

died in a most loathsome state of disease, bodies covered with pustules and a vicious ser running from the nose and from the eyes, leaving the sheep completely blind, and emitting the most foul stench that can be conceived. Local remedies are entirely unavailing. The lady was a mystery, and it became necessary that the best possible advice should be had, and that, too, without delay. Mr. Joseph Parry sent to London, last Monday week, to consult Prof. Simonds, the well known lecturer at the Royal Veterinary College. After hearing Mr. Parry's explanation of the symptoms. Professor Simonds came immediately to the conclusion that the disease from which the sheep were suffering was small-pox; but as small-pox has never been known to make its appearance except through infection—as, wherever it has appeared, its origin and propagation have always been traceable—its introduction into Mr. Parry's flock is perfectly unaccountable. Every suggestion which the Professor could offer was at once met by Mr. Parry. There had been no change on the male side of the flock for at least half a century. New male blood was only introduced once two years; and it was now two years since Mr. Parry had purchased or hired rams from another flock. Neither could it have been introduced by the shearers, as all the flocks which the shearers had shorn this year, both before and after Mr. Parry's, were known, and in neither was there the slightest symptoms of disease. In short, there was no traceable means of accounting for the visitation. A "chill" could not possibly produce it, as a common cause of illness would not produce a special disease of this description. Its spontaneous appearance, therefore, is a thing unheard of. Moreover, it is a disease unknown among English flocks; the only occasion of its appearance was having been 1847, when some Merino sheep which had just been imported were sold with the small-pox upon them at Smithfield market. This was the first known appearance of the disease among sheep in England; and although it was then unfortunately communicated to two flocks belonging to Mr. Statham, a farmer at Abchurch, near Windsor, and Mr. Weale, of Pinxton, and for a time found its way into Norfolk and Hampshire, it was ultimately eradicated, and from that time to the present there has been no known instance of small-pox in this country. To account for it in the present case, therefore, seemed impossible, inasmuch as Mr. Parry's had always been a notoriously healthy flock—well fed, carefully fed, and with all the advantages of fine down air. Still, from the symptom, Professor Simonds had no doubt about the fact, and he visited Allington on Friday last fully convinced by his previous persuasion. On examining the sheep he found them suffering in almost every stage of the disease. Some in which the disease had first shown itself exhibited a staggering gait, with slight fever, and swelled eyelids; others, when it had become more fully de-

veloped, red spots (easily discernable upon the bare parts on the inner surface of the legs) were found thickly studded over the body, while in those where the complaint had still further advanced, pustules (in form like the heads of linary small-pox) and malignant ulcers, emitting a thin stinking matter, were the distinguished features of the malady. A more loathsome sight than the sheep exhibit in this advanced stage can hardly be imagined. The contagious nature of the disease is truly astonishing. An instance is related (when it was introduced into England by the Spaniards in 1847) of its having broken out in a flock penned some distance off, but in the same field, while feeding on rape, clearly showing that infection was carried in the air from one flock to the other. Considerable danger has in the same way arisen on the continent (where the disease is well known) from the driving of a healthy flock on the same road or on the same down which had previously been travelled over by diseased sheep, or by the immediate transit of a sheep dog or a shepherd from one fold to another. But while it is so highly infectious to sheep, it is by no means so to other animals or to human beings. Cases are recorded in which children of all ages have been inoculated over and over again without any specific disease resulting; and the like experiment upon the cow, and even the goat, have been equally unavailing. Upon examining the flock on Saturday and Monday and again on Tuesday, Professor Simonds found that a great number of sheep had already passed through the most trying part of the malady while some (as many as 170) were declared by him to be perfectly convalescent. This being the case, it is impossible to say how long the disease has actually impregnated the flock; but to reduce its continuance to a certainty, and as the most effectual means of preserving those that have not already been attacked, Prof. Simonds suggested that the whole of the sheep should at once be inoculated; and, having placed the case entirely in the hands of the Professor, Mr. Parry assented to this proposition, and the whole flock of 1,700 sheep and lambs (exclusive of those which have died and those which have recovered) are accordingly at this moment either in an incipient or a malignant state of small-pox.

Adding misfortune to misfortune, the old shepherd who had tended the flock for the last thirty years dropped down dead among his sheep last Thursday evening. Proud of his flock, which had borne a high character, and reflected credit upon his management, the poor man seemed to feel the visitation most acutely; and there is no doubt that the anxiety under which he had been labouring for the previous month, acting upon a diseased heart, tended to bring about his melancholy end. He was endeavouring to catch one of the sheep on Thursday evening, when he fell with the animal under him, and almost instantly expired.