

The Breeding and Management of Swine.

BY J. C. SNELL.

Circumstances of late years have brought the subject of swine breeding and feeding in Canada into special prominence and importance. The need of some other means of disposing of our grain, besides placing it on the market in competition with that more cheaply-raised in other countries, and especially in our own north-western provinces, has been one factor in bringing about this change. Another has been the opening in our own country of large establishments for curing and packing pork, and which are in operation the year round, providing a more uniform market at all seasons of the year.

Formerly, hogs were only fattened, in any considerable numbers, at one season of the year, and the market for hogs or for pork was regarded as lasting for only about three months, commencing in November, and frequently the result was a glutted market at that season, and buyers naturally took advantage of that fact and combined to keep down the price. Under such circumstances, only a limited number of hogs could be handled by any average farmer, since they all had to be fattened at the same time; but now, with a more uniform market all the year, and often a higher price in summer than in winter, a farmer can make his arrangements to turn off a few fat pigs at any season of the year, and may thus handle three, four or more different lots in the year, and thus have a little money coming in all the year round.

The improved markets for dairy produce, partly owing to the growth of our cities and towns, and partly to an increasing export trade, has been the means of turning the attention of a large proportion of our farmers to dairying, and the feeding of hogs is found to work in profitably with dairying, the skim milk being one of the very best adjuncts to successful pig raising. With these features prevailing, during the past few years the hog has proved to be one of the best, if not the very best, paying animals on the farm, and pork feeding one of the most profitable departments of the farmer's business.

The demand for Canadian pork in the English market is practically unlimited, and our pork has a good reputation there, and commands a higher price than American pork; so much so that dealers have been accused of using the Canadian brand to sell American pork by.

Canadian farmers do not produce a tithe of the pork they are capable of producing. In 1892 the number of hogs in Ontario was 900,974, an average of less than five to each 100 acres of assessed farm lands. We export but a small proportion of the hog products imported by Great Britain. The United States supply sixty-three times as much of hog products to the English market as we do, while their population is only thirteen times as great as ours, so that we are not getting anything like our share of a trade that is open and free to us, and which we are in a fair position to avail ourselves of. The question is, How are we to secure an increased export? It can only be done by keeping more breeding sows and increasing our output in these lines.

In treating the subject of breeding swine, I suppose the first thing to consider is the selection of a breed, and this is, with most people, a difficult question to decide. It is also a delicate subject for an interested person to discuss in a meeting of this character. I am not aware that the question, "Which is the best breed?" has been settled by any authority, and possibly it never will be settled to the satisfaction of every one. Even in Great Britain, the home of most of the breeds, it has not been settled, and men there, as here, honestly differ in their opinions on the subject.

Every man should, if possible, be persuaded in his own mind which is the best breed for him—for his circumstances and surroundings, and for his market; and having so decided, should bend his energies to the development and improvement of the breed of his choice to the greatest perfection possible, by breeding to a fixed type or ideal, and making only such changes in the type as the demands of the times and the markets require. I contend that it is not necessary for a breeder to give up the breed he has been handling when a change in the style is demanded by the market. Rather let him, by judicious selection of animals within the breed he has, seek to get nearer to the desired type, and by good judgment and skill, he can in a few years make the desired change without giving up his breed, and without crossing with other breeds. This will prove a better test of a man's judgment than to drop the work of perhaps a lifetime at the call of fickle fashion, or a prevailing fad, and to rush after someone's untried and untested theory.

While the farmer and breeder should give due attention to what are likely to be permanent features in the market, he will do well to be cautious about making changes in his methods at the suggestion of interested parties—changes which are perhaps only in the interests of those who handle his produce after he has disposed of it; for what is for their interest is not always for his.

The farmer's first lookout should be for number one, and in this country, as in most countries, the farmer is number one; the pity is that so many of them fail to realize the fact.

The first thing for the farmer to consider, since he is the producer, is the cost of production; and unless some extra price, equal to the increased cost, is assured him for a product that is costing him

more to produce, he will wisely reject the proposition, no matter how loudly or persistently the manufacturer may advocate it. The pork-packer may advocate a breed of hogs which the farmer finds from experience are like the daughters of the Horse-leech, crying, "Give, give," and are never satisfied. If he finds the breed does not make a fair return for the food consumed, he has no use for it. If the miller advocated a variety of wheat which the farmer finds from experience yields less than a fair average crop, he has no use for it. And new varieties have been advertised and trumpeted as yielding enormous crops, which upon trial have proved a miserable failure.

We would not be understood as discouraging experiments, for we all know that some of the most valuable discoveries in agriculture and stock raising have resulted from experimenting; but the general farmer will do well to experiment first on a small scale, and more cautiously, if he would avoid loss and disaster. We have now several experiment stations supported by public funds, and it may be well to leave the greater part of this business to them until we are satisfied they have proved some things that may safely be adopted.

If I were asked for advice as to the best course for the general farmer to follow in improving his stock of hogs, or any other class of stock, I would feel safe in advising him to improve the stock he has now by the use of only pure-bred males of a high standard of merit, and weeding out and feeding for the shambles all of the produce which does not come nearly up to the desired standard. This course will involve no great expense, for pure-bred sires can now be bought at very moderate prices, and will certainly pay for themselves in the increased value of their offspring; and when they have served their term in the herd, may be sold for a fair percentage on the original cost, and in some cases for all they cost.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Chatty Stock Letter from the States.

(FROM OUR CHICAGO CORRESPONDENT.)

Extreme top prices now, compared with two weeks and one and two years ago:—

	Present prices.	Two weeks ago.	1894.	1893.
CATTLE.				
1500 lbs. up.....	\$ 6 25	\$ 6 15	\$ 4 65	\$ 6 35
1350 @ 1500.....	6 25	6 10	4 55	6 00
1200 @ 1350.....	5 90	5 90	4 50	5 50
1050 @ 1200.....	5 80	5 75	4 25	5 25
900 @ 1050.....	5 50	5 65	4 15	5 00
Stillers.....	5 75	4 70	3 90	4 70
Feeders.....	4 75	4 70	3 80	5 00
Fat cows.....	4 80	5 10	3 80	5 00
Canners.....	2 60	2 50	2 50	3 00
Bulls.....	4 25	5 00	3 75	4 50
Calves.....	5 00	5 00	5 00	5 75
Texas steers.....	5 25	4 80	4 10	4 90
Texas C. & B.....	3 35	4 50	2 50	3 85
HOGS.				
Heavy.....	4 70	5 10	5 40	7 80
Light.....	4 80	5 20	5 40	7 90
Pigs.....	4 60	5 00	5 35	7 80
Sheep.				
Natives.....	4 40	4 75	5 25	7 65
Western.....	4 75	5 05	4 65
Texas.....	4 10	4 85	4 65
Mexican.....	3 25	3 85	4 00
Lambs.....	4 35	4 65	4 25
July Corn.....	5 75	5 85	5 20
Wheat.....	50¢	47¢	39¢	44¢
Pork.....	62¢	61¢	58¢	80¢
Lard.....	11 95	12 17½	12 37½	20 65
	6 65	7 00	7 07½	10 95

Combined receipts of cattle at Chicago, Kansas City, Omaha, and St. Louis, for the first four months of this year were about 1,529,000, against 1,855,000 a year ago, 1,892,000 two years ago, and 1,738,000 three years ago. Combined receipts of hogs at the four markets the first four months of 1895 were about 4,616,000, against 4,341,000 a year ago, 3,080,300 two years ago, and 5,198,000 the corresponding four months of 1891.

Stock raisers and feeders so far this year have had little cause for complaint. Even in the duller of the dull times, they fared rather better than people in other lines of work. All kinds of live stock is bound to be good property to raise and mature from now on for quite a while, is the opinion of a good many stock-yard men.

A feature of the revival in the cattle industry of especial interest, and but little noticed, is an improved demand for pure-bred bulls to go on Western ranches. Joseph LaRocco, Montpelier, Id., was at the Kansas City yards with a car of pure-bred Shorthorn bulls, purchased in Saline county, Mo., which he will put on his ranch. J. D. Duckworth, of Cass county, Mo., was also here with twenty-eight pure-bred Hereford bulls, which he is shipping to Amarillo, Tex., to be placed on Sam Lazara's ranch.

J. H. Catlin, of Augusta, Hancock county, Ill., a shipper who has been shipping stock to Chicago since 1856, sends in a bill of sale of a car of hogs, marked November 30, 1895, at the Michigan Southern yards. John Gridley & Co. sold the stock as follows: Fifty-four hogs, 13,140 pounds, at \$8.10, making \$1,128.98 gross. The items of expense were: Freight, \$71; yardage, \$4.32; three bushels corn, \$3.00; U. S. tax, \$1.12; commission, \$6.00; net proceeds, \$1,013.52.

Some Oregon cattle sold as follows: 169 steers, 1,203 pounds, \$4.65; 19 steers, 1,221 pounds, \$4.65, with a carload of tail-ends at \$3.10 to \$3.00.

E. M. Gibson obtained \$4.50 for 127 head of 1,195-pound hay-fed Idaho steers, with 23 tailings at \$3.40.

Among the fancy cattle sales were two loads of A. Moffitt & Son's, the well-known Hereford breeders, of Mechanicsville, Iowa. They averaged 1,175 pounds, and sold for \$6.15.

J. G. Imboden, of Decatur, Ill., was here with fifteen head of prime Hereford cattle, which sold to

Eastman at \$6.25. They were fed by Sam Weaver, of Forsythe, Ill.

Receipts of Texas cattle only 4,300 short for the year so far as compared with last year, and 9,000 short of 1893.

The prospects are that Montana will have more cattle than expected, and that the summer and fall crop of grass-fed beefs from that State will be about as large as last year, when 240,000 cattle were marketed.

Hogs received at Chicago the first four months of 1895, compared with last year, exhibit a decrease of 14 pounds, averaging about 223 pounds. Average weight of hogs last month, 226 pounds, the heaviest of the year, four pounds heavier than last March, exactly the same as April, 1894, and one pound heavier than April, 1893. April, 1891, the average was only 204 pounds.

The hog market is top-heavy. The spring receipts have been large, and packers are probably over-estimating the summer crop.

Albert Dufour, of Paris, who for some time has been in this country buying horses for French traders, said: "There is quite a good demand for good drivers at present, and a good many of such horses are being shipped. A horse does not last within the past six months. A horse does not last long in Paris, for Frenchmen are hard drivers, and the pavements are hard. After a horse is worn out he can easily be sold for 'beef' purposes."

At a recent sale of Cobs, Hackneys, and Coaches, here, teams sold at \$400 to \$1,250. The offerings catalogued drew a large crowd of buyers, local horsemen outbidding the domestic and foreign dealers, and securing the choicest consignments. P. D. Armour, Jr., captured the finest team for \$1,250, and Freddie, 2,211, was knocked down to H. Arms, Chicago, for \$800, the top prices of the sale.

April receipts of sheep, 280,341, the largest since last November, and 37,562 larger than April, 1894, being the largest April receipts on record.

Some Western sheep are coming from Oregon, and a good many Mexican from Colorado. Texans are beginning to show up rather too freely for the good of the market.

The sheep market is remarkably strong, considering the liberal receipts being crowded forward. The foreign demand is the key to the situation. Good sheep are scarce on the other side, and exporters are making plenty of money.

Horse Breeding from a Farmer's Standpoint.

BY "CLAUGHBANE."

(Continued from page 152.)

We now come to the draft horse, and the first question we must ask ourselves is: Can we raise a draft horse fit for export? To some this may seem a ridiculous question, but, nevertheless, it is doubtful if we can. The Americans have in the past taken a lot of light draft horses from us, but as that market is practically closed, there is not likely to be any great demand for that class of horse; and while in England there is a market for draft horses, at highly remunerative figures, they there want a larger horse than up to the present has been raised in Canada. I do not say that horses large enough for the Old Country market have not been raised, but they have been comparatively few—not enough of them to amount to anything; and as I have already said, it is questionable whether horses large enough can be raised in sufficient numbers to create a regular trade in Canadian draft horses.

There are probably three reasons why our draft colts do not reach the required size. One is that, as a rule, our mares are rather under-sized, and it requires a large mare as well as a large sire to produce a really large colt. Another reason is that our colts are not generally pushed from birth to maturity, as they are in the Old Country, where the greatest care is taken that there shall not be the slightest check in their growth; nor is their food as nutritious as that used in feeding colts in England. These two difficulties may, however, be overcome, but our climate is possibly another trouble, and it is one which cannot be managed. I say possibly, for we do not know, if we bred and fed as they do in the Old Country, whether our colts would not grow to be quite as large as they do in that more temperate climate. This remains to be proved, but for the present we know that we are not producing mares heavy enough to supply the demand for such animals as are employed in the English city street work.

I have said that our mares were on the small side for producing large colts, and we cannot expect it to be otherwise, as the greater number of so-called draft mares that are kept on farms have been bred from comparatively light horses, graded up by the use of heavy sires, and have one or more crosses of draft blood in them. They are fine farm animals, the draft sires used in breeding them having generally been chosen rather for quality than size.

Here in Manitoba the farmer thinks he has a good-sized beast when it tips the scale at 1,500 pounds, and so he has for farm work; but if we would raise geldings for the Old Country cities, we should aim at nothing less than 1,700 pounds; and to do this with any surety of success, the mares used should not be less than that weight. Although there are among mares, as among females of other domestic animals, those who individually produce progeny of exceptional size, while they themselves are comparatively on the small side, it will, therefore, sometimes be found that a 1,500-