

Fashion in Breeding.

From a paper on Fashion in Breeding read before the Central Farmers' Club (England), we make the following extracts:—

The general cattle breeders of the Kingdom will agree in assigning the first position to the shorthorn, both numerically and from the prices they command in our show-yards and sale-rings.

There are three separate and entirely distinct systems of breeding pursued—the one is "Line Breeding," which is most in favor. The practice of the continuation of the use of sires, of the same line of descent, preserving an affinity, which is not considered likely to prove prejudicial to the health of the offspring—when a herd has rendered itself famous, by the development of a perfection not generally found, there is the desire and the probable fulfilment of that continued excellence which is peculiarly its own. The other is "Cross Breeding," or the introduction of a male of one line to a female of a separate strain, and this I think causes more controversy with shorthorn men than any other; some maintaining that it is essential for the preservation of the health of a herd, that there must be an occasional introduction of new blood,

results of such a course are strongly condemned by some, although finding favor with others.

The subject naturally brings us to consider the relative merit of the stock of the present day, when great prices are realised, and the comparison they bear to those bred 30 or 40 years ago. It has been affirmed they have not improved, but if this be so, we must ask ourselves, How is this to be accounted for? Certainly there is a great increase in the value of animals of all kinds during that period, it is also conclusively proved that certain strains of blood have moved upwards in value far beyond any other, whilst the general increase in the value of live stock may be considered to have ranged from 30 to 40 per cent.

Recently we see whole herds realizing fabulous prices, instance the sale of the late Mr Torr, in the autumn of last year; many others can be quoted, showing results confirming my statement.

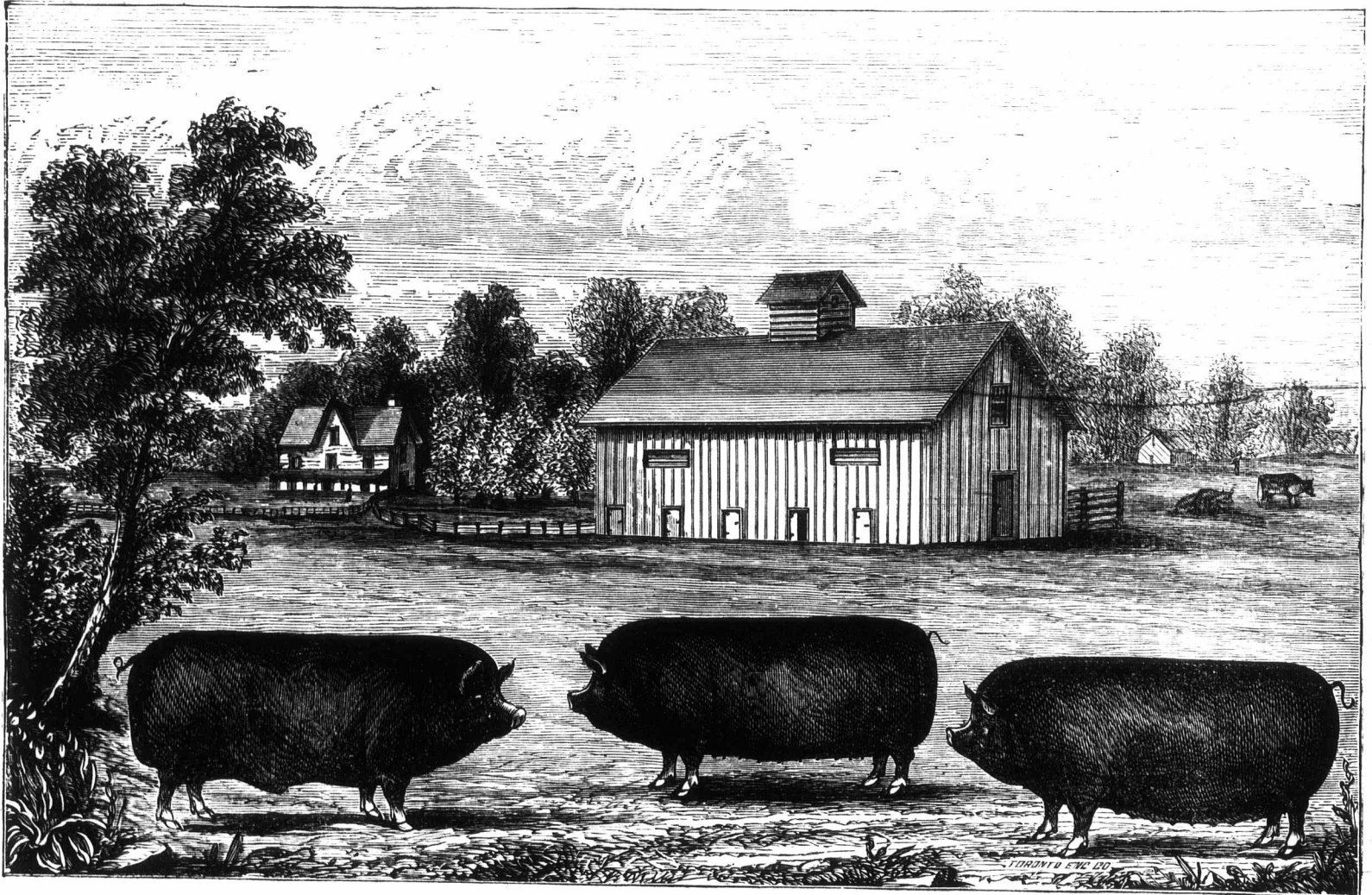
There are cases occurring every year of certain strains of blood commanding prices not known until recently; though instances can be quoted of animals bred with the nearest possible affinity, having realized extravagant rates. This question admits of great latitude, and the subject suggests an amount of argument which does not appear on the

The breeders of Devons of the present day are disposed to favor more scale than formerly. The same animal that now takes prizes was not the favourite in the show-yard some years ago; the small animal has made way for a larger one. I am disposed to think that change is due to the lightness of flesh the smaller animal carried, and in some measure to the fact that few could be found possessing the constitution it is so essential to preserve.

The Hereford is a breed that has always found favour at the hands of both grazier, butcher, and consumer.

The late Lord Berwick, Mr. Green, of Marlow, Mr Shirley, and others have herds possessing hardihood of constitution, with hair and heavy flesh, without that inclination to produce superfluous fat with absence of flesh, which is occasionally seen in our show-yards in the present day.

I must not forget to mention the beautiful and symmetrical polled Angus, and his heavy flesh; and his companion from the extreme North, with his long and shaggy coat which defies the cold blast of that exposed district; both of which afford some of the best beef the epicure can desire, and which finds admirers wherever they are introduced.



BALMORAL FARM, LOBO, THE PROPERTY OF MR. ALEXANDER McARTHUR.

to act as invigorator to the general system, whilst others as determinedly pursue the system of line breeding, as the one leading to that perfection which it is the object of all breeders to attain.

The cross-breeding may command more flesh or robustness of constitution, but experience tells us that, as sires, animals bred in that manner rarely command prices equal to those that are bred from one direct line of ancestry. I have often known men with ordinary stock purchase a good sire for two or three successive crosses, and, by that means, have materially increased the value of their stock, and have then used an animal bred by themselves, and the result has been most disappointing; the germ of perfection was not sufficiently marked and distinctive to warrant the practice, and thereby they have reproduced some of the weaknesses that were apparent prior to their first investment. The other course is that of "In-and-in Breeding"—a fashion much followed by certain classes of breeders.

There is little doubt that some extraordinary results have been attained, and many animals so bred have commanded most fabulous prices. The

surface. Similarity may be arrived at to a greater certainty than by any other course, but the opponents of the system affirm that you beget a lack of constitution in many so bred; the necks, heads, and general muscular development are not of that character to commend them to the general breeder, who is in favor of a more robust animal. There is a temptation to those possessed of animals commanding such extreme prices to continue to breed from the weakly and delicate misfits which occasionally appear. The continuation of the use of such animals is prejudicial, not only to the owner, but to the purchaser of stock with that predisposition, the only recommendation to which is the somewhat fictitious price which they bring.

Many breeders of sound and moderate views object to the introduction of any distinct line of blood into their herds. They prefer the use of an animal possessing a strain of character and line of descent predominant in the herd where such introduction is desired. Breeding from any two separate breeds will always produce good butcher's animals, but the next cross is generally a disappointment.

"Balmoral" Farm, Lobo, the Property of Mr. Alexander McArthur.

This farm is claimed by some to be the best farm in Lobo township, which is generally admitted to be unsurpassed in the county of Middlesex. The farmers of Middlesex, like the farmers of some other counties, consider their locality the best in Canada; at any rate, the soil is of an excellent quality, being a rich clay loam. Mr. McArthur has been a successful farmer, and feeling bound to excel, has lately devoted his time and means in establishing himself as a stock breeder. He has a lot of very fine Berkshires; he procured his stock from Mr. T. S. Cooper, the gentleman who made the finest display in that class at the Centennial Exhibition; in fact, we do not doubt but his stock is the best to be found in the world.

Mr. Chapman, the artist who drew the picture, has made some slight alterations in it to meet his