The Farm.

Sheep as Scavengers.

A sheep is not a scavenger in the sense that a hog is. A hog will eat putrid or spoiled food, while a sheep will rarely eat spoiled food, and never anything putrid. The sheep is fastidious in the extreme in this respect, but will eat almost all kinds of weeds. Some professor has experimented with them, and has found that they will eat a great number of plants—a great many more than any of our domestic animals. They will pass through a pasture or a field filled with all kinds of weeds, eating of this and that by way of variety, or as a tonic to their systems. The dandelion which is so abundant in our pastures, is relished by sheep, and they will scarcely let any of it go to seed, so diligent are they by eating it down. In England the shepherds purposely sow yarrow and mustard for their sheep and in this country these weeds give a great deal of trouble where no sheep can get at them. Most of these weeds are somewhat bitter to the taste, and the liking for what is bitter seems to be a peculiarity of the sheep, which often leads it to eat plants that are poisonous if allowed to run where poisonous weeds grow. It has been stated upon pretty good authority that sheep have been poisoned by an overdose of cherry, peach, almond and oleander leaves, all of which contain prussic acid, and are poisonous when eaten in any considerable quantity.

It is in the spring of the year, when sheep have been a long time on dry feed, or during a dry time in the heated term, that they are almost sure to have an appetite for such leaves as above named. This love for something bitter is probably an explanation why sheep will eat the tender shoots of some trees at certain seasons of the year.

A sheep will not eat blood, excrement or anything uncleanly, and in this respect the taste of the sheep is more refined than any of the domestic animals. The appetite is unquestionably ready for anything bitter. Bitter and wormy apples are eaten by sheep, when a hog will nose over them and pass them by, and on the other hand, the hog will partake of some food found among filth that a sheep could not be brought near enough to touch.

We have noticed sheep eating burdock, cockle burs, dog fennel and rag weed, all of which no other farm animal will touch. They seem to have a liking for plants in their tender stage that they do not like when it is well along, while other plants they seem to prefer when about to ripen the seeds. In clearing a farm of weeds nothing will outrank the sheep. It can be counted on every time to do it with ease, and at the same time with an appreciative relish. Weeds and sheep cannot grow on the same farm, unless the sheep are kept in one field and the weeds in another.—(Live Stock Indicator.

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The Health of Dairy Cattle.

In commenting not long ago, upon the outbreak of tuberculosis in ex-Governor Morton's herd of Guernseys The Tribune suggested that the method of stabling and feeding pursued at Ellerslie might be, to some extent at least, responsible. A recent number of "The Country Gentleman" contains a report of the hearing at Syracuse on August 3 and 4 before the Assembly committee investigating the subject of tuberculosis among dairy cattle.

Dr. W. Smith, Secretary of the Tuberculosis Committee State Board of Health, testified that he thought there was more evidence of tuberculosis now than ever before; we hear more about it. He thought it easily explained from the fact that as this country becomes more thickly populated the demand for dairy products is greater, and every effort is made by the dairyman to get the largest flow of milk from his herd; the animals are necessarily more closely stabled than they used to be, and more highly fed. This being the case, they are kept and fed under conditions that they are more liable to generate disease. Very little is heard of tuberculosis in the Western States, where cattle have large ranges and run out to pasture.

This is in exact accord with The Tribune's modest suggestion, and is valuable coming from an expert The effort on the part of dairymen to make their business pay, of gentlemen farmers to make records, and of the advocates of the different breeds to prove that his favorite breed is the best, has led to the adoption of methods of feeding and stabling which are certainly unnatural and probably injurious. The editor of this department has long been convinced that dairy writers will come to modify their teachings as to the care of dairy cattle very materially.

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Begonia.

S. W. and others ask the cause of begonia leaves turning brown and dropping off. Ans.—The method of treatment as described seems all right; but begonias are particular as to conditions. It is right they grow as easily as a geranium, if not, they suffer and the leaves fall off. They delight in perfect shade, are great feeders and enjoy rich soil. They will not allow you to leave them thirsty one dry, and drown them the next, which is the worst fault of all. They need less water than most plants, but must never be root dry. Charcoal at the bottom of the pots helps drainage and keeps the soil from getting sour. Begonia Rubra is very fastgrowing and, if the plants are warm and shaded there is no reason for the leaves dropping off, in excess. I find that all plants shed their outside leaves at times; but irregular watering, or sour, wet roots are the principal causes of trouble with these plants.

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Gathering and Keeping Fruit.

'An Amateur Farmer' who is new to the business, asks if it is time to pick apples and pears, as the farm he has lately bought contains a few trees, and the fruit is falling badly. Ans.—There is no word as to varieties, and some apples and pears will fall from over-ripeness before this time, while others will swing on the branches till frost comes. The best way of judging is when the fruit parts readily from the stem, without bringing with it the end branch that contains next year's buds. The apples and pears must be carefully handled, if they are to be kept through the winter, and stored at once, after they are gathered, in a cellar or fruit house, where the temperature is as near freezing as possible, without actual frost.—Ex.

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