

Breeding and Management of Pigs.

The Canadian farmer will in the future, far more than in the past, find that the best markets open to him will demand that the articles he produces must be of the best quality, and his chief interest will be to reduce the cost of production. While granting that much advancement has in a few years been made, we have no hesitation in asserting that in few of the articles which he produces is there more room for the continued improvement than in the average quality of hogs placed on the market. A considerable proportion of our farmers have paid attention to the trend of the markets and the discussions of the press with regard to the type of hog wanted, and have bred and fed their hogs with a view of meeting the requirements and with a good degree of success, but evidently there is a large proportion of the farmers who have not read either the papers or the signs of the times, and have gone on in the old way producing what is not wanted and must be sold at second or third class prices, thus losing money and at the same time injuring our trade, which, but for their carelessness, would be more satisfactory. The pig now required to bring the best results to breeder and feeder is one of early maturity. It has been clearly proved by repeated experiments, both by private individuals and at experimental stations, that pork made from young pigs is far more cheaply made, that it brings the highest price on the market, and that it enters more readily into consumption by the class of people who are willing to pay a good price for what suits their taste.

The type of pig required to meet the present-day demand is a lengthy, deep-sided pig, which will grow rapidly while young, and will attain the 200 lbs. weight at 6 months old. To reach this weight, he must be fed a variety of food, such as milk, whey, barley, shorts, and peas, with good clover besides, when it is to be had, and roots supplied in winter, together with free access to such condiments as a mixture of wood ashes, sulphur and salt, and a shovelful of earth from a root cellar occasionally. As to the best means to bring one's pigs to these requirements, there may be room for difference of opinion, as most men have their own ideas of the merits of the different breeds, but it is safe to say that no one breed has a monopoly of all good qualities which go to make the ideal bacon hog.

If it is purposed to breed and keep pure-bred hogs, the first essential is to secure a sow of desired type, with good length, deep body and strong bone, standing straight on her toes, having a quiet disposition, with at least twelve teats, even in size, placed equidistant apart, and commencing as near the fore legs as possible. The fact that the produce of a boar may, and often does, amount to hundreds of pigs in a few months makes it essential that care should be taken in his selection and in the study of the character of his forebears. To this end, it is preferable, as a rule, to look for him in the herd of a breeder of long standing and good repute, and if you are not a judge, explain your wants fully and trust him to supply what you need. The oft-quoted remark, "The bull is half the herd," applies with greater force in the case of a boar in a herd of swine, and as many good points as possible should be combined in the pure boar. The first essential is that he should be bred, and in order to this he should be registered, and if descended from an old-established herd, all the better, for the reason that in a newly-established herd, even though the owner may have won prizes at recent shows, a variety of type is likely to be found, and more likely the prize animals have not been raised by the exhibitor, but bought from different herds differing very much in type, and their produce, when bred together, will often be unlike the parents or each other. Here again comes up the point of importance to the beginner who hopes to found a herd good enough to take a high position. It is to select the boar from the same breed for a lengthened period in order to secure uniformity of type. Young breeders are apt to get the idea that by selecting boars from a number of leading herds in succession, they will combine the best points of all, but in actual practice this will end in a partial failure: the stock bred will lack uniformity, some points will be abnormally developed, while strong failings will be equally noticed.

The essential points sought for in a stock boar are a compact frame, as long and deep as possible, consistent with strength, a wide chest and a good heart-girth, but fine and smooth in shoulders, and a straight top line, well-sprung ribs, deep flanks, strong loins, hams wide and deep, twist full and well-fleshed down, legs strong, straight and well placed, good quality of bone, and flesh smooth and elastic to the touch, and his temper should be good, for a vicious boar is an intolerable nuisance and a constant source of danger, and is liable to transmit this temperament to his produce, which are apt to prove restless, unsettled and poor feeders. Mere size should not be considered a strong point unless it is combined with compactness and fineness, and

strength of bone and feet. A very large boar is apt to have weakness of the spine and hind quarters, and is frequently weak in his joints, and these failings are hereditary. Weakness of fetlocks and roundness of the bone should always be avoided in a sire. These are frequently combined with great size. A medium-sized, compact boar, heavy in the hind quarters and light in the fore quarters, will most generally prove fruitful for a much longer time than one heavy in the shoulder, and a strong-boned hog and his produce will have stronger constitutions and prove to be much easier feeders.

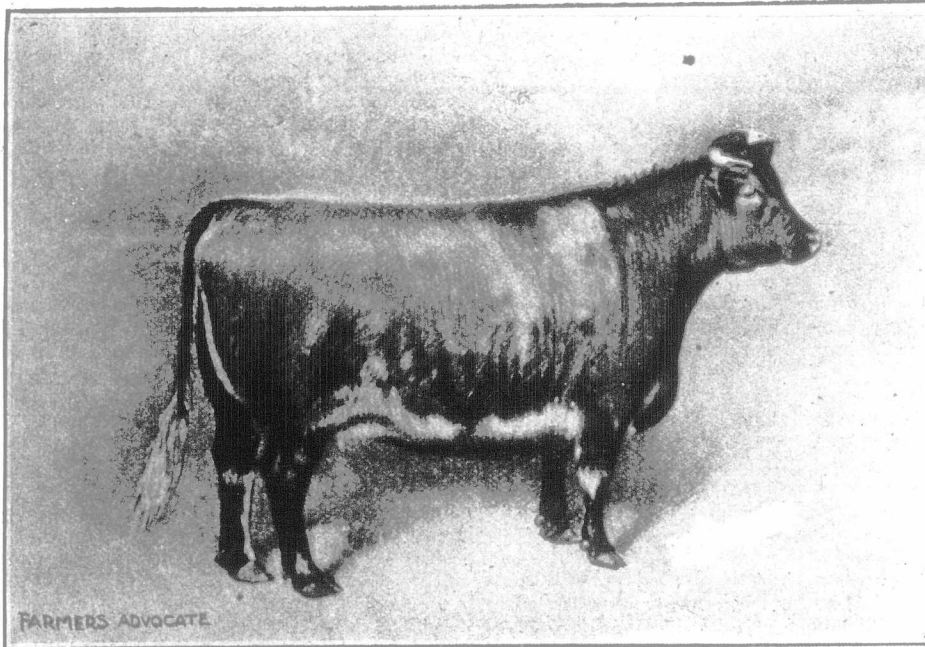
As to the age at which pigs should be mated for breeding, there is room for a variety of opinions. Where they have been liberally fed and well developed for their age, they may be safely put to breeding at 6 to 8 months old. A young sow should not be allowed to raise more than one litter of pigs the first year, but allowed to rest and grow. After this, if desired, she may raise two litters a year, having them in April and September for best results, as late pigs generally get "stunted" and do not go on and make rapid growth for the food they consume, since they cannot in winter get sufficient exercise to give them the vigor of constitution necessary to stand heavy feeding.

Kent Co., Ont.

HENRY SMYTH.

Bone in Sheep Breeding.

The *Farmer and Stock Breeder*, England, of recent date, says: "For many years breeders of all persuasions have differed on the question of 'bone' in stock-breeding. This subject cropped up recently, when Mr. Mansell was reading his paper on sheep-breeding, before the London Farmers' Club, and in the subsequent discussion much difference of opinion apparently existed. Mr. Mansell, who breeds Shropshires, thinks that plenty of bone, when you have it combined with a good sheep otherwise, is a



DAISY 3RD.

Imported 3-year-old Shorthorn cow; contributed by W. D. Flatt, Hamilton, Ont., to the Canadian combination sale at Chicago, June 5th, 1901, and sold for \$1,910.

highly desirable characteristic, but a fine-boned sheep, otherwise suitable, he would not discard for breeding purposes. This, we fancy, is the attitude of the great majority of breeders of the smaller breeds. The Southdown, for instance, maintains its supremacy by reason of its small bone and quality of carcass. It is not difficult to get large-framed Southdowns if the breeder wished it so, but the distinctive character of the breed would be lost thereby. Indeed, in some parts, that is the difficulty with many of the Southdown flocks, to keep down the bone and keep the type. On the other hand, Mr. Treadwell, an Oxford breeder, leads the van for bone. Without plenty of bone you cannot have lean flesh. Quite true; but when a breeder looks too much to bone, he is apt to sacrifice quality. Moreover, much depends on the quality of the bone. The eye is very deceptive, and a flat-boned sheep is sometimes discarded because he does not appear to be so well equipped in this particular as a round-boned sheep. If quality and quantity can be combined when dealing with the larger breeds, by all means encourage bone; but if encouragement of this feature should lead to coarseness, let us walk warily. The Lincoln sheep owes a very large part of its popularity abroad to the bone it carries. Foreign Lincolns do not necessarily decline in quality of wool, but they cannot retain the substance. Under these conditions, plenty of bone is essential if the popularity of the breed for export purposes is to be retained."

A Good Watch.

DEAR SIR, I received the watch all safe. It gives good satisfaction. Am well satisfied.
Waterloo Co., Ont. JAMES R. BURNETT.

Raising the Pure-bred Calf.

Whether the calf is the main consideration with the breeder, or whether a little butter or cream is of more importance to the owner than the highest good of a valuable calf, must be decided at the start. If the latter, some substitute for mother's milk must be given; if there is anything to take its place, I have never found it. If possible, then, let the calf have free access to its mother, as its delicate stomach is best suited by frequent draughts of small quantities. My system is to allow the calf to run with its dam for two or three weeks, then separate them and allow the calf to suck three times a day until it is two months old, when the noon sucking is discontinued. If the calf does not take all, the cow should be stripped dry to keep up her flow of milk till the calf will take it all. In all cases the calf should be taught to eat as soon as possible, for it is important to supplement the milk ration, both in quality and variety, as early as possible. They will soon learn to nibble at a little sweet hay or oat sheaf, and as they progress, the variety should be increased by bran, oat chop, and a little sliced or pulped roots. It is generally safe to feed the calves, both before and after weaning, all that they will eat up clean. Always see that there is nothing left in the boxes to sour. A careful watch should be kept to see that they do not scour; at the first symptoms the amount of food should be reduced. Generally, the cause is easily detected, and should be removed at once; and it rarely takes more than a few days of reduced rations and quiet to correct the disorder of the bowels.

Under ordinary circumstances I do not stable the calves during the warm summer months, but after the pasture becomes good, allow them to run with the cows. They should have access to a shady place during the heat of the day. The open air and plenty of exercise I regard as one of the prime factors in making thrifty, vigorous animals. As soon as the grass begins to get a little dry, the calves should be put in roomy box stalls and fed a ration of sweet hay, oat chop, bran, and a few roots. I grow a patch of corn to feed them at this time of the year. The usual weaning time, seven or eight months of age, is a very critical period in a calf's life, and if cut off from nature's diet too quickly, bad results may follow. The calf should be allowed to suck once a day for a week or so, and thus gradually become accustomed to the change. The great thing is to keep the growth of the calf from suffering any check. If the weaning is followed by a period of fretting, and the calf is for a few weeks unthrifty, the effect will be apparent in the animal's after-life. It is not an easy matter to impress on many men that an animal that has an unchecked calfhood of thrifty growth will mature earlier and develop more completely than one with at first equal promise which has been allowed to get out of condition the first month's time of its life. A little retarding of growth at this period may mean the difference between making a good calf or a bad one. After the calves have been weaned, they are past the first epoch in their lives and may be regarded as out of the period of special care, but during the whole course of growth the feeder's attention should not lag, but he should use every effort to develop all there is in the animal. This is an art the feeder of breeding animals needs to learn thoroughly.

J. G. WASHINGTON.

Sharp Teeth, Not Black Teeth, in Young Pigs.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

SIR,—I have read from time to time articles in your paper on black teeth in young pigs. If the writers would call them sharp teeth, then they would be barking up the right tree. I never saw young pigs without black teeth, as it seems to be natural for them to be black. But that is not what we are getting at. I want to give your readers to understand if they would buy a pair of small pincers and break off eight long teeth close to the jaw, four above and four below, that are as sharp as needles and cut the little pig's tongue and cause it to swell and create inflammation of the throat, etc., they would lose fewer pigs. I always remove the teeth from my pigs after a day old, and seldom lose one.

A. M. LAIRD.

Halton Co., Ont.

For the Flies.

The following cheap mixture has been recommended for the fly pest: Take pine tar, 1 lb.; lard, 6 lbs. Melt the lard, and stir in the pine tar warmed. Smear some of the mixture on the poll, along the spine to the tail root, and on the brisket, twice or three times a week.