

Directly a lot was placed in the pen, he started it at a certain figure, and in the briefest space knocked it down, indicating the fact of the sale merely by a movement of his finger. So rapidly, indeed, were the animals brought forward and disposed of, that in twenty-nine minutes more than £50,000 had been realized." It is proverbial that slow salesmen make slow sales; as the bidders know that auctioneers of all kinds here in England will hang and potter and turn away in make-believe consultation, and do anything to get another guinea offered. It is not quite clear to us but that Mr. Page, clearly a man of original genius in his way, 'made' the sale, as one almost shudders to think how it might have been produced. And, further, how capital is the notion of the lot being sold by 'a movement of the finger,' instead of that absurd threatening, so continually repeated, to let the hammer drop, or the yet more fallacious business of setting the glass running. Again, 'there was a stand-up lunch, to which all and sundry were invited,' in place of the perfunctory ceremony so common here in England, where the chair is taken by somebody, not because the price is short-horn or knows a South-Down from a Leicester, but because he is a member for the borough, High-sheriff of the county, or the parson of the parish. And of course 'the customary loyal toasts' are given, and the health of 'our worthy host,' and of his 'worthy wife,' and of his 'dear home land,' and of the 'able chairman,' and of the 'auctioneer,' although everybody will hear quite enough of him during the rest of the day. As we once entered the luncheon tent in company with a famous breeder of stock, he seized on a seat handy to the door, saying, as he did so, 'if we sit here we can get out as soon as the speaking begins.' Cannot all this sort of thing be reformed, particularly when, with the auctioneer's eloquence, people have often to run for it before the business is over? But things may take a deal of selling, but good sell themselves, and when we come to really crack cattle, let us take example from the stand-up lunch, the stump of the old pump, and Mr. Page's forefinger. Naturally enough, the English, after the "hang fire" system to which they have been so long accustomed, were somewhat surprised, and one man straightway began babbles in millions. Moral: whether he be offering a estate, a race-horse, a Short-horn, or a sideboard, a talkative 'dwelling' salesman is a mistake. 27th Nov.

The only comment we have to add to the foregoing is the fact that the "certain figure," at which the several lots were started, was simply the first voluntary bid, and not an upset price, as might perhaps be inferred.

The Short-horn Controversy.

A sharp controversy is now going on in the English agricultural papers about the respective merits of the Booth and Bates families of Short-horns. Relative thereto, a correspondent of the London *Field* says:—

If Short-horn breeding is not to sink into an association of half a score or so of millionaires buying in one another's cattle at fabulous prices to set folks talking, it will be necessary for breeders to look at the pursuit from a wider point of view than that now taken up by purists, and lauded by the press. If all that is to be aimed at is obsequiously to copy the herd of some dead breeder who earned a reputation, it would seem more rational to adopt the dead man's method rather than to scramble for what are left of his tools in the condition that he left them. To have a right to public sympathy, it would be necessary to show some benefit accruing to the public from the pursuit. To judge by some recent observations it would seem as if some leading breeders thought the object of breeding was to confine an admirable breed of an animal in as few hands as possible.

Both the two national benefactors—the late Messrs. Bates and Booth—tried with such powers as they had (and these were large) to establish a distinct type of Short-horn. Both succeeded, and the moulds they left behind are deservedly much prized. But it should be the object of the admirers of each to reproduce the forms of the animals which won distinction for their original breeder, and not to reproduce pedigrees on paper, varying as little as possible from those which their forerunner left. It is quite well known that the animals which most resemble the original Duchesses have been found in tribes crossed with Duchess blood, but not of Duchess descent, and that cows reproducing the model of Bracelet and the Blossoms, or the four sister Queens, have occurred at intervals in very obscure families which have had the advantage of crosses of Killebray or Waraby blood. Such reappearances are more to the credit of the owner than animals which, having a pedigree

almost a fac-simile of original Bates or Booth pedigrees, and yet weedy or unsightly. Yet the tendency of the recent sales is to encourage young beginners to neglect the former, and to half ruin one another in a frantic effort to restrict the number of the possessors of the latter. It is a matter of common talk that at some not far distant auctions the best butchers' beasts have scarcely made butchers' prices.

No doubt, for special purposes, "pure" animals have a special value. But it must not be forgotten that the result of "pure" breeding has been that some most valuable families are fewer in numbers now than they were ten years ago. Is this a recommendation to the land occupiers to set up for keeping "pure" herds? The object of the land is to feed the people; and the really good stock are they which year by year contribute the largest portion of the best food for English families.

There is a tendency in much that is said and written about Short-horns to obscure the fact that no breed, when really in a natural condition, will milk long, or tender, or give more saleable carcasses than good Short-horns. The Irish and Scotch farmers (both of whom of late years have bred with greater intelligence than their English brethren) have never joined in the hunt after this "pure" will-o'-the-wisp, as we must needs regard it. The English press should encourage the English farmer not to join in flattering the owners of "pure" animals—in the esoteric sense of the word—which produce a good many more paragraphs than beefsteaks.

"Pure" cattle are all very well for the few who can afford to run the long-continued risk which pure breeding involves; and for the fewer still who know how to turn to best account such cattle when they have got them.

English Agricultural Statistics.

The following abstract of the agricultural returns of Great Britain for 1873, is furnished officially for the English papers:—

	1871.	1872.	1873.
Wheat, acres.....	3,571,894	3,229,257	3,390,332
Barley, do.....	2,253,593	2,316,512	2,330,020
Oats, do.....	2,713,567	2,794,737	2,676,231
Potatoes, do.....	127,691	161,933	141,093
Hay, do.....	14,029	13,527	13,223
Cattle, number.....	5,337,759	5,621,304	5,361,529
Sheep, do.....	27,113,563	27,921,797	29,127,623
Pigs, do.....	2,479,992	2,771,719	2,500,279

This shows, as to wheat, a decreased acreage of 3 per cent. as compared with 1872, and not quite 2½ per cent. as compared with 1871. The decrease in the acreage of barley is but little short, and in that of oats but little over one per cent., compared with 1872. In live stock there is an increase over last year of 6 per cent. on cattle, about 5½ per cent. on sheep, and a decrease of nearly 10 per cent. on swine.

The decrease in the acreage of wheat is much smaller than had been estimated by leading writers on the prospect of the crop the present season. On the other hand, however, the crop has turned out enough below the earlier estimates more than to make up for the difference. The official statement of the average price of wheat shows an advance of about six shillings sterling per quarter, against the price at the same time in 1872, as follows:—

Wheat, average price, September, 1872.....	57s. 5d.
do, do, 1873, 1874.....	63s. 2d.
do, do, 1874, 1875.....	63s. 4d.
Am. Flour, price per bush, September, 1872.....	29s. 6d.
do, do, 1873, 1874.....	31s. 3d.
do, do, 1874, 1875.....	31s. 3d.

It will be observed how slight are the variations in the acreage of the several crops from year to year, under the definite systems of rotation and culture adopted on British farms—illustrating the fact to which we have often adverted, that English farmers adhere in the main to the purposes to which experience has led them to devote their land, comparatively regardless of ups and downs in prices—depending for their profit upon the general result for a series of years, and not attempting, as is so customary here, to change with every turn of prices from one branch to another. The consequence of our system, or lack of system, is that each branch in turn is overdone; when wheat is high we put too much land into it that the price at once fluctuates to the contrary extreme; and so of Indian corn and pork-making, of wool-growing, dairying, &c. At the same time there appears to be a tendency in English agriculture to diminish (or not to extend) the area in grain crops, in which the competition from other countries is most seriously felt, and to devote more and more attention to the making of beef and mutton, which cannot be imported on so large a scale from the adjacent continent, and still less from America or Australia.—*Country Gentleman.*

English Ram Sales of 1873.

A great change has taken place of late years. Time was when the sheep that sell most readily today were not even known beyond their own locality; when the Leicesters and South-Downs were about the only recognized breeds in the country, and commanded great prices. Now the number of rams sold is comparatively small, and the prices barely remunerative. At Chichester market, a few days since, we learn from a contemporary that Mr. Measman's rams were unlet, and that others made wretched prices; and from eight to twelve guineas seems about the range of auction lettings of Leicesters. There are doubtless instances in which more money is made, but the demand is limited in both cases. Let us look at some of the Shropshire sales. Mr. Procco had a great attendance at his first Shrewsbury sale, and most of the lots went off well. Lord Chesham, whose successes in the show yard have placed him at the head of the list, sold and let over thirty sheep at an average of over £40 a head; three animals making 105 guineas, 110 guineas, and 150 guineas. The Messrs. Cranes disposed of a large lot, averaging over £20. At Mr. Coxon's sale two sheep made 100 guineas and 105 guineas; whilst Mrs. Deach's second prize shearing at Hull was let the other day for 200 guineas, the highest price ever made of a Shropshire. Customers from all parts, not only of this country, but Ireland and the colonies, testify to the demand for these rent-paying sheep. Three rams and fifteen ewes have been selected from Lord Chesham's flock, and despatched to Australia; the former at 50 guineas each, and the latter at 10 guineas each. The Hampshire sheep have also met with a ready demand. Ram lambs are principally used, and Mr. Rawlence, of Balbridge, a leading breeder, let two lambs at 75 and 72 guineas respectively, averaging over a large lot 22½ guineas for those let, and 16½ guineas for such as were sold. Mr. C. Dibber, however, stands at the top of the tree, having let a ram for £162 15s. The Lincoln's have also sold remarkably well. At Mr. Kirkham's sale, at Dischamps, sixty-two shearlings made an average of close upon £25, and the older sheep rather more. A considerable proportion were purchased for New Zealand, where the Lincolns are much appreciated. Great prices were made at the Messrs. Dudding's sale, where an average of £29 was reached. Here again large purchases for New Zealand greatly affected the total.—*The Field.*

Portrait of the late Luther Tucker.

The *Country Gentleman* is presenting its paid-up subscribers and exchanges with a beautiful steel engraving, which is a life-like portrait of its late senior editor and proprietor. Our best thanks are due and are hereby tendered for the copy which has reached this office. Slight as was our acquaintance with the original, we detect the resemblance of the picture at a glance. Nor can we refrain from expressing our appreciation of the filial love which has taken this method of showing respect to an honored father's memory, and at the same time giving his large circle of friends a welcome and valuable memento and memorial of him.

North American Bee Keepers' Society.

The next annual meeting of this body will be held at Louisville, Kentucky, commencing the first Wednesday of December, and continuing in session two or three days. Hitherto Canada has had but a single representative at the meetings of this important Society. Will not others of our bee-keepers make an effort to attend this year? It is expected that arrangements will be made for reduced fares on the railroads, and cheap board at the Louisville hotels.

Not having received the expected official information relative to the Ontario Agricultural College, at the date of our going to press, we have no alternative but to delay its publication until our next issue.

We direct attention to the superior cotton warps manufactured by William Parks & Son, New Brunswick Cotton Mills, St. John, N. B. These yarns are almost exclusively used in the maritime provinces, and are being successfully introduced into Quebec and Ontario.