

seem to be the Bramah Pootra, possibly because they are the scarcest. Assuming they will ever come into general request, there is no fear that they will soon find their level from forties and fifties to common sense prices. Unable as we are to do full justice to the awards, we may yet avail ourselves of the opinion of the judges, as to be gathered occasionally from a note in the prize list. They recorded, then, two classes of the silver-spangled Hamburg as "*meritorious*," the colored Dorkings as "*very meritorious, and deserving the highest commendation*." The cinnamon and buff Cochins were, on the same authority, "*an excellent class*;" the white Cochins "*a very good class*;" the Dorking cocks shown singly, "*a very excellent class*;" the Spanish cocks shown singly were "*the whole class commended*;" the Game fowl, blacks and brassy-winged, as a class "*generally meritorious*;" the white Aylesbury ducks also "*generally meritorious*;" and the turkeys "*a very good class*." As for the Aylesbury ducks, we never remember to have seen anything like so generally excellent a collection, and we have known them some time, too, both at home and abroad.

When we find, year after year, how one show is made to support the other, we come the more to wonder how the Smithfield and Birmingham meetings should ever have been allowed to clash. Without the opportunity of visiting the two, one cannot fairly ascertain how the different breeds of stock are just at present supported. By the experience of the Smithfield Show, for example, we might have written the Hereford cattle as going rather out of fashion. Birmingham steps in, opportunely enough, to correct this. The best beast here was a Hereford—he took the gold medal as the best. The best cow here was a Hereford, and she took the gold medal as the best. There was no want of competition, either, to damage such proof. The gold medal cow at Smithfield—that mistaken notion of Mr. Towneley's—was at Birmingham. She was here, again, the best of her sort; but not, the judges decreed, the best of all. The show of Shorthorn cows and heifers, in fact, went very much as the week previous—Mr. Towneley and Mr. Langston again first and second with their cows, and Mr. Phillips with his heifer. These classes—the Durham cows and heifers—were altogether very good, and might have been generally commended. The Shorthorn oxen and steers, on the other hand, were quite as remarkable the other way. A rougher lot, taking them all, we never remember to have seen; and there was nothing like a first-class animal amongst them. Mr. Stratton, it will be observed, took the uppermost place, with a beast undistinguished at Smithfield, and by no means in high favor here.

A limited entry of Devons still spoke more satisfactorily to the general excellence of the sort. We do not remember a bad animal amongst them. The show, however, was chiefly confined to our best known exhibitors: Prince Albert and Lord Leicester carrying all before them. The Prince's Devon heifer, first here, was the second prize at Smithfield; while of Devon cows there

was only one exhibited, but to that one the judges very properly awarded the premium. For general merit, we must repeat, the lead was unmistakably with the Herefords: when we come to consider the good cows and heifers in both the Durham and Devon classes that succumbed to a Hereford, we may fairly assume that Mr. Stedman's was a very perfect animal. She exhibited, indeed, both in form and color, all the best points of her breed, and had a round, low, and broad contour, not always the distinguishing marks of the sort. Mr. Heath's gold medal ox, though apparently not so highly bred, had fattened into a very serviceable beast; still his superiority over those against him was not so apparent—a fact that speaks well for the general strength of the entry. It is remarkable that the gold medal beast of the Birmingham Show at this meeting is the twin-calf of the one which took the same honor last year. In the Hereford steers Prince Albert and Mr. Niblett with the same two animals changed the places they occupied in London—the Prince here being the first and Mr. Niblett the second. It will be recollected the same thing happened last year with the two Shorthorn cows, and public opinion declared that the Birmingham was the more correct award. There is little choice, though, in this instance: both are very good, and two fresh sets of judges would be quite as prone again to differ.

Of the other kinds of cattle, the Long-horn has but a local repute that is not very likely to extend in its influence. Far more popular, one would imagine, must be the Highlanders and Scots, of which there were some very capital specimens. Birmingham, in fact, is commonly strong in these classes—the best quality of meat, we are assured, that the butcher can procure, and yet a beast never shown to the extent that might be expected. The Duke of Beaufort exhibited some promising crosses of the West Highlander with both the Gloucester and Jersey cow, the former obtaining a commendation from the judges.

In the show of sheep, considerable advance was observable—especially in the Southdowns, by far the best ever seen here. Despite the absence of the Duke of Richmond, Lord Walsingham could not improve on the two second premiums he took at Smithfield—a sufficiently significant fact of what he had against him. The sheep, however, above all others peculiar to Birmingham, is the Shropshire Down, one of the most useful varieties we have, and that is daily growing into repute. One of the great secrets of the sheep-breeder is this improving or enlarging on the frame of the pure Southdown; and we can only say it has been most successfully attempted by "the proud Salopians." It is being more boldly tested with other breeds, as some very excellent pens of cross-bred sheep bore witness to. They were all Downs on one side, crossed with the Leicester, Cotswold, and Oxfordshire Longwools; the most successful being with the Cotswold.

In the pig classes—once a strong point in a Midland Counties show—there was a very observable falling-off, both in the number and quality of those exhibited. It has often struck us, indeed,