and in the night ſometimes keep off the bears, by whirl­ing fire-brands : four of them belonging to the flock mentioned above lie here. I viewed their flock very care­fully, and by means of our guide and interpreter, made ſome inquiries of the ſhepherds, which they anſwered readily, and very civilly. A Spaniard at Venaſque, a city in the Pyrenees, gives 600 livres French (the livre is 10 1/2d. Engliſh) a-year for the paſturage of this flock of 2000 ſheep. In the winter he ſends them into the lower parts of Catalonia, a journey of 12 or 13 days, and when the ſnow is melted in the ſpring, they are conducted back again. They are the whole year kept in motion, and moving from ſpot to ſpot, which is owing to the great range they everywhere have of paſture. They are always in the open air, never houſed or under cover, and never taſte of any food but what they can find on the hills.

“ Four ſhepherds, and from four to six large Spaniſh dogs, have the care of this flock: the lacter are in France called of the *Pyrenees breed ;* they are black and white, of the ſize of a large wolf, a large head and neck, arm­ed with collars ſtuck with iron ſpikes. No wolf can ſtand againſt them ; but bears are more potent adversaries : if a bear can reach a tree, he is ſafe; he rises on his hind legs, with his back to the tree, and ſets the dogs at de­fiance. In the night the ſhepherds rely entirely on their dogs ; but on hearing them bark are ready with fire-arms, as the dogs rarely bark if a bear is not at hand. I was ſurpriſed to find that they are fed only with bread and milk. The head ſhepherd is paid 120 livres a-year wages and bread ; the others 80 livres and bread. But they are allowed to keep goats, of which they have many which they milk every day. Their food is milk and bread, except the fleſh of ſuch ſheep or lambs as accidents give them. The head ſhepherd keeps on the mountain top, or an elevated ſpot, from whence he can the better see around while the flock tra­verses the declivities. In doing this the ſheep are expoſed to great danger in places that are ſtony ; for by walking among the rocks, and eſpecially the goats, they move the ſtones, which, rolling down the hills, acquire an accelerated force enough to knock a man down, and ſheep are often killed by them ; yet we ſaw how alert they were to avoid ſuch ſtones, and cautiouſly on their guard againſt them. I examined the ſheep attentively. They are in general polled, but ſome have horns ; which in the rams turn backwards behind the ears and project half a circle forward ; the ewes horns turn alſo behind the ears, but do not project : the legs white or reddiſh ; ſpeckled faces, ſome white, ſome reddiſh ; they would weigh fat, I reckon, on an average, from 15 lb. to 18 lb. a quarter. Some tails ſhort, ſome left long. A few black ſheep among them : ſome with a very little tuft of wool on their foreheads. On the whole they reſemble thoſe on the South Downs ; their legs are as ſhort as thoſe of that breed ; a point which merits obſervation, as they travel ſo much and ſo well. Their ſhape is very good ; round ribs and flat ſtraight backs ; and would with us be reckoned handſome ſheep ; all in good order and fleſh. In order to be ſtill better acquainted with them, I deſired one of the ſhep­herds to catch a ram for me to feel, and examine the wool, which I found very thick and good of the card­ing sort, as may be ſuppoſed, I took a ſpecimen of it,

and also of a hoggit, or lamb of laſt year. In regard to the mellow ſoftneſs under the ſkin, which, in Mr Bakewell’s opinion, is a ſtrong indication of a good breed, with a diſpoſition to fatten, he had it in a much ſuperior degree to many of our Engliſh breeds, to the full as much ſo as the South Downs, which are for that point the beſt ſhort-woolled ſheep which I know in England. The fleece was on his back, and weighed, as I gueſſed, about 8 lb. Engliſh ; but the average, they ſay, of the flock is from four to five, as I calculated by reducing the Catalonian pound of 12 oz. to ours of 16, and is all sold to the French at 30s. the lb. French. This ram had the wool of the back part of his neck tied cloſe, and the upper tuft tied a ſecond knot by way of orna­ment; nor do they ever ſhear this part of the fleece for that reaſon : we ſaw ſeveral in the flock with this ſpecies of decoration. They ſaid that this ram would ſell in Catalonia for 20 livres. A circumſtance which can­not be too much commended, and deferves univerſal imitation, is the extreme docility they accuſtom them to. When I deſired the ſhepherd to catch one of his rams, I ſuppoſed he would do it with his crook, or pro­bably not be able to do it at all ; but he walked into the flock, and ſingling out a ram and a goat, bid them follow him, which they did immediately ; and he talk­ed to them while they were obeying him, holding out his hand as if to give them ſomething. By this method he brought me the ram, which I caught, and held with­out difficulty.”

The beſt sort of ſheep for fine wool are thoſe bred in Herefordſhire, Bevonſhire, and Worceſterſhire ; but they are ſmall, and black-faced, and bear but a ſmall quantity. Warwick, Leiceſterſhire, Buckingham, and Northamptonſhire, breed a large-boned ſheep, of the beſt ſhape and deepeſt wool we have. The marſhes of Lincolnſhire breed a very large kind of ſheep, but their wool is not good, unleſs the breed be mended by bringing in ſheep of other counties among them, which is a scheme of late very profitably followed there. In this county, it is no uncommon thing to give fifty gui­neas for a ram, and a guinea for the admiſſion of an ewe to one of theſe valuable males, or twenty guineas for the uſe of it for a certain number of ewes during one ſeaſon. Suffolk alſo breeds a very valuable kind of ſheep. The northern counties in general breed ſheep with long but hairy wool : however, the wool which is taken from the neck and ſhoulders of the Yorkſhire ſheep is uſed for mixing with Spaniſh wool in ſome of their fineſt cloths.

Wales bears a ſmall hardy kind of ſheep, which has the beſt taſted fleſh, but the worſt wool of all. Nevertheleſs it is of more extensive uſe than the fineſt Segovian fleeces ; for the benefit oſ the flannel manufacture is univerſally known. The ſheep of Ireland vary like thoſe of Great Britain : thoſe of the ſouth and eaſt be­ing large and their fleſh rank : those of the north and the mountainous parts ſmall and their fleſh ſweet. The fleeces in the same manner differ in degrees of value. Scotland breeds a ſmall kind, and their fleeces are coarſe.

But the new Leiceſterſhire breed is the moſt faſhionable, and of courſe the moſt profitable breed in the iſland. Joſeph Altom of Clifton, who railed himſelf from a plough-boy, was the firſt who diſtinguiſhed him-