

(From *Low's Elements of Practical Agriculture*.)
SHEEP.

THE SOUTHDOWN.—The Southdown is a breed of fine-woolled sheep, now greatly esteemed, and extensively diffused on the light soils and chalky downs of England. They are without horns; their legs and faces are grey, and, like the sheep of the mountains, they are light in their fore-quarters. Their wool is fine and short, being from 2 to 3 inches in length, and weighing, on an average, about 2½ lbs. the fleece. Their flesh is of excellent flavor; they are a hardy class of sheep, kindly feeders, and well suited to the species of pasture on which they are chiefly reared; they are about the size of the Cheviot sheep, the wethers, when fat, weighing about 18 lb. the quarter.

These sheep have been raised from time immemorial upon the chalky soils of Sussex; they have spread into other districts of light soils and downs, and also into some to which they are not adapted.

Much care has been bestowed on the cultivation of this breed, and it has accordingly been greatly improved; but attention having been mainly directed to the form and fattening properties of the animals, the quality of the wool has declined, though its quantity has increased.

MERINO.—In the class of fine-woolled sheep is the Merino or Spanish breed, now partially naturalized. They were originally natives of the northern provinces of Spain, and were introduced into this country in the year 1788. In the year of 1792 the rams were made to cross the Ryeland, the Southdown, and other fine-woolled breeds of England. His Majesty King George III. had introduced rams of the Merino breed from Spain, and cultivated it with care. In the year 1804, the sales which then began of his Majesty's stock attracted great attention to the breed; and, in the year 1811, a society was formed for the purpose of encouraging and extending it.

The result of the crosses with the native sheep, has not in any degree fulfilled the expectations formed. The wool of the native sheep has indeed been improved in quality; but this has been accompanied by defects in the characters of the animals themselves, not to be compensated by the increased value of the fleece. The sheep of the mixed breed have nearly all proved defective in their forms, slow feeders, and less hardy than the parent stock.

DISHLEY.—The improved Dishley breed is very generally termed the New Leicester, for having been formed by Mr. Bakewell of Dishley, in the county of Leicester. This gentleman was the son of a considerable farmer; and, about the year 1755, had begun to turn his attention to those improvements in the form of feeding animals by which he became so distinguished. The precise steps which he followed in the forming of his breed of sheep are not known, as he chose to observe a species of mystery upon the subject. He is supposed to have derived his first sheep from Lincolnshire; but however this may be, it was by a steady breeding from the best formed animals, until the properties aimed at had been acquired, that he gradually corrected the defects, and improved the form of the animals. He was well aware of the external characters which indicated a disposition to feed, and, by a steady course of selection, continued during a lifetime, he obtained animals of superior feeding properties to any that had been before cultivated. By constantly breeding, too, from individuals of his own flock, and consequently near of blood to each other, he gave a permanence to the characters of his breed which it retains to the present hour. Mr. Bakewell adopted the practice of letting out his rams for the season, and this contributed to the general diffusion of his breed. Successors to Mr. Bakewell have continued the same system, and bestowed the utmost care in maintaining the purity of their flocks; and thus from the county of Leicester as a centre, this breed has spread to every part of England, where the breeders have thought fit to receive it; and it has generally changed the character of the greater part of the long-woolled breeds of this kingdom.

The sheep of the new Leicester breed are inferior in size to the other varieties which they have supplanted. The wool is but of moderate quality, and in weight it falls short of that of the larger breeds: it weighs from 7 to 8 lbs., and has a length of pile of from 5 to 7 inches. The value of the breed, therefore, does not consist in the size of the individuals, or the quality or abundance of their wool, but in early maturity, and aptitude to feed. In this latter property, the New Leicester has not been surpassed or equalled by any other breed of cultivated sheep.

IMPROVEMENT OF BREEDS.—The breed of sheep to be reared in any case must be selected according to the nature of the pastures, and the artificial means possessed of supplying food. If a mountain breed is selected for rearing on a low arable farm, then the advantage is lost which the farm possesses of producing a larger and finer class of animals. If, on the other hand, a lowland breed is carried to a mountain farm, an error of a different kind, but yet more hurtful, is committed; for a fine stock will be ruined if placed in circumstances where it cannot be maintained.

The breed, then, being selected which is the best suited to the circumstances in which it is to be placed, the province of the breeder is to breed from the best individuals.

Disposition to feed, and early maturity, are the properties most regarded in sheep to be reared for food. But the property of yielding good and abundant wool is not to be disregarded; and there is another property essential in this class of animals, namely, hardiness and sound health of individuals.

In the case of the sheep, as of the ox, refinement in breeding may be carried too far, and with more danger. By breeding from animals near of blood, the same means exist in the case of the sheep as of the ox, of giving that prematurity of age which produces fineness of the bones and a disposition to feed. But it is attended too with the same effect, of rendering the animals more delicate, and subject to diseases. It seems a violence done to nature, when carried too far, and the animals show the effects of it by becoming too fine in their skins, by ceasing to produce wool in sufficient quantity, by the females ceasing to yield milk, and by males becoming at length unable to continue their species.

Whenever, then, the sheep of any flock become too near of blood, the breeder should resort to the best animals of another family, but of the same breed, to continue his stock. This species of crossing is now easy, since there is now scarce any of the cultivated breeds of which superior males may not be procured from other flocks. In the case of the new Leicester, so widely spread, and highly improved, no necessity can exist for breeding from animals too nearly allied.

FORM.—In the sheep, as in other animals, certain external characters indicate a disposition to feed, and at an early age. Other characters indicate a disposition to produce wool, and the quantity of wool, it has been said,

is not to be disregarded in the rearing of the sheep. But the main purpose in rearing the sheep in this country being for food, the province of the breeder is to accomplish this object with as little sacrifice as possible of the secondary qualities.

A property that indicates a tendency to feed in the sheep, as in the ox, is a general rotundity of form and fineness of the bones. The chest should be broad, the ribs well arched, and the back and loins accordingly broad, flat, and straight. The sheep, like the ox, occupies, independently of the neck and head, nearly a rectangle, and the larger proportion of this rectangle which the body occupies, the more perfect is his form as a feeding animal. His body, therefore, should be large in proportion to his limbs; or, in other words, his limbs should be short in proportion to his body; his breast should be well forward, and his belly straight; his head should be small and his ears thin; his limbs to the joint should be fleshy, below delicate and covered with short hair; his skin should be soft and elastic; his wool soft to the touch, thick, and coming well forward to the face, but not covering it: his face and forehead should be covered thickly with short hair, and his eyes, as indicative of health, should be lively.

(From the *Colonial Farmer*.)
COWS.

The best Cows for the Countryman are generally those that make the most butter, and if a person here were to raise no calves except those of cows that made more than the average quantity of butter, and at the same time carried flesh well; and when these calves were grown, continued his selection of breeding cattle, he would undoubtedly improve his stock. By selecting by hand yearly the best and largest grain to raise seed from, the quality of the different kinds of grain may be improved also; but the same care must always be continued. And it is necessary to keep in mind the caution given to the Farmer by Virgil, (from whom the substance of the above directions are borrowed.) "That every thing naturally degenerates, and that he who does not continue his care to keep up the improved quality of his stock and seeds, will fare like the man who having slowly pushed a little boat up a rapid stream, stopped to rest; when the current rapidly carried him down again." In attempting to improve a breed of cattle, size should not be regarded; that will be properly regulated by the quality of the pasture and feeding. We should aim only at procuring a given quantity of beef or butter; of mutton or wool, at the least expense.

Throughout the province, Cows are with few exceptions turned out to range over the waste lands and woods in the vicinity of the farm till the hay season is over. Then milk cows and cattle that are designed to be fattened are turned into the mowing ground to eat off the after grass. It is very rarely that we see cattle pastured through the summer upon land that has been formerly ploughed and manured, except in cases where, from neglect of manuring, the grass had become so poor that it was not worth mowing. Early in the season cattle feed in the woods very much upon plants akin to the lily of the valley, upon the leaves of beech, maple, and black-berry, and upon the tender leaves of the Prenanthes, a plant somewhat resembling Lettuce, which is found in almost all woods. This kind of feed keeps them in tolerable flesh, but they do not give more than two-thirds the milk they would if kept in a good grass field. After the middle of August the feed in the woods grows worse, yet dry cows and young cattle still can support themselves feeding upon violets, wood sorrel, French willow, with the young shoots of white maple and black-berry. In many places cattle have a scanty allowance of hay in winter and support themselves partly by browsing upon the tops of the hardwood trees which are cut for cordwood. I have seen at Margaret's Bay 14 head of small sized cattle in the month of April who could not have consumed more than five hundred of hay each during the winter, as I judged by the space which the haymow had occupied; they were poor, but the owner said that he did not lose any, they having been brought up from calves upon brouse, that they did not give half the milk that was given by cattle which were well fed, but that he gave to five only the quantity of hay that others gave to one, and that they would make as much butter as two cows that were well fed, and that they would fatten earlier than the cows that were well wintered, and make as much beef as any other five.

When there is no land producing hardwood in reach, these cows generally learn to eat the Carriboo moss upon the barrens.

There are in the Eastern part of the Province large tracts of a better description for pasturage, but much of this land is still in a state of nature, without settlers.

As there are contiguous to most of our settlements large tracts so poor that they will not be cultivated, yet capable of supporting cattle in summer, we should take advantage of this pasture which costs nothing, and for that purpose, a small rather than a large breed is the most suitable. The size of the animal is not of importance. We want those which will furnish a given quantity of beef or butter at the least expense.

THE DWELLINGS OF THE POOR IN LONDON.—If it were required to draw a strong picture of man morally and socially degraded by misery, the savage tribes of distant zones would in all probability be selected to sit for it. Yet such darkly-shaded originals, such painful realities, need not be sought in remote lands. Let the street beggar or the London thief be followed to his home (if he have one), and mankind will be seen existing in degradation as great, enduring misery as sharp, as the South Sea Islanders or the South Africans in their worst aspect. Amongst them poverty, vice, ignorance, have no contrast to heighten their effects; but here—in England, in London, perhaps at our own back doors—wretchedness the most acute, infamy the most shocking, exist upon the same square acre with a high condition of luxury and wealth; and despite this near neighbourhood, it may be safely conjectured that the British public know more of the social miseries of savage nations than they do of their own poor. Yet upon this ignorance the debased and the criminal are specially legislated for, sometimes incorrectly, always inefficiently. It is a fact that in St. Giles's, in the back streets of Drury-lane, around Westminster Abbey, in the parishes of Bethnal-green, Shoreditch, &c., nearly all along the Surrey shores of the river, and in the similar neighbourhoods of great towns, a state of civilisation exists as low in degree as it is found in the far-off regions of Africa! This is no rhetorical flourish—we have seen it, and will describe as much of it as dare be poured out without violently shocking the sensibility of the reader. Beggars, street-jobbers, and the poorer classes, or seek shelter in a nightly lodging-house. The first description of houses and their inhabitants will occupy us at present. "Lodgings for travellers," as they are

called, will form the subject of another article. The poor pay more dearly for every necessary of life than the wealthy. This we shall have abundant opportunities of proving; but to begin with house rent. We visited last week Charles, King and Parker streets, Drury-lane; many of the houses are without fore-doors; some of the rooms are in the last stage of dilapidation, and exhibit fewer conveniences than the basket-work cone of a Bechuana, or the wigwam of a Red Indian. The stairs are in a few cases broken away; the out-offices—where there are any—are rendered useless from accumulated filth, and sewerage is frequently stopped up. Some of the rooms have no grates, and large holes let in the cold from without. The best of the habitations manifest in some part or other traces of ruin—all afford but imperfect shelter, and no convenience; there not being any fixtures (such as stoves and cupboards) but those belonging to the tenants; the accumulation of dirt, refuse, &c., exhales effluvia scarcely tolerable on entering the passages; it is quite unendurable to a visitor, especially after a shower of rain, and can only be borne by the inhabitants from long habitude. These wretched abodes are either let in separate lodgings by their immediate landlords, or are rented by persons who sub-let them; a speculation which seldom fails to be a most profitable one; for what does the reader suppose each of these dens produces per annum? It may startle him to hear, from £35 to £50! Thus:—for two cellars, 3s per week are charged; the parlours fetch 4s per week; the first floor, 4s 6d; the second, 4s; the attics 3s. The excellent secretary of the London City-mission has calculated the rental of Charles-street, Drury-lane, from information obtained from parties interested both ways, and finds it exceed £2,000 per annum! To show still further how profitable the sub-letting system is, and, at the same time, the horrible encouragement and temptation to crime it creates, it is only necessary to state the manner in which it is carried on. We will take the example of a blind man who has now become the sole proprietor of Nos. 1 to 5 in King-street, Drury-lane. Some of the houses he originally rented of a superior landlord, and to make a profit he proceeded thus:—A single man or woman would apply for lodgings; he would ask what they could pay; if the answer were, "2s a-week," he would say, "You can have a lodging for 1s 6d a-week, furniture and all, if you do not mind a couple of companions—the bed is very large." The bargain is struck: and thus the old man gets three lodgers at 1s 6d a-week each for a room that probably stood him in less than 1s. By this means he gradually accumulated money enough to purchase the five houses he now owns, and will doubtless die rich; but by what means? Let us see:—the applicant for lodgings is possibly a young man who has some situation of from 10s to 15s per week, without friends to provide any other home than such as his narrow income drives him to seek in a poor neighbourhood. He is honest and well-disposed; it is more than likely, however, that one, perhaps both his bed-fellows, seem to him gay, pleasant persons, who live he does not exactly know how, but, at all events, are seldom in want of cash. They take him to a "free-and-easy" now and then, introduce him to a female companion or two, whom he takes to the tea-gardens on a Sunday. Being up late at night, he rises late of a morning and neglects his employer, who of course discharges him. His rent soon gets into arrears, and the landlord is troublesome; but his companions pat him on the back when he desponds, and ask him if he have "pluck" enough to do as they do. What is that? The question is not long in being answered. Look for the hitherto well-disposed young man, who was till lately earning an honest living, and you will find him busy in some crowd seeking pocket handkerchiefs, and other stray articles. He makes more money at this kind of industry (for a thief's is by no means an idle life), than he did in his former pursuits, till he gets known to the police; which generally proves the "beginning of the end," for after this stage of his career, the step is but short to the hulks. This picture does not apply to the male sex only. A young girl, perhaps a milliner's journey-woman, a tambour worker, or a book-binder's stitcher, seeks lodging in the same way. The landlord advises economy, and says how much better it would be for her to save 6d a-week by joining "the respectable young girl that lives in the two-pair back," who is, in fact, a prostitute; and so will her new companion be in a very short time. These are no fancy sketches: we can put our finger on the originals any morning in the week, from six o'clock till twelve. We have insensibly passed from the houses to their inmates: let us proceed. It will mostly be found that the basement of these houses, the kitchen or cellars, are preferred by thieves for the convenient nooks and crannies they afford for hiding stolen property. The parlours are often occupied by a labouring man, with a wife and family. A journeyman, who works at home, with his wife and family, will perhaps live on the first floor. The front room on the second floor houses a couple of street-walkers; the back-room, a beggar; and so on. Here is a mixture of vices in full operation, and of virtue surrounded by temptation! The man on the ground, or first floor, may be labouring hard to bring up his family with credit, but is obliged to live where he does, because, from poverty, he cannot procure lodgings in a decent neighbourhood. One of his daughters gets gradually intimate with one of the girls above, without perhaps knowing the course of life she pursues, and, through evil counsel, soon becomes vitiated. Perhaps it is one of the sons who makes the fatal acquaintance, and the consequences are, if anything, worse; for the prostitute, most likely, introduces him to the young thief in the cellar, who is sure to be a friend of hers.

—*Journal of Civilization.*

THE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC PRINTING TELEGRAPH.—A remarkably curious instrument, bearing the name of the "Electro-Magnetic Printing Telegraph," was on Thursday exhibited, for the first time, in one of the lecture rooms of the Polytechnic Institution. The object of this invention is to convey information from one place to another by means of the electrical current, in such a way that words or sentences transmitted from one locality are instantaneously printed in another, however distant; and this, too, without the agency of any person in the place to which the correspondence is to be forwarded. The means by which this extraordinary effect is produced are simple enough. Three wires for the passage of the electric fluid are first laid between any two given places. To one end of these wires is attached a dial-plate with one revolving hand, which is kept in motion by a spring. A peg stops the hand when required; and the face of the dial-plate contains the letters of the alphabet, separately arranged in a circle, each letter having a small hole in the plate, immediately underneath it, into which the peg is placed when the revolution of the hand is to be arrested. To the other end of the wire is affixed a small frame-work, and into it are

introduced a cylinder, round which the paper to be printed on is placed; also a wheel, having the letters of the alphabet arranged regularly on its edge, and a similar ink-roller. All these revolve horizontally and simultaneously, the wheel with the letters being placed between the ink-roller and the cylinder for paper. Motion is communicated to these parts by a pair of electro-magnets attached to them and communicating with the wire. Thus, if the word "the" is to be printed, the hand of the dial-plate is allowed to revolve until it reaches the letter t, beyond which it is prevented from passing by the peg. When stopped, the printer places his finger on a spring attached to the plate, which allows a current of electricity to pass to the wheel with the letters which immediately presses the letter t against the ink-roller, it having previously been inked by the roller, and the letter is printed. The other letters are arranged in the same way until the word is complete. A peculiar part of the mechanism, and that which can hardly be explained without a diagram, relates to the passage of the galvanic current from the dial-plate to the wheel with the letters on it, in order to produce corresponding motion in both, so that the letter indicated by the dial-plate shall be printed by the other. This, however, is effected by a simple arrangement on the face of the dial-plate which makes and breaks the current exactly in the way required. The inventor of this extraordinary machine is Mr. Alexander Bain, the chronometer-maker; and it appears to us that its introduction for telegraphic and other similar purposes might be attended with great success. The length of the wires laid on at the Polytechnic Institution is not more than a mile; but were it the distance of a hundred or a thousand, the instantaneous effect would be the same.

IF I WERE.—It is very apt to be the case, that a man would do a great many good things if he were so and so situated; but that troublesome word, "if," is apt to interfere with his good intentions. His professions are of the most patriotic and praiseworthy kind, and he would be the most kind-hearted, the most generous, the most benevolent man in the world, if it were not for certain things which intervene to prevent the fulfilment of his noble designs.

If I were a merchant, says one, I would always transact all my business in the most honourable way, I would never take advantage of another, I would deal honestly with all, I would accumulate a fortune, and I would leave my children independent of the world.

If I were a farmer, I would devote my whole attention to the cultivation of the soil, I would raise the largest crops of wheat, the greatest number of bushels of potatoes to the acre, the largest cabbage heads, and I would have the neatest and best managed farm in the town.

If I were a rich man, I would appropriate all my surplus income to charitable purposes.

If I were a lawyer, I would always plead the cause of the poor and oppressed, and would deduct a large amount of the fees for my services. I would go against oppression, in all cases, whether it would subvert my interest or not. I would act for the general good of mankind, regardless of self interest; I would make my own emolument secondary to that of others.

If I were a tailor, I would not take more than a reasonable quantity of cabbage, and I would always have a garment done and sent home at the time I promised it.

If I were a physician, I would always attend upon the poor gratis, and I would not charge half so much for feeling the pulse or extracting a tooth as the regular practitioners do. I would devote my time and services for the benefit of the public generally.

If I were a mechanic, I would devote all my time to my profession, and I would always punctually execute all the orders sent to me.

If I were a soaplock, I would have the scissors applied to my hair at once, and not suffer myself to appear like a hermit, or a shaggy bear, or a thief who had lost his ears, and strives to cover the parts where they appear to be, with a superincumbent quantity of capillary ornaments.

If I were a lady, I would be attending to the domestic concerns of the household, and not walking the streets, endeavouring to attract the attention of the beaux, and spinning street yarn when I ought to be spinning stocking yarn at home.

If I were an editor, I would try to please myself as well as my customers, so far as I was able, without the expectation of always doing the one or the other.

If I were a subscriber to a newspaper, I would always pay for it punctually, and never find fault because sometimes happened that there was nothing in it which particularly interested me—especially when there was nothing to put in it.

If I were born with a gold spoon in my mouth, I would hold on upon it, and not exchange it for a pewter or an iron one.

But that little word 'if' is apt to be in the way, and to disconcert all one's good intentions and charitable actions, and if it were not so frequently made a proviso and a bar to good actions, many more deeds of charity might be accomplished. It is often an excuse for not performing what charity would demand, what common sense would dictate, what a sense of duty would require. If I were situated so and so, I would do a vast deal of good; but it is often the case that a man can do good deeds and acts of charity, which he pretends he would if he were differently situated.

But, without any more ifs or ands, it is certain we can often do a good deed when we don't, and if is a kind of general excuse for not doing as we ought.—*Boston Transcript.*

NEEDLES.—It is stated that in the small town of Redich, in the county of Worcester, England, there are upwards of 70,000,000 of needles manufactured every week.

A bible which belonged to Cardinal Ximenes is amongst the books bequeathed to the King of the French by the late F. H. Standish, Esq., of Duxbury-hall, and is valued at 25,000*l.*

ECONOMY.—"Oh, eat it up, eat it up," says mamma. "I can't, ma, I've ate enough." "Oh, yes, dear, eat up what's on your plate, so that it needn't be lost." How common a practice that is! stuffing children beyond the wants of nature, and making them gluttons all their lives, so that the scraps needn't be lost! Precious economy this!—*Galaxy.*