeding for color is a favorite topic for condemnatory articles. Likely we have attached too much importance to the color of a switch or of tail feathers, but it would be far worse to ignore color altogether. It is an assertion commonly met with that the color of an animal has nothing to do with its value. This is not true; and as long as it is not true we cannot ignore color in breeding. Let me illustrate: A team of nicely matched white or cream-colored horses makes a fine carriage or coach team, because the man who can afford a coach or carriage can also afford to have his horses kept clean; and when clean the white or cream colored horses are more valuable to their rich owners than if they were of some other color, for they are more beautiful and attractive, and accomplish better the purpose of their owner—display. Their color makes them worth more to their owner. But this same color is objectionable in a farm horse. The farmer wants a horse for service, not for display. He cannot afford to brush and sponge and rub as the coachman does. Hence he prefers a horse of a bright, attractive color, but which does not publish to the world the least soil. Can anyone doubt that, other things being equal, the darker horse is the more valuable to him, for it does his work as well, requires less grooming and yet looks better? A hard, lifeless hide can no more grow fine, silky hair than the thistle grow the rose. The same conditions of the body—the action of the digestive or assimilative organs, as determined by their permanent characteristics or by temporary circumstances—have the same effect upon the texture of the hair and of the hide The careful feeder always feels the hide of the animal. If that hide is hard and lifeless, he knows that the animal will be an unprofitable feeder. The most noted breeders of cattle, swine and horses have always attached the highest importance to the texture of the hide. Who does not know that the cow with the soft, yellow hide and bright, silky coat gives rich milk and a good lot of it from a certain amount of food? Such a hide and coat is characteristic of the Jersey; and always among other breeds this hide and coat indicate good milking qualities.—Ex.

Pleuro-Pneumonia.

The breaking out of pleuro pneumonia in Chicago to the extent reported, has given this disease at present a prominence that bids fair to awaken enough interest on the subject and enliven enough public sentiment which can be brought to bear upon our legislators to secure that all too slow legislation which the agricultural press has been asking for, for the past three years, necessary to meet the exigencies of the breaking out of this disease in any locality, within the jurisdiction of the United States. John W. Gadsden, one of the most able veterinary surgeons of our day, states that in order to thoroughly extirpate pleuro-pneumonia from this country or any other, is to kill every animal that has, has had, or has been in any way exposed to the disease, and this opinion is sanctioned by the best veterinaries in Europe and Canada, as well as in this country. Dr. Gadsden informs us that we have some veterinary surgeons who claim there is no such thing as chronic pleuro-pneumonia, or that an animal, when attacked with acute pleuro-pneumonia which has been cured is as healthy and as free from any ability to contaminate other animals as though they had never had the disease. He said that he would make any one a present of one thousand dollars for every such case that even after two years he could not conclusively prove to the claimant upon post mortum examination, remains of the disease, and that such animals finally succumb to its power.—Eastern Exchange.

No stallion has made as good a record as has been made by a mare. Maud S. thus far stands unapproached by any stallion known to history. But some of them have made wonderful time, as is shown by the following figures:

Maxey Cobb	2:13¼
Phallas	2:13¾
Smuggler	2:15¼
Guy Wilkes	2:15½
Jerome Turner	2:15½
Bonnie McGregor	2:16

It is worthy of remark that nearly all the horses are descendants of Rysdick's Hambletonian, that wonderful horse whose blood has done more than that of any other for the trotting horses of America.

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Rapid Beating of the Heart.

Whenever you find an uneasiness in the region of the heart, a slight pain in the shoulder, arm, or under the shoulder-blade, or when you find yourself short of breath when exercising, or your heart has periods of beating fast, you have heart disease, and should take Dr. Flint's Heart Remedy. At druggists. $1.50. Descriptive treatise with each bottle; or address J. J. Mack & Co., S. F.

The Apiary.

Dairy Hints

Any harsh treatment that excites the cow lessens the quantity and injures the quality of her yield. Cows should be allowed an abundant supply of wholesome, suitable food, and as much pure water as they will drink. A supply of salt should be placed where they have access to it every day. Cows should not be allowed to drink stagnant, impure water, or to eat cleanings from horse stables, leeks, turnip tops, or anything that will give the milk an offensive taint. All milk vessels must be thoroughly cleansed, first being well washed, then scalded with boiling water, and afterwards sufficiently aired to keep them perfectly sweet. The cows should be milked with dry hands, and only after the udders have been washed or well brushed.

Milking should be done, and milk should be kept only where the surrounding air is pure and free from all objectionable and tainting odors. Milking in a foul-smelling stable or yard imparts to milk an injurious taint. Sour whey should never be fed, nor should hogs be kept in a milking yard, or near a milk stand. Tin pails only should be used. All milk should be properly strained immediately after milking, and for that purpose a detached strainer is preferable to a strainer pail. Good ventilation for a milkhouse, milk cellar or dairy-room is most essential, and may be provided by leading an air-drain underground for say 200 feet. Through it a supply of pure, fresh, cool air may be admitted. The foul or warm air may be allowed to escape through the ventilators or windows in or near the ceiling.

Cream should invariably be removed from the milk before the milk is sour. The cream for each churning should be gathered into and kept in one vessel, and the whole should be well stirred every time fresh cream is added. In summer it should not be left longer than three days before churning. The best churning temperatures are between 57 degrees and 60 degrees during the summer, and between 60 degrees and 64 degrees during the winter. Butter can be more thoroughly washed free from buttermilk while in a granular condition than after it is gathered or pressed into a roll. Only the best pure salt of medium and uniform fineness of grain should be used, and from three-quarters to an ounce of salt per pound of butter will be found satisfactory for the summer. The utmost cleanliness in milking, in utensils and in all surroundings can only preserve the flavor and body of milk, cream, butter and cheese from contamination.—Bulletin, Ontario College.

Filthy dairymen are a disgrace to the dairy interests and an injury to the business. As a contemporary remarks: "It is strange people still think they can strain filth out of milk. It can't be done. Filthy milk will be filthy to the end of the chapter, and all the straining in the world will not make it pure. When a cow steps into the pail she steps into the butter plate." There is nothing truer. The strainer takes out only what is mechanically held and is too coarse to go through the strainer, the finer particles and all that is dissolved remain in the milk to give it, and the products manufactured from it, odor and flavor. These, no amount of straining, nor care and skill in manipulating, will take out. They give the "cowy" odor and flavor. This flavor may also come from the breathing of impure air by the cows. A few minutes of inhalation of the odors of a foul stable will taint the milk more than all the odors absorbed; for so long as the milk is warmer than the air of the stable it does not absorb odors, but is constantly giving them off by evaporation. When colder than the atmosphere, it condenses the air and absorbs odor. But filthy particles and microbes of all kinds floating in the air may fall into the milk and injure it in that way.

Experience of a Poor Man

A correspondent to the Riverside Press writes: As there is much inquiry East as to how a poor man can get a start and make a living in California, I will give the experience of one who has come to this county with small means—not over $500 all told, and an invalid. He had worked at the mason trade for thirty-five years in the States, starting from a city in Indiana, on the Ohio river. Sickness and consequent loss of work amounted to at least $150 a year while in winter he could do nothing at his trade and had to depend upon something else for a living. To use his own language:

"I could get nothing ahead there and concluded to try Illinois. My health was somewhat better, but after having doctors' bills to pay through a long, hard winter, when spring came I was down to bed-rock and often in debt. I tried all parts of the State for fifteen years, when I had a little real estate that I sold for $700, the result of fifteen years of hard labor. I then tried Kansas, but though the winters were milder, there was considerable sickness, and I could not depend on my trade to get ahead any. I tried this for some years and went to Colorado, where I worked at my trade and took up some government land that I improved a little, sold it out for what I could get and came to California with a team and settled near the coast. Had throat and lung troubles contracted by sudden changes in Colorado, and finding my land title not very good, sold out and came to San Bernardino county. Found some government land in a canyon and located. That was nine years ago. Was offered $10,000 for the land two years ago, and $15,000 would not buy it now. In the nine years I have not employed a doctor or paid a dollar for medicine, and my health is excellent."

As an illustration of what can be done on a small piece of ground, I accosted the lady owner and superintendent of a ten-acre tract of blackberries, and found that she employed ten to fifteen hands at picking and obtained 600 pounds per day, which she sold readily at six cents per pound, and that the season would last six weeks at that average. We leave the reader to figure up the profits on this berry patch.

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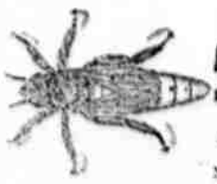

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