

Yorkshires and Berkshires.

BY FRANCIS GREEN, JR.

Mr. Snell, in his letter contained in the last issue of the *ADVOCATE*, takes exception to certain statements in a paper written by me, on the selection of a breed of pigs, in a previous number. In the first place it is, perhaps, due time to say that this paper was written and read at an institute meeting several months previously, and before we had imported any Yorkshires. It was the result of information gleaned from various sources at a time when we were looking around for a breed of pigs which would be more profitable to an ordinary farmer than any we had previously tried. The statement of our own experience contained in that paper is, I am sorry to relate, perfectly true; and I may here say that we are not alone in that respect, for it has been confirmed by the verbal and unsolicited written testimony of others. In the next place I merely gave my own convictions as to Yorkshires, compared with what experience we had had with other breeds, and in no way singled out for attack Berkshires, or for the matter of that, any other breed. Mr. Snell claims that a proper course of feeding will produce a larger proportion of lean, uniformly mixed with fat, in Berkshires than any other breed. Such is not the testimony of pork-packers and others, who have had a large experience in the carcasses of both breeds; and it is ridiculous to imagine, for a minute, that a pork-packer, who is in a large way of business, is going to advise the rearing of a breed which, according to Mr. Snell, produces an inferior quality of meat, in order to sell a few head of that breed which he may happen to own. Besides the number of pork-packers who prefer Yorkshires, is not limited to one; not only does Mr. Davis advocate the breed, but Mr. Fearman also approves of it; while in England, Messrs. Harris, of Calne, one of the largest bacon-curers in that country, and many others, all bear the same testimony. Again, the large demand for Yorkshires (and I am not referring to this country, but to Denmark, Ireland, Germany, etc.) is, in itself, a sufficient proof of the good qualities of the breed, for the demand in those countries was not started by advertising, but by personal inspection and practical experience. It is true the Yorkshire does not present the rounded appearance of Berkshires; if he did, it is altogether probable that he would not be the favorite he is with the pork-packer, for such rounded appearance is the usual concomitant of an excessive proportion of fat.

Mr. Snell hits the nail on the head when he says, "What is the use of a sow having more pigs than she has teats?" This is one of the points which contributed to decide us in favor of this breed, for the Yorkshire sow has great length and a considerable number of teats. Out of curiosity, I examined several of the young sows in our litters and none had less than twelve, and many had fourteen teats. Another point which also had some bearing on our choice of the Yorkshire was, that a white pig always looks better when dressed than a colored hog. This advantage is exemplified only this last week by an item in the *Breeders' Gazette*, which mentions that on Nov 8th, at the Union Stock Yards, Chicago, two car loads of white hogs sold for ten cents per 100 lbs. more than the best of the blacks. As regards their feeding qualities, I can now give some personal experience of them: The boars are keen servers and good foragers,

but when at service they will not lay on flesh rapidly. I do not, however, consider this a disadvantage, as stock boars, like all male animals, give better results when not overloaded with flesh. The sows are good mothers and heavy milkers, and when dry fatten very easily and rapidly, and, if anything, on less food than some good Berkshire grades we are fattening, while the litters they have produced and raised have averaged considerably more than any other breed we have tried.

Mr. Snell's last remark, that the Improved Large White Yorkshire is not recognized as a pure breed at the Royal, or any other large show, in their prize lists, is calculated to mislead only those who are not posted as to the method of arranging the prize lists, and in respect of which many complaints have frequently been made. It is no criterion whatever that the Yorkshire is not a pure breed. 'Tis but a few years since Shire horses were given a separate class; and if my memory is correct, it is only this very year that Herefords, at first, were either omitted altogether as a separate class, or else were limited to very few sections in comparison with other breeds of similar standing, and no one will contend that either of these breeds is impure. In the strict interpretation of the term there is practically no pure breed of pigs, and it is probable that all breeds have been crossed more or less with foreign breeds; but as comparing the purity of Berkshires with Yorkshires, let us see what the old authorities say: All seem to agree that the color of the old Berkshire was a sandy or white color, some of them were entirely sandy or reddish brown, some with brown or black spots. The *Complete Grazier* mentions that Sir Wm. Curtis exhibited in 1807, at Lord Somerville's Show, some pigs of the Berkshire breed of a reddish color, with brown or black spots, which were universally admired, and goes on to say that some of the best are bred in the neighborhood of Tamworth, the home of the red Tamworth pig, a statement which naturally gives rise to the suspicion that the old Berkshire had a dash of the Tamworth in its veins. The *Farmers' Series* and other writers remark that the Berkshire breed was usually crossed at intervals, either with the pure Chinese or Tonquin race; and in the report of farming in Berkshire, page 403, the opinion of a gentleman who had studied the breed for many years is given, who asserted that if not crossed once in six or seven generations with the Indian stock they would degenerate in shape and quality, from which it is plainly evident that a cross of these foreign breeds was constantly used on the Berkshire. Both Morton and Copland make mention of a herd of white, and also of black Berkshires, the former as owing its origin to a cross of the Chinese, and the latter to the Neapolitan boar. Copland, writing on Yorkshires, says: "The old York-prevalled in many of the counties of England, and different types of the same breed existed in Leicestershire, Shropshire, Gloucestershire and Herefordshire;" and in Lincolnshire, according to Morton, he was known as the wild pig; his color was a dirty white, spotted with blue or black spots, marks which occasionally appear in specimens at the present day. In no work that I have come across have I found any mention made of an extraneous cross, save an alleged cross of the Berkshire, and if this had been the case one would naturally expect that the result would have been a colored pig, just as of which he is now white, and is remarkably persistent in fixing this color on his offspring, which, even on Berkshire sows,

are invariably white, another proof of the purity of the breed.

The extracts from the works of the writers quoted, I have attempted to state as impartially as possible; and I think that it may fairly be contended that, if anything, the Yorkshire is the purer breed of the twain.

Chatty Letter from the States.

[From our Chicago Correspondent.]

Wm. McLean, the live cattle exporter, of Goderich, Ont., is now buying cattle in Chicago.

W. H. Monroe, of Boston, who has long been a conspicuous figure in the live cattle trade, has bought a large interest in the Hammond Dressed Meat Company, and will be the eastern representative of that concern. Thus we see that the system of refrigeration is steadily encroaching upon the live cattle shipping business. The introduction of patent palace stock cars has a tendency to prolong the custom of shipping animals long distances on the hoof, but there is no doubt that the dressed carcass system is on the increase.

It appears that L. E. Montgomery, of Springfield, Ill., who recently exported a boat load of cattle, lost a large number by suffocation.

Fancy Christmas cattle were sold here to shippers and exporters as high as \$5.75@6.35. During December the general cattle market was very bad, as the quality was generally poor; the commoner grades of cattle were to a certain extent made to fill the places of good grades. Indeed, pretty good, 1,200 to 1,400 lbs., commo-fatted cattle have sold in large numbers at \$3.50, which is the lowest in years for such stock.

The cattlemen ranching on the "Cherokee Strip," in the Indian Territory, have been ordered to vacate early next summer. This is considered by them to be a very great hardship, and adds one more burden to the heavy load cattlemen have had to carry.

Range cattle appear to be wintering well. The weather in Montana and Wyoming has been unusually mild.

Hogs have sold at \$3.50@3.75 during December, being the lowest since 1879. The receipts of hogs have been liberal compared with the last year or two, but not compared with four or five years ago, when prices were much higher than they are now.

The death of Mr. John Adams, the well-known Chicago live stock salesman, removed from the live stock trade a conspicuous figure. He always took a great interest in fat stock shows.

Horses are selling rather slowly at present, and the market is over-supplied with inferior to fair kinds.

The late Fat Stock Show proved to be not quite a financial success after all.

Good hogs and pretty good cattle sold during December close down to \$3.50. Good sheep were about \$1.50 per hundred pounds higher. The sheepmen have cause to feel better than any other class of stock growers, and they are making the most of their good fortune. Corn-fed and screening-fed western sheep have sold at \$4.50@5.40 lately, and have made plenty of money. Grass western, suitable for feeding, have never been so scarce, and the demand for them has hardly been half supplied.

Col. J. W. Judy, of Tallula, Ill., is of the opinion that the fine cattle sales of the year have not been so bad as some have seemed to think. He contends that good cattle have sold at good fair prices, though the common "fine cattle" sold at very low prices, as they deserved to do. Choice cattle, he says, cost no more to breed and raise than the scrubs.