

at the headlands than would have been in working in a pair of horses. The ploughs were entirely under control as they are in the case of the ordinary ploughman; and, indeed, I think on account of the steadiness derived from their weight, a great deal more so. All I can say, in a word, is that it was as well finished, as thoroughly done work, as any farmer could wish to see. There were altogether ten or twelve engines and cultivators at work, but scattered over a circle of at least five miles. Coleman's apparatus did its work very well, snatching up the soil thoroughly, and rather deeper than any of the others. The Woolston system did not show to great advantage, to me at least; and far in the distance was a novelty indeed—two of the local Kent ploughs working by steam. To say one not having seen them, I may say that the rudest old Irish wooden plough is a great, handy implement in comparison; but such a prejudice, that a gentleman told me they were really superior to any, say of Howard or Horsfall's, and that he himself, farming in the vicinity on a large scale, after giving a trial to the improved implements of these celebrated makers gave them up and returned to the old style, as being the better one. It may be; but *apropos* this is forcibly reminded of the argument of Paddy-go-Easy in a similar case. The land operated upon, in nearly every instance, was over stubble, rather tenacious in some places, and rather hard and dry in others—in such a state generally, that it could not well have been turned over with an ordinary furrow with a good pair of farming horses. I like the ploughing, however, as well as Howard's because the entire green stubble was turned down, the furrows were firmly pressed together, and, I may fairly say, the ground was ready for the seed at one operation. It does not matter that no grain is about being sown; this to me, appears one of its greatest recommendations, that any surface weeds would certainly be decomposed, shut out from the atmosphere between the hard pressed furrows; whilst in the other—the Woolston system, as it may be generally designated—throughout the land, no doubt, is broken up, the surface undergoes but little change, and if at all, after standing some time would again be growing green. It is no practical answer to say that there should be no surface weeds; we will hardly ever attain to that perfection in ordinary farming. But if we did, the land at Farningham was very clean indeed; not the slightest trace of coltsfoot or scutch grass; while you might have immediately sown the wheat after the ploughs. I don't see how it could possibly have been done after the cultivators.

These are the ideas of a mere Irishman, as between the two systems. I must say the English farmers seem to be pretty equally divided on the subject; and it would be presumption of the first water for a poor Co. Armagh farmer

“to decide” where such “doctors disagree.” All the machines on the ground worked along smoothly; some of the engines moving themselves forward as the progress of the work required; others remaining fixed to the same spot all the day. I prefer the former, though each worked well; but, upon the whole, it appeared to me that a great many more hands—men and boys—were required to attend on any of the machines than we usually read of in the papers.

As a wind up, I may add a few notes on things in general touching the district in which the trial was held. It is almost wholly cultivated; grazing, except in the meadows bordering the Darnet, a beautiful though shallow stream, and here flowing over a pebbly bed, nowhere to be seen. Yet it is a district famous for its sheep; and on the second day (Friday), the Messrs. Russel, of Horton Kirby, sold by auction, just adjoining the station, 100 ram lambs of the west country Down breed, at prices varying from £2 6s. to £6 per lamb, or about a general average of £4 10. No doubt, they were about the finest lot of lambs I ever saw, and their breeders widely celebrated—but think of the prices. They were sold in the field in which they had been penned for a month previous, on vetches; a magnificent crop. The pens are formed by hurdles of wicker work, and are a peculiarity of the district. Each hurdle is, say, 10 feet long, with ribs about two feet apart; they are wrought up with hazel, which abounds in the country; also sometimes mixed with clean whitethorn shoots, and are capitally adapted for the purpose. When not used, they are built up in great square piles, 18 or 20 feet high, at the farm-yard, and carefully thatched over. Nowhere here, in a wide district of country, do the sheep seem to be penned on the Irish and common sense system, of giving them a ridge or so at a time, fresh and fresh; leaving them at liberty to quit the ground on which they feed when they choose. By this means the green food is kept sweet as may be, and they eat it with relish to the last. But here, a square pen is put up, with hurdles all round, the shepherd attends on the sheep constantly, they are put at least 100 to the square rood, and kept on that space till the food is consumed, or rather, till they will eat no longer. I think there must be great waste, and the system entirely of a piece with the ploughs.

The first view of the country, from the Farningham station, is wonderfully like that of the grain growing districts of the north and midland of France, and the soil, too, the very same: the cultivation identical. The hills rise in long sweeps; the incline nowhere so great as to tax the strength of the horses. Wheat, rye, barley, oats, some peas, and rarely, beans; winding along the face of the hills, undivided by any fences. Even parish boundaries are merely marked by an occasional stone: all is cultivated.