

Agricultural.

MANAGEMENT OF HOOF ROT IN SHEEP.

Whenever this disease has made its appearance among sheep, it should receive prompt attention, and effectual remedies should be applied without delay, in order to prevent the virus from being communicated to the hoofs of healthy sheep. Every sheep that is in the least affected with the hoof rot, should be separated at once from the flock and kept at a distance from them, until every appearance of the disease is removed. The best time to examine whether the hoofs are diseased or not, is soon after a heavy rain, as all dry dirt will then be washed from their feet, and the hoofs will be wet and soft, and may be shaved off much more easily than when they are dry. Let the sheep be confined in a clean pen, littered with straw, so that but little manure will be held between the parts of the hoofs. Now, let one man place a sheep on one of its sides on a plank or box, about 2 feet high, with all its legs extending horizontally over a large tub of water. While the sheep is held in this position, let another man wash the hoofs clean, using a woollen wash-rag. With a sharp-edged but dull-pointed knife, remove all the dirt from the cracks and creases of the hoofs; and cut off scaly pieces, and ill-shaped hoofs. In dry salting, the cucumbers are put in a barrel or other receptacle and sprinkled freely with fine salt; juices exude from the cucumbers to dissolve the salt and thus form a very strong brine, while the fruit itself shrivels very much. This method uses a great deal of salt, but more cucumbers can be put into a barrel than when they are put into a brine. The shriveling is of no disadvantage, as the plumpness is restored when the pickles are soaked. We have eaten pickles made by putting cucumbers directly into vinegar, but consider them greatly inferior to those prepared in the usual way. There are two methods of salting: dry salting and brining. In dry salting, the cucumbers are put in a barrel or other receptacle and sprinkled freely with fine salt; juices exude from the cucumbers to dissolve the salt and thus form a very strong brine, while the fruit itself shrivels very much. This method uses a great deal of salt, but more cucumbers can be put into a barrel than when they are put into a brine. The shriveling is of no disadvantage, as the plumpness is restored when the pickles are soaked.

The sheep should then be turned into a clean dry yard or pasture, for a few hours, where no wet grass will wash off the application, and where the hoofs will not be filled with dirt. The most suitable tools for pruning hoofs are a strong pair of pruning shears that make a drawing cut, a good pocket-knife, and an inch or an inch-and-a-half chisel and mallet. All these tools should be properly ground on a stone of fine grit, and then wetted on a fine-grained oil stone. If the tools be put in good cutting order, hoofs may be cut or pared off without difficulty. When hoofs are dry and hard, they are not only more difficult to cut or pare off, but there is danger of tearing off the shell where it is thin. When any of the hoofs have grown beyond their proper length, place the sheep on its feet on a hard plank, and use the chisel and mallet. Chip off small portions at once, when cutting near the quick; and never place the clippers on the hoof so as to cut square across, but a little slanting, as it will cut easier and be less liable to hurt the sheep. After the hoofs have been pruned off, shave off the prominent corners with the pocket-knife.

There are several remedies, ointments, caustics, and corrosive applications, which have been employed in curing the foot rot. An application of pine tar and spirits of turpentine mixed, has been used with good results. Blue vitriol pulverized and mingled with tar, applied warm, is another remedy; and a strong solution of blue vitriol in warm water is also good, the sheep being made to stand a minute or two in a trough containing it. It is, however, apt to be washed off in a short time by wet grass. The best preparation that we have ever used was equal quantities of dry white lead and finely pulverized blue vitriol mingled with boiled linseed oil, but only to degree that it would barely flow. This is applied with a small swab to the affected parts, after the feet have been prepared as already directed. One or two applications of this preparation during the first stages of the foot rot, will usually arrest its progress in a flock, and effect a permanent cure. But when the disease has required the paring away of a large proportion of the hoof, so much so that the bones are laid bare, as is sometimes the case, it will be necessary to tie pieces of firm cloth over the feet, which are first wrapped in tow. The tow is put around and over the wound, then pieces of coarse toweling or of old sacks about five inches square, are placed beneath each foot, the edges are turned up, the corners folded smoothly to the leg, and tied firmly tight enough with wooden yarn to keep the rags from dropping off. The boiled oil causes the lead and copper salts to adhere well, and by drying soon, it forms a good coat to exclude dirt, after the bandage has worn out. Sheep should be examined at least once a week where the hoof rot has made its appearance, and a constant watch should be kept to discover any symptoms of lameness, which is one of the first signs of the disease. Timely attention may save many valuable sheep.

Youatt directs, that after thoroughly paring, "the foot should be washed with a solution of chloride of lime, in the proportion of one pound of the powder to a gallon of water. This will remove the fat, and tend to sloughing and mortification, which are the two frequent attendants on foot rot. The muriate or butler of antimony must then be resorted to, and by means of a small stick with a little tow tied around one of its extremities, applied to every denuded part, lightly where the surface has a healthy appearance, or more severely where fungous granulations have been cut off, or where there are small granulations springing up. There is no application compared to this. It is effectual as a superficial caustic; and is so readily combined with the fluids belonging to the part which it is applied, that it quickly becomes diluted, and comparatively powerless, and is incapable of producing any deep or corroding mischief. So far as these foot cases are concerned, it supersedes every other application. The change of color in the part will accurately show to what portion it has been applied, and what effect has been produced." * * * The foot should be dressed every day. Each new separation of horn should be removed, and every portion of fungus submitted to the action of the caustic, with a degree of severity proportioned to the necessity of the case. The new horn should likewise be examined. If it appears to be healthy and tolerably firm, nothing should be done to it; but if it is soft and spongy, the caustic should be lightly applied. The sooner the bandage can be removed, and the sheep turned to some upland or thoroughly dry pasture, the better will it be for the foot and the health of the animal generally. The worst cases of foot rot will readily yield to this mode of treatment, provided the bone has not been exposed, and there are no sinuses running into the joints, or deep-seated parts of the foot, or the pastures above."

CURE FOR WITCH GRASS.—In a late Farmer you say that there are only three things that trouble you very much, viz., "sin-nus-quites, and witch grass." I will give you my experience in regard to witch grass. I first prepare a piece of land for sowing rutta bugia, cultivate between the rows as soon as I can distinguish the line to plant. I am diligent and do not allow a blade of grass to rise more than two inches. When they are harvested I plow deep, and in three years there will not be a root of witch grass on the field, the land is cultivated for that time in this manner.—W. G. in Maine Farmer.—Country Gent.

MAKING PICKLES.

During the rebellion the army demand for pickles was so great that the high prices they brought were sufficient to give many persons the pickle fever. The numerous inquiries respecting the manner in which cucumbers were raised on the large scale have been well answered by our friend Timothy Bunker Esquire. We now have many asking us about the manner of putting up the pickles, and though we have intimated to the Squire that we would like his views on this matter, we have heard nothing from him. Probably the heavy hay around Hookerton keeps him busy, or else he is, as Justice of the Peace, engaged in looking after the morals of that nourishing village. In the absence of any thing from the Squire, we are obliged to tell what we know upon the subject, and thus answer a great many calls for information. In the first place it is necessary to put cucumbers into salt before placing them in vinegar, as the vinegar penetrates much better and the salting removes a crude and raw taste that they otherwise have. We have eaten pickles made by putting cucumbers directly into vinegar, but consider them greatly inferior to those prepared in the usual way. There are two methods of salting: dry salting and brining. In dry salting, the cucumbers are put in a barrel or other receptacle and sprinkled freely with fine salt; juices exude from the cucumbers to dissolve the salt and thus form a very strong brine, while the fruit itself shrivels very much. This method uses a great deal of salt, but more cucumbers can be put into a barrel than when they are put into a brine. The shriveling is of no disadvantage, as the plumpness is restored when the pickles are soaked.

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