

AGRICULTURAL.



A Sheep Experiment.

The following experiment made by the Parlington Tenants' Club of Scotland to prove the fattening qualities of certain breeds of sheep, reported in the *Scottish Farmer*, may not be uninteresting to sheep raisers in this country:—

There were eight different kinds of sheep, and each lot was turned into a two-acre plot of a 16 acre field, each plot being of equal grazing value. The lots consisted of—1st, ten crosses from the Teeswater with the Leicester; 2d, 12 crosses from the Cheviot with the Leicester; 3d, ten Lincolns; 4th, ten South-Downs; 5th, ten Shropshire-Downs; 6th, twelve Leicesters; 7th, ten Cotswolds; and 8th, seven odd sheep, one from each of the above classes—all hoggs. The fairness of the trial would thus appear to be somewhat vitiated by the difference in the numbers. The cross Cheviots and the pure Leicesters, would have a sixth less grass than five of the other lots, and five-twelfths less than the odd sheep.

The lots were all turned into grass on the 23d May. A fortnight after this they were weighed. The weight of the Teeswater crosses was 105 stone 3 lb.; of the Cheviot crosses, 124 stone 13 lb.; of the Lincolns, 125 stone 9 lb.; of the South-Downs 97 stone 10 lb.; Shropshire-Downs, 101 stone 6 lb.; odd sheep, 69 stone 7 lb.; Leicester 116 stone 3 lb.; and Cotswolds, 90 stone 9 lb.; Between this date and the 4th of October the sheep were weighed four times. After four months' grazing, supplemented by 3 lb. of linseed cake per day, from 17th June to 1st August, and thenceforward with 6 lb. per day of the same materials, it was found that the Teeswater crosses had added 18 stone 1 lb., or nearly one-sixth to their original weight; that the Cheviot crosses had added 18 stone 9 lb., or little more than one-seventh; the Lincolns, 6 stone 7 lb., or about one-twentieth; the South-Downs 13 stone 2 lb., or less than one-seventh; the Shropshire-Downs, 20 stone 8 lb., or about one-fifth; the odd sheep, 11 stone 10 lb.; or about one-sixth; the Leicester, 24 stone 7 lb., or nearly one-fourth; and the Cotswolds, 19 stone 6 lb., or more than one-fifth of their original weight. The advantage is thus in favor of the pure Leicesters and Cotswolds. The Cheviot crosses, however, do not seem to have had enough of grass, having decreased instead of gaining in weight during the last month.

One sheep of each kind was tried on grass without any artificial food. Under these conditions, the Cheviot and Leicester cross greatly surpassed all the rest, making three stone in four months.

The grass eaten is, of course, an item, when profit comes to be calculated, and the Cheviot crosses appear to be the greatest consumers. Next to them the Lincolns and Shropshire-Downs bared their pasture most, and after them the pure Leicesters and Cotswolds. The fact that the sheep were not all in the same condition when procured, must also affect the experiment to some extent, but it is to be commended as a step in the right direction.

A Fortune from a Sheep.

A correspondent of the *Boston Cultivator* relates the following anecdote:

"In 1802, Mr. Bidwell, a law student in Stockbridge, told a poor lad that if he would catch and turn out his horse he might have it to ride home to keep Thanksgiving. The boy accepted the offer, and the day before Thanksgiving, as he was mounted on the horse ready to start for home, Mr. Bidwell handed him a silver dollar—the first dollar the boy ever had. Instead of spending it for personal gratification, and most boys now-a-days do, he bought a sheep with it. From that sheep he had, in 1832, a flock of 1064 sheep which he sold for 1506 dollars. The money he invested in up-town lots in New York City, purchasing ten lots for 250 dollars each, which he sold, in two years, for 12,000 dollars. This was the beginning of the fortune of Nathan Jackson, Esq., distinguished for his generous and munificent donations at various times to Williams' College, Mass."

"When a boy, the writer, with his brother and sister, each had a sheep given them, and the father kept them, and retained half the increase for keeping, thus affording an opportunity for procuring a little money which he and they could call their own. Myself, and brother, also, were allowed, each, a piece of ground to cultivate as he pleased, and were permitted to sell the products thereof for what they would fetch. In this way we were allowed to get money that we could call our own, it being the product of our own skill and industry. The brother of the writer is now a successful and forehanded farmer in Worcester county, Mass., and the writer has a farm in Hampshire county, Mass. How much these early lessons in rural industry and economy had to do with their present position can never be accurately estimated. Doubtless something and perhaps much. All farmers will find it a pleasant way thus to encourage their children by giving them an opportunity, by exercising skill and industry, to produce something they can call their own."

The Sweet German Turnips.

The Michigan Farmer has the following:

Among the many good, bad and indifferent varieties of turnips that are cultivated in this section, we have one that I think is superior to any we have yet seen. It was sent into this place a few years since from Canada, I think, by the name of "Sweet Turnip." I have since learned that it came originally from Germany; thereupon, I have given it the name of "Sweet German Turnip." I have taken some pains to distribute the seed, and as far as I know, they gave universal satisfaction. Those who have them discard all other kinds, especially for the table, as they have not that strong "turnip" taste peculiar to other varieties, being sweet rich, and tender. I will venture the assertion that they will keep sound and tender the longest of any turnip known; they will keep perfectly until July, without any protection whatever, more than to lie on the bottom of a cool cellar. By being packed in dirt or sand, they can easily be kept until new turnips come in; in fact, I have never yet seen a "corky" sweet German turnip. By exposure to the air they will wither, and eventually dry up, but they never become "corky," like other varieties. They yield about the same as the ruta-baga, and should be cultivated in about the same manner. My method of cultivating them as a field crop was as follows: I selected a piece of land that was highly manured the year before with barnyard manure and planted with corn—soil, a gravelly loam—planted about the fifteenth of June, and sowed in drills far enough apart for the cultivator to pass between them; at the second hoeing thinned to twelve or fourteen inches. I used no "fertilizer," except a light top-dressing of plaster when they first came up. About the first of November I gathered them. They were the most beautiful lot of turnips I ever saw; yielded at the rate of nine hundred bushels per acre.

I once sent a quantity of the seed to F. A. Stow, of Troy, N. Y., who has since written as follows: "From the sweet German turnip seed that you sent me last spring (sown on five acres), I raised two thousand bushels of turnips. I consider them a fine article, and wish you to send me four pounds of seed for next year. I enclose you a letter that I received from Levi Bartlet, of Warner, N. H."

Such testimony from such a source speaks more than I can write. I have sent at different times two hundred and fifty pounds of the seed of this turnip to the Patent Office for free distribution. I have still a large quantity on hand, and will send a package free to any address on receipt of a few stamps to pay return postage, and trouble and cost of putting up and mailing. I make this offer from a desire to have it more extensively cultivated.

EDWARD C. COY.

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Mixed Varieties of Wheat.

Selected samples of distinct varieties of wheat are now generally cultivated in Scotland. It may be questioned, however, whether the practice has much to recommend it, beyond securing a pure variety for sale or for re-sowing. At one time the wheat usually grown was a mixture of a number of varieties of white wheats, including velvet-eared and occasionally bearded heads. There are distinct types in England and on the Continent where a mixture is still preferred. In some instances in England, red and white wheats are grown mixed, from the belief that the produce of grain is in the whole more uniform, and larger, and the sample brings a higher price in the market than when either the white or the red variety are grown separately. This is the general result in those localities where the wheat crop is liable to become affected with mildew. With more attention to the cultivation of wheat in Scotland, selection has been carried out, and the greater portion of the wheats in cultivation are true to their kinds. It is therefore important to ascertain whether, by cultivating genuine or unmixed varieties, the produce per acre is not impaired, and as a consequence the money return less than when a mixture of varieties are grown. Several eminent physiologists state that a mixture of all kinds of any of the seed-producing plants usually yields a larger amount of seeds, and this opinion is very general among farmers where the growing of mixtures of the cereals and leguminous plants are carried out. It is supposed by physiologists that the different varieties spread their roots at different depths in the soil, and thus draw a larger amount of the constituents of plant life from the soil. Perhaps something is due to the difference of produce in the different varieties, arising from the character of the season, climate and soil. There are several recorded experiments which support this belief, but more experiments are required to elucidate the question.—[North British Agriculturist.]

THE GENESEE FARMER.—The February number of this well known agricultural journal is received. As we have said before, the *Farmer* is the cheapest and one of the very best agricultural and horticultural papers published. It costs only 50 cents a year, and we see from this number that the publisher offers some exceedingly liberal premiums to all who subscribe for the paper at this time. Specimen copies of the paper are sent free to all applicants. Address Joseph Harris, Rochester, N. Y.

Growing Cotton in the Northern States.

The Chicago Tribune published recently a communication from B. F. Johnson, Esq., on the subject of growing cotton on the prairies of Illinois, Iowa and other north-western States. He recommends that seed should be procured from the neighborhood of Nankin, China, where the best cotton is grown, or from a region near on the 35th parallel N. L., some degrees further north than it is allowed in the United States, that cotton can be profitably grown. Mr. Johnson says:

The best evidence we have, that the cotton plant will suit itself to more northern soil is, that it has improved in migrating from a tropical to a subtropical region, and that it has been cultivated on the prairie with as much success as could be expected from the character of the cultivation and attention bestowed upon it. The greatest success in grape culture, and in wheat culture too, have been obtained, of the first in Germany, and the second in England, the cultivators depending on that degree of knowledge which can only be obtained under a rather unfavorable climate and on a tolerably barren soil. Should our intelligent agriculturists undertake the cultivation of cotton, a higher degree of skill and greater results are likely to follow in ten years, than those achieved in the cotton States in three quarters of a century.

The Culture of the Tea Plant.

The climate most congenial to the tea plant appears to be that between the twenty-fifth and thirty-third degrees of latitude on the Asiatic coast; that it will bear a more severe range of climate is shown by its culture in Japan and the Himalayas; that it will bear a greater heat, its culture in Cochinchina and Tonquin as an article of commerce, and also as a garden shrub in Singapore and Penang, where it is exposed to equatorial heat. The last experiment of its culture, fostered by the English government at Himalayas, appears eminently successful. At an Agricultural Fair held during the last season at Jeedarling, eight samples of teas were offered in competition from different plantations, which were pronounced equal in quality with the best imported teas. The best evidence, however, of its success is in the fact that the private investment in its culture, which had already reached 1,600,000 rupees, was increasing, new plantations having been started. The Dutch government, however, with the commercial shrewdness which characterizes that people, have successfully introduced its culture in Java. The annual report of 1857 of the productions of that colony, shows an export or growth of 2,000,000 English pounds of tea, and that the tea plantations contained 14,729,700 tea shrubs, giving employment to 110,000 families. These instances show that tea plants can be readily accustomed to a wide range of soil and climate, that the secret of its culture and preparation cannot be hard to acquire, when the Javanese and Hindoos so rapidly acquire it. The next question is of profit and competition with low priced labor. I would seem almost the rule in all low-priced labor countries, that freights and transport are enormously high. China is no exception to this rule, and the transport is farther burthened with heavy local duties and charges, as well as export duties at the port of shipment.

Good Pigs.—A correspondent of the *Country Gentleman*, writing from Orangeville, Ohio, says:

"We often see accounts published of large crops, the great weight of various domestic animals, &c. I would state that Mr. Seth Brockway, one of my neighbors, killed a few days since two pigs, nine months and twelve days old, weighing as follows—350 and 415 lbs.—765. They were fed in all 50 bushels of shelled corn—the corn was boiled or ground into meal, besides the slops from the house. They were a cross, Suffolk and Chester White.

Beet Root Sugar.—John H. Klippart writes to the *Ohio Farmer* that Prof. F. A. Mot, of Columbus, has succeeded in the manufacture of sugar from the beet. From a computation based upon his experiment, six and a half tons of sugar can be produced per acre, or 6,000 lbs. of sugar and 600 gallons of syrup. Rating the sugar at six cents per pound, and the syrup at forty cents per gallon, the product per acre is \$600. Prof. Mot has ordered from France sugar-beet root seed to plant ten acres next spring, and is preparing machinery to manufacture it.

The Pig's Tail.—In one important fact all writers on the subject of pork agree with wonderful unanimity to wit: that in selecting a pig particular reference should be had to the character of his tail if it droops and drags upon the ground, or sticks out straight behind like the marlin spike of an "old salt," reject him at once. Ever choose one which has in his tail a graceful curl or kink like a fanciful bow in the bonnet of a fashionable belle. Such a tail is indicative of a strong and straight back, a kind and cheerful disposition, and a healthy state, and gives assurance of a hog that will fatten easily and make capital pork.

—The Emperor of Russia has devoted 125,000 francs to the erection of an observatory upon Mount Ararat.

CLIPPINGS.

—The municipality of Paris has lately bought up houses to the amount of fifty million francs. They are obliged to stop short for the present, as funds are not forthcoming for the demolition and reconstruction of the houses.

—The family name of Queen Victoria is Alexandria Victoria Guelph. Since Prince Albert's death, there is an effort to find out what was his name. It was Francis Albert Augustus Charles Emanuel Busici.

—The Persians have beaten the Turcomans in a great battle, and sent four hundred heads of their enemies to the capital as trophies.

—The Louisville Journal humorously alludes to a large cave in the vicinity of Washington, discovered at about the time the reply was made by Mr. Seward to Lord Lyons surrendering the rebel commissioners.

—Mrs. Baxley, the Baltimore widow, from "Dixie," arrested with letters sewed in her under garments, on being consigned to quarters with Mrs. Greenhow, refused to sleep under a blanket marked "U. S." After being confined she sent to an officer for different ones. She soon received a notice to sleep under them or go without.

—At the New Year's tree of the President, Mrs. Lincoln wore a lace shawl, presented to her by A. T. Stewart, of New York, which cost twenty-five hundred dollars.

—The formal evacuation of the city of Canton by the allied forces of France and England took place on the 21st of October, after an occupation of four years.

—Mr. Holt, the predecessor of the present Postmaster-General, estimated that by telegraphic dispatches, Government lost \$1,000,000 of letter postage revenue annually.

—The new tea plants are now in bloom in the National Conservatory, at Washington; they bear a white flower, and fill the air with a delightful perfume.

—Secretary Stanton is reported to have said that the army must now earn its living. This is what the soldiers have long desired to do.

—Gin shops have been introduced from England to India, with tremendous success. The institution flourishes greatly to the vast dismay of the more intelligent natives and foreign residents.

—The *Paridarshak*, a Hindoo newspaper, accuses England of introducing habits of drinking among the people of Bengal, and imputes their demoralization, consequent on the multiplication of gin shops, to the "guardians of civilization."

—A sexton and undertaker, in the town of Hingham, Massachusetts, in an advertisement in a weekly journal of that respectable locality announces to that portion of the public which expect to be buried by him, that "hereafter his funeral expenses must be paid in advance."

—It is estimated that the mortality in our army since the war broke out will reach 22,000. The number killed in battle, skirmishes, &c., is about 11,000, and the number wounded 17,000.

—The Canadian military authorities at Montreal advertised for 2,000 iron bedsteads for troops arriving, whereupon some speculators bought up all the iron in the market suitable for the purpose, and held it for a large advance. The War Department decided at once to substitute baulds for bedsteads, and the speculators "missed a figure."

—Out of a class of 60 members, who graduated at Princeton Theological Seminary last year, there are not more than 10 who are not engaged in the ministry, or still further pursuing their studies, or have refused calls. Out of 50 who were graduated last May, in the Western Theological Seminary, there is not one unemployed.

—A Connecticut soldier wrote home recently that the commissary at Annapolis had given the boys so much mule meat that the ears of the whole regiment had grown three and one-half inches since their arrival at the Maryland capital.

—There can be no question that the beautiful and touching text of Scripture, "The summer is over, the harvest is ended, and we are not saved," affords a perfect description of the present condition of this country. The question now is whether it will not soon be necessary to substitute Winter for Summer in the quotation to render it historically exact.

—By estimate the Federal army, on its present war footing, is costing \$660,000,000 per year. The French army, of same numbers, would cost \$65,000,000, at their present rates of expenditure.

—The London Press announces that the opening of the Great International Exhibition will not be postponed on account of the death of Prince Albert, but that the Queen will open it in person, as she considers that by doing so she will best fulfill the wishes of her deceased consort.

—The Methodists have the most Army Chaplains; the Episcopalians come next, then the Presbyterians, then the Baptists. The Methodists have also furnished the army with toward a dozen Colonels and a score of under officers.