

## Stock Department.

## Taking the Young Pigs From a Sow When She Litters.

The following controversy appeared in a recent issue of the *Irish Farmers' Gazette*. The letters themselves as well as the editorial remarks appended to them are suggestive, and breeders will be amply repaid by giving the subject as here represented, their careful attention:—

A letter from "Harden, Yorkshire," appeared lately, which somehow escaped our attention, or we should have replied to it; however, as it is of some little importance, and as it takes us to task for our teachings, we re-insert it:—

Sir,—Under the head of "Queries and Answers," in your paper of last Saturday, you instruct some Greenhorn from Ennis how to manage his fat sow at her first parturition as follows:—

"Attempt no quacking (!), but have her closely watched, and as she litters let each be taken from her and put into a basket with some fine hay or warm wool, till all are come forth. Then put each by hand to suck, and when they get enough return them to the basket. Attend to this three or four days before they are permanently left with the sow, &c."

Now, sir, I venture to say that no sow will stand her young ones being taken away in a basket, and brought back in this manner for three or four days, if it is lined with silk, instead of warm wool or fine hay. Your friend will never rear a pig. Let him try this plan: have the sow lean, not fat. Let the regular attendant only be present on the occasion. As each one comes forth let him place it to the teat, and get the litter to suck as quietly and as soon as possible. He must try to keep them from being lain on or trod upon by the sow, but rather allow some to be sacrificed in that way than irritate the mother.

After they have all found the way to the teats and had a slight breakfast, let them retire and leave them to the care of their natural and generally most affectionate guardian. This is the experience of—Yours; HARDEN, Yorkshire.

To this the original querist from Ennis replies as follows:—

Sir, I see by your last number that your answer to my query—what should I do with a valuable sow on her first litter, within a week of her time, from which I apprehend trouble in her parturition owing to her being very fat?—has induced "Harden, Yorkshire," to give us the benefit of his experience, and recommends me to try his plan. Before recurring to this plan I must say I followed your instructions, and succeeded quite to my satisfaction. That interesting event is now over, and I am happy to say, the fat sow and her young are now all right.

I have found no difficulty in removing the young into the basket, and leaving them near, not taking them away in a basket for three or four days, as Harden phrases it. After two days I found I could with safety leave the young ones with her.

Now, sir, as to Harden's plan, viz., "Have the sow lean, not fat. Let the regular attendant only be present on the occasion. As each one comes forth let him place it on the teat." I differ a bit from him. 1st. I don't like to breed from a sow that will not keep fattish even on grass, with very little other feeding. 2nd. I consider the better the condition, the better she will breed and rear her young. 3rd. A lean sow will rarely, if ever, bring two litters a year regularly, as a well fed, fattish sow will usually and ought to do. 4th. I don't think it is possible to let each be placed to the teat as he comes forth. 5th. The young ought not to be placed to the teat until the placenta has been ejected.

"I would like to know on what authority Harden says 'your friend will never rear a pig.' I may tell him I hope to do so, and have reared some good ones, which he would admit if he saw my present stock. More, I would like to know it is because I seek information in your columns he calls me 'greenhorn from Ennis.' I beg to tell him it is a long time since I was a 'greenhorn.' I also tell him I agree with him in leaving sows to farrow with the 'regular attendant only,' as the less they are irritated the sooner they let down the milk; also that I am obliged for his plan, which is not a bad one, save those little objections I have raised.—Yours, &c., SCREASIBER, Ennis, 28th May, 1866."

Our subscriber's letter is certainly a sufficient answer to "Harden, Yorkshire;" but as he calls in question the authority and practical value of the information and recommendations given, and by so doing would lessen the confidence which the *Gazette* has for so many years enjoyed, as far as "Harden,

Yorkshire" can do by stating "your friend will never rear a pig," we have but to say that the mode of treatment recommended by us has been adopted by numerous pig breeders and fanciers in Ireland.

It will be in the recollection of many of our readers who have frequented the Royal Dublin Society's Spring exhibitions of live stock that sows have been shown which had littered on the way to or in the show-yard, and the owners and attendants treated the mamma pig and her offspring exactly as we have recommended, and that the visitors were daily witnesses of the interesting sight of seeing the basket brought near the crib in which lay the unwieldy mother, a great overgrown white Yorkshire sow, and the tiny young things, handed one by one, put in through the bars of the crib, still held by hand, and allowed to suck till satisfied, and then removed.

In addition to this public instance, we have a beautiful Berkshire sow since it was eight weeks old. The 27 February last she had her first litter, no less than 14 black beauties. She littered in the middle of the night, and the young things as they came forth were one by one basketed, and were brought regularly from the warm kitchen to the sow and regaled in the manner recommended, and restored to the basket and warm kitchen till the "lady in the straw" was perfectly recovered and able to perform her maternal duties, which she did with care. Had we not adopted this plan it is quite possible we would never have reared one of them; for, after having given birth to thirteen, we thought all was over, and in some hours after she gave birth to the fourteenth, which she devoured. Well, we reared the rest, and have now six of us well-looking swinish lads and lasses as can be seen. So much for "Harden's" assertion, that those who follow our teachings will never rear a pig.

We had begun to think after reading "Harden, Yorkshire," that Yorkshire and Irish pigs were differently constituted as to temper and disposition; but curiosity tempted us to look into "Youatt," the best and most reliable author in the English language on our domestic animals; and he says, page 116, in his valuable treatise on the pig, "The young ones should be taken away as fast as they are born, and deposited in a warm spot; for the sow, being a clumsy animal, is not unlikely in her struggles to overlie them, nor should they be returned to her till all is over, and the afterbirth has been removed, which should be done the moment it passes from her; for young sows especially will invariably devour the afterbirth if permitted, and then, the young being wet with a similar fluid, and smelling the same, will eat them one after the other." So that we are led to believe the practice is in vogue in England, and that we certainly are not singular in adopting it.

In our own case, as the sow got accustomed to the removal of her young ones, we had some doubts about her not being careful enough in lying down to suckle them, and that there was some danger of her crushing some of them under her as she did so, and, therefore, kept them in the basket for three or four days, till they got strong enough to take care of themselves. It is fortunate for "Harden, Yorkshire," and also for some more of our readers, English as well as Irish, that he called in question the propriety of our teachings, as he will now have learned a little more of such matters than he evidently did before.

We should not forget to thank our Ennis subscriber for coming so promptly to the rescue; and though "Harden, Yorkshire," has in his wisdom designated our respected subscriber a "greenhorn" from Ennis, he has in his letter in reply shown "Harden, Yorkshire," that he is not so green as the latter has gratuitously supposed, but a sound, practical, experienced man, from whom "Harden, Yorkshire," and many others, could gain valuable information, if they would only cast aside prejudice and seek knowledge. But, unfortunately, Englishmen, and Scotchmen too, that do not know us (it is the contrary with those who do) imagine that in Ireland we are a parcel of know-nothings.—*Irish Farmer's Gazette*.

HIGH PRICE OF COTSWOLD RAMS.—We learn from *Bell's Messenger* that "recently, 54 sheep of the Cotswold breed were sold by Messrs. Lyne and Son for Mr. W. Lane, at Broadfield, and realized the extraordinary average of £26. 18s. 9d. each. Four of the sheep sold for upwards of £100, each, namely, one purchased by Mr. John King Tombs, 110 guineas; another, by Mr. Fletcher, 122 guineas; a third, by Mr. Porter, 126 guineas; and a fourth, by Mr. R. Garne, at 100 guineas. Again at Aldworth, on the following day (by the same auctioneers), Mr. Brown of Norfolk gave 120 guineas for one sheep, and Mr. Charles Barton 70 guineas for another, the property of Mr. Robert Garne.

## Ayrshire Cattle.

On this subject, Mr. Sanford Howard, the efficient Secretary of the Michigan State Board of Agriculture, writes to the *Prairie Farmer* as follows:

EDS. PRAIRIE FARMER:—I am glad to see that some of the farmers of the Prairie States are turning their attention to dairying. The Great Northwest comprises many situations in which butter and cheese may be made to advantage. Persons engaging in this business are of course interested in the kind of stock best adapted to it. In fact, I have lately seen various inquiries from your section in regard to dairy breeds of cattle, especially Ayrshires and Jerseys. On this account I am induced to send you a brief notice of the fine herd of Ayrshires belonging to Hon. Samuel Campbell, of New York Mills, near Utica, N. Y. I have lately enjoyed a re-examination of this herd after an interval of two or three years.

I am more particularly induced to mention this herd, as persons visiting the eastern cities might with very little delay or trouble, examine it for themselves. By stopping at Utica, they can take a Whitesborough horse car, and go to within a few steps of Mr. Campbell's farm—the trip not necessarily occupying more than the usual interval between trains going the same way on the New York Central railroad.

Mr. Campbell's herd of Ayrshires numbers some fifty head, and since the dispersion of that of Mr. Peters, of Massachusetts, is probably the largest herd of this breed in the United States. The older animals, and some of the younger ones, were imported from Scotland, selected without stint in price, from the best herds in that country. The two bulls—Baldy and Tarbolton—now being used in the herd, were imported a year or two since. Both are very fine animals.

The milk from Mr. Campbell's cows goes to supply the operatives in a large manufacturing establishment in which he is interested. No particular measurement of the yield of each cow is commonly taken. In some cases, however, this has been done—the cows being found to give from twenty-five to thirty quarts (wine measure) of milk per day, and in a few instances, thirty-five quarts per day. Many of them would give milk the year round, but it is better for the constitution of the cow, and insures a stronger and better calf, to have her go dry six or eight weeks, and this is the general practice.

To show that there is generally no lack of constitution in the herd, I will mention that Ayrshire Lass is now eighteen years old, and has still nearly the vigor and sprightliness of a young cow. White Lily and Lady Ayr are thirteen and fourteen years old. All these are extraordinary milkers, and have usually had calves annually.

Besides Ayrshires, Mr. Campbell has Short-horn cows—nearly as many of the latter as the former. Some of them are imported, and the others are their descendants. They are large and showy animals. In summer they run on the same pastures with the Ayrshires, and the grass being abundant and good, all have enough to eat. They are fed on the same kind of food in winter—all having what they want.

I was interested in knowing what would be the comparative yield of milk of the Shorn-horns and Ayrshires, under these circumstances, and questioned the herdsman on this point. He replied that the Ayrshires generally gave most milk, notwithstanding that the Short-horns were very much larger and consumed a proportionately larger quantity of food.

It is not often, at least in this country, that the two breeds are thus brought together, and though it is not certain that the same result would follow in a comparison of other animals or herds, the fact stated is deserving some weight.

I should say that most of Mr. Campbell's Ayrshires are very handsome, judged in reference to points of merit in a dairy cow.

GYPSUM IN STABLES.—The *German Town Telegraph* says—"Gypsum should be sprinkled daily over the floors and tie-ups, to absorb the ammonia of the urine. The strong odour observable on entering the stable on a morning, arises from the presence of ammonia, one of the most valuable products of stable manure; when properly economized. Gypsum or lime, either slacked or caustic, should also be sprinkled over the bottoms of cellars in the spring. This will tend to purify the atmosphere and prevent many deleterious effects resulting from the presence of miasma. After a few days it should be removed, and a fresh supply substituted in its place."