THE SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK.

The New Year.—Those who keep an eye on our market reports need not be told that the new year does not open as auspiciously as is desirable for the wool trade. The market is just now weaker than it has been for several months, though the shrinkage in prices has been but slight. We are ready to say, however, that even should the January sales in London be as unsatisfactory as the last sales, our faith in the early future of the industry will remain unshaken.

Views of Bradstreet's.—This commercial authority comments on the situation as follows: Dullness continues to prevail in the various wool markets. At the end of the year many holders are ready to close out particular lots at concessions, while the settlement of accounts for commission houses also tends to weakness. For these reasons prices show no improvement, notwithstanding a fair inquiry on the part of manufacturers. Cash purchasers find the market in their favor, but quotations are nominally unchanged. There is thus apparent an undertone of strength, which dealers are confident will become very pronounced in the course of a week or two, when purchases for consumption promise to be considerably larger than they have been of late.

New York Merino Breeders.—The eighth annual meeting of the New York State American Merino Sheep Breeders' Association was held in the city of Rochester, December 21st and 22d, 1886. There was a large attendance and much interest manifested. The society is in a prosperous condition, and has had several new members added during the last year. The following officers were elected: President, Davis Cossitt, Onondaga; Vice-President, S. D. Short, Honeoye; Secretary, J. Horatio Earll, Skaneateles; Treasurer, Howland Sherman, East Avon. The following resolutions on the action of Secretary of the Treasury Manning, in recommending wool to be placed on the free list, were read and adopted:

Resolved, That we deprecate the continued agitation of the subject of tariff revision so far as it threatens the prosperity or stability of national industries, and declare ourselves unequivocally in favor of the full measure of protection for such industries we now have as is necessary to their permanence and prosperity.

Resolved, That we regard with alarm the recommendations of the Secretary of the Treasury, favoring the removal of the tariff upon wool, as threatening with destruction the property and business of the members of this and kindred associations; that the concessions with regard to the wool tariff made by the wool-growers and embodied in the tariff of 1883 go to the utmost limit of safety, and that any further reductions will endanger if not annihilate this the largest and most beneficent of all our industries.

Resolved, That we reaffirm the unity of interest between the wool-growers and wool manufacturers, and urge the continuance of the honorable alliance hitherto maintained for the common protection.

It was decided to print the above resolutions and send to the representatives in Congress. Several interesting papers were read and discussed during the evening sessions. The Association is to hold a spring shearing, the time and place to be decided by the executive committee.

J. H. EARLL, Sec.

Ohio Merino Sheep Breeders' Association.—The annual convention of this Association will be held in the city of Columbus, O., on Wednesday, January 12. It is important that there should be a large attendence at this, as well as at all other wool-growers' and sheep breeders' conventions. The official utterances at Washington have given the wool-growers of the United States such a New Year's greeting as is worthy of our hearty response. Especially do I urge upon the members of the O. S. M. B. A. to come to our annual meeting. As one who has been familiar with the workings of the Association ever since its organization, I am glad to be able to say that the year of 1886 has been most prosperous. Notwithstanding the demoralized condition of the Merino sheep trade, there has been an encouraging addition of thirty new flocks. As the forthcoming annual report of the Secretary will show, the receipts of the Association during the year have been about $1,000. It is true the Association is still some in debt for the publication of the first volume, but surely we have no reason for discouragement when we consider that the receipts of the year were sufficient to pay all the current expenses, all the interest on the entire indebtedness, and twenty-five per cent. of the principal. I am sorry that the notice of the meeting given in your paper did not state what hall the meeting would be held in, so that members arriving in the city on a late train would know where to go. [We do not know the hall.—ED.] I think we have about two hundred and fifty members in good standing, and I hope to meet at least one hundred of them at the most encouraging and pleasant annual meeting we have ever had.

J. W. POLLOCK.

Greene county, O.

Pennsylvania State Wool-Growers' Association.—This Association met in Washington, Pa., on Tuesday and Wednesday of last week, and held one of the most interesting annual meetings in its history. Stirring addresses were delivered by Hon. W. S. Shallenberger, of Rochester, Hon. O. L. Jackson, of New Castle, and Hon. J. F. Dravo, of Beaver, all of whom discussed the wool tariff intelligently and at length, making many points to which their hearers gave the closest attention. The members in attendance also took part in the discussions with a good deal of spirit and vim. Among other things done it was resolved to appoint a permanent committee to be ready when necessary to present the claims of wool-growers before Congress. The election of officers resulted as follows: President, J. C. Mc Nary, Washington county; Vice-President, R. S. Sterling, Beaver; Secretary, W. H. Herriott, Allegheny; Treasurer, H. W. Nelson, Beaver. The place and date of the next annual meeting were left in the hands of the Executive Committee. The following resolution were adopted:

Resolved, That as wool-growers of Pennsylvania we pledge a determined resistance to the proposition to place wool on the free list as a raw material.

Resolved, That in no just sense can a fleece of American-grown wool, requiring labor, capital and skill for its high development as to quality and weight, be regarded a raw material.

Resolved, That the placing of carpet wools on the free list, as suggested in some quarters apparently friendly to protection, which wools with adequate protection can be produced in America in sufficient quantities to meet our demands, would in practice result injuriously to wool-growing, opening new avenues to fraudulent valuation, and precluding the possibility of ever reaching the desirable point where we can produce all our needed wools.

Resolved, That a great national industry like that of wool-growing, so important as to be justly named the key to the protective system, should command such tariff duties as will fully protect it against the present large importations.

Resolved, That we favor the reduction of revenue by the increase of tariff duties, and the consequent decrease of importations which yield revenue.

Resolved, That we adhere without hesitation to our formerly expressed belief that wool-growing needs and is fully entitled to the protection afforded in the era in which that industry made its greatest progress in this country; and that, in a spirit of absolute fairness to the great twin industry of wool manufacturing, we cheerfully accord to the manufacturing interest such a readjustment of duties, in the event of a tariff on wool being increased, as will be equitable and right.

Resolved, That we recognize, as one of the greatest evils with which wool-growing has to contend, the constant menace with which both the measure of wool duties and their actual existence has been threatened in the last few years; and that we demand, above all things, a cessation of the congressional agitation tending to the lowering or complete destruction of existing duties. If it is impracticable to secure at present the legislation we confidently claim as a right, the industry should at least have a period free from menace, in which to quietly recuperate.

Muskingum County, O., Wool-Growers.—The Muskingum County Wool-Growers' Association held their last meeting in the Probate Court Room, at Zanesville, O., December 23, 1886, at 1 p. m. The meeting was unusually interesting, notwithstanding many of the members were absent.

There was quite a lengthy discussion upon resolutions, offered by J. D. Mercer, to be presented to Congress, which were finally adopted about as drafted.

The topic assigned for the meeting was, "The Winter Management of Sheep," the discussion to be opened with a paper by Wm. Herdman, of Rix's mills. The Association regretted to learn, by the chair, that Mr. Herdman could not be present, on account of ill health. Perhaps it would not be out of place just here to remark that we have not, during our four years' existence, lost a member by death.

H. P. Sellers, of Redfield, Perry county, being present, was then invited to open the discussion on the above topic. In justice to Mr. Sellers, it is right to say that he was not called upon until a few minutes of the time the train was due on which he wished to return home. Consequently he could do but little more than suggest some important facts and experiences touching upon the subject. The following is a brief synopsis of his speech: "I would advise beginning in April to commence wintering sheep. Generally sheep that are well summered are half wintered. Sheep are the worst inhabited animal that lives. I mean by this that they are in almost constant danger from the parasites that infest their intestines. As to the matter of grub in the head, I never give it much attention. I am aware that during the summer season a fly deposits in the nostrils of the sheep an egg that develops into the grub; yet it never produces any serious results to sheep that are in a healthy condition. Rather give attention to the parasites that infest the intestines. For this use ashes, sulphur and copperas, but do not use these too long at a time. Much might be said upon the winter stabling of sheep, for doubtless in this inexperienced shepherds make more serious mistakes than in any other branch of the winter management of their flocks. As a result of gross errors in this line some perhaps have gone to the extreme and have abandoned stabling altogether. This I would not advise. But avoid over-crowded and ill-ventilated stables. Ventilate on the lee side, from above and not below. Have your stables made close and warm, with glass windows, ventilating by dropping the upper sash. Prevent any draft from passing through. The stables should be cleaned every month. You don't need the accumulation of manure to keep sheep warm, as a man who was always tired once remarked. Another important duty in the proper wintering of sheep is to provide plenty of pure water. If your sheep have not access to salt constantly, salt at least twice a week. The best hay is clover. Sheep should have plenty of exercise when the weather is favorable. I have sometimes kept my sheep in the stable as long as a week at a time, when there was a deep snow, or the weather was otherwise unfavorable. But, finally, we need something as a substitute for the green pastures of the summer. This we find in roots. I have been very successful in raising beets, and have grown nearly 1,000 bushels on about half an acre. I use a root cutter that cuts a bushel per minute, then feed in troughs with flat bottoms. I do not wash the beets, as the clay that adheres to them is just what the sheep need. The benefit derived from the use of roots is two-fold. (1) They keep the sheep in a healthy condition during the winter, as a substitute for the grasses of the summer, and (2) they prevent them from scouring when turned upon the pastures of the early spring."

The Association will meet hereafter on the third Saturday of each month, in the Probate Court Room, at Zanesville, at 1 p. m. We trust that everyone interested in sheep-raising and wool-growing will be present at our next meeting, January 15, 1887.

S. H. BUCHANAN.

FLOCK SCRAPS.

—Read "Wool Wanderings in 1886," on the 18th page.

—The free wool heresy is being denounced more widely and more heartily every day.

—There seems to be a little more life in wool-growers' associations this winter than usual.

—An increased animation and slightly advancing in prices in the woolen goods market just now would be worth a good deal of money to wool-growers.

—The first series of wool sales in London for 1887 has been fixed to commence Tuesday, January 25. A net supply of about 200,000 bales will be offered.

—The annual meeting of the Vermont Merino Sheep Breeders' Association will be held at the Town Hall, in Middlebury, Wednesday, January 12, 1887, at 10 o'clock a. m.

—The annual meeting of the Delaine Merino Sheep Breeders' Association will be held at White Hall Stock Farm, the home of James McClelland, near Canonsburg, Washington county, Pa., Tuesday, January 18, 1887. A good meeting and a good time are assured.

—Secretary Stanley writes us that the railroad authorities have refused to give reduced rates to the annual meetings of wool-growers and sheep breeders at Columbus, O., next week, although he is hopeful that he may yet get rates within fifty miles of that point.

Boston Wool Market.—The market, says the *Commercial Bulletin*, has been fairly steady, and for the closing week in the year moderately active. At the same time there is no disguising the fact that stocks on hand are larger than was anticipated and that the market is in buyers' not in sellers' favor. The general tone of business in the United States is fairly prosperous but the woolen goods trade continues dull. When cassimeres have been opened, and a few have been opened, they have been sold at last season's prices. Overcoatings of all grades sell at last season's prices. If foreign markets be admitted to exert any influence upon our markets their influence must be of a depressing character except as regards medium wools, which seem to be in scant supply the world over. Detailed reports are given below. We are threatened with another yarn deluge. Yarns are lower in Bradford and weak at quotations. At present although Bradford yarns are fifteen or twenty per cent. higher than at the lowest point last year they can be laid down here (Nos. 40@50) at a cent or two less the pound than similar American yarns. As yet however the margin is not sufficient to overcome the prejudice in favor of American yarn. Ohio and Pennsylvania fleeces are quiet but fairly steady. There is but little call for fine fleeces. Medium wool, including No. 1 fleece, is a shade steadier. Michigan wool is very quiet. Some wool is still held out of the market. Thirty-two cents is the usual price obtainable for X fleece, and even that has been slightly shaded in some cases. No. 1 wool is firm. Combing and Delaine are steady. In a quiet way the worsted mills having been picking up considerable delaine during the last two weeks at 35c for Michigan and 37c for Ohio. Texas wool is quiet and in such light stock as to be practically no longer a feature in the market. The small lots of Texas fall selling are disposed of on a scoured basis of 53@55c for medium and fine. Territory wool is still in heavy stock and more or less pressed for sale. The market is emphatically in buyers' favor, though quotations are nominally no lower than last week. California wool is very quiet and either held out of the market or selling without profit. The same state of things prevails on the Pacific coast. Bids there are 2c a pound less than offerings, and although sellers are willing to concede something, no sales are noted. Pulled wool is in fair request. Combing pulled is selling to some extent on the same basis as noted last week. Some fortunate pullers claim that they have obtained 35c for combing pulled in the grease, and 45c clean. Good wool, however, has been bought at lower figures during the week. Mail advices from abroad indicate a state of affairs even worse than was shown by the cablegrams. Messrs. Buxton, Ronald & Co., say of the late London auctions: "Prices, which were primarily reported from 7½ to 10 per cent lower on merino descriptions than at the close of the September series, fell away during the ensuing week to the extent of a further 5 to 7½ per cent, the incidence of the decline being, however, somewhat irregular. Roughly speaking, a line dividing the old from the new season's wool was sharply defined, the demand for the former being apathetic to a degree. For the latter, when fairly free from fault, there was generally good bidding at, however, fully 10 per cent below the equivalent values of the preceding series. English wools are in light stock and in marked distinction to other varieties and are strong in foreign markets. Stocks are very light in Bradford of all coarse combing wools and though the inquiry is light prices are well maintained. The Continent has been buying Irish wethers with some freedom. The following are quotations for leading grades of wool in Boston: Ohio XX and above, 36@37c; Ohio XX, 35@—c; Ohio X, 32½@—c; Ohio No. 1, 37c@38c; Michigan X, 32c@—; Michigan No. 1, 36c@—; fine Ohio delaine, @37c; Michigan delaine, 35@—c; unmerchantable Michigan, 24c; unmerchantable Ohio —@27c; No. 1 combing washed, 39@40c; Kentucky ⅜ blood combing, —@31c; Kentucky ¼ blood combing, 30c@—; Texas fine 12 months, 25@26c; do do 6 to 8 months, 19@22c; Texas medium 12 months, 25@27c; do do 6 to 8 months —@25c; Texas fall fine, 19@22c; Texas fall medium, —@25c; Georgia unwashed, 31@32c; California Northern spring free, 25@27c; Southern do do, 20@23c; California burry and defective, 12@16c; free fall, 15@21c; Southern fall, 14@15c; eastern Oregon ordinary, 17@19c; do do choice, 22@25c; valley Oregon No. 1, 27@28c; do do No. 2, 26@28c; do do No. 3, 24@25c; Wyoming fine, 20@21c; do ⅜ blood, 24@26; do ½ blood, 23@25½c; Kansas choice fine 22@23c; do medium, 24@25c; Montana fine choice, 23@24c; do average, 22@23c; fine medium choice, 25@26c; do do average, 23@24c; medium choice, 25@—c; do average, 23@24c; low, 20@—c; California pulled, 32@38c; Maine supers, 43@45c; eastern lambs' supers, 4 @—c; do A supers, 38@42c; western supers, 30@35c; extra, 28@32c; Montevideo, 31@—c; Australian cross bred, 36@42; Australian combing, 36@39c; Australian clothing, 34@39c; combing pulled, 32@35c.

CONTRIBUTIONS.

For the National Stockman and Farmer.

CHICAGO BUSINESS LETTER.

It is nothing unusual that the markets of the last week of the year should prove quite brisk, and this period just closing has been no exception. Salesmen pronounced it one of the best weeks in the way of strong prices and active inquiry that has been realized for many months. Country shippers are always cautious about the markets just at holiday time, and with the resulting lessened receipts and fair demand this period is usually attended with good trade. All kinds of stock have advanced in price, and the year closed on a higher market than for many weeks previous. Cattle were in fair supply for the time of year, and there were larger numbers of good to choice medium and heavy steers that were desirable not only for refrigerator houses but for exporters as well. The advance in beef cattle in the past ten days is 40@60c, while cheaper qualities of steers, cows and bulls show less improvement. The movement of stockers and feeders has been quite large, and countrymen were in attendance throughout, paying $3@3.35 for fair to choice feeders of 1,000@1,150-lbs average. Little stockers were quiet at $2.25@2.85 per cwt.

In addition to the various reports from the country, the fact that the high prices prevailing for live hogs fails to bring them in in any considerable numbers proves the former assertion that the crop is surely about exhausted throughout the West. Prices have been paid this week higher than any since last July, good packing and shipping weights going at $4.75@4.95, and even $5; yet day after day we have had a paltry 12,000 to 18,000