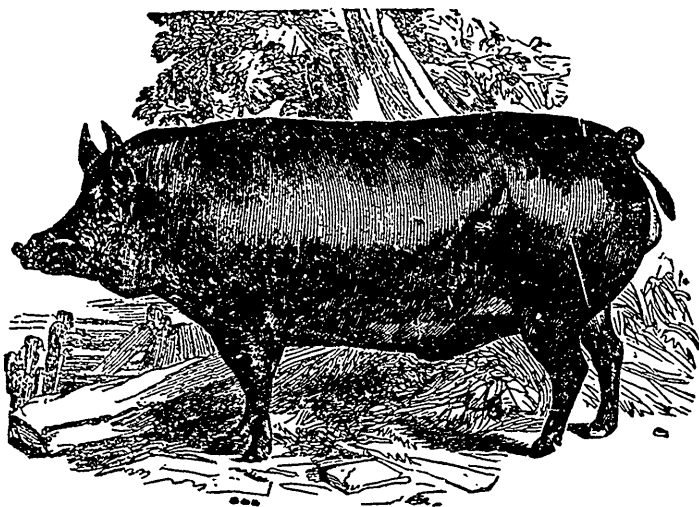


**DIOSCOREA BATATAS OR CHINESE YAM.**—My opinion coincides with that of those who think this esculent very much, if not altogether a humbug, notwithstanding the flourish of trumpet which heralded the introduction of this "celestial" stranger among us the past spring. I planted the vegetable in question here, in excellent soil, and had it planted about eighty miles south of this, on the eastern shore of this State, near Easton in Talbot County. In neither instance did the tubers increase more than two inches in length, nor were their diameters very sensibly enlarged. It would require two or three dozen of such vermin of vegetables to equal in size one respectable sweet-potato. I think the *Dioscorea batatas* may be set down as "very small potatoes and few in a hill." E. L. R. *Baltimore, Md.*—*In Country Gentleman.*

### IMPROVED BREEDS OF PIGS.—ESSEX.



LORD WESTERN'S ESSEX BREED.

The Essex pigs, have been indebted for their improvement to crosses with the foreign breeds, and especially the Neapolitan, and with the Berkshire swine. They are mostly black and white, the head and hinder parts being black, and the back and belly white; they have smaller heads than the Berkshire pigs, and long and thin upright ears, short hair, a fine skin, good hind quarters, and a deep round carcass; they are also small-boned, and the flesh is delicate and well-flavored. They produce large litters, but are bad nurses.

The most esteemed Essex breeds are entirely black, and are distinguished by having small teat-like appendages of the skin depending from the under part of the neck, which are commonly termed *wattles*. Some of these animals will attain the weight of 480 lbs., but they are not, according to some breeders, quick fatteners; while others prize them for their rapid growth and aptitude to lay on flesh, as well as for its excellence; it forms small and delicately-flavored pork. Lord Western has been the great improver of the Essex pigs, and his breed is highly esteemed throughout Great Britain.