

7d. per lb. When Down wool fetches something like double, or, to speak more correctly, 75 per cent. more money than longwools, it is time to recast calculations as to the profitable nature of certain breeds of sheep. It is here assumed that the fleeces at York and Driffield would be mostly from Leicester and Lincoln sheep, and we are therefore under the impression that such wool makes 6½d. to 7½d. per lb., while Hampshire wool makes 11d. to 11½d. The Hampshire fleece of 5 lb. would thus equal in value to a Leicester fleece of over 8 lb. When the superior value of Down mutton is considered, the balance in favour of these breeds is fairly established. The lamentation over the price of wool will not find a sympathetic echo in the breasts of Hampshire and Southdown breeders, for the value of their wool has been rising for two years.

The price of sheep is very disappointing, especially of ewes. Much has been written upon the golden prospects of sheep breeders, but for some reason not easily explainable, the early fairs are no better, and probably are lower in prices than those of last year. The reason is to be found in the extraordinary nature of the season, which is turning out dry and harsh. Although all must feel thankful for the heat and settled weather of the last two weeks, the crop does not improve, and appears stunted. It encountered cold nights and insufficient moisture in its first stage, and was then met with drought and heat not favourable to rapid growth. The last few days have turned the pastures brown and made grass scarce, and complaints are already heard of a deficiency of sheep keep. This is in itself enough to depress prices, and accounts for a certain degree of shyness on the part of sheep buyers. It is probable that in many parts of the country the state of things is still worse, as the Midlands are short of grass, and crop prospects are not exhilarating.

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AMERICAN INFLUENCES UPON ENGLISH FARMS.

There is no doubt as to the practical character of American books and publications on agriculture, of their judicious avoidance of any excess of technical terms. Their willingness to go into details, with a general habit of speaking out so that persons of ordinary intelligence are always

able to follow the teacher; and in this all readers of this journal will recognize that the worthy Editor is not one whit behind his American confrères.

England has admired and may be benefited by noticing the way in which the American agricultural experiment stations invariably keep themselves in touch with the immediate needs of the agriculturists of the district, but still it is only right to admit that there are some respects in which the American influence has not been to England's advantage. Probably one of the worst services the United States has ever done England is by the caprice with which they take up, in turn, each one of the breeds of farms stock, and having set breeders all agog for American offers, "chuck it all up," leaving the folks that have been catering for them with an unsaleable lot of things, bred to suit an especial fancy. The race after Bates short-horn cattle, the preference for red ones, the Hereford boom, Aberdeen Angus boom; the demand for live stock registers (whether there is any facts to put in or not), all of these have had influences which cannot be thought to be benefits. The influence on short-horns was especially hurtful, for the result was that the English herds of one of the most generally serviceable breeds of cattle became full of specimens that no one cared to buy. They excited no competition for the herd, butcher, or dairy.

The Hereford and the polled breeds did not suffer to the same extent; but there must have been many disappointments to the breeders of these after making pain-staking and expensive preparations for customers who never came. With swine, the effect on the Berkshires has been the same as on the short-horns.

The useful, partly coloured rough-coated swine, have been transformed, to suit an American whim, into a fine skinned, black carcased animal with six tiny white markings, viz., the snout, on the tail, and on the four feet. They have been made as pretty as a child's rocking horse and with as much "go" about them.

The English curers of fine bacon and ham say, "What has become of the lean meat? of the flesh that was not too oily to take the salt?" There is no answer except to challenge admiration for the exact description of the "latest thing in petitoes."

Now in regard to live stock registers—of which the larger half have sprung into existence in