



Ashton Gifford

WARMINSTER AND SOUTH WILTS FARMERS' CLUB

The first exhibition of Stock for the premiums given by this Society took place on Friday, in a field near Portway-house, Warminster. There was so great a competition in Sheep, that the Judges had some difficulty in coming to a decision upon their merits. The sow of Horned Cattle was not so large, but fully equal to the expectations of the promoters of the Society. – In the afternoon, upwards of 150 gentlemen dined together at the Town-hall : T. H. Phipps, Esq. in the Chair. Among the company were Mr Benett and the Hon. Sidney Herbert, Members for the Southern Division, Capt. A'Court, Mr W. Wyndham, jun., Mr Seymour, Mr H. Biggs, Mr Ravenhill, Mr Ludlow, Rev. Mr Skurray, Rev. Mr Williams, Mr S. Mills, Mr Barton, Mr Davis of Fisherton, Mr H. and Mr C. Fussell, Mr Wansey, Mr Bannister, Mr Chapman, Mr C. Bleeck, Mr G. Vicary, Mr T. Davis, Mr T. Chandler, Mr J. Seagrim, Mr Thring, Mr F. Bayly, Mr H. Bannister, Mr Pullen, Mr I. Whitaker, Mr W. Brown, Mr J. and C. Ingram, Mr I. White, &c. &c.- Mr T. Goodman very ably officiated as Vice-president. The dinner was provided by Mr Bedford, of thr Lamb Inn; and it is but an act of justice to him to say, that the arrangements were excellent; the dinner and the dessert, liberal and good; the wines of the best quality; and that the whole reflected upon him very great credit. The different candidates, men and women, almost 40 in number, for the premiums awarded to agricultural labourers, were regaled, in a side room, opening into the large dining room, with a good old English dinner of roast beef and plum-pudding, the chair having been kindly taken by Mr Ravenhill, and Mr R. Vardy acting as vice. In the course of the afternoon all the labourers came into the dining-room to hear the list of prizes read; and perhaps a more interesting sight was never witnessed.

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The Chairman said, that the company would be gratified to hear that Mr Wm. Wyndham, jun., of Dinton, had accepted the office of Chairman for the ensuing year (loud cheers). The governing principle of the Society, with regard to their Chairman, was – to elect no one to fill that office, who was not acquainted with the science and practice of agriculture, however high his name or station in the county; and here they followed the rule laid down by the Royal Agricultural Society. The first officer of that Society was not the highest in rank among its members: but was elected on account of his being the most eminent agriculturalist. High and popular, then, as the name of Wyndham was, it should be distinctly understood it was not from that circumstance, that Mr Wm. Wyndham had been requested to take the chair, but on account of his scientific knowledge and ability. He then proposed the good health of Mr Wm. Wyndham, which was drunk 3 times 3, and the “one cheer more” frequently repeated.

Mr Wyndham was very vehemently cheered on presenting himself. He sincerely thanked the company for the compliment they paid him; but they might have selected a far more able person to fill the office. His knowledge of agriculture was very deficient, and he should have to contend against great difficulties in following so excellent a chairman as Mr Phipps; but as he had accepted the office, he would do his best to

discharge his duties (cheers) Mr Wyndham then observed, that his attention had been attracted, in occasionally riding over lands in that part of the county- he feared as a trespasser – to the different modes in which different farms were ploughed. In some instance the soil was turned on its back; in others at an angle; and again, in some places, it was merely ripped up. Surely one or the other of those systems must be the best: then why not generally adopt the best? Knowing how material to the crops good ploughing was, he hoped he should be allowed to offer at the next annual meeting a premium of 5 £. to the three best ploughmen recommended by members of the society. In the mean time, the committee would probably draw up some regulations for the government of an annual ploughing match. Many of the company had, no doubt, read Mr Pusey's account of the different ploughing matches in his neighbourhood. The ploughs there, it appeared, had not separate pieces of land to work upon, but merely followed each other. Mr W. pointed out the inconveniences and defects of this system; and then, having entreated the support of the company at the next anniversary, sat down amidst loud and reiterated cheering.

The Chairman announced, that Mr Wadham Locke, of Ashton Gifford, had also very kindly offered the sum of 5 £. towards the premiums for a ploughing match during the ensuing year.

Mr Bennett paid a high compliment to the arrangements of the Society, and proposed the healths of the Secretaries – Mr T. Davis and Mr Chandler. Drunk with 3 times 3.

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