

community in general. I do not think you occupy that relative social position, nor exercise that political influence, nor give to agriculture that dignity, which you ought to, considering the capital you employ, the abilities you exercise, and the supreme importance of your occupation. For if it be the duty of the manufacturer to provide clothing and furniture, of the merchant to distribute them—if it be the duty of the physician to take care of your health, of the lawyer to guard your property and person, of the architect to build your house, and of the clergyman, so far as he can, to guide your faith, it is your office to provide plenty of wholesome food for the whole community.—And if you fail in your department all the others—the whole fabric of society—will fall to the ground and perish. What reason, then, can be given why the agriculturist should not feel himself upon a level with any of these professions, except that his education has been left short?—Then how comes it to pass that the manufacturer and merchant should exercise so much greater political influence than the agriculturist? The capital embarked—the labour and care exerted—the number of hands employed, directly and indirectly, by the plough, are two-fold more than are put in motion by the loom; and yet the manufacturer and merchant exercise double the political influence, which you are often made to feel by the distribution of the taxes. I can see no other cause for this than that the sons of merchants and manufacturers and of professional men have a more enlarged education, and have more of that power which general knowledge gives. They feel themselves more equal to take a prominent part in political discussions, and are better qualified to gain a hearing from the public.

As to the advantage to be derived for your own occupation, I have to observe, that every one of the natural sciences might very materially subserve the purposes of agriculture. As to mechanics, it would seem that the knowledge of the first principles of this science were a *sine qua non* of the agriculturist—who has so much of his capital invested, and his power employed, in moving heavy bodies in every direction and angle to the horizon. As to chemistry, it is felt more and more to be a necessary for the agriculturist. It would enable him to judge of the quality of food and manures he may have to purchase, and of the medicines he may have to administer to his cattle. It is scarcely necessary to point out to the cultivator, the usefulness and even necessity of knowing something of geology and its kindred science mineralogy. Generally the soil will partake of the qualities of the stratum which underlies it, or if some of those disturbances which from age to age have varied the external crust

of our earth, have covered the rock with an adventitious soil, it will generally be found to have been washed down from the surrounding hills. Then, as to botany, it would seem that the study of that science would be almost forced upon the agriculturist by his daily occupation.

THE SHORT OR MIDDLE-WOOLLED BREEDS OF SHEEP.

SOUTHDOWNS.

Among our native *short-woolled* breeds, (we use the term *short-woolled* because it is in common acceptance), the Southdowns have long stood conspicuous. It were idle, and more than that it would be fruitless, to attempt to investigate the original source of our short-woolled races, or to attempt to analyze the causes which led to their peculiar character of fleece, as distinguished from that of the long-woolled breeds of our Island; yet it has often struck us that the Southdowns, strictly speaking, are confined to Sussex; they rise from the Marsh of Pevensey to the bold promontory of Beachy Head; they then trend westward as far as Shoreham, occupying a surface of about twenty-six miles in length, and six or seven in breadth, containing 99,480 acres. This tract is properly denominated the South Down.—From Shoreham the Downs gradually recede from the coast and traverse the western part of the county, bearing some points towards the north, and enter Hampshire between West Harting and Stanstead, near Petersfield. Their extreme length in Sussex is fifty-three miles, their greatest breadth seven, and mean about four miles and a half. The average height is about five hundred feet above the level of the sea; but Ditching Beacon is 858 feet, Firle Beacon 820 feet, Chancetonbury Ring 814 feet, Rooks Hill and Bow Hill each 702 feet, and Beachy Head 564 feet above that level. The Downs have a rich covering of short and delicate turf, containing large portions of wild thyme (*Thymus Serpyllum*), and occasional patches of the common furze, the *Ulex Europæus*, in patches of thirty or forty acres. The whole district is without trees, except in some declivities, where the white thorn is found, and in some of the richer portions of Stanmer and Arundel parks, where thriving plantations of beech and other hardy trees have recently been made. The surface of the Downs is gracefully undulating; the northern escarpment is precipitous, whilst the southern declines gently, and westward of Brighton gradually blends with the lowland of the coast.

Such is an outline of the general characters of the Downs of Sussex, the nursery and congenial home of the breed of sheep in question.

Formerly the Southdown sheep were very indifferent; it is true that they car-

ried very fine wool, but then the carcase was ill-formed, a disadvantage which more than counterbalanced the excellence of the fleece. They were small, thin in the neck, high in the shoulders and in the loins, down on the rump, with the tail set very low; the back was sharp, the ribs flat, and the fore quarters narrow; yet there were materials to work upon, and besides, these sheep had some excellent qualifications; they arrived at early maturity, were extremely hardy, thrived upon scanty keep and short feed on the natural pastures, and the mutton was fine-grained and of good flavour.

Attempts were first made to improve the Southdowns by crosses with the Leicesters, a long-woolled sheep, but these attempts ended in utter failure, nor were crosses between them and the Merinos ultimately advantageous. It was by careful selections, and the keeping in view of a definite purpose in the choice of breeding stock, that the improvement of the Southdowns was achieved. It is to Mr. Ellman of Glynde that the elevation of this breed to its unrivalled position in its own line as a hill sheep is due.—*Martin, on the Sheep.*

FARMING IS FASHIONABLE.

Let our Halifax merchants read the opinion of an English lord. Gentlemen farming has its disadvantages in an old country, but it is very much wanted in a new one:—

Agriculture is the only trade which is fashionable. As soon as a merchant becomes rich—as soon as he attains a position in society—he must needs become a farmer. No one thinks of becoming a tanner or a tallowchandler for his amusement. But everyone tries to get a farm, and then swears that he loves the smell of a dunghill more than the scent of his wife's flowers. Perhaps he obtains three or four farms and throws them into one. This naturally increases the competition for farms, and raises their price. But the price of your produce is not proportionately raised. It is true that the wages of artisans are much increased, and that many of them eat beef twice a day, which they did not do before. This, however, does not enhance the farmer's prices so much, as it draws imports from abroad. Then, again, you are subject to losses by weather. If it be dry, alas for your turnips. If it be wet, your corn is damaged. There are also losses of cattle by disease. Besides, sheep and oxen cannot be laid by until there is a demand in the market for them. An ox soon eats up his price without adding to his value. He must, therefore, be at once forced upon the market. These are all great drawbacks. What, then, is to be done? That which the manufacturer has to do in his