

SHEEP AND SWINE.**HAMPSHIRE DOWN SHEEP.**

A late issue of the *London Field* had an article on the autumn sheep sales, showing the present tendency in breeding sheep in England, in which some facts were stated about Hampshire Down sheep that will hardly be without interest in this country, especially so far as they relate to raising mutton sheep. After giving reports of sundry sales, showing prices, it says:

On these good prices may be penned a few words of comment. Now that long wool, even when it is of a lustrous character, is worth no more or less than 1s. per pound, and dark-faced mutton keeps at a high price, Lincolnshire and Midland counties flockmasters are turning their attention to the cultivation of a better class of mutton than it is known white-faced and long-wooled sheep produce. The demand for Hants-Downs ram lambs has therefore increased during the last few years. Thousands have been sold annually in Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Huntingdonshire, and Yorkshire. The numbers this year will, no doubt, be increased, of which the above prices are an indication. A point about the Hampshire sheep is exceptional. They are so large and vigorous, that ram lambs are preferred for use to yearling or older sheep. In fact, unless in the case of an exceptionally good ram, which proves himself capable of leaving a strong stamp of his own good qualities on his issue, a yearling or two-sheer sheep is never used, even by the flockmasters of

Hants and Wilts. These ram lambs are now in great demand on account of the great proportion of lean to fat they produce. This is why they are so suitable for crossing purposes with the large Lincoln ewes, which possess a large portion of fat to lean. By the way, too, brown, black mottled legs are thus produced; butchers can leave a bit of skin on the legs and shanks of their sheep in the carcass, and thus charge the price of the best cross-breeds or downs. Whether or not there will be a turn in the English wool trade we have at present no means of judging. But the increase in the produce of the foreign wool-growing countries has been so great within a few years, that it seems to be a better prospect for English flockmasters to improve the quality and price of mutton, rather than to look forward to an increased profit by the growth of wool. This will be sufficiently evident if the fact be recalled that the wool imported from Australia, New Zealand, South America, and some other minor foreign countries last year amounted to the sum of upwards of twenty-five million pounds sterling. At other sales of less noted flocks of this breed, ram lambs have made good prices.

Stock that will not pay to keep in good condition at all seasons is not worth keeping at all.

NOT LESS FAT, BUT MORE LEAN WANTED.

EXTRACT FROM AN ADDRESS BY F. D. COBURN, ON "THE HOG WITH A STREAK OF LEAN AND A STREAK OF FAT."

While in recent years patient care and skill in breeding have produced an animal that can in a short time be converted into an animated, walking lard-tub—and, in that respect, a stupendous improvement on any hogs of their size the world has ever seen before—the "artist" is yet to appear who can produce at will, such as have in happy unison those layers of fatty and muscular tissue known to connoisseurs as marble meat, and to our plain-spoken farmers as a streak of lean with a streak of fat, or, "streaky bacon."

At the present time the breed of hogs a person has is pretty sure to be claimed by him as of those having the greatest percentage of

times of it solid in the porcine family, like the victims of it liquified in the human family, are each year numbered by tens of thousands, among whom are always the finest specimens—the brightest and best. Corn sustains something of the same relation to hogs that beans do to men; notwithstanding the fact that beans are considered as one of the most wholesome single rations known for soldiers, more men, I dare say, fell in the late war victims to beans than to bullets. That our western farmers, especially in Kansas and Nebraska, have in many instances apparently lost sight of the fact that the hog is a grass-eating animal, I account for largely by the scarcity of timber for cheap and ready fencing material for pastures, and the lack, as yet, of tame grasses, of which there would, even now, be much more were not fencing so expensive. Besides, growing tame grasses has as yet been largely an experiment on our western prairies, and the seed is seldom sold for aught but ready cash, which, alas! too many of us do not always possess.

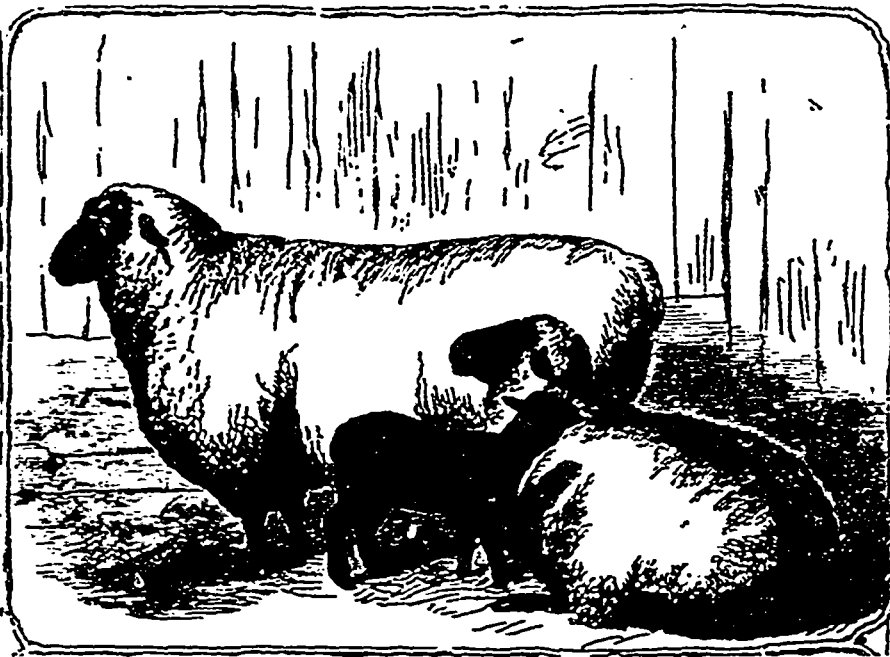
While most of us are too poor to fence extensive pastures, most of us can enclose ground for a goodly plat of artichokes, oats, rye, or alfalfa (and Prof. Shelton says one acre of alfalfa will yield as much pig feed as five acres of artichokes), or, at all events, can plant sweet corn to cut up and feed green as a part of the summer ration, insuring better growth and better health for the porker, and a fatter pocket-book, better health, a better coat, and a cleaner conscience to the owner.

The time is past when lard is to be considered the sole end of a hog; it has ceased to

have exceptional value, and the desideratum is, and will continue to be in our generation, the production of flesh rather than fat; or, rather, a carcass in which both are blended in palatable proportions. I would surrender no jot or tittle of any of the vast improvement we have already made, and only plead for others still, that we can and should and will attain.

EXTRA FOOD FOR HOGS.

Coal ashes and clay are beneficial for hogs when shut up to fatten. Hogs are fond of cinders, coal ashes and clay, and improve in condition in eating a certain portion of them every day. Some persons are unable to account for this singular propensity in swine. Poultry are very fond of egg shells, lime, sand, and it is well known these substances are necessary in order to form the shells, and to furnish materials for bones for fowls. Now, it is reasonable to suppose that swine eat ashes for the purpose of supplying the material for their bones, and this singular instinct in animals so low in the scale of intelligence is truly wonderful, for ashes contain ingredients necessary to form these, viz., clay, soft coal, lime, rotten wood, etc., but when they are penned up, they endeavour to supply the material necessary for keeping up their frames by devouring ashes and cinders.



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lean meat, whether that breed be the Chester, Essex, Suffolk, Poland-China, Jersey Red, or Berkshire; while I doubt if any man on the face of the earth has definite, reliable data that would enable him to decide satisfactorily even as between any two breeds which excel in that direction. As lean meat is muscle, and activity tends more to the development of muscle than fat, and the Berkshires are claimed by their friends as being reasonably active, and by their opponents as entirely too much so, I am of the opinion a thorough test would show their meat as well or better marbled than that of any other of our improved swine, though I do not know that it is, nor do I believe any one else does.

The hog that otherwise fills the bill, and is properly lean and fat at the same time, is yet to be invented; this vale of tears has not yet been illumined by his jocund presence, or the throats of its pilgrims lubricated by rashes from his unctuous carcass. Whenever that happy day arrives, and his brief tale of life concluded, with his body offered as a sacrifice to the insatiate desire for more lean meat and "red sop," it will be found the product of much besides Indian corn "straight."

While Indian corn is the most easily produced and convenient single article of hog feed we have, all things considered, the vic-