

IMPORTED SOUTHDOWN SHEEP.

THE PROPERTY OF MR. JOHN JACKSON, WOODSIDE FARM, ABINGDON, ONT.

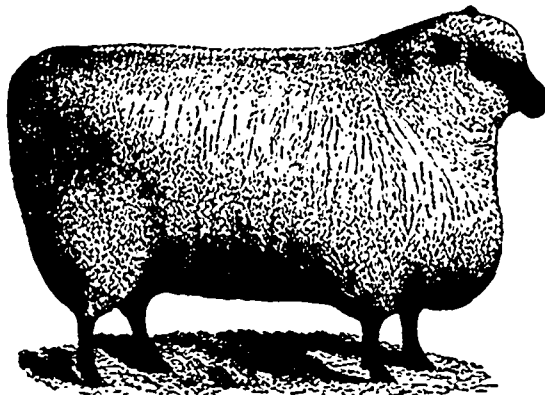
The sheep (see engravings) were imported in 1883. The ram, "Beau Brummel 36," was bred by Mr. Henry Webb, Streetly Hall, near Linton, Cambridgeshire, and is a very perfect specimen of the Southdown sheep (costing a long price). In 1883 he won first prize in his class as a shearling at Toronto, London, and other shows, standing at the head of Mr. Jackson's flock, awarded the champion prize at Provincial Fair, Guelph (open to all short-woolled breeds). In 1884 he won seven first prizes in his class and was at the head of Mr. Jackson's flock awarded the Dominion Gold Medal at Ottawa. The ewe was bred by Mr. Charles Chapman Frocester Court, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, won first prize at the Bath and West of England, and second at the Royal, in 1883 and has since won a large number of prizes in this country.

The Woodside flock of Southdown sheep, of which the two in our illustration form a part, has made perhaps the best prize record in 1884 ever made by a flock of Southdowns in any country in one season, having been exhibited at nine of the leading shows in Canada, carrying off one hundred and fifteen prizes, comprising 54 first, 40 second, and 21 third class honors. The Southdown is perhaps the oldest and purest bred of all the English breeds of sheep, having been bred on the chalk hills of Sussex for centuries, and although they have been greatly improved in regard to size and weight of fleece within the last century, it has been brought about by careful selection and feeding without an intermingling of other blood, as in the improvement of other breeds. Their superior quality as a mutton sheep with their purity of breeding is what makes them so valuable for crossing on other breeds. Of late years they have come very much into favor for that purpose, and while each different breed of sheep has something to commend it to public favor, the Southdown may claim superiority over all English breeds in the following characteristics: permanency of character, quality of wool, constitution, freedom from disease, impressive power, hardiness, reliable breeder, quality of flesh, prolificacy, good mothers, uniform fleece, cost of production, and early maturity. At the great Fat Stock Show recently held in Chicago, the first prize for best dressed carcass for wether under one year was awarded to a Southdown, also the prize for wether showing the greatest gain per day from birth was won by a Southdown. At the Smithfield Fat Stock Show in England (the greatest fat stock show in the world), held a few weeks ago, where all the English breeds are shown in their purity,

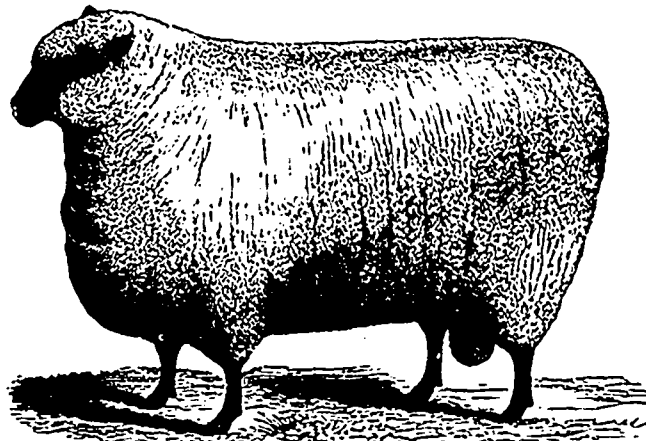
the champion prize for the best pen of sheep or lambs in the show yard, any age or breed, was awarded to a pen of Southdown lambs ten months old, their average weight being 187 lbs.

Farmers who, from the depressed state of the grain market, are contemplating a change and going into stock will do well to carefully weigh the claims of the different breeds and get the best.

In this country the Southdowns are as yet too scarce and valuable for breeding purposes to figure in our fat stock shows.



SOUTHDOWN EWES. Property of Mr. John Jackson, Abingdon, Ont.



SOUTHDOWN RAM, "Beau Brummel," property of Mr. John Jackson, Abingdon, Ont.

MULES ON THE FARM.

It must be a source of surprise to many who have had occasion to employ mules that they are so little used in Canada. It is quite true that here as across the international boundary the mule has been extensively employed in "literature" and "oratory." Indeed, there are many funny writers and "comic" speakers whose reputations have been mainly built on this much maligned, long-suffering animal. He has been described as able to kick higher than a bolting politician or an alderman that had "got left" in the matter of a champagne lunch. He has been accused of being as lost to all sense of decency and as devoid of principle as a ward politician, and it has been darkly hinted that

he can be as treacherous and ungrateful as a party leader after a general election. In fact the wildest hyperbole has been employed to emphasize and exaggerate the weak points of his character, while those who know him will have been usually too indifferent to stand up and tell the truth in his defence. The simple truth is that under reasonably kind treatment the mule is quite as intelligent and quite as docile as the horse, though as a rule he is rather less courageous. If he gets it into his head to be afraid of anything, it is very hard to convince him that it is not dangerous. A mule has a very strong will, but until he is rendered stubborn by unnecessary abuse he is

much less apt to assert his own views in opposition to those of his master than the horse is. And even when a mule manifests a very strong desire to have his own way, it is usually not a difficult thing to induce him to recede from the position he has taken. If gentle means are employed to convince him that his own interests can best be served by doing as he is told, he will usually be tractable enough, but it must be admitted that in many cases when a sharp cut of the whip might set a horse right, it would rouse in the mule the most determined and dogged opposition. Indeed, it is useless to deny that in temper the mule is a little faulty, though not nearly as much so as people generally imagine. Until he is rendered stubborn by abuse the mule is no more apt to be lazy than the horse is. In fact the mule is extremely sensitive so far as natural disposition is concerned, and no animal, not even the horse or dog, better enjoys being fondled and caressed. A kind-hearted, intelligent teamster will be much less apt to have trouble with a pair of properly broken mules than with horses equally well broken, but the trouble is that the mule is not nearly as apt to forget and forgive bad treatment as the horse is.

In other respects the mule has rather the best of the horse as far as farm work is concerned. He is longer lived, he will endure more hardship, and keep fat on less feed and poorer feed

than the horse. He is less liable to go lame and very rarely develops unsoundness of any kind. A well-broken active mule makes an excellent harness or saddle animal, performing extraordinary journeys with little or no apparent inconvenience.

There are many mares in every neighborhood that prove barren so far as their unions with stallions are concerned, that with the services of a good jack might be throwing good mule foals every year. There is no reason why such animals, at least, might not be utilized for the production of mules, while it is by no means clear that many mares that are annually dropping plain-looking, unsaleable foals would not be better employed in breeding mules.