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Nec aranearum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster melior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

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REPORT ON THE BREEDING AND MANAGEMENT OF PIGS.

A Prize Essay on this subject, by Thomas Rawlandson, appears in the 11th volume of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, published in 1850, and contains so much valuable and appropriate matter on the subject committed to us, that we deem the republication of copious extracts therefrom as highly desirable:

OF THE VARIOUS BREEDS OF PIGS.

The wild Boar is the animal from which all our breeds of pigs have been derived, and to which type the whole would speedily degenerate were they again left to nature.

Leaving out of view that nearly extinct race, the Irish greyhound breed, the kind which approaches nearest to the original stock are the large kinds which are known as the old Hampshire, Berkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, Suffolk, &c. The modern breeds Hampshire, Berkshire, Suffolk, &c. have large flop ears—"the old English hog;" both kinds were originally covered with strong bristles. There are good grounds for supposing that "the old English hog," with flop ears, was originally the only domestic animal of the kind throughout the kingdom.

When or how the short prick eared or Hampshire hog became introduced I have always been unable to trace: the probability is that it has been obtained by a cross with some of the more southern European breeds. The genuine old English breed was coarse boned, long in limb, narrow in the back, and low shouldered, a form to which they were most probably predisposed from the fact of having to travel far and labor hard for their food, and undergo considerable privations during the winter; notwithstanding these ill qualities, I have witnessed in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Cheshire, instances where the old breed have, through the effect of better care, shelter and food, produced a most valuable animal, the thick flop ears having become fine and thin, the bones of moderate size, the thick coat of stiff bristles converted into a finer description, spread more thinly on the animal and the skin become fine and ruddy. I have seen this occur where there can be scarcely a doubt that the animal was the aboriginal one, and had never received a cross.

Until within a very recent period fine animals of this description were to be found pretty frequently with the farmers in the counties named. They had several admirable qualities; amongst which were the facts that they were exceedingly prolific and excellent mothers. I have known a sow of this breed have twenty four young ones, often twenty and twenty-two, though more commonly from twelve to eighteen. I have frequently known a sow of this kind suckle from 12 to 18; but the common practice when the progeny was so numerous is to force the young ones forward, and kill them as sucking pigs, until they are reduced in number to about a dozen. The sows of this breed have rarely more than 18 teats; and it is not usual to see more than sixteen to eighteen suckling.

The only disadvantage of this breed is, that they require a considerable amount of food without making adequate progress for the first twelve or sixteen months; after which latter period, if put up in fair store order, there is scarcely a breed that puts on more flesh for the meat given to it than this breed, and it increases to enormous weights, the hams when well cured being of excellent quality.

The old Berkshire hog was of large size, and is, I believe now almost extinct. Lawrence, in his treatise on cattle in 1790, describes it as long and crooked in the snout, the muzzle turning upwards; the ears large, heavy, and inclined to be pendulous; the body long and thick but not deep; the legs short, the bone large and the size very great. This general description, but particularly "the ears inclined to be pendulous," shows that the celebrated Berkshires are

derived from a cross of the old indigenous breed.

The large Hampshire breed are characterised by somewhat similar qualities; there is also a smaller and finer or improved Hampshire breed, the result of a cross with either the Chinese or Neapolitan; the whole of which will be noticed when the mixed breeds are taken into consideration. I have introduced the Berkshire and Hampshire breeds in noticing the larger breed; not that I believe either country possessed originally any other breed than the large flop-eared; I have done so more in deference to common opinion, which usually gives that breed a distinct and original character. It will afterwards be shown, however, that the character of the improved Berkshire may be obtained by a cross between the indigenous large breed, and one or other smaller ones. Of the smaller breeds there are only two that require a lengthened notice—the Chinese and the Neapolitan. Crosses of one or both of these breeds with the old English have produced all our varieties of the larger kinds.

The Chinese hog was first introduced for the purpose of improving our native breeds. There are two varieties, the black and the white; both fatten readily. The black variety varies very little in appearance from the Neapolitan, the distinctive characteristics being the shorter and thicker leg and much wider snout of the Chinese; their form is a round body, short head, wide cheek, high chine, exceedingly thin skin, covered with thin bristles; it has not a very fine shape, and when fat appears to have no neck, and little more than the tips of the snout can be seen; it is a very gross feeder, eating almost anything, and if the food given be of an animal and fatty nature, the skin frequently burst in patches, and form scabs on the animal's back, which it will sometimes rub off, displaying its oily fat covering beneath.

The pure Chinese is very susceptible of cold, and too delicate to be acclimated in this country; its only valuable quality is its great aptitude to fatten on a comparatively small amount of food of indifferent quality. If fed on farinaceous food, and not made too fat, the flesh is delicate, but if animal food has been much introduced, such as greaves, &c., and highly fattened, the flesh is coarse and the fat oily and disagreeable; they make nice sucking pigs and dairy fed porkers; the latter good whether used for roasting or pickled pork; they are prolific but bad mothers.

The Neapolitan stock is the one from which our improved smaller breeds are indebted for their most admired qualities. The Neapolitan pig has a smaller quantity of bone in proportion to the size than any other breed; the color black, great aptitude to fatten at an early age, and will put on flesh with a moderate quantity of food of indifferent quality; in fact will get into something better than store condition, by grazing; they are moderately prolific, and excellent sucklers; average produce of a litter from eight to nine.

I have both heard it remarked and seen that they are bad mothers; whenever I have had an opportunity of tracing such rumors to their sources, I have invariably found that the want of milk has arisen in consequence of being allowed to get too fat whilst with young: in fact so great is the tendency of this breed to put on fat during the period of gestation, that they will almost get over-fat by being left in the straw-yard, to which place they will be a valuable assistant, being inveterate rooters.

This breed is to be distinguished from the black Chinese breed by its larger frame, greater general symmetry, and much sharper snout; in proportion to its size; it is not so long in the body as the Chinese; it is destitute of hairs.

The varied intermixture of the breeds already enumerated constitute the whole of the varieties of swine known amongst farmers, the three grand distinctive features of which are, that for size of frame, but inaptitude to fatten, until they are twelve or sixteen months old, we must look to the flop-eared old English breed; for very early aptitude to fatten from the time of farrowing until they are ten or twelve months old, we must resort to the Chinese. If properly kept from the first, this breed

will be found to pay best by killing them between nine and ten months of age. For symmetry, moderate size, flavor of meat, aptitude to fatten and excellent nurses, as a self breed, there is none to compare with the Neapolitan; it pays best to kill this breed at from nine to twelve months old. The improved Essex breed is a slight improvement on the Neapolitan; in external appearance they closely resemble each other. Notwithstanding the relative and distinctive qualities of the breeds named, it is possible by judiciously crossing them, that the excellencies of one kind may be intermixed with the desirable qualities of another; thus the slow fattening quality of the old English breed may be improved by crossing with the Chinese—in this way the celebrated Berkshire pig was first obtained.

A description of the indigenous Berkshire Hog has already been given; and in proof of the statement here made I shall quote the words of the author of the "Berkshire County Survey, 1809," who states:—"But excellent as the Berkshire swine undoubtedly are, they are usually crossed at intervals with the Chinese or Tonquin race. Mr Smith, sen., of Letcomb Bassett, who has studied the breed of native animals for many years, assured me that it was necessary to cross the Berkshire swine once in six or seven generations with the Tonquin race, or they would degenerate in shape and qualities."

By comparing this account of the modern Berkshire with the preceding one given of the old species, we are led to understand that a cross with the Chinese has constituted a marked improvement in the race. Now we know that the modern Berkshire hog has a tendency to fatten at tolerably early age, and can generally be turned out as fat as can be profitably made to be by the age of fourteen months. Of course I here allude to hogs that have been carefully attended to, and never allowed to fall back from the time they are taken from the sow until sent to the butcher; and as a general good serviceable hog at all ages, from the sucking pig up to the gammon of bacon, he is scarcely exceeded by any cross breed.

In selecting males and females to breed from, neither should be chosen less than twelve to fifteen months old: the third litter will generally be found best for this purpose.

Whether as boar or sow the finest of each sex ought only to be selected. By these means only will the good points of any breed be perpetuated. There is generally one small pig in every litter, called the riddling—this should never be used as an animal to breed from.

For sucking pigs and porkers colour is an object—this should invariably be white. For bacon hogs' colour is a matter of indifference, other than the fact that black pigs appear generally to do better on the same amount of food than the white pigs. A singular reason was assigned to me for the prevalence of black coloured pigs in Essex, viz: that the white kind was subject to eruptions of the skin of the back, when put into clover fields, whilst the black kind were not obnoxious to this complaint. Probably the white kind had more of the Chinese, and the other more of the Neapolitan breed. It must be remembered also that the old Essex breed was a black one.

A sow's usual period of gestation is from sixteen to seventeen weeks. When she has arrived near the period of farrowing she will be seen collecting and carrying straws in her mouth to form her bed. If there exists any suspicion that the sow will devour her young, as sometimes is the case, care should be taken that she is securely muzzled. All such sows should be fattened and slaughtered.

The carnivorous habit here alluded to is rarely exhibited among the improved breeds; amongst the old sows of the rough breed this habit was somewhat prevalent, probably brought on through deficiency of food.

Sows should be put to the boar at such times as to farrow (in April), unless sucking pigs for the festive time of Christmas and the new year is the object; if so, they should be well littered and kept warm. Whether intended for sucking pigs, pork-

ers or stores, skimmed butter-milk and whey, mixed with steamed potatoes, and a little barley, pea, or oatmeal, should be given in moderate quantities even when sucking; if intended for porkers, they should be kept continually fed up with this mixture.

Sucking pigs should never be allowed to run about, and porkers only permitted sufficient exercise to keep them in health. Where convenient, store pigs may be allowed to pasture in clover, giving them only a morning and evening meal in addition, or they may be allowed to root in fallows or the dung heap, and during the winter in the straw yard. In fallows and rough pastures swine eagerly devour such weeds as the dandelion, chickweed, sow-thistle, &c.

[To be continued.]

WEDNESDAY'S MAIL.

CANADA.

Canadian Legislature.—Mr Christie, of Gaspé, in moving that the public accounts for 1851 be referred to the standing Committee of public accounts, congratulated the House and the Country on the state of the Revenue, the gross amount of which for the last year, he stated at nearly one million currency, leaving a nett sum of £852,184 for the year 1851, after deducting for the expenses of management, collection return duties, redemption of land and militia scrip, exceeding £30,000, with a great variety of other charges, the round amount of £127,946. This certainly was a very gratifying proof of the progressive prosperity of the Province. It was, however, also to be observed that the interest of the Provincial debt now exceeded £223,000, but the Provinces, he believed had full value for this unusual charge upon its revenue, heavy as it really was. It was not his intention to go into particular details, but would only glance over accounts, noticing as he proceeded some of the items that seemed to him to call for a passing notice. The Seignior of Lauzon had only produced for the last year, it seemed, something over sixteen hundred pounds; he believed however, that the average income of that seignior, properly looked after, might be taken at two thousand five hundred pounds at least. The whole of the territorial revenue of the Crown amounted to seventy four thousand pounds, including some thirty six thousand pounds for sales and instalments on Crown Lands, but the expenses to be deducted from that sum were heavy, amounting to upwards of fifty four thousand pounds, including of course the expenses of the Crown Land Department of both sections, east and west, of the Province, leaving scarcely twenty thousand pounds to the public treasury.

He remarked upon the enormous expense which the public printing cost the country. For instance he found the various sums paid to Messrs Derbyshire and Desbarats alone for printing, to exceed nine thousand pounds, and he understood that there was still a considerable balance due or claimed by them. He intended no reflection upon these gentlemen. He presumed that they had justly earned it—but the expense was great, and he thought that it behoved the Government to reduce it if they could. The expenses of the Sheriffs in Lower Canada, he observed, were heavy, which, however, he did not attribute to them. The fault was in the system. They actually pocketed nothing of the large sums set opposite their names. These were for the maintenance of gaols.

Mr Chaveau here remarked that much of these monies went to defray witnesses brought from the rural parishes to attend the criminal assizes at Quebec, and the Government was actually engaged in the consideration of this matter with the view of redressing it.

Mr Christie—very well, so much the better. He then remarked upon the expenses of Coroners in Lower Canada. He observed that there should be some check upon those officials, whom he had heard of sometimes instituting inquests at once unnecessary and disgusting to the relatives of the deceased, apparently for no other purpose than to increase their revenues, he did not himself assert that such was the