

blood, while the white colour of the northern ones is said to be that of the ancient breed of the island. There is no certainty, we think, in these conjectures, but they are probably correct. It is, however, in any case true that Neapolitan and Chinese pigs have been imported into this country, and they have greatly helped in improving the build and usefulness of our native breeds; selection in breeding and care in treatment have done the rest. In the days of the Ancient Britons the pig was a raw boned, thick-skinned, rakish-looking animal, weird and gaunt, with long legs, light quarters, a narrow back, and a figure-head that was surpassingly ugly; whereas his descendant of to-day is plump and symmetrical, short legged, fine boned, with well-developed hams and shoulders, a broad back, and deep thick sides, and a face which has lost its ferocity.

The white breeds are known under the generic name of "Yorkshires," though they are, and perhaps always have been, equally common in various other counties; the large white breed, from which the others have been obtained by crossing and by selection, are specially known under that name, while the sub-varieties, though also known as Yorkshires, are sometimes known by the name of other counties in which they are bred, as Cumberland, Leicester, or Lancaster.

*The Large White Breed.*—Up to the middle of the present century it was a common thing to find at our leading agricultural shows huge specimens of this variety some of them weighing as much as a fair-sized heifer, but in recent years they have been dropped out of sight as a rule, chiefly because they were slow to mature and large consumers of food, leaving consequently little or no profit for fattening, though at the same time they produced bacon of good quality and were prolific breeders, the litters often numbering sixteen or eighteen; and now the quality of early maturity is cultivated in connection with smaller size. The famous Robert Bakewell is said to have been the first to improve the white pigs of Leicestershire, and these in turn have improved the Yorkshires by crossing. Bakewell pursued with pigs the system he had with such marked success applied to Longhorn cattle and Leicester sheep, viz., selection; discarding the coarser ones, he bred only from such as were symmetrical and compact in form, and fine in skin and bone, cultivating at the same time the properties of early maturity and aptitude to fatten.

*The Small White Breed.*—This breed affords a striking contrast to the foregoing, not in size only, but in the period at which they mature, in quality, and—if the expression is applicable to pigs at all—in delicacy of character. It is supposed that this variety has been chiefly obtained from crosses with Chinese pigs, and it is commonly known as the small Yorkshire breed. Being small in size, indifferent breeders, and less hardy than most other kinds, these small Yorkshires are not as a rule profitable, and so are not adapted for practical dairy-farmers. There is, however, a good and constant demand throughout the country, and specially in London, for these small and dainty porkers, and the price they fetch is the highest in the market. But this small white breed has a special value for breeding purposes—for carrying on the improvement of the larger breeds, for reducing the coarseness and the coarseness of the largest sort,

and for providing a model which, differing more or less so far as size is concerned, breeders everywhere are striving to copy. Crosses with other breeds—Berkshire, for instance—have produced animals that were excellent for fattening. One of the most striking peculiarities of the small white pig is its puggy, dished, snout, of which, when the animal is fully fattened, all that can be seen are the up-turned nostrils, which sometimes nearly meet the projecting forehead; the eyes are completely hidden, their position being indicated by creases in the fat, and the head is set on much below the level of shoulder.

*The Medium White Breed.*—This breed has hardly yet attained the dignity of a distinct variety. Having been produced by modern crosses between the large and small breeds, the type is not yet fixed, and individuals here and there are found to lean too much to the one or to the other branch of their diverse ancestry; by judicious selection of true specimens to breed from, the type will soon lose its nondescript character, and variations will in time cease altogether. This type promises to become one of the most valuable in the country for tenant-farmers' use; it has the early maturity and the facility to fatten of the small breed, while avoiding the coarseness and late maturity of the large one, and it is moderate in size, fattening nicely into twelve to eighteen stones, yet the longer it is kept as store, within limits, the larger weight it will fatten into. Its face resembles that of the small breed, but it is less concave on the snout and somewhat longer, while the frame is longer and larger, and less abnormally developed in the shoulders. It is one of the best of our bacon pigs.

*The Berkshire Breed.*—This, perhaps, is the most famous breed we have, and the most general of any distinct variety in the British Islands. Formerly these pigs were of various colours, generally "a tawny, white, or reddish colours, spotted with black;" but now there are two distinct varieties, the one wholly white, and the other black, with a little white as a rule on the nose, on the feet, and on the end of the tail, and a pinkish hue on the skin. The Berkshires are understood to owe their type to the influence of Chinese blood, of which breed there are both white and black-and-white varieties; hence the two varieties of Berkshires; yet they have been less changed than some breeds have by the infusion of foreign blood, and their improvement is mainly owing to the care and attention that have been bestowed upon them through a long period.

Mr. John Coleman, formerly Professor of agriculture and farm manager at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, describes the black Berkshires in the following terms:—"Head, moderately short; forehead wide, nose slightly dished, straight at the end—not *retroussé*, as in the small breeds; chops full; ears slightly projecting, occasionally pendant and covering the eyes. Prevailing colour black, with white blaze down the nose or white star on the forehead; sometimes uniformly dark, but this is the exception, and never the dead black of the Suffolk or Essex. The pink tinge should be always apparent. The eye is not sunk and closed as in the breeds remarkable for feeding properties, but large, intelligent, and denoting activity. General effect pleasing. The head is well set; the neck, of moderate length, is full and muscular; the shoulders well set, so that we have a perfectly regular outline.

There is not the extraordinary wealth of China seen in Suffolk, but the forequarters are well proportioned. Occasionally we find a slight deficiency in the girth, caused by the flatness of the fore-ribs. The back is fairly level, and the ribs, as a rule tolerably sprung; a less perfect barrel, however, than is to be found in the Essex and Suffolk blacks. Loin wide and well covered; quarters often rather short and drooping—this is probably the weakest point in the breed. The tail is usually set lower than the hips, which give a somewhat common character. The gammon full and deep; under lines somewhat irregular; the flank often light. The carcass stands on short legs, and the bone, whilst stronger than that of the small sorts, is well-proportioned, and by no means stronger than is necessary. The strength and character of the coat varies according to sex and management. The effect of confinement and close breeding is to reduce the hair. We have a great objection to bristles, which indicate a thick skin, coarse offal, and slow feeding; but we also equally dislike the thin, weak, soft hair, which is a sure evidence of delicacy, especially in the boar; the offspring will be sadly deficient. In the sow fine long hair is desirable; too much and too strong hair is indicative of coarseness. But if the pig is required to work for its living, and to officiate as scavenger of the farm, there must be constitution; and we cannot have this without hair. The great merit of the Berkshire over most other breeds consists in the larger proportion of lean meat, and the distribution of fat and lean when properly fed; consequently a given live weight realises a larger proportion of available meat than any other breed."

As Mr. Coleman has said, the hind quarters are weak and drooping, sloping downwards from the hips to tail, so that the top line is not level, as it ought to be, from the neck backwards; this fault, though much more marked than in other breeds, is not by any means a feature which cannot be removed, or at all events greatly reduced, by careful breeding against it. [There is an engraving of a Berkshire prize-winner, in which the fault we speak of does not exist, but the quarters, instead of sloping, are nicely rounded off, while the top line is as level as anyone can desire in a pig.] As their name implies, the Berkshire pigs first became celebrated in one of the southern counties, but they are now, as the Shorthorn cattle are, known in all the civilised countries of the earth; yet, so far as England is concerned, they are chiefly found in the southern and western counties, and are not at all common in the northern ones. Besides the Berkshires, there are several varieties of black pigs, most of which bear the name of the county in which they are a speciality, as the Essex, the Suffolk, the Dorset, &c.; but so far none of them have attained anything like so widespread a popularity.

*The Essex Breed.*—The old Essex pig had a "roach back, long legs, sharp head, and restless disposition"—four very undesirable qualities; it is now a shapely and valuable breed. While travelling in Italy some forty years ago, the late Lord Western saw and admired the breed of swine called Neapolitan, which "found its greatest purity in the beautiful peninsula, or rather tongue of land, between the Bay of Naples and the Bay of Salerno—a breed of very peculiar and valuable qualities, the flavour of the meat