



CHRISTMAS, 1883.

Special Holiday Number.

NEW YEAR'S, 1884.

**RURAL NOTES.**

The *Toledo Blade* incensed at the importation of American pork into Germany being prohibited, seeks the imposition of a higher tariff on all German manufactures.

No other repairs upon a building pay as good interest as money invested in painting. Well painted farm buildings are a necessary part of an attractive homestead, and they add very materially to its market value.

At the recent exhibition of fruit, made near old London, under the auspices of the Royal Horticultural Society, Nova Scotia apple-growers made a display that attracted much attention, their fruit being especially fine in size and colour.

A cow that produces only half-a-pound of butter per day will cost as much for its keep as one that produces two pounds. This difference in a head of fifteen or twenty cows is sufficiently large to make all the difference to a farmer's family between poverty and wealth.

Do not place too much food before cattle at one time, but replenish the manger as often as eaten up, until they have had enough for a hearty meal. In this way little food is wasted. It is also important that they should be fed at regular hours, for the work of digestion cannot go on if new instalments of food are arriving at all hours.

It may interest farmers who have a scarcity of hog-feed this year, to know that an excellent winter food for store pigs is a mixture of finely cut clover hay, boiled with potatoes, adding one-fourth its weight of wheat bran, and enough skimmed or buttermilk to make a thick slop. Clover, either green or in hay, is especially good for pigs.

Horses that come into the stable after a smart drive or a half-day's work in winter, require particular care. They should be well rubbed over while still warm, and every particle of snow, ice, or frozen mud on their feet and ankles cleaned off. Nor should they ever be allowed to stand where a cold current of air can strike them while in the stable.

EXPERIENCE proves that fattening animals consume nearly one-third more food while putting on a given amount of flesh when exposed to the rigours of winter weather, as against the same amount of flesh gained by similar animals when well housed. Nevertheless, a plentiful supply of fresh air is necessary in the making of good, healthy flesh.

A NUMBER of the prize animals at the recent

Fat Stock show graced the stalls of Toronto butchers at Christmas time. The carcass of White Duke—a short-horn two-year-old steer that weighed over a ton, live weight—was very much admired. Another fine animal; fed by Groff Bros., of Waterloo, made a still finer show; its thickness of fat measured nine inches.

Nor much noise is made over Holstein cattle in Ontario, but we have reason to believe the number is considerably larger than most people have any idea of and that they are rapidly growing in favour, especially in the dairy districts. One thing to be said in favour of the Holsteins is, that besides being first class for the dairy, they are much superior to other milch breeds as beefers.

THE failure of crops last year will lead many farmers to pursue a more thorough system of cultivation this year. They will get the land in better tilth; they will manure it more liberally; they will look more carefully after drainage; in a word, they will farm better. This always follows a season of failure, and as a consequence the severity of periodic crop failures may be said to be gradually lessening.

Do not be in too much hurry to dry off the milch cows. If well fed and in comfortable quarters, they may be kept in milk to within two months of calving. Remember that cows that have been bred for generations solely for a development of milking qualities, are not to be judged by the same rule as cows bred with the expectation of giving eight or ten quarts a day, or of being milked only seven or eight months in a year.

THE failure of the red clover seed crop in Ontario this year makes it necessary to import a large quantity of seed for next spring's sowing. Usually our supply in years of deficiency is obtained from the Middle and Western States, but past experience teaches farmers to be very careful when making their purchases from seedsmen. Clover seed from the prairie States especially is apt to be foul with the seed of rag-weed, and there is danger that farms may be polluted with it unless close inspection of the clover seed is made before sowing.

LAND that is meant to be kept in pasture ought to be sown with a mixture of grass seeds—all the better if not less than half a dozen varieties. Experience shows that in this way the richest pastures can be obtained, for the failure of one or two varieties (which may happen under varying circumstances) is scarcely perceptible where there are so many. One of the most valuable results of the plan, however, is the consecutive

growth of the varieties, furnishing a succession of fresh herbage from the early spring till late in the fall. A top-dressing every two or three years will greatly improve the quality of the crop.

THE wheat made such poor growth last fall that we will not be surprised to hear bad accounts of it when spring opens. There is no doubt that a good top-dressing with coarse manure would have greatly improved its chances, and it may not yet be too late for this work. Decomposition goes on very slowly in the cold weather, and nothing can be lost from the fresh manure until the warm weather of spring sets in motion the process of decay. Besides protecting the young plant from the effects of winter and spring frosts, the manure will furnish it with subsistence at the time of greatest need—when it is just starting into new life.

THE advantage of good roads to farmers does not need to be urged, and yet how few really good roads there are in the country. Very few certainly, if we compare them with the number of bad ones. A soft, rough road, offers the same obstacles to a loaded waggon as a hill would; and unless the water is taken off it can never be kept in order, although it may be under repair every day in the year. A road should be as straight as possible, so that it may be short. It should be as nearly level as possible, so that it may not waste the power of horses in drawing loads up hill. It should be smooth and hard, and made of durable material. Finally, it should be made dry by a thorough system of drainage. Such a road will cost money, but it will add to the value of every farm which it serves.

ONE of the obvious merits of polled cattle is their comparative harmlessness in the yard or field, being unable to do any serious injury to each other such as is often done by horned animals. There is also a greater measure of safety to men who take care of them, especially in the case of animals disposed to be vicious. But to depend on the supplanting of horned animals by the introduction of polled breeds, such as the Galloway and Aberdeen, would probably occupy centuries for its accomplishment. An ingenious American suggests, as a better way, the removal of the small "nubs" on the heads of calves from which the horns grow, for, as the bud upon a branch can be removed and destroyed in embryo, so may the bud of the horn on the head of the calf. The skin being returned over the wound, a little plaster of pitch will cause it to heal quickly. It is asserted that every bovine could be rendered harmless in ten years by the persistent removal of the germs of the horns from every calf, and breeding from these disbanded animals.