

mer was to reduce it this year to £40. annually in consequence of the operation of Free Trade. But to return to the ploughing match. There was 8 classes to enter in, in the class open to all England, there was 49 entries. The following is an extract from the Report.

RUTLAND PLOUGHING MEETING.

It is 23 years since Mr. R. W. Baker, of Cottesmore, first turned his attention to the advantage of encouraging good ploughing in Rutland by means of annual competition; at that time there were very few good ploughmen; but as meeting followed meeting, the spirit of honorable rivalry increased, until at length the smallest county in England stood before the agricultural world as the most celebrated for its arable cultivation. Rutland ploughing having reached this point of pre-eminence, and Mr. Baker having arrived at the 20th year of his management, three years ago he relinquished his position, in the hope that what he had so well established might be continued by others; no one, however, seemed willing to take the responsibility of the meetings, and the annual competition ceased until the present year, when Mr. Baker again resolved to take the field, and the result has been the largest and most important series of ploughing matches ever known in this or any other country. The locality selected for the trial of industrial skill was Great Casterton and Ingthorpe (two miles from Stamford), on the farms of Mr. Edw. Roberts; and at eight o'clock on Tuesday the 8th inst., no less than 133 ploughs were simultaneously set to work. The scene was a most imposing one; and as the operations progressed, admiration was on all sides expressed at the extreme nicety with which the numerous competitors guided their shares, turning up ridges straight as a line, and forming furrows of such accurate dimensions that not the least difference of measurement was perceptible. The judges had a most difficult task to perform in selecting the best men, though in the end their decisions gave general satisfaction. The number of visitors to the fields in which the ploughing took place was immense, and the village of Casterton had not presented such a busy aspect for many years. Among the county gentry who attended the operation in the course of the morning were Gilbert John Heathcote, Esq., M.P., and some friends, Geo. Finch, Esq., and his daughter, the Hon. Gerard Jas. Noel, M.P., the Hon. Henry Noel, Stafford O'Brien, Esq., J.A. Ransome, Esq., of Ipswich, &c., &c. The judges were Mr. T. R. Cutbush, of Teston, Kent; Mr. Hawkins of Assingden Hall, Suffolk; Mr. Benj. Painter, of Carlton Curlicu, Leicestershire; Mr. Harrison, of Bagworth Park, Leicestershire; Mr. Burbidge, of Wakerley; and Mr. Fowler, of Exton.

The ploughs used were chiefly manufactured by local makers, being Ransome's principles adapted to the soil and system of the county. The quantity to be ploughed by each candidate was half an acre of land, and the conditions were that the work should be done within four hours, the furrows not less than four inches deep, and horses abreast without a driver.

At the Dinner, amongst the toasts given, a Mr. Harmond proposed "The Plough Makers of England," and coupled with it the name of Mr. Allan Ransome of Ipswich.

Mr. RANSOME said it was to him a source of great pleasure, though not unattended with difficulty, to be able to join the company on the present occasion; for, when he looked back through the long vista of years during which he had occasionally been associated with his kind friend Mr. Baker, and with many of those now present whose heads had grown grey since he had known them—and when he found that the places of some of his early acquaintances had been supplied by younger men whom he had not before met—it was gratifying to find that the object of efforts of more than 20 years' continuance had been fully and successfully realized (cheers). He remembered the time when Rutland was behind the other Midland Counties in ploughing, and when he introduced ploughs which were the types of those now in use; and he congratulated the county on its efforts to carry to perfection this necessary employment. He heartily recognized as brother-workers those makers who had taken the Ransome plough as their model; and, far from looking upon them as competitors, he hailed with satisfaction the display of their ingenuity, and felt great pleasure in meeting them. He had no desire to lower the value of the improvements which had been made in some of the ploughs; but, as an implement-maker, he thought it right to warn them of this fact, and to acknowledge an error into which he had himself possibly fallen, that by a too high breeding as it were, by attempting to make the very best article for the species of competition they had that day witnessed, it did not necessarily follow that the plough best adapted for that purpose was the best description of plough for general purposes. (Hear.) It was important to look to that which would tend most to promote the pounds-shillings-and-pence value of cultivation, and not be led away by the applause which attended success on occasions like the present. Reverting to the principal object of the day, Mr. Ransome said it was pleasant to be able to congratulate the company on the increasing prosperity which attended their efforts in Rutland to promote the cause of good ploughing. He had for many years attended ploughing meetings, though for the last few seasons he had from necessity held himself excused; but, like a good hunter, at the sound of the horn he could not refuse to visit his friends in Rutland, upon re-