ſelf in the midland counties of England for a ſuperior breed of sheep. How he improved his breed is not known ; but it was cuſtomary for eminent farmers in his time to go to Clifton in ſummer to chooſe and purchaſe ram-lambs, for which they paid two or three guineas. This man was ſucceeded by Mr Bakewell ; and it may reaſonably be ſuppoſed that the breed, by means of Altom’s ſtock, had paſſed the firſt ſtage of improvement before Mr Bakewell’s time. Still, however, it muſt be acknowledged, that the Leiceſterſhire breed of ſheep owes its preſent high ſtate of improvement to the ability and care of Mr Bakewell.

“ The manner in which Mr Bakewell raiſed his ſheep to the degree of celebrity in which they deſervedly ſtand, is, notwithſtanding the recentneſs of the improvement, and its being done in the day of thouſands now living, a thing in diſpute ; even among men high in the profeſſion, and living in the very diſtrict in which the im­provement has been carried on !

“ Some are of opinion that he effected it by a croſs with the Wiltſhire breed ; an improbable idea, as their form altogether contradicts it : others, that the Ryeland breed were uſed for this purpoſe ; and with ſome ſhow of probability. If any croſs whatever was uſed, the Ryeland breed, whether we view the form, the ſize, the wool, the fleſh, or the fatting quality, is the most probable instrument of improvement.

“ Theſe ideas, however, are regiſtered merely as mat­ters of opinion. It is more than probable that Mr Bakewell alone is in poſſeſſion of the ſeveral minutiæ of improvement ; and the public can only hope that at a proper time the facts may be communicated for the direction of future improvers.

“Whenever this ſhall take place, it will moſt probably come out that no croſs with any alien breed whatever has been uſed ; but that the improvement has been ef­fected by ſelecting individuals from kindred breeds ; from the ſeveral breeds or varieties of long-woolled ſheep, with which Mr Bakewell was ſurrounded on almoſt every ſide, and by breeding, *inandin* @@(c), with this ſelection : ſolicitouſly ſeizing the ſuperior accidental va­rieties produced; aſſociating theſe varieties; and ſtill continuing to ſelect, with judgment, the ſuperior indi­viduals.

“ It now remains to give a deſcription of the ſuperior claſs of individuals of this breed, eſpecially ewes and wedders, in full condition, but not immoderately fat. The rams will require to be diſtinguiſhed afterwards.

“ The head is long, ſmall, and hornleſs, with ears ſomewhat long, and standing backward, and with the noſe ſhooting forward. The neck thin, and clean toward the head ; but taking a conical form ; ſtanding low, and enlarging every way at the baſe ; the fore-end alto­gether ſhort. The boſom broad, with the ſhoulders, ribs, and chine extraordinary full. The loin broad, and the back level. The haunches comparatively full to­ward the hips, but light downward ; being altogether ſmall in proportion to the fore-parts. The legs, at preſent, of a moderate length ; with the bone extreme­ly fine. The bone throughout remarkably light. The

carcaſe, when fully fat, takes a remarkable form ; much wider than it is deep, and almoſt as broad as it is long. Full on the ſhoulder, wideſt on the ribs, narrowing with a regular curve towards the tail ; approaching the form of the turtle nearer perhaps than any other animal. The pelt is thin, and the tail ſmall. The wool is ſhorter than long wools in general, but much longer than the middle wools ; the ordinary length of ſtaple five to ſeven inches, varying much in fineneſs and weight.”

This breed ſurpaſſes every other in beauty of form ; they are full and weighty in the fore quarters ; and are remarkable for ſmallneſs of bone. Mr Marſhall, who has been of ſo much benefit to agriculture and his country by his publications, informs us, in his Rural Economy of the Midland Counties, that he has ſeen a rib of a ſheep of this breed contraſted with one of a Norfolk ſheep : the diſparity was ſtriking ; the latter nearly twice the ſize ; while the meat which covered the for­mer was three times the thickneſs ; conſequently the proportion of meat to bone was in the one incompara­bly greater than in the other. Therefore, in this point of view, the improved breed has a decided preference : for ſurely while mankind continue to eat fleſh and throw away bone, the former muſt be, to the confirmer at leaſt, the more valuable.

The criterions of good and bad fleſh while the ani­mal is alive differ in different ſpecies, and are not pro­perly ſettled in the ſame ſpecies. One ſuperior breeder is of opinion, that if the fleſh is not looſe, it is of courſe good ; holding, that the fleſh of ſheep is never found in a ſtate of hardneſs, like that of ill-fleſhed cattle : while others make a fourfold diſtinction of the fleſh of ſheep ; as looſeneſs, mellowness, firmneſs, hardneſs : conſidering the firſt and the laſt equally exceptionable, and the second and third equally deſirable ; a happy mix­ture of the two being deemed the point of perfection.

The fleſh of ſheep, when ſlaughtered, is well known to be of various qualities. Some is compoſed of large coarſe grains, interſperſed with wide empty pores like a ſponge : others, of large grains, with wide pores fill­ed with fat ; others, of fine cloſe grains, with ſmaller pores filled with fat : and a fourth, of cloſe grains, with­out any intermixture of fatneſs.

The fleſh of ſheep, when dreſſed, is equally well known to poſſeſs a variety of qualities : ſome mutton is coarſe, dry, and inſipid ; a dry ſponge, affording little or no gravy of any colour. Another sort is ſomewhat firmer, imparting a light-coloured gravy only. A third plump, ſhort, and palatable ; affording a mixture of white and red gravy. A fourth likewiſe plump and well-flavoured, but diſcharging red gravy, and this in various quantities.

It is likewiſe obſervable, that ſome mutton, when dreſſed, appears covered with a thick, tough, parch­ment-like integument ; others with a membrane compa­ratively fine and flexible. But theſe, and ſome of the other qualities of mutton, may not be wholly owing to breed, but in part to the age and the ſtate of fatneſs at the time of daughter. Examined in this light, whe-

@@@{c} *Inandin* is a term uſed in the midland counties of England to cxpreſs breeding from the ſame family.