

driving have reduced the time many seconds, but it is doubtful whether as much progress has been made in breeding. Shall Huntress with her faster record stand ahead of Dutchman? Taking both animals as types of their respective times, shall we say even that there has been improvement?

From Hiram Woodruff's account of Dutchman, and from what I have heard of Huntress, I should say that Dutchman with all the improved trotting appliances of to-day could have beaten her three mile time, although it was  $11\frac{1}{4}$  faster than his which for 33 years stood at the top of the record, viz: Three miles in seven minutes and thirty-two and one-half seconds. This, by the way, was real work and a distance which affords a true test of the power of a horse. I sometimes fear that our mile heats will finally result in the production of weedy, leggy creatures like those once bred for quarter races. The very highest endurance is not required, even with all the usual amount of scoring, in mile contests. The true object of trotting races should be the production of horses of speed for actual use; and for such use, speed for a single mile is alone, of but little value.

If the animal cannot trot at about his best gait for more than a mile without stopping he may do for the track as it is managed nowadays but he is not the best horse for use. Until our fairs and associations offer purses for longer distances, the trotter will continue to be bred and trained for mile heats, and as a consequence, the stout hardy stock will be ignored for lighter timber. The evil effects of breeding for speed alone, are severely felt in England. It takes a horse of good bottom, but not the best, to trot mile heats. What we want is the best bottom, and with it, as high speed as we can get; but let us not have it at the expense of bottom.

#### BEST BREED OF SWINE.

EDS. COUNTRY GENTLEMAN:—I have been reading Frank Pettit's article on the "Best Breed of Swine" in a late number of the *Country Gentleman*, and wish to make some comments upon the same subject. That the best hog for feeding purposes is the one that will give the most pork for a given amount of feed, may be laid down as an axiom, but how we are to tell this hog when we see him, or how to breed such swine, he does not tell us. If one hog be selected from each of the breeds, and all are fed side by side, this would by no means settle the point; for the breed that in one experiment would give the best results, might give the poorest in another trial. Is there nothing to guide us in deciding which is the best hog, and which the best breed? I am of opinion that there is no essential difference in the amount of pork that may be made from a certain quantity of food from animals of the various improved breeds, provided only the best specimens of each breed are taken for trial. It is my deliberate

opinion that the good qualities of a hog do not consist so much in the breed as in the breeding. It is a very easy matter to raise a poor pig of any breed, and on the other hand it requires a great deal of skill and care to raise the best specimens of any breed.

What are the points that shall decide us as to the best pigs? Compare the prize pigs of to-day with the portraits of the old English or ancient Irish pigs, and remember that our prize animals have been bred by artificial selection (I use the term artificial as opposed to Darwin's natural) from the wild ancestral type. Note the difference! The nose has been much shortened; the breadth of the skull has been increased; the legs shortened; hams and shoulders made heavier, and, most important, the animal made thicker in build, and I would lay it down as a rule that the hog that will fatten the easier is the thicker in build. To be sure it is possible to breed a little short, broad hog (for no animal is so plastic in the hands of man as the hog), that might not be as valuable as a longer hog, though such pigs will fatten very easily. If care be taken to preserve a long body, it is impossible to breed too broad a hog.

In my opinion the most essential point in a hog, whatever the breed may be, is great width across the shoulders, back and hips; the next is depth, with legs wide apart, giving ample space for heart, lungs and stomach, thus giving healthy animals with good digestive powers. Add to these the well-developed ham included under the first part; short nose; small ear; fine limbs, and a long, slim tail, and I care not what the breed is, you will have a first-class hog. As to whether a large or small hog is the best, I should be inclined to prefer a medium sized one. One that will dress from 350 to 450 pounds at 9 months of age, when well fed, I should consider the most profitable.

I have thus, as a breeder, given my ideas of the best breed (that is, the best bred); I should like to know if they coincide with the views of other breeders. E. W. DAVIS.

*Oneida Co., N. Y.*

#### CROP REPORTS,

(Received too late for the July No.)

FROM HIRAM BLACK, ESQ., M. P. P.

*Amherst, July 2nd, 1877.*

MY DEAR SIR,—In reply to yours respecting the growing crops, I would say the dry weather with the unusually cold June has somewhat damaged the prospects of a few weeks ago.

The Hay on the marshes in this vicinity will be much better than last year. New land or rich soil will be good, as it always is; but on old land, especially where getting run out, will be very poor, even if we should have moist growing weather this month.

The ice kept around our northern shores so late in the spring, keeping the ground cold, that I fear there will be a light hay crop in such localities. The marsh will be a full average, but the upland short. A large area of wheat sown, owing to the high price of flour, which

looks well. Oats, a large breadth sown, look well, excepting early sown on damp ground, which are thin and spindling. A large acreage of potatoes were planted on account of the high prices and prospects in the States. They have come usually well, unless in fields untimely planted, where they are thin, and in some places have had to be replanted. Turnips and barley are less extensively planted and sown than formerly. The harvest prospects are at least fair, but the continuance of the dry weather a few days longer will materially change them.

I remain, &c.,

HIRAM BLACK.

FROM C. C. HAMILTON, M. D.,  
CORNWALLIS.

*Lower Canard, July 4th, 1877.*

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your note of the 22nd June, in reference to the "crop prospects," I beg to say that the past spring has been the earliest for forty-six years. The year 1831 was somewhat similar, farmers commenced haying the last of June and the first of July, and all cultivated crops were abundant.

This spring, Grass made its appearance very early and continued to improve gradually, but I do not think there will be over an average crop. Rich and early uplands, and good dyked marshes are over the average and of good quality; but old meadow, and especially on the mountains, will be less than usual; this, I think, is owing to the want of warmth and moisture during the latter part of April and in May.

Some farmers have commenced cutting their Grass, and, as a general rule, I am inclined to believe that haying is often delayed until "it is fit," to the great detriment of the quality of the hay.

The breadth of all kinds of grain sown, I believe, is larger than previous years, and so far promises well. The few parcels of winter wheat are early and fine, the berry being nearly full.

The "good price" of Potatoes this last spring, and a favorable seed time, stimulated the farmers to plant more largely than heretofore, and, so far, with some few exceptions, the crop looks well. I hear nothing of the potato bug being in Nova Scotia.

The Apple crop will be less than an average; whilst the trees blossomed full, the sets are not numerous; and besides, in some localities, especially in Wolfville, Port Williams, and the lower end of this district, much damage has been done to the orchards by that pest of insects, the cauler-worm. Something must be done by fruit cultivators to prevent the females from ascending the trees in the autumn depositing their eggs on the trees,