

mistry, we are told that it will be his immediate duty to acquire this knowledge. In the first place, however, we do not believe that this is the way to acquire a knowledge of agriculture; and, in the next place, we are certain that it is a knowledge of agriculturists, quite as much as a knowledge of agriculture, that an agricultural Editor requires.

In fact, it is the heroic idea of Agricultural Education which has been of late years prevalent in Hanover Square that has all along been leading them astray: but this must be the subject of remark hereafter. Meanwhile, it is obvious that, though the Editor should, as no doubt he can and will, give us in his Journal good geology, good botany, good chemistry, and so on, dressed in good English, yet, unless he give us good agriculture in its pages, they will be left unread, as heretofore, by those to whom they are especially addressed.

We are accused of presumption in questioning the unanimous decision of a large and competent committee. But, whether it be presumptuous or not, we are certain it is the duty of the *Agricultural Gazette* to protest with all the force it can command, that agriculture includes within it a special department of knowledge; and that this, like every other, must be acquired, investigated, studied, within its own limits, under competent, professionally educated men; and that, as it is a farce to elect an entire outsider (however clever otherwise he may be) as teacher and leader within a special department of instruction, such as agriculture is, so is it either treason or delusion for those in charge of the election, with the interests of agriculture and of agriculturists committed to them, to sanction any such a thing.

THERE is no subject connected with the farm upon which practical men so differ as the character of the rook. One calls him a black thief, and traps and shoots or scares him with every engine he can command. Boys with clapper in hand make the day hideous by hooting and yelling at this bird, but he still lives and thrives. On the other hand there are those who would elevate the rook to the highest rank of utility, who would never have him shot, but at all times treat him as a friend.

We do not for a moment think that our friend, for such we believe him to be, is absolutely perfect, yet we would not have it quoted against us that—

“— oftentimes excusing of a fault  
Doth make the fault the worse by the excuse.”

We would rather exclaim—

“With all thy faults I love thee still.”

This year the “surface grub,” the larva of a *Noctua*, has been particularly active. We have gathered as many as five inch-long individuals from around a single root, and it seems to us that their broods increase year by year. And in such a dry summer as we have just experienced their depredations are all the more serious. As it is, the bulb will be scarred and scored, and we fear that the quality is also injured by the production of hard woody fibre within it. Now on our farm rooks are respected, and they have consequently saved several patches of Swedes and aided our Mangels by their ceaseless scavenging as it may be called. It is true that unbelievers among us have shot a few from time to time in order to convince us of our errors, but the few in question have afforded conclusive evidence of the good they had done us; for their gizzards contained an average of 38 of the surface grubs in each!

It is true that there was a little corn therewith, but those who have suffered from insects well know that their destruction is cheaply attained at the expense of a little grain. One, however, of the most interesting cases of insect attacks we have observed this year still remains to be noticed. On recently going over a field of *Trifolium incarnatum*, we noticed how regularly the young plant had come up. It was then favourably progressing to the second leaf, and the whole field looked green with a well-growing plant; but on going over the same field only five days afterwards, rooks in hundreds were observed to be busy, and the promising crop was nearly all destroyed. “Holloa!” said our companion, “the rooks have done it now, they have eaten up all the *Trifolium!*” and there, sure enough, where the rooks were most busy, the soil was bare, and no plant was to be seen, and at first the case looked bad against the birds. But having unshaken confidence in them we ventured to look a little below the surface, and on remov-

ing the soil on the bare patches it was found that there were hundreds of the larvæ of the *Melolontha vulgaris*—Cockchafer, or May-beetle of the first year. It would seem that eggs of these were laid in the previous crop of Oats, and as soon as the *Trifolium* came up they were ready to devour it, which indeed they had done so completely, and in so short a time, that we ploughed up the whole for the double purpose of exposing the depredators to their enemies the rooks, and then sowing the field with Vetches.

These cases, then, point to the great importance of a knowledge of insects and birds to the farmer. In Paris there is a *Société d’Insectologie Agricole*, which had a special exhibition in the Palais de l’Industrie last month, and held bi-weekly conferences on agricultural insects, and we are glad to find that a Museum of these objects is being got together at the Horticultural Society. In France this branch of study has really been forced upon the cultivator by the injuries he suffers from the attacks of insects, which we think are mainly attributable to the paucity of birds. In this country we would have every candidate for an agricultural certificate pass an examination in the leading facts and principles of ornithology and entomology; as, from the ignorance which prevails on these subjects, cultivation is becoming daily more difficult, true friends are sacrificed to imperfect observation, and too often the real enemy is encouraged. B.

— THE Corn Markets have been dull throughout the week, and in most instances a slight decline in prices has occurred.—In the Stock Markets, the forced sales which have resulted from want of feed are beginning to tell, for while “meaty” animals make full prices, inferior kinds are less numerous, and their value is proportionately increased.

— We are very glad to see it announced that Mr. MCCOMBIE, of Tillyfour, is elected one of the Members for Aberdeenshire. It is to be earnestly hoped that he will be accompanied to the new Parliament by his brother farmer, Mr. C. S. READ. Whether on questions of merely party politics they shall be agreed or not, it is on professional agricultural grounds of the greatest importance that at least two Members of the tenant-farmer class shall be present in the new House of Commons to support the special interests of farmers there; and to give that professional and even technical information, without which debates on agricultural questions cannot but in some degree be liable to mislead.

— Mr. DARWIN, writing from “Down, Bromley, Kent, S.E.,” makes the following request, for which we bespeak the favourable attention of our readers:—“I should be greatly obliged to any one who keeps Merino sheep, or any other breed in which the ewes are hornless, or to any one who has the power of inquiring about such breeds, if he would take the trouble to inform me at what age the horns first appear in the young rams, or acquire a certain specified length, in comparison with other breeds of sheep in which both sexes possess horns. Or, to put the case more generally, is there any difference in the period of development of the horns in the breeds in which they are common to both sexes, and in those in which they are confined to the males? I am anxious for information on this head, as I believe such facts have an important bearing on an obscure point in inheritance.”

— From the proceedings at a recent meeting at Halberton, in Devonshire, we gather that the feud between the clergyman and the farmers of this parish has not yet healed. We refer to these proceedings, however, only for the sake of extracting a single passage bearing on the subject of agricultural wages:—“Mr. PEARCE had not intended to mention the name of Canon GIRDLESTONE there, or to introduce their parochial differences to that meeting; but the Canon’s paper at Norwich demanded a reply. The Canon had said that the labourer earned 8s. or 9s. a week. Now he had gone through his labour book, and taken out the amount paid to one of his labourers from Lady Day, 1867, to Lady Day, 1868. Although this man received nominally 8s. a week, he actually received, taking all the year round, 10s. a week in money; and with grist corn, convenience for pig, and other things, he received as much as made up the wages to the value of 14s. a week. The labourer was not, therefore, in the poverty-stricken and degraded state which had been represented. He altogether denied that anything which Canon GIRDLESTONE had done had had any influence whatever in altering the rate of wages in that locality. He was glad to say that the condition of the labourer had of late years been ameliorated, but not since the Canon had made his onslaught on the farmers of the parish.”

— One word more on the “pulp” of the Beet-sugar manufacture. The 1s. 6d. per ton mentioned in a recent paragraph as the price of this pulp is more properly the price which Beet growers pay for it out of the roots which they sell to the manufacturer. Mangel pulp is sold at the works for 12s. a ton, and as 8 tons of roots go to make one ton of the refuse pulp, it is clear that a grower selling 8 tons, and buying the pulp from them, pays 1s. 6d. per ton of the roots he sent in for the pulp he takes out.

— The following is an extract from a letter written by the master of a school in the west of Somers-

setshire to Sir W. TREVELYAN, October 28, 1868:—“The ‘Acorn gathering,’ or ‘masting,’ has this year proved a great source of profit to the families of the labourers, and also of bad attendance at school. I have talked with many old people, and one and all say they never remember ‘such a plenty of mast.’ After a wind the roads have been strewn under the trees in such a manner that they could be scraped up. The Acorns are very large and well ripened, and stock of all kinds will eat them greedily. I have been told of three farmers in the neighbourhood who have purchased 150, 200, and 200 bushels respectively for stock. The price has generally been 1s. 4d. per bushel, but taking 1s. 3d. as the average, we should get 34l. 7s. 6d. from these three, added (as we may take it) unexpectedly to the earnings of those who collected them, who are almost entirely women and children. Talking with a girl nine years of age on the way home from church on Sunday, I found that her mother, self, and a younger sister and brother, had gathered and sold 32 bushels, had 10 bushels stored, had given Acorns ‘to the pig all along,’ and hoped to pick a great deal more this week. No wonder then that the children do not come to school, nor can we blame the parents for not sending them, when they have such a chance of gaining a little. But such breaks in the school work as this and the wort gathering (of which I gave you an account some time ago) are quite disastrous to anything like uniformity of progress among the children, and are not enough taken into account in the legislation on the subject of education.”

#### OUR LIVE STOCK.

WE beg to call the attention of our readers to the sale of the Rev. John Storer’s Shorthorns, which takes place on December 2, at the Lawrence Sheriffs’ Arms Inn, Rugby; Mr. John Thornton, auctioneer. The catalogue contains the names of some well-bred Booth Shorthorns, intermixed with others of less fashionable blood.

*Modred*, a white cow, calved in February, 1861, got by VALASCO (15,443), is splendidly haired, and has good quarters and loins, but a plain head. She is out of Mr. John Booth’s *Mistress Mary*, and is half-sister to the well-known COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF (21,451). She is by the same bull as the dam of Mr. Foljambe’s prize calves at Leicester. *Rosedale 2d* is half-sister to the celebrated *Rosedale*, the winner of more than 20 prizes, cups, and medals in England, besides others in Canada. She is of first-class appearance, straight, and level, with excellent loins and well laid shoulders. Unfortunately, *Rosedale 2d* has lost her calf. *Anna 3d*, by MANTALINI PRINCE (22,276), is a large and somewhat plain 3-year-old heifer; descended from *Adelaide* by ALBERT (727), the highest-priced cow at the Studley sale in 1834. She calved a red and white bull on November 8, which died a few hours after it saw the light. *Killerby Queen 2d* is a very taking heifer by MANTALINI PRINCE, and descended from Mr. John Booth’s *Calomel*, by HAMLET (8126). One of the best pedigrees is that of *Lady Booth*, a roan heifer, calved April, 1866, got by BARON BOOTH (21,212), dam *La Valliere*, by GAINFORD 5TH (12,913). She may be described as full of character and quality, and as of gay colour. Like most of Mr. Storer’s stock, she is poor, and requires better keep. She has had one calf, dropped on September 3, and is a very good milker. The yearlings and calves comprise *Royal Mistress* by ROYAL BUCKINGHAM, dam *Modred* (lot 2)—a very thick and well-made heifer, with wonderfully developed loins. This animal was shown with *Killerby Queen 3d* (lot 11) at Leicester, but without obtaining honours. *Mantalini 2d* is a white calf, 3 months old, of very taking appearance, and well haired. Among the bulls, we may mention PRINCE OF ROSDALE, by PRINCE OF THE REALM (22,627), dam *Rosy*, as a very excellent animal, particularly level and stylish, and of a fine deep red colour. He has been used by Mr. Carr, of Stackhouse. 3D EARL OF ROSDALE, by ROYAL BUCKINGHAM (20,718), dam *Rosy*, is, if anything, superior to his half-brother just spoken of; he is of great length, and at the same time square, thick, and good in every point. ROYAL BUCKINGHAM, who heads the list of bulls, is the sire of six lots, and is from the dam of PRINCE OF THE EMPIRE (20,578), the sire of Mr. How’s *Jolly Queen* and *Lady Anne*. In general the stock may be said to be well haired, with good loins and middles. Mr. Storer is not a high feeder, but with the extra indulgence he is now allowing them we expect to see his cattle come into the sale ring in fair good order.

— The present time is not eventful so far as important sales of Shorthorns are concerned. We learn that Mr. Barclay, of Keavil, has sold his NORTHERN DUKE (22,431), to Mr. E. J. Tunnicliffe, of Bromley Hall, Eccleshall. Mr. Meakin, of Shobnall Grange, has secured OXFORD (20,450), own brother to the dam of Mr. M’Intosh’s *Lady Oxford 5th*. He was imported from America with the Thorndale bulls and sold to Mr. Slye, who resold him to Mr. Noakes, of Kent, from whom he goes to Mr. Meakin’s herd.

— Mr. Jacob Wilson has favoured us with information as to the present number of the herd of wild cattle at Chillingham Park in Northumberland. Representatives of the ancient progenitors of any of our present established breeds of cattle must ever be looked upon with interest, especially when we remember the mystery which envelops the origin of many of our domestic animals. Such representatives are to be met with at Chillingham Park, the property of the Earl of Tankerville, at the Chase of Cadzow, the property of the Duke of Hamilton, at Chartley Park, the property of Lord Ferrers, and at Ribblesdale in Yorkshire. It was the opinion of Sir Walter Scott that the Chillingham and Hamilton cattle were the “remnants of the