

ly every spectator, were utterly inferior to all the better specimens of those which had been passed over. In such cases the third judge, being usually a north country breeder, has been placed in the disagreeable position of having to dissent from his colleagues at every decision and had better not have been there at all. At Perth last year the case was reversed: as two of the judges were Scotch and one Irish. The latter, having been used to sheep of the English type, could only look on and see his colleagues award the prizes quite contrary to his judgment. I do not see how the Directors could have come to any other decision than that which they adopted, viz., to deal with all Leicester sheep as constituting one breed. At the same time I am fully persuaded that their premiums will never be awarded in a way that will secure the confidence of the members of the Society, unless the decisions are made by men who at least recognize the genuineness of the Border sheep, and their eligibility to carry prizes when of sufficient merit. Now, it is well known that this is not the case with breeders from the midland counties of England, who for the most part, have no scruple in expressing the opinion that our Border sheep are not Leicesters at all. And our south country neighbours, while refusing to call our sheep *Leicesters*, have provided another name for them. In most of the reports of the recent show at Leeds, notice was taken of an experiment then in progress on the farm where the steam ploughs were tried, for the purpose of testing the comparative merits of a number of different breeds of sheep, amongst which was enumerated the *Barnshire* breed. Again, in the prize report on the farming of Yorkshire, in the 22nd volume of the "Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England," p. 122, the author speaks more than once of the *Barnshire* breed of sheep. Now, I daresay, many persons, in reading these reports, must have been puzzled as to the locality of this *Barn* or *Barnshire*, and may have felt some curiosity to know what kind of sheep was referred to. The explanation is just this: A fair for the sale of draft-ewes has for a long time been held annually, in the month of September, near Wooler, in Northumberland, which, from the day in the calendar on which it takes place, is known as St. Ninian's, or, in northern dialect, St. Ringan's fair. The site of this fair lying in the part of Northumberland which in the olden time was called Bamboroughshire, the graziers and dealers from Yorkshire, by whom these ewes used to be bought, got into the way of calling their purchases "Bamboroughshire sheep," which for handiness was shortened into *Bampshire*, and has now as we have seen, got varied into *Barnshire* and *Barnshire*. The fair just referred to has now greatly declined from its former importance in consequence of the annual drafts of ewes from the innumerable flocks of Northumberland, Merse, and Teviotdale being

bought up at home, or at local markets, by dealers who convey them by rail to the great markets annually held at York, Harwood, &c. Forty years ago the sheep bred in the districts just referred to were exclusively Leicesters, and it was to these that the name *Bampshire* was first applied. About that date, however, many of our farmers began to try a cross betwixt Cheviot ewes and Leicester rams, and these two breeds were found to blend so readily, not only in a first cross, but also with a continued use of the pure Leicester ram and the cross-bred ewes for successive descents, and to produce so useful an animal, at once hardy, prolific, of good size, with great aptitude to fatten, and excellent quality both of wool and mutton, that this mixed breed rapidly superseded the pure Leicester, *except in the case of ram breeding flocks*. I may here notice that in the Border districts a pure Leicester is invariably called a *bred sheep par excellence*. Sheep of the first and second cross betwixt Leicester and Cheviot are in like manner half *bred*, or two-parts *bred*, as the case may be; but when they are the produce of a pure Leicester ram and ewe of the mixed breed of three or four or more descents, I suspect that, when taken south, the old name of *Bampshire* is often applied indiscriminately to them as well as the pure Leicesters. The latter, as I have said, are now found only in the hands of regular ram breeders; but that their flocks are still comparatively numerous, may be inferred from the fact that, at the ram fair now annually held at Kelso in the month of September, from 1,600 to 2,000 shearing Leicester rams are presented for sale, and are most of them bred in the surrounding districts.

And now again for the question: Are these rams really pure Leicesters? They certainly differ much in appearance from the type of sheep now found in the midland counties of England. They are stronger in the bone, larger in frame, have white faces and legs, and are altogether of a more robust form than their modern English kindred. Are these diversities, then, due to crossing, or are they entirely owing to selection, and the influences of climate? Now, without claiming absolute purity for every flock, I do believe that those of the best breeders on the Borders can establish as direct and pure a descent from Bakewell's flock as any now to be found elsewhere. Let us inquire when, and by whom, the Leicester breed was first introduced to the Borders. It is well known that this was largely due to the Messrs. Culley, who in 1767, migrated from the county Durham to Tweedside, and brought with them excellent breeds of live stock, and in particular a flock of sheep of the pure Leicester, or *Disley* breed, as they were then called. Mr. George Culley was the personal friend of Bakewell, and the author of a treatise on live stock, in which his description of the *Disley* breed of sheep quite corroborates the opinion which it is my present object to