

brand as second class because it was as just described is now A1 and "Gilt Edged," while what we used to class as No. 1 is now relegated to an inferior grade and has to be sold in the English market at a greatly reduced price, and sometimes hangs fire at any figure.

It is amusing that Mr. Snell should claim that his favorites are not overdone with fat, when in the *ADVOCATE*, containing his article, are the pictures of his prize-winning Berkshires, and noble animals they are. I can endorse them as admirably suited to raise stock suitable for mess pork whose destination is the pine woods, where lumbermen, working with the thermometer at zero or below, could eat blubber. Mr. Snell intimates that although I am a pork packer, because I have within a year taken to importing and breeding Yorkshires I am not impartial, and as one swallow does not make a summer, so one pork packer does not represent the sentiment of all the pork packers in a country. To this I would say that though only one, my firm has slaughtered over 80,000 hogs in a year, which is a greater number than all the other packers in Ontario; and I have yet to learn that our rivals do not endorse our views, on the contrary I know the principal ones do. In conclusion, if I, whose business success as a pork packer depends on having a supply of the right class of hogs, while my success or failure as a pig breeder is an insignificant matter, and am not impartial to Mr. Snell, the Berkshire breeder and importer for many years, with a business extending over the continent, the person whose statements are to be received as final, are unquestioned.

Yours truly,

WM. DAVIES.

Berkshire Pigs.

BY J. C. SNELL.

My remarks on the Berkshires in the last number of the *ADVOCATE* were written hurriedly, and were not as complete as I should have liked, and I purpose in this paper, with your permission, to treat more fully of their claims to public favor. I think that the question of size should be effectually settled by the fact, that as a class the Berkshires are the largest hogs shown at the fairs in this country, either at maturity or at an earlier age, as compared with other breeds.

In these days, when so much is being written about the desirability of producing lean meat, or a large proportion of lean to fat, the pig, which best fills the bill as a grazer or forager, is what is required. And I claim that there is no better "hustler" than the Berkshire. Of course, he can be spoiled for this, by close confinement and pampering; but given a run of grass or clover from his infancy, with a little help for the first two or three months, he will then go on to look out for himself as successfully as any class of hog in the world. It is, of course, essential to start with the right type of Berkshire; by this, I mean pigs of good length, with deep sides, wide level backs, no broader on the shoulder than on the loin and hind quarters, with full, deep, well-developed hams, and the tail right up on the back. Too many people, I fear, make the mistake of demanding, as the first desideratum, a short dished face, a feature which is all very well for fancy, but not for practical usefulness.

While we believe in contending for a good head in any class of animals as an indication of thrift, contentment, and a good disposition, we claim that this can be had in a more useful form than in that of the pug nose, which does not belong to a grazer; and when combined, as it generally is, with a very short neck and heavy jowls, is very apt to lead to wheezing and imper-

fect breathing, and goes with an idle, listless, lounging animal, which will not get up for exercise or anything else till it is kicked up. We have seen pigs of this description at the English shows, which had to have their heads raised by placing a pillow under them to keep them from smothering, and have seen them with their mouth turned up so much, and the jowls so large, that they could not eat out of a trough, and their food had to be made up into balls by the attendant and dropped into the mouth of the pampered brute as it lay with its eyes shut, and with scarcely energy enough to open its jaws. Such a hog may suit the fancy of rich men, who can afford to pay for the attention they require; but in this country, and in these times when labor is dear and time is precious, we want a hog that is able and willing to help himself.

What we call a good head, is one that is of moderate length, broad at the snout and nostrils, broad between the eyes and ears, the ears well set up and out, giving a pleasant and intelligent expression of countenance, and indicating a vigorous, active, yet contented hog, which seeks its food as it requires it, eats with a relish and is satisfied. A long shaped snout and a narrow visage, generally indicates a squealing, restless, dissatisfied animal, which is hard to satisfy, and does not make a satisfactory return for the food it consumes. We would here remark that a very short and dished face is not generally found combined with the straight, level back, and broad, deep hams we are aiming to produce, and which is certainly of very much greater importance. Who has not seen the pug nose on a pig with "cat hams," and a drooped rump and light flanks? Yet, the tyro in breeding, who thinks he knows it all, must have the head to suit him, let the hams be what they may. There is a happy medium in this, as in many things, that is more to be desired than the extremes.

Then as to color markings in Berkshires, there is the same danger of being too fastidious, and making uniformity of marking the first or principal feature in selecting breeders. While we all like to see uniform markings, other things being equal, it is a great mistake to overlook the more substantial and valuable qualities of size, bone, formation and constitution. By all means let us have well-marked Berkshires, avoiding splashes of white on the body; but when a pig shows all the characteristics of the breed, as to size, quality and constitution, undue prominence should not be given to even markings, which are not, after all, a sure indication of pure breeding; for who has not seen a half-bred Berkshire marked as perfectly as it could be done with paint and a brush? It is strange, but true, that experienced breeders of many classes of stock have allowed themselves to be influenced, in the breeding of their stock, by the demands of the public, or the new-comers in the field of farming and stock breeding, most of them ignorant of the true characteristics of the breeds, and have pandered to public taste, when their own judgment condemned it as tending to the destruction of the more useful qualities of their stock. The craze for all-red Shorthorn cattle, which prevailed a few years ago, did incalculable damage to the breed in discouraging the use of good roan bulls in many fine herds, and leading to the use of inferior bulls because they were red, a color which did not nearly so much belong to the breed at its best as the lighter colors, and which is not so generally found associated with the best flesh

and constitution. The demand for solid colors in Jersey cattle is having the same tendency and effect at the present time, a huge mistake undoubtedly where the capacity for producing milk and butter should be the quality looked for first, last and always. Breeders in England set us a better example by adhering to the standard of practical usefulness first. Then the roan and white Shorthorn prevails and wins. At the Royal Show, at Windsor, the Jersey cow that won highest honors had more white marks than any other in the great show of over four hundred Jerseys, while the first prize cow in the Ayrshire class was a pure white; but these cows were built for milking and butter-making, and reason says if they are not good for these purposes they are good for nothing. Leading breeders of Berkshires, both in England and in Canada, I am pleased to say, are not pursuing the phantom of color, and wasting their time in splitting hairs, but are breeding with a view to producing the best hog in the world for yielding the most and the best quality of bacon and hams, with flesh well mixed, and marbled with lean meat with the fat; and that they have succeeded in this, has been proven, in many cases, in England in the last few years, where prizes have been offered by the pork packers for the best bacon hogs, and the Berkshires have won the first prizes. As I write, I turn to a copy of the pedigree of an imported Berkshire sow, on the back of which is endorsed a number of first prizes won by the ancestry, "these being given for pigs calculated to make the best bacon," and several similar cases were reported to me while in England last summer, of which I regret I did not take notes.

In the breeding of hogs for the production of more lean and less fat, we cannot do better than use the Berkshire. No doubt much can be done by judicious feeding with almost any breed toward securing an increased proportion of lean meat, but it is undoubtedly true that the Berkshire will respond more readily to a course of feeding, having this object in view, than any other hog. He is, of all others, the lean meat or muscle-producing hog, and can be bred and fed for this as naturally as the collie dog can be taught to tend sheep. A review of the history of the Berkshires shows that this quality, now deemed so desirable, has always been a characteristic of the breed. From the oft-repeated testimony of early days, and all the way down through the last fifty years, we are assured of the special fitness of the Berkshire hog for the production of lean meats; so that in all these years, the hog with "a streak of lean and a streak of fat," or the hog with the best marbled meat, is always understood to be a Berkshire.

These traits cannot be expected from a slow, quiet, fat-accumulating hog, but may be looked for in one having a more active disposition, or nature that prompts him to such exercise as will develop muscular growth, and at the same time secure a reasonable degree of fatness. In this regard the Berkshire is unexcelled, while for crossing purposes, or grading up other classes, he is unequalled among hogs, and takes the same position, as is generally credited to the Shorthorn among beef cattle, in grading up and improving everything he comes in contact with. He is hardy and stands the cold weather better than any other, as well as the heat of summer; his skin does not crack and blister under the summer sun, as does that of white hogs, so that he is adapted to any and all climates. As the Berkshire usually heads the list, he also forms the standard of comparison. The height of one man's ambition is to produce a hog that is heavier than the Berkshire; of another, one that will feed as well, or one that is as prolific and hardy, or that will graze as well, or that will produce as fine hams and bacon; or in some, one or more ways resemble the Berkshire—the pattern hog—the first that fills the eye of nearly every man who turns his attention to the breeding of swine.

I now close in the language of the poet:

"One breed may rise, another fall;
The Berkshire hog survives them all."