



PLATE XI
SHEEP-DIPPING

It is one of the laws of the land that sheep must be dipped at least twice a year. The reason of this is that a skin disease, called "scab," maybe prevented from spreading from flock to flock. The bath in which the sheep are dipped contains that which will kill the germ of the disease.

The sheep that have to go through the bath are gathered in pens at one end of the dipping trough, which is just wide enough to let one sheep swim straight forward. The bath is about eighteen feet long, and by the time that a sheep has gone from end to end, the liquid has soaked right through the wool to the skin. The sheep now steps up an incline into the "dripper," shakes itself, and remains in the dripper for a little while. The liquid drips from the sheep and flows back into the bath. In this way as little as possible is wasted.

On farms where there is no swimming-bath, the sheep are caught one by one and dipped into a tank, which contains the same kind of liquid as that in the swimming-bath. It takes three men to do this. One of them stands at the animal's head and closes its ears, so as to prevent the liquid from entering them. The other two seize the sheep by the legs and dip it back-first into the liquid. The sheep is then sent into a dripper.

As the bath contains a harmful liquid, care ought to be taken not to let the sheep go on to their pasture until they are dry.

Although dipping is an uncomfortable process for the sheep, they thrive much better after it.