

FIRST PRIZE SUFFOLK PIGS, AT THE PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION LONDON, 1865.



The Property of Mr. JAMES MAIN, Trafalgar.

The Breeder and Grazier.**Premium Suffolk Pigs.**

Herewith we present our readers with an accurate portraiture of a pen of Suffolk pigs, exhibited at the recent Provincial show, and prize-takers on that occasion. Our engraving represents a group of remarkably well-bred animals that competed successfully for the prizes offered for the best Suffolks under one year. The animals shown were only six months old, and, as we remarked in our account of this department of the show, "are admirably developed, showing the best points of the Suffolks to perfection." The parents of these pigs were also prize-takers, and their owner may very properly be congratulated on his success as a competitor in the pig classes. Mr. Main is a deserving young farmer of limited means, and his enterprise in importing and multiplying such excellent stock, richly merits not merely commendation, but much more substantial reward. We recommend any of our readers desiring pure-bred Suffolks to apply to him.

Fat versus Health.

The following is an extract from a clever letter in the *London Times* by the famous "S. G. O." Taking for his subject the disastrous cattle plague at present decimating many of the dairies in Britain, he points out some of the predisposing causes which invite and foster its attacks. Our selection forms the conclusion of his able and lengthy communication:

"It is a great mistake to suppose that highly privileged animals, living on the fat of dairy land, or mansion-house land, are in real natural health because they show no ailment, are portly and comely to look upon. Nature has, I have no doubt, very different views from our own about health. We were originally built to her order, and then left to our own devices. We have taken strange liberties with man and beast. We establish a certain standard of what we call health, that is a condition of body which will

bear decently the indulgences in the way of food in which we delight. With our beasts we feed for the market, making just as far as we can, all the powers of beast nature submissive to processes calculated to obtain ends of our own. Mr. Banting found woe in fat; penitent and reflective, he deplored his abuse of a too good-natured digestion; repenting, became prudent, treated his stomach with respect, regained the lesser corporeal calibre of his better nature. Great men and women made him their prophet, gladly gave up much daily bread, beer, and loveable matters of food, to reduce their bulk. Nature is very good natured; if you have only offended her, not actually maimed her, she only asks of you to do so no more; to eat in future for her sake, rather than your own.—Oh! that a cow had speech, that an ox could preach, a pig lecture! We should then learn from dairy, stall and sty, that there may be a clean coat, great appetite, much fat, and yet a constitution so artificially abused, that a feather may turn the scale; one puff from a blast of wind blowing over a dead beast miles away may infect this pampered blood, to at once disease and destroy. We wonder how so foul a guest could get into so fair a chamber; we ought to remember that artificial nature is after a sort nature perverted, nature unnaturalised, and therefore out of health, as such, in a condition in which its force must be weak as against imported disease; an animal kept for our special purpose in a certain condition of what we call health, may after all be in a state of disease, a state altogether unfitted to contend with any sudden constitutional disturbance.

"I once ventured to remonstrate with an agricultural enthusiast on the strange diet and treatment to which he submitted his farm animals. He pitied my ignorance. I was told his object was to get rich manure for his fields, and to clothe the creatures he fed with all the fat he could, as he sold by weight. I own I was of opinion, that any animal used as a mere manure mill, taking toll of what it ground in fat, could not be in a state of health. I was inclined to argue that oil-cake and saccharine vegetable food given to an ox, kept from exercise, in quantity sufficient to cover heart, kidneys, intestines, the whole

frame, with fat, until the animal appeared more fit for the tallow vat than the kitchen, must be an extraordinary liberty taken with every natural condition. I could not see that a pig fed with greaves and the boiled flesh of animals, killed to save them from dying, however fat and sleepy it might become, however valuable its outgoings, could be considered so much by weight of edible wholesome bacon. I had my own doubts how far manure thus obtained would grow sound crops. I was inclined to think the roots might be grown very large, but of such weak, forced cellular substance, that they would be liable to rot under atmospheric conditions in which roots, less artificially driven to size, would preserve health. In my ignorance, then and since, I have expected a day would come when we might purchase a fine Wheat head too dear; that continued choice of the best ear-producing seed, and its cultivation under the high pressure of strongly prepared manures, would lead at last to a plant unable to stand cold nights, heavy dews, and then we should have a Wheat disease.

"With regard to dairy cows, I firmly believe that in the best of dairies there is too much of experiment in the way of getting rich milk, a great deal of it, and a long continuance of milk-giving power. The pail supplants the calf; in a state of nature the calf feeds at intervals, and the udder thus is often relieved. Just as women do among the lower classes, for ends of their own, often nurse too long and suffer for it; so I believe we not only artificially over-stimulate the milk-giving power of our cows, but we are apt to force milk-giving action beyond the time that in pasture the calf would seek it, and therefore the mother afford it. We expect our cows to go on giving milk to the last moment we can by any means, however artificial, promote its secretion. They may look healthy in an aristocratic dairy, or they may be, as London cellar cows, giving their milk much under the same conditions as those in which thousands of lodging human mothers give theirs in crowded back lanes. I believe, in both cases, the animals are not in health, the poor cows and poor women are the most likely to breed typhoid disease, the richer are then quite likely to be infected by it