

RURAL TOPICS.

Notes, News and Thoughts Connected with Farm and Household Management.

Talk About Sheep.

THE LINCOLN.

The Lincoln is the largest and heaviest of all the breeds. In one instance a yearling dressed seventy-one pounds per quarter, a two year-old, ninety-one pounds, and one three years old, ninety-six and a half pounds per quarter; and in another case thirty lambs (wethers), fourteen months old, dressed 140 pounds each. The fleeces is also very heavy, as from fourteen months old lambs, have been taken clips weighing from ten to twenty-six pounds of wool, and in another case from several score of them, fleeces weighing fourteen pounds each, of washed wool which is long and lustrous, fully nine inches or over. The old breed are about extinct, their home was on the low lands of Lincolnshire, England, they were coarse and large, and with a long, straggling fleece, with much yolk, were slow feeders, but had delicious meat; juicy, good flavor, fine grained, and not too fat outside, though their habit was to lay on plenty of fat inside.

This promising breed was crossed by improved Leicester rams, after Mr. Blackwell made the latter famous, and from 1862 to 1870 were very prominent at English shows, being given a separate class in the latter year, and have become very popular for producing market sheep, for crossing, and for their wool. But they require very good and rich land, the best care, and are most suited to a high system of farming, with its attendant heavy root and green fodder crops.

THE SHROPSHIRE DOWN.

This well-known breed sprung from the old Morfe Common, and the Cotswold, before and after the latter's improvement. Morfe Common, (a tract of 600,000 acres in Shropshire), were originally horned, with black or mottled faces and legs, hard and active, as large as the Southdown, but not compact, thrive on poor pasture, and yielded a very fine fleece of two pounds, and dressed nine to thirteen pounds per quarter. Now, the Shropshire is hornless, face and legs dark grey or spotted, thick neck, head fine, rather small and good shape, well set on, and neat ears, back straight, strong boned, clean legs, body round, and they retain their early good qualities, besides quickly fattening into a carcass, at two years old, of eighty to 120 pounds of very excellent meat, which bring among the top prices and is in great demand. The ewes are prolific and good mothers. They have a close fleece of long, shining wool, about seven pounds washed, and are well adapted to farms where their chief living will be got at pasture.

OXFORD DOWN.

This sheep has risen rapidly into favor in England, as it was only given a separate class in 1862, at the fairs. It resulted from a cross of a Cotswold ram on a Hampshire Down ewe, in 1839, by Mr. Tarynam, and some other farmers in Hampshire. The produce resembled the Cotswold in fleece but finer, and size, and was heavier than the dam, and by great and steady care in selection, the good points of the first cross (no further has been made) have been retained. They are profitable in mixed farming, are hardy, not subject to disease common to others on the same lands in England; they will weigh at fourteen months, 75 to 90 pounds dressed, and give seven to nine pounds of wool in ready demand, but, of course, by extra feeding, these weights are much improved, as they have weighed at two years, over 300 pounds alive, and rams first fleeces over twenty pounds. They have a round body on short legs and faces, a tuft of wool on the forehead, a thick, partly curly fleece, and their meat is thought by some when young to be a superior to Southdown.

Among the prominent breeders in England are Messrs. Albert Brassey, Charles and J. F. Howard, Frederick Street, John Treadwell, and George Adams. Of these Mr. Treadwell of Aylesbury is the foremost, a prize winner for many years past.

HAMPSHIRE DOWNS.

This breed sprang from a cross, made early in this century, between a Southdown ram and a horned white-faced sheep of Hampshire, which was hardy and large, with large head and nose. Now the breed is hornless, has black faces, compact frame, straight and broad back, round body on short legs, and the flesh is juicy, good flavor and good proportions of lean and fat. They mature early, fatten rapidly and the lambs are large, at one year old running up to 85 or 100 pounds. The fleeces is from six to eight pounds of combing wool, not as fine though as the Southdown.

THE DORSET

is a very old breed of the south of England, noted for its fecundity (and breeding in early season), there being many twins and triplets, a consideration where only market lambs are required, and the meat sells at high price. They are hardy, quiet, and easily handled, mature early to an average of 100 pounds dressed, at 2 years; the fleeces is heavy and close, giving five or six pounds of soft, clean, combing wool. Both sexes are horned, they have full, deep bodies, longish legs, thin, light boned, and white legs and faces, the latter long boned, and with a tuft of

forehead wool, and black muzzle, and we should think would prove valuable here when kept near large cities and towns, though perhaps requiring extra care for early lambs.

WINTER CARE OF SHEEP.

"The winter care of the flock," says the Pittsburg Stockman, "is where many new sheep men make mistakes. It is no trouble to keep sheep through the summer, but often inexperienced flock masters lose half their flock in a single winter. The reason of this is either carelessness or ignorance of the nature and requirements of the sheep. The most successful winter care of sheep cannot be undertaken without suitable stabling. This is the first great requisite. There is no use trying to keep a sheep thriving, and at the same time have its wool saturated with water, with the temperature down toward zero. Then, after seeing that you have sufficient shelter for your sheep, the next important thing is to see that there is an abundant supply of hay or other forage. The hay and fodder must be early cut and put up in the very best condition. With these preliminary preparations a flock of sheep can be wintered safely, cheaply, and profitably. With good hay and proper shelter sheep require but little grain. These facts alone should determine every shepherd to provide proper stabling for them as an economic measure."

MUTTON MERINOS.

A western stockman says: "I would as soon raise and feed 300 merinos as 200 Cotswold until three years, considering the difference in feed and handling. Perhaps some will think that I have had no experience with what are called the mutton breeds. Well, I have had some, in both this country and also in Europe. Now I will tell you the principal reason why the mutton qualities of the merinos have not been developed. The merino has been considered only profitable for wool, and, therefore, most breeders have paid little attention to the carcass; and as a general thing the more wrinkles and grease the better, and that in nearly every case destroys the mutton qualities of the sheep.

On the other hand, the breeders of mutton sheep have paid little attention to the wool, and a great deal to the form and fattening qualities. In order to make a merino profitable for mutton as well as wool, we have to look more to the size and build of our sheep. The merino can be improved in size a great deal, I know from experience, and not injure them for wool either.

Household Matters.

METHODS OF PRESERVING EGGS.
At a recent poultry show in Birmingham, England, prizes were awarded for the best dozen of preserved eggs. They were sent in two months before the date of the show, a short time to test any preserving process thoroughly. The eggs were tested by being boiled both soft and hard (that is for a single minute and a half, and for ten minutes), and then tested by the judges. Those that gained the first prize had been simply packed in common salt. They had not lost sensibly by evaporation, had good consistent albumen, and were of the best flavor when boiled. Those that received the second prize were but slightly inferior to the best and the process of preserving is thus described: Melt one part of white wax to two parts of spermaceti, boil and mix thoroughly; or two parts clarified suet to one of wax, and rub with antiseptic salt or fine rice starch. Wrap each egg in fine tissue paper, putting the broad end downward; screw the paper tightly at the top, leaving an inch to hold it up. Dip each egg rapidly into the fat heated to 100 degrees. Withdraw, and leave to cool. Pack broad end downward, in dry white sand or sawdust. The London Agricultural Gazette adds: "The eggs so preserved were admirable and, probably, had the longest been for a longer time, would have stood first. But it is exceedingly useful to know that eggs may be preserved admirably for two months with no more trouble than putting them in common salt. The other plan was superior in one respect; on stripping off the waxed paper, the shell was as pure and clean as when laid; in fact, the eggs might have sold as being fresh, if not as new laid."

THE SIN OF OVERWORK.

I want to protest against the lack of self-control so many of us house-keepers exhibit, especially such of us as do our own work, on certain days, which come to all, when it seems as if there were everything to do and only one pair of hands to do it. Generally we begin to work with might and main, with every nerve tense,—you see I speak from experience—and thus hurry from one thing to another until we are fit to drop always replying feverishly to any remonstrance: "Oh, I can't stop till this work is done."

I, for one, am trying to break myself out of this habit and method of working; for it is nothing short of a positive sin, and it does show a silly want of self-control of which every woman should be ashamed. What is the sequel to every such day of overwork? Invariably, a painful weariness and stiffness of the muscles, a feeling of "Oh-I-can-never-get-up-in-the-world," loss of appetite, and an almost unobtainable inclination to fretfulness. We are cross and snappish to those we love dearly, and we feel that life is a burden, and lie around for days doing only what "must be done," until the work has piled up mountain high again.

It is so much better to divide one's work into daily shares, so as to equalize it as much as possible, that a woman may have none of these dreadful days of overdoing, and that she may keep her temper calm and sweet. This last is especially desirable, if she has the care of small children. Home is spoiled where a woman makes a wretched drudge of herself half the time, and a fretful invalid the rest.

NICE FOR BREAKFAST.

Corn Meal Breakfast Rolls.—One and a half pints of flour, half a pint of white

corn meal, one teaspoonful of salt, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one tablespoonful of butter, three-fourths of a pint of milk. Sift together flour, corn meal, salt, and powder to the batter, cold, add the milk and mix smoothly into a rather firmer dough than usual. Flour the board, turn out the dough, give it one or two turns to complete its smoothness. Divide it thus prepared into pieces the size of an egg; again divide these in half, which roll out under the hand until they are long and half the size of one's little finger, lay on a greased baking tin, so they do not touch each other, wash them over with milk, and take them in a quick oven seven or eight minutes.

Delicate Graham Bread.—One pint of Graham and one pint of wheat flour, one teaspoonful of sugar, one teaspoonful of salt, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, leaving out the coarse bran which will be found in the sieve; add the milk; mix quickly into a smooth, soft dough, when pour into small greased tins, and bake as usual in a rather hot oven ten minutes. Protect with paper ten minutes.

Delicious Breakfast Puffs.—Beat the whites of six eggs till they stand alone, and the yolks the same space of time; cream in by degrees nine tablespoonfuls flour, put in a tablespoonful of melted butter and a teaspoonful of salt; then make into a batter with one pint of sweet milk. Grease little patty pans, pour in the batter, and bake rapidly till of a light brown color. Nutmeg may be added as a flavoring, if liked.

Buttermilk Muffins.—One quart of buttermilk, two eggs, one teaspoonful of soda dissolved in hot water, one teaspoonful of salt, flour to make a good batter. Beat the eggs well and stir into the milk, beating hard all the while; add the flour and salt, and at last the soda. Bake at once in a quick oven.

French Toast.—Beat four eggs very light, and stir with them a pint of milk, slice some baker's bread, dip the piece into the egg, then lay them in a pan of hot boiling lard, and fry brown; if liked sprinkle a little powdered sugar and cinnamon or grated nutmeg on each piece, and serve hot.

TO PRESERVE PICTURES.

May I tell the young people how to preserve and mount pictures that they like in the newspapers and magazines? Ever since I can remember I have liked to save the portraits of people I have read about in my history or in the papers. A good many papers print very nice pictures of people. People who have plenty of money to spend can frame them, but I have never had much pocket money, and I guess there are a good many boys and girls who don't have their pockets full of money either. But pictures can be nicely mounted at no cost on common pasteboard. Trim the ends and sides of the picture very straight, and cut your pasteboard very carefully about half an inch wider than the picture each way. Put on the picture with mucilage, leaving an even margin all around, and place in an old book until it gets dry so it will not warp. With a little money anyone can get nice, smooth cardboard of different colors, which makes a great improvement; and if the pictures are treated to a coat of common varnish the dust will not stick to them and they will last a long time. A nice set of half a dozen would make a pretty Christmas present. I like pictures of kittens and dogs, and children, too, to have in my room.

Heart Beats.

Dr. N. B. Richardson of London, the noted physician, says he was recently asked to convey a considerable amount of conviction to an intelligent scholar by a single experiment. The singer was singing the praises of the ruddy bumper, and saying he could not get through the day without it, when Dr. Richardson said to him:

"Will you be good enough to feel my pulse as I stand here?"

He did so. I said: "Count it carefully; what does it say?"

"Your pulse says seventy four."

I then lay down on the lounge, and then said: "Will you take it again?"

He replied: "Why, it is only sixty-four; what an extraordinary thing!"

I then said, "When you lie down at night, that is the way nature gives your heart rest. You know nothing about it, but that beating organ is resting to that extent, and if you reckon it up it is a heart rest, because in lying down the heart is doing ten strokes less a minute. Multiply that by 60 and it is 600; multiply it by 8 hours, and within a fraction it is 5,000 strokes different; and as the heart is throwing six ounces of blood at every stroke, it makes a difference 30,000 ounces of lifting during the night."

"When I lie down at night, without any alcohol, that is the rest my heart gets. But when you take your wine or grog you do not allow that rest, for the influence of alcohol is to increase the number of strokes, and instead of getting this rest you put on something like fifteen thousand extra strokes, and the result is that you rise up very seedy and unfit for the next day's work till you have taken a little more of the 'ruddy bumper,' which you say is the soul of man below."

A Good Joke.

"I suppose land must be very expensive up there," remarked Smith to Mr. Isaacs, pointing to some property on an elevation.

"Very so," said Mr. Isaacs.

"Because it is so high."

THE CLIMAX OF HORRORS.

Cannibalism Among the Negro Population of Hayti.

Intense excitement has been caused in Port-au-Prince, says a correspondent, by the receipt from England of copies of Sir Spencer St. John's work on Hayti. The author was formerly British Consul-General there, and his revelations as to barbarism, and cannibalism in the black republic have proved a decided sensation. Commenting upon this work, a well known gentleman made the following almost inconceivable statement:

"I was present at a dinner, at which, by the way, Sir Spencer St. John was also a guest, and heard a story told by the Archbishop of Port-au-Prince, which Sir Spencer has incorporated into his book. I will let him tell it to you. Says he: 'In 1874 a French priest, who had charge of the district of Arcahaie, had the curiosity to witness the Vaudoux ceremonies, and he persuaded some of his parishioners to take him to the forest where a meeting of the sect was to be held. They were very unwilling, saying that if discovered, he and they would be killed; but he promised that whatever happened, he would not speak a word. They blackened his hands and face, and disguising him as a peasant, took him with them. The neighboring villagers flocked in to the ceremony. With these the priest mixed, and saw all that went on. The people came to ask that their wishes should be gratified, and the priest stood on a box containing the sacred serpent. At first she went into a violent paroxysm, then in a sort of half trance; she promised all that they could desire. A white cock, and then a white goat were killed, and those present were marked with their blood. Presently an athletic young negro came and knelt before the priestess, and said: 'O Mama, I have a favor to ask. 'What is it, my son?' 'Give us the complete sacrifice.'"

THE GOAT WITHOUT HORNS.

She gave a sign of assent, the crowd in the shed separated, and there was a child sitting with its feet bound. In an instant a rope already passed through a block was tightened, the child's feet flew up toward the roof, and the priest approached it with a knife. The loud shriek given by the victim aroused the Frenchman to the truth of what was really going on. He shouted: "Oh, spare the child!" and would have darted forward, but he was seized by his friends around him, and literally carried from the spot. There was a short pursuit, but the priest got safely back to town. He tried to arouse the police to hasten to the spot, but they would do nothing. In the morning they accompanied him to the scene of the feast, and near the shed the boiled skull of the child.

"I have frequently heard similar details given by prominent Haytians. One of the most atrocious cases of cannibalism that ever became known in the island, is that which occurred during the presidency of Geffard, a really enlightened and able ruler. The village of Bizoton lies a few miles from Cap-Haitien, and there lived a sister Jeanne, a Vaudoux priestess. Congo had been in what you may call hard luck, and he had decided to offer a sacrifice to the medium of the Vaudoux. After a consultation between Jeanne and two Vaudoux priests named Julien Nicolas and Floreal Apollon, it was decided to offer the sacrifice of a female child, and Claircine, the niece of Jeanne and Congo, was chosen. On the 27th of December, Jeanne enticed her sister, the mother, and her absence Congo kidnapped the girl, who was about twelve years old, and concealed her in the house of Floreal, where she was bound and gagged, and her hair cut, and she was made to witness the horrors of the child.

Four days later, in the night time, a festive gathering took place at Jeanne's house. The blood was caught in a jar, and Floreal flayed the victim. The flesh was cut from the bones and placed in wooden dishes, and the entrails and skin were reserved. Then the carrying of the remains of their victim, the women formed a procession, following Jeanne, who, carrying the head in one hand and ringing a bell, acted the leader. They proceeded to the house of the priestess, where they were to have a feast. The noise made by the carousal of the cannibals aroused a woman and girl sleeping in an adjoining apartment, and they, looking through the doorway, witnessed the horrid orgie. They saw Jeanne cooking the flesh with Congo beans, while Floreal, putting the head into an iron pot with yams, prepared a way-come dinner for a young woman, Roside Sumera, urged by her unsatiable appetite for human flesh, cut off and ate raw pieces of flesh from the palms of the child's hands.

All partook of the dishes prepared, and drank of the soup, and the blood was greedily quaffed. Then one of those terrible scenes of drunkenness and debauchery which are ending only with daylight. Then the fiends finished the remnants of the last night's feast, and offered some to the two watchers, the older adopting.

CUT OFF THE GIRL'S HEAD.

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MIXED MORSELS.

A Congressman shouted in his speech: "We must return to the food of our fathers. And what was it? I ask." A deep voice across the hall replied: "Thistles!"

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"The longer a person is in eating the more pleasure he will derive from it," says a writer. That's where the six-foot fellow is a neck like a giraffe's has the advantage of the ordinary thick-set citizen. Burlington Free Press.

A Pennsylvania girl who expected to take the first prize at a county fair for making the best cake has not been made to rejoice in any great extent yet over the receipt of the premium. To tell the truth, the cake didn't give the judges time to send in their verdict before it killed them.

Made a Clean Half-Million.

"Well," said a business man to a friend as a highly dressed dude went by "that fellow is no earthly good that I can see. He does nothing but walk the streets and show his good clothes."

"I guess you don't know him very well. Why, man, he made a clean half-million in six months, and that's twice as much as you have made during your whole life."

AMERICA'S SONGSTRESS.

The Splendid Little Warbler who Promises to Rival Patti.

It came out that the lady's husband had a mistress, who, becoming jealous of her, procured from a Vaudoux priest a poison which put her into a death-like sleep, in which state she was buried. That night the devilish creature got her friends together and dug up the coffin, intending to steal the body and cast it in the sea, but the priest, who had been watching her, had lost its potency, and she came back to life as she was lifted from her coffin. Her screams attracted help, and, finding themselves faulted, the wretched scoundrels put their victim to death, tore her heart and lungs out and fled, carrying them with them for the purpose of a feast.

"I remember a naval officer whose vessel touched at Hayti. He declared that he ordered several casks of pork, and among them found one cask containing human flesh. It was discovered through finding fingerprints in the cask. New-born babies are frequently made insensible, buried, dug up and eaten."

The uninformed reader might suppose that the Haytians are ignorant savage people, little removed about their African ancestors. Such is not the fact. The people in the cities read and write and are intelligent. They talk English almost exclusively. They have government institutions that would be good if correctly administered, and are very fond of dress."

CLEVELAND'S SISTERS.

One of Them Will Reside at The White House.

Although the Governor has received several proposals of marriage since he was nominated and much good matronly advice on the subject of matrimony, he has, as alleged, turned a cold shoulder on all. The stone statue of the Goddess of Liberty on the dome of the Capitol at Washington, it is claimed, is not more impervious to Cupid's darts than Governor Cleveland, all reports to the contrary notwithstanding. It is said he has no present intention of getting married, some of his friends here believe that in the second year of his administration he should marry some Louisville or Charleston belle to symbolize the union of the North and South, but the Governor only smiles at such suggestions.

The White House will be presided over by Mrs. Hoyt, Governor Cleveland's oldest sister, who has directed the Executive Mansion during the greater part of the Governor's residence there. Mrs. Hoyt is a quiet lady. Until her distinguished brother became Governor she resided in the quiet simplicity of Theresa, Jefferson county, where she was renowned for her generous and charitable deeds. Unlike the Governor, she is of only medium height, with deep, simple but attractive features. She affects generally darker colors in dress. In many respects she is not unlike the Governor, but she is straight forward and inspiring confidence and ease, from the outset in conversation. When the burden of years shall have whitened her dark brown hair she will not be unlikelier than the Governor, and the traits of Martha Washington. While the White House under her regime may lack the brilliancy of President Arthur's administration, it will become a genial and dignified American home. Mrs. Hoyt is a regular attendant at the Presbyterian church.

The Governor's youngest sister, Miss Rose Cleveland, will also become a member of the national household. During the years that her brother has been laboriously climbing the ladder of fame and reputation, Rose Cleveland has lived with her mother, who has been a devoted and efficient helpmate. Miss Cleveland is a cultivated lady of pleasant address, and all the characteristics of the family, intensified, of course, by youth. She is taller than Mrs. Hoyt, and while like her, simple in costume, has yet that tasteful dress which makes woman always adorable.

Besides his two sisters who will be regular members of his household, Mrs. Col. Lamont one of the most attractive of the young members of Albany society, will also be an office member of the Executive household.

Beside these, the Misses Hastings, Governor Cleveland's nieces, and Miss Folsom, daughter of Governor Cleveland's former law partner, will also be frequent visitors to the White House. Miss Folsom is said to be the most beautiful young lady in Buffalo, and the ladies of all the traditional Democratic families of Albany—the Corning, Parkers, Banks, Prunys, Peckhams and many others. Her making preparations to attend the Democratic administration in twenty-four years shall open with the greatest social eclat and that it will eclipse anything seen in Washington since Buchanan's time. Governor Cleveland is not very fond of society, but he does not take unkindly to the news of these preparations. He says he has not been invited to give the address, and he would be glad to be able to please the politicians as easily as he can them.

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"Well," said a business man to a friend as a highly dressed dude went by "that fellow is no earthly good that I can see. He does nothing but walk the streets and show his good clothes."

"I guess you don't know him very well. Why, man, he made a clean half-million in six months, and that's twice as much as you have made during your whole life."

"The mischief, you say! I didn't know he had any business about him at all. How did he make it?"

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"Well," said a business man to a friend as a highly dressed dude went by "that fellow is no earthly good that I can see. He does nothing but walk the streets and show his good clothes."

"I guess you don't know him very well. Why, man, he made a clean half-million in six months, and that's twice as much as you have made during your whole life."

"The mischief, you say! I didn't know he had any business about him at all. How did he make it?"

"Aye, mon, ye're jest too late the night," said a genial Scotch voice.

"Must come to-morrow, eh?"

"Aye, just come at half past 12 in the noon, or at 8 the night."

"No chance before?" I said, pointing at the placard, "and the devil has so many painted temples open."

"I cannot help that," said the Scotch soldier. "The young man's quite right; ye're too late the night!"

Second voices singing a rousing hymn accompanied our conversation. I could not help thinking, after all, how much better they manage these things in Roman Catholic countries. I verily believe that only my tact and self-possession prevented the two sentinels from laying violent hands upon me for daring to step even into the outer portal of the Salvation Temple after regulation hours. If St. Peter is as particular as these earthly representatives, I fear it will go hard with myself and some of my contemporaries, for whom the night can hardly be said to have begun at 10 p. m. London Letter in Boston Herald.

EAR MUFFS.

A long strike—Twelve by the clock. Judge.

Electric belles—Lady telegraph operators. Merchant Traveler.

A graveyard—Thirty six inches of black crape. Carl Pretzel's Weekly.

Lawyers may avoid a procession, but they will never shun a process. New York Journal.