

AGRICULTURAL.

WOOL GROWING IN TEXAS.

We noticed a brief article upon this important subject in the Galveston Civilian, in which the editor observes that the business is steady on the increase, and that a number of flocks which came under his observation were generally healthy and flourishing. We believe, with the Civilian, that this business will soon become one of the most profitable sources of employment to the farmers of Texas. The condition of this branch of industry is gradually improving, and everything calculated to foster it and encourage its extension, should be carefully laid before the public. We are assured from official sources, that the supply of wool grown in the United States is far below the demand for home consumption. About eighteen millions of pounds were imported in 1840, to supply this deficiency. With a soil, climate, and herbage as well adapted to the raising of wool as any other part of the Union, no good reason can be adduced why the skin and wool of our enterprising planters should not be worth a reward as great as that which has crowned their efforts in cotton planting. We see in the Western States, the most successful farmer engaged almost solely in this branch of business, and in a locality too, where the work of the summer is given to the people, and the winter to their animals in winter. Here nature provides fresh food for sheep the whole year, although practical men, humane owners, consider it a duty to provide food during the season of wet and snowy weather. This would adequately embrace thirty days in the year. We have in the Pastoral Office Report, the testimony of experienced wool growers, that in the Northern or winter feeding States, the cost of keeping sheep is from \$1 to \$1.25 per head annually. In Texas, the same sum would not exceed 25 cents; and the expense, say of a flock of 400, would be principally in the cost of a shepherd.

It gives us pleasure to lay before our readers the operations (in an improved view we must admit) of one of our very particular friends, who has been engaged for some time in the raising of wool, we allude to Count Leon de Serrin, of Colorado county. This gentleman emigrated from France about ten years since, and after encountering many reverses and vicissitudes of fortune, located at his present residence, in 1846, and commenced with 32 sheep, 25 of which were ewes. With this small beginning he has steadily pursued the business, and his perseverance has shown its result by the respectability of his flock, both in quality and quantity. He now has 350, and has sold within the last two years, 290 bucks and wethers; the former at \$10.00 per head. To his original stock he added, only six—these he purchased from the importation of Saxony and Merino, brought several years since from Virginia by Capt. S. Douglas, and for these six sheep he paid *three hundred dollars*, and although it may be observed by the reader that this was a high price, the Count exhibited his sagacity in the purchase, as his sheep pen is now resorted to from various parts of the State for bucks to improve the flocks of others. It is certainly astonishing what an improvement has been made by his Saxon and Merino breeds in the quality of the wool and the improved form of their progeny. We have in our possession samples from his fine buds, and also of lambs produced from the coarse native and Mexican ewes, which we will take pleasure in exhibiting to our friends.—The wool sold by Count de Serrin from his flock, has already increased 25 per cent in value—from this judicious purchase he has derived profit in two ways, from the enhanced value of his breeding stock for others, and the price of his wool in the Eastern market.

His losses during the time have been quite small; but this decrease has been made up by twin births, and the increase of 100 per cent, annually from his ewes besides. His friend is methodical in his business, and a name for all his sheep made and known there is Josephine, and Pauline, Louis Philippe and Napoleon, and the birth, birth of wool and death of each sheep are regularly recorded in his diary. Thus we learn from him, that from his original stock Marshal Scott is the only survivor—the patriarch of the flock, and although ten years old, he carries a stately head, yields a good fleece, and is yet able to mystify his compeers in the prairie, neither compels him to remain under shelter.

His sheep are shorn semi-annually, in April and September, and in the latter shewing are included the spring lambs. The annual yield from the whole flock is five pounds of clean wool to each sheep, and is prepared for market by rolling each fleece separately, and packing them in a sack holding about 300 pounds.

The health of the flock is uniformly good, and his loss by disease is principally by what we suppose to be stricken, which strikes his fat-tail sheep in the months of July and August; but the number of deaths is very small in comparison to the flocks in the Eastern States, by liver rot, foot rot, and other cutaneous diseases.

Sheep are dependent animals; that is, they are not able to contend with or evade the wolf, and his ally, the dog; and although the Count bestows largely care upon his flocks, these enemies steal them at noonday, and have frequently killed quite a number. But many of these enemies have extended their pursuits to a host of vermin, and have thus been somewhat turned out. We look upon this dependence of the sheep as the principal cause why our prairies do not present as frequently large flocks of sheep, as we see of other animals.—The horse and mule, from their strength and fleetness, evade frequently our most expert riders; the horned cattle run over the country and browsed and feed where they desire; the hog is an independent gentleman, and one rots his way through a forest of cattlemen; and the wolf and foxes, sheep must have some care bestowed upon it, in the present state of the settled condition of the States. When we lost our friends clouds, we saw, because they have failed, a few simple questions, candidly answered, have generally solved the cause of their failure. Have your sheep been separated from you?—Yes, and how long?—Have their delicate frames been strained by a hard, cold winter?—Yes, and how long?—Has the pasture of a flock so large been taken away?—Yes, and how long?—Are your young and lambs?

A bottle thrown into the sea, Dec. 19, 1851, in latitude 22°43' North, longitude 70°44' West, for trial of currents, had upon the C. S. ship Albany, while North on the 2nd ult., near Botany Bay, clapped, and broken, only fifteen days ago, a course of W. the messenger having a distance of about one hundred & four miles.

On Dec. 19, during the month of January, a sum was received at the Mint in Philadelphia, due to the amount of \$4,100,000, at New Orleans \$500,000. During the same time, the Frothmores and Cherokees bought \$1,300,000 more. The amount of coin shipped to Europe in that month was \$3,200,000. It shows a total sum of \$2,600,000 added to our supply of specie held during the month of January.

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