Thesis for the Degree of B.S.

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"Sheep Husbandry in the United States" by

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Sharp Husbandry in the United States

The agriculture of the United States, owing to the almost unlimited extent of fertile territory, unoccupied, and offering to the industrious man almost every inducement which nature can provide, has lead the farmer of the past to adopt styles of farming suited to thinly inhabited land. This must give way as the country becomes more populous to a form which will produce the most profit on the territory occupied.

In the past history of the United States, agriculture has been closely confined to the production of grain alone.

which was marketed directly from the farm and in some of the states we see this custom still existing, as in Minnesota which dedicates a very great amount of her interest to the production of yeast. While this mode of production is very profitable for a short period, it cannot be continued long. Or no land can retain the reproductive power of any successive crops without being supplied with the essential drugs, from it either mechanically or by rotation of crops. By mechanically replacing the distribution of organic manures or prepared inorganic fertilizers, the former are much more valuable, cheaper and accessible.
when midland agriculture is carried on. By rotation of crops we must
needs, at times, raise on the farm
crops which are very bulky and
expensive in transportaton.
Now, in order to maintain the
fertility of the soil and gain
the greatest profits we must
practice mixed farming; that
is converting our vegetable pro-
ducts into animal products.
To do this to the best advan-
tage we need to keep several
classes of animals on the
farm suited for the consump-
tion of the various products,
and yielding, in their, turn
the most profitable results;
but in this article we will
confine ourselves to the sheep.
This animal is one of the
oldest, if not the oldest ani-
mal under domestication.
Always very highly prized
for the wool, hair, flesh, it
clearly received the care and at-
tention which is so necessary
to the development of the
higher characteristics of any
race of animals.
The first prominent class of
sheep that comes under your
notice is the Spanish Mer-
in, whose origin is involved
in insecurity.
It has been believed that
this race arose from a cross
which Colombella made bet-
tween five wool Tarantian ewes
and wild rams brought from Barbary
and that the work impelled
Spanish colonists later by a
fresh importation of rams from
the same quarter by Pedro IX.
and that two centuries later still, the Merino was a very desirable animal, as it was with our present stock, and at the present day, such stock would be discarded from the flock.

Formerly the aim of the sheep breeder was to make a heavier and more compact sheep—one that would demand a higher price, also a longer staple of wool was sought, but not at finer quality. The American shepherd has bred for compactness of carcase, hardiness, and a dense, heavy fleece of medium length and fineness. The improvement of the breed has gone forward very rapidly during the last forty years so that at the present time, it is not uncommon to find
rams' fleeces, which, unwashed, will weigh twenty, twenty-five, or sixty pounds a yard. This case, taking at the head, and representing the fine wool.

Of the middle sorts the Southdown stands at the head of the list, and from its early maturity, size, and freedom from disease, it is destined to receive a large part of the attention of the American farmer.

The coarse sorts we will represent by the Cotswold's Leicesters.

The Cotswold is one of the largest of the English sheep, though at present smaller than, originally, on account of the introduction of Leicestershires. It is the favorite long-wool sheep of America. An account of its size and hardiness, though not to be equal to the Leicesters, often being fit for market at 6 to 8 months old, and giving a weekly increase from 5 to 8 lbs each; the price is from 6 to 8 times as long, the wool of very superior quality and needed better than that of the Leicesters.

The Leicester sheep is one that has been especially bred for early maturity, and without much trouble to hardiness and quality of wool. As a consequence, it is not a hardy sheep, and requires
When crossed with the Merino, make a very valuable animal for the plains.

CARE OF SHEEP

This heading may be divided into 1st care in the Eastern part of the United States.
2d Care in the Western portion of the United States.

In this division we have the more thinly settled portion of the country, in which the flocks have to be confined to narrow limits or account of their being no range left open. Winter management.

We will assume that the sheep are in good condition at the opening of winter. The farmer should have good, roomy, shade, thoroughly

rich pasture, and close attention. The fat producing quality are indeed very great. Our fact so much so as greatly to destroy the quality of the mutton. In this country we find the Leicester an valuable animal to cross with other breeds when a class of sheep is wanted for early maturity.

The Mexican sheep sometime called the "native" sheep of Mexico are descendants of the Spanish race of Spain. They have greatly deteriorated by neglect. They are small thin-knobbed, hardy, and have very great resistance to hunger, heat, tempests, and famine. This sheep in its natural state, is not a profitable one, but
drained, and well protected from the storms of winter by means of grooves, or by making them under the protection of walls. The sheds should be bedded as often as they become dirty. This is not only to keep the sheep clean, comfortable, and healthy, but also did much to the preservation of the wool, which is one of the valuable products of sheep husbandry, due to the arrangement of the sheds. They should be so divided that each division would not contain more than fifty sheep, and these divisions so arranged that the sheep could be transferred from one division to another without being compelled to leave the protection of the roof.

Each division should contain a sufficient number of hay or grain racks so that there could be no necessity of the sheep crowding all during feeding. The water supply should be as possible in the shed; but yes, this is next to impossible in many cases, we must have it as near as possible on the outside for the sheep, more than once other domesticated animal will resist the charge of thirst to the detriment of its bodily condition if it finds it all difficult to satisfy its thirst.

It may seem that we have brought protection into rather great prominence here, but when we consider that the
shape of all domesticated animals while in general it requires but little attention, must have on certain occasions the closest attention, or the success of the business will be swept away as it were, in a day's time.

During the greater part of our winters the sheep can obtain a large proportion of their subsistence from the corn fields, and from protected grasses, as for instance blue grass, which it permitted to grow during the summer, will make the very best of sheep feed during winter when the snow is off. We must not depend too much on this, however, for in no time during the winter is this kind of food sufficient. They should receive grain daily. The amount to be increased with the severity of the weather, or cold and stormy days requiring much more than on pleasant days. In this way, the sheep should always have a supply.

The shepherd should always see that there is feed for his sheep, for very often the sheep will be, apparently, gaining a good supply of food from the field, immediately after they are filling themselves with innutritious food, and are losing in flesh. If the hay is before time all of the time, they will not be tempted to fill themselves with innutritious food, but will continue to pick up the little
city of nutritious matter which they may find here and there on the farm, which they prefer to hay, and will take first, and finally satisfy their hunger on hay.

During stormy weather and when ordering out the sheep, the sheep should be confined to their yards and sheds, and their food given to them in their wake and brought. Enough should always be given so that the sheep will be thoroughly satisfied. One of the greatest losses which occur to the shepherd is the slow drainage to the sheep's system of its physical power by exposure, and lack of nutritious food. At the first appearance of grass in the spring, we must not cut off the regular supply of points of feed, but should gradually change gradually to the grass, which is first of pure although it be insufficient at first, it is very succulent and contains but very little nutritious, to feed to before it becomes more mature is vertically starving the sheep; and to have a flock in bad condition at this season of the year, is one of the greatest misfortunes that could befall the shepherd, for never in the commencement of the ordinary lambing season or when the snow must be in their very best condition in order to bear good lambs, and furnish them with a sufficient sup-
It may also require that the shepherd should give the closest attention to his flock both day and night in good weather, as well as that he may be at hand to relieve the mother of her lamb when necessary. Assist the work to nurse, warm, and shield the unskilled find the mother of dis caulds, or to give colts to mothers which have lost their sons. Generally, the above causes require but little attention if the work is done at the right time; not little as it is the means of saving many lambs and of for good laws.

During the lambing season, the flock should be separated. Keeping the more by

Hyacinth, and so situated that they may go to and from the yards at their pleasure. This will allow the mothers to remain quiet with their new-born lambs until they have become sufficiently strong to follow the flock, thus protecting the confusion which often arises between mother and lambs.

The flock of wefters and dry ewes need but ordinary attention through the summer, to see that they are free from disease and infestations. Dogs and have good pastures.

About the 1st of October will be the best time for separating the lambs from the ewes. The ewes should still receive a little better attention than the rest of the
flocks in order that they may be in strong and healthy condition during gestation.

The lambs at weaning should have one or more old sheep with them to act as guides and to quiet them. They may have the range of the cornfield which, at this season of the year, furnishes most excellent feed for the young sheep, and as they browse nothing else but old stubble and cornfield, and will be some time in learning, there will be no loss from parasites of unshaved corn. The lambs in the varied food which they are able to obtain from the cornfield will continue their growth without a check at weaning, and almost as

fast as if they were at their mother's side. The large area of the Western portion of the United States in the west where the open prairie still lie open to the bread, many and further South where the temperature of the year is always at a degree that the sheep's coat gains its living throughout the entire year, where the gales of the plains, etc., have an entirely different style of sheep back up. The sheep being mostly kept in large flocks for this purpose the Mexican sheep dressed, with the wooling, is found to be the best and most profitable class of sheep. The range should bear
large as possible, and be supplied with never-failing water. The shepherds should be with his flock all of the time, and should keep his sheep as a rule, in a particular part of the range, for a given period of time, days having much travel for the sheep, and allowing nothing to rest and improve for winter feed.

There is no place in the West or South of the United States in which it will do for the farmer to depend entirely on the range for the flock's winter supply of food. Often for several years at a time, the sheep will not need a pound of hay, when, again, a season may come in which a few days of snow or bad weather may take away half a year's

... the result of a Guard sheep, which might have been saved, if a very few

... that could have been purchased.