

several breeds of sheep no one who knows anything on the subject, entertains a doubt. The case of the Southdowns, as improved by Ellman, offers perhaps the most striking instance. Unconscious or occasional selection has likewise slowly produced a great effect, as we shall see in the chapters on Selection. That crossing has largely modified some breeds, no one who will study what has been written on this subject—for instance, Mr. Spooner's paper—will dispute; but to produce uniformity in a crossed breed, careful selection and "rigorous weeding," as this author expresses it, are indispensable.⁹⁵

In some few instances new breeds have suddenly originated; thus, in 1791, a ram-lamb was born in Massachusetts, having short crooked legs and a long back, like a turnspit-dog. From this one lamb the *otter* or *ancon* semi-monstrous breed was raised; as these sheep could not leap over the fences, it was thought that they would be valuable; but they have been supplanted by merinos, and thus exterminated. The sheep are remarkable from transmitting their character so truly that Colonel Humphreys⁹⁶ never heard of "but one questionable case" of an ancon ram and ewe not producing ancon offspring. When they are crossed with other breeds the offspring, with rare exceptions, instead of being intermediate in character, perfectly resemble either parent; even one of twins has resembled one parent and the second the other. Lastly, "the ancons have been observed to keep together, separating themselves from the rest of the flock when put into enclosures with other sheep."

A more interesting case has been recorded in the Report of the Juries for the Great Exhibition (1851), namely, the production of a merino ram-lamb on the Mauchamp farm, in 1828, which was remarkable for its long, smooth, straight, and silky wool. By the year 1833 M. Graux had raised rams enough to serve his whole flock, and after a few more years he was able to sell stock of his new breed. So peculiar and valuable is the wool, that it sells at 25 per cent. above the best merino wool:

⁹⁵ 'Journal of R. Agricult. Soc. of England,' vol. xx., part ii., W. C. Spooner on cross-Breeding.

⁹⁶ 'Philosoph. Transactions,' London, 1813, p. 88.