THE GLEANER:

AND NORTHUMBERLAND, KENT, GLOUCESTER AND RESTIGOUCHE COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL.

OLD SERIES] *Nec aranearum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.* [COMPRISED 13 VOLUMES

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From the Albany Cultivator.

VERMIN IN ANIMALS.

From man, down to the inferior tribes of animals, such as bees, grasshoppers, and beetles, almost every species has its peculiar parasite. Each kind of domestic animals, including poultry of all sorts, is attacked by one or more species. We have heard it said that lice on cattle and ticks on sheep, "*don't do much hurt*," and from the myriads of those insects which are permitted to live, we might suppose some such idea was quite common. How many lice or ticks it takes to consume an ounce of blood in a given time, we don't know that any body has ever ascertained; but that they do actually support themselves from the bodies of the animals to which they are attached, is certain. Their beaks or suckers are almost always inserted in the skin, and their bodies are filled almost to bursting with animal juices. By their attacks, the vermin keep the animals in a state of constant fretfulness and irritation; the consequence of all which is, the stock become poor and weak. In endeavoring to relieve themselves, by biting and rubbing, from the intolerable itching which ticks occasion, we have frequently known sheep to pull out and lose nearly all their wool, and lice induce cattle to rub off much of their hair. Exposed to storms and inclement weather, in this naked and feeble condition, both cattle and sheep often contract diseases which carry them off—the owner, perhaps, satisfying himself by attributing the loss to *bad luck*.

The application of various substances will kill vermin. Tobacco-water, strong soapsuds, spirits of turpentine, oil, or any kind of grease, will kill them if brought in contact with their bodies. Preparations of mercury, (such as unguentum) by affecting the blood and being thus carried through all parts of the system, are more effective; but their use is not unattended with danger. Salivation is sometimes produced, and if the animal while under its operation is exposed to cold and wet, its death is frequently the consequence. Sulphur also operates through the blood, and is a useful and perhaps harmless application. Strong decoctions of tobacco are sometimes injurious by making the animal sick and weak for a time.

In the winter season, when the animals are clothed with a full coat of hair or wool, the entire destruction of vermin is attended with some difficulty. If cattle are kept under cover, or are *fully protected* in bad weather, we see no objections to a moderate use of unguentum. We have often used it under such circumstances, with perfect safety. For stock that are kept out of doors, or are much exposed, we should prefer whale oil mixed with spirits of turpentine.

The best mode of killing sheep ticks, when the wool is long, is by fumugation with tobacco. Take a cannister, of copper or sheet iron, made at one end to fit the nose of a bellows, and having at the other end a small pipe for the escape of the smoke. Fill the cannister with tobacco, put in a coal of fire, and fasten the cannister to the bellows pipe, around which there should be wrapped some damp tow, to make it fit tight, and commence operations. It takes two men, or a man and a boy, to work to good advantage—one to hold the sheep and open the wool, and the other to blow in the smoke with the bellows. The wool should be opened in lines or furrows around the body from six to eight inches apart. As the wool is opened the pipe of the cannister should be applied close to the skin, the wool immediately closed around, and slightly compressed at the surface with the hands, and at the same time a puff given with the bellows. This will keep the smoke close to the animal's body. The work may be done very expeditiously, and nearly every tick will be killed.

This is the best course when sheep get over-run with ticks in the winter season; but if the *lambs* are properly attended to, after the sheep are sheared, no necessity for smoking will ever occur. Three or four days after shearing, the ticks being deprived of protection on the sheep, resort to the lambs, whose wool is then generally started enough to give the vermin sufficient covering. If, at this time, the lambs are dipped in a decoction of tobacco, the ticks may be exterminated at once. The decoction need not be so strong as to hurt the lambs.

From the same.

DRAINING.

Although the advantages of draining are almost universally conceded, yet how rare it is, to see in our travels in this country, well drained or thoroughly reclaimed swamps, or wet low lands. Such lands, abounding in almost every district, when neglected, are not only unproductive and unprofitable, substracting materially from the value of a farm, but are unsightly, and more or less prejudicial to health. On the contrary, such lands, of all others, when reclaimed, are the most interesting and productive. They have the depositaries of freshets and floods for ages, and have received more or less of the manure and surface soil gradually carried from time to time from the surrounding knolls and hill sides. When thoroughly drained and stirred up by proper cultivation, and the inert vegetable substance brought into action by the application of the usual decomposing agents, such lands are distinguished for their enduring fertility.

Much money, however, is fruitlessly expended in the operation of draining. Very few of our native American farmers are skilful in the art, and like every other branch of farming, it will pay best when best performed. It is by no means necessary that a bog or swamp should have "a great fall," or inclination, to be well drained. It is customary to dig the ditches down to the gravel, instead of digging three or four ditches in depth into the gravel stratum, which, by the bye, is one great secret in draining. Where springs abound, either above or below the surface, they must of course all be let down into under-drains. An expert ditcher will not often be deceived about the location or source of blind springs under the surface, which generally do most mischief. Such springs develope themselves by the peculiar character of the vegetation which covers them, or can be discovered by the tread. The location of drains is of the utmost importance. Twenty-four or thirty inches will be found in most places a sufficient depth. Thirty inches wide at the top, sloped to 18 inches at the bottom, are the common dimensions of a good ditch; but if the gravel substratum be shallow, the depth would always be determined by it.

Stones for many reasons form the best materials for filling up drains. After clearing the bottom of the drain of gravel or mud, the first layer of stone for a foot in depth should be set in a vertical position, leaving no opening or culvert; the stone afterwards may be levelled promiscuously within eight inches of the surface, reserving the smallest stone for the top; this done, cover the stone, first, with the inverted sod, carefully cut from the surface of the ditch, and preserved for this purpose. Lastly, fill in over the sod all the earth put out in digging, which will elevate the surface, but it will settle down in due time. This method of draining I have practised, and prefer it to all others. An inexperienced farmer would profit by employing an experienced ditcher from Scotland or Ireland.

Putting hot water, say a couple of gallons, into a churn, and shaking it about a while before using it, will it is said, make the butter 'come' in a short time.

PRESERVATION OF ROOFS.

A writer in the Boston Cultivator, referring to wooden roofs and their rapid decay, gives the following cheap and singular method of preserving them for many years. He observes—"A friend of mine, who unites much close observation with large experience in building, states that the best preservation of shingles that has come within his knowledge, is to soak them in an alkaline solution of quick-lime before they are put on. The plan adopted by him for the purpose, is to prepare a box in which to dissolve the lime, similar to that used by plasterers, and have it elevated, so as to permit the lime water to be drawn from it into another box in which the shingles are to be placed that are intended to be impregnated with the alkaline solution. A sufficient quantity is put in the upper box, which is slaked and reduced to a thin wash, and well stirred up, when it is permitted to settle.

"The shingles are set on an end, with their butts down, in the lower box, which is sufficiently deep to permit the parts which will be exposed to the weather when they are put on in courses, to become soaked by drawing down the alkaline water from the upper box into the one below, in which they are placed. They should remain in this solution for some hours, when they are removed and suffered to dry, and others substituted in the box, to undergo the same operation before they are nailed on the lath.

"No part of whitewash or lime should be permitted to pass into the lower box, it being the caustic alkaline solution of the lime only which is beneficial. It is a powerful antiseptic, interposing powerful obstacles to the decay of wood or vegetables of any kind. The presence of the insoluble particles of the lime would tend to prevent the entrance of the transparent solution.

"The tendency of white-wash to preserve wood from rotting, is universally acknowledged, but it should be borne in mind, that it is the alkaline solution of the lime only which has this tendency, and that the gross insoluble principles of the lime which remains for a time in the form of a scale on the surface to which it has been applied, has nothing to do with its antiseptic powers, and that where the design of its application is to preserve the wood only, it would be better to accomplish the object by being much more diluted than it generally is, so that the alkaline quality would be more thoroughly absorbed than is usually the case. It is a very curious and interesting fact that water at the freezing point dissolves twice as much of the alkaline ingredient of lime as boiling water does, so that the use of hot water to dissolve lime is worse than useless."

CARE OF ANIMALS IN WINTER.

In the cold climate of the northern section of our country, buildings of some kind, are required for sheltering all domestic animals, and in general we think all should be fed under cover, or in yards attached to barns and sheds. There is much less waste in this way, and the animals are much more quiet and comfortable than when the food is thrown out in the dirt, and they are forced to eat under the exposure of wind and storm. In dry, cold weather, when the air is still, sheep may be sometimes foddered on clean, hard snow to good advantage—they will eat fodder here which they would refuse any where else. But it is only in dry weather that they can be fed in this way—as soon as the snow softens, or the weather becomes moist, they will not eat their fodder clean, out of doors, and they must be fed from racks or mangers in the house. Sheep do not like *wet*—they always prefer to keep both their food and their bodies *dry*.

Large flocks of sheep should be divided, putting the bucks and wethers together, the ewes in another lot, and the lambs and weak sheep in another. Subdivisions of these may be necessary, for too many must not be kept together. Some very good sheep-farmers think not more than a hundred should be allowed run together—others allow more—but much depends on the room given them the facilities for feeding, sheltering, &c. A *hospital* should be provided—self-interest, as well as humanity, demand it—and attention to the sick and feeble will be well repaid. A little nursing at the proper time often has such a magical effect on the invalid, that he comes out in the spring as brisk and hale as the best of the flock—a much more gratifying sight, truly, than to see his carcass hanging on a tree for the crows to pick.

If it is designed to raise early lambs for market, the ewes should be at once provided with warm, dry shelter, and fed with a little grain, and some roots, such as potatoes, turnips, or beets. This will ensure a strong healthy lamb, with plenty of milk to feed him.

Cold weather gives cattle and other stock sharp appetites, and this is the best time in the winter to feed out poor fodder. Give i to the stock in small quantities at a time, replenishing the mangers as often as they are cleaned, till the animals get their fill. It is not good policy to make *milch cows* eat too much poor fodder—it had better be fed mostly to the young cattle—such as steers and two year old heifers.

Considerable advantage is sometimes derived from cutting fodder with a machine. Clover hay and straw, cut fine and mixed together, may be fed in this way without waste. Corn-fodder, if the stalks are small and well cured, will all be eaten if it is cut pretty fine. But it is not so with *large* stalks, which are very coarse and fibrous, and the sap of which becomes *sour* before they can be cured—cattle will not eat such much sooner than they would eat their hoofs. It is of but little use to cut stuff for cattle to eat which is absolutely *uneatable*. It is true that animals will sometimes reject long fodder which is really nutritious, and which would be eaten if passed through a cutter; but the idea should never be taken from this, that cutting substances which are little else than woody fibre, will convert them into proper food for animals.

In the western section of the country, where large herds are kept, sheltering and feeding under cover is attended with more inconvenience; but we are satisfied that the extension of the practice even there, would be followed by advantages more than counterbalancing the trouble. There is a great difference in the management of farmers in that region—the contrast between good and bad farming being as strikingly shown there as anywhere else—but it is often the case that the stock is permitted to range at will over the whole farm. The loss which is sustained from the waste of food, the injury done to the land by the treading of the cattle when it is wet and soft, and, as a matter of course, the great waste of flesh in the animals, is incalculable. The practice of feeding cattle almost entirely on corn fodder, which in that country is very long and coarse, is quite an obstacle to barn or yard feeling; but where this cannot be adopted, the stock should be fed on dry lands, with, if possible, a strong, blue-grass sod, and by all means sheltered from the bleak and cutting winds, by a forest or belt of trees.

THRIFTY AND UNTHRIFTY FARMERS.

The grand difference between a thriving farmer, and one who does not thrive, is, the one looks out for the *fractions*, the other does not. In farming, nothing should be lost; nothing should be neglected; every thing should be done at the proper time; every thing should be put in its proper place; every thing should be performed by its proper implement. When these rules are observed, the farmer will surely prosper—though his gains may be slow, they will be certain and sure.—*Proctor's Address.*