More Thoroughbred Bulls.

Really first-class breeding stock is scarce in the country at present, and it may be safely said that in Shorthorn bulls there are not half enough to meet the demand. Young bulls, not of fancy pedigree, fit for service, readily bring from $100 to $150, to cross on common animals for raising steers. Our farmers have found out that it costs no more to raise a good class of stock than to raise scrubs; and that a well-bred animal at two years is as far advanced as common stock is at four years. Besides, it is quite evident that stock raising will become a paramount industry in the older portions of this country, where the fertility of the soil is required to be continually kept up, by returning to the soil what was taken away in crops.

Although good bred bulls are coming to the fore, and there is an increased demand for such, yet, if the herds of our farmers are looked at, there will be found that only about one in ten claims to have good grade stock; and about one in a hundred even a few pedigreed animals; and there is not one in a thousand that *claims* to be a breeder, and there is not one in ten times that number that *is* one. Every farmer in the country cannot become a professional breeder, and support a large herd of well bred cattle, but every farmer can use well-bred sires to improve his stock.

In the majority of neighborhoods where there is one pedigreed bull kept now, there might be half a dozen. Besides not being enough bulls kept for common breeding stock, there are not enough first-class men who understand the business of breeding as such, and the consequence is, even amongst our thoroughbreds, there is a lot of poor stock, and where there is one first-class breeder now, three times as many could make handsome profits. Well-bred bulls will always be in keen demand, so long as new areas of stock raising country are being opened up in our Northwest and the different States of the American Union. To make two pounds of beef where only one was before is the true economy of stock-raising, and in no better way can it be done than by increasing the number of shapely, good-bred animals in our herds The improvement of our stock would add immensely to the general advancement of the country, and to the individual wealth of our farmers at large. As the dairying interests advance and enlarge, there will be an increased demand for both well-bred sires and also females of good milking strains; and thus, with the two leading branches of beef, butter and cheese raising, good stock will always be a good paying investment.

The Wheat Prospects.

As far as we have heard, the prospects of fall wheat are not so bright as they were a year ago. The winter has been severe, and five months of steady snow and drift has smothered the plant out completely along fences and hollow places. Even where so much snow has not been the plant is sickly in the majority of places, and gives no promise of becoming a strong, healthy plant. The fact is, last fall the sowing was too late, and it had no chance of a vigorous growth before winter set in. Again, the condition of our fields at the present time argues strongly for better drainage and culture. Where wheat was put in early and on land in good tilth, it looks well; but where one field was properly put in last fall, two were sown on stubble or land which had no previous preparation. The successful crops of the last four years induced farmers to sow all their available land in fall wheat, whether the land be in condition or not. Such farming may do for a while, but finally the day of reckoning comes, and during a bad winter and unfavorable weather, the plant has not sufficient strength to withstand the attacks of such seasons. Without good farming it is a risky crop, and every condition, such as thorough drainage, plant food and tillage, conducive to the growth of the plant, should be fulfilled. It is plainly evident from the appearance of fields side by side, the one green and luxuriant and the other completely killed, that early sowing, drainage, and culture, are the main factors in a good crop of wheat, notwithstanding the weather has a powerful influence in determining any crop.

United States Letter.

Washington, D. C., April 20, 1883.

This spring has been the most backward we have had in this latitude for many years. As a consequence the fruit buds will escape late frosts, and we have promise of a good yield of fruit. The short apple crop of last season gave us the spectacle, last winter and this spring, of seeing oranges selling in our streets for *one-half* the price of fair apples.

Among the interesting and instructive addresses delivered before the Convention of Agriculturists, which met at the U. S. Department of Agriculture in this city last winter, that on Swine, by Col. F. D. Curtis, of Charlton, N. Y., was among the best. As it never has been published, I here, by permission of Hon. Geo. B. Loring, Commissioner of Agriculture of the U. S., make a few extracts. He said that the methods of feeding swine in the great pork-producing districts of America are not conducive to the production of parasites in the flesh of swine, nor is it a resultant effect of climate; but the opposite. Corn, the great staple, is the purest kind of food, and ranging in the open air, on the naked ground, is also more productive of healthful growth, as compared with the system of style rearing and feeding so common in other countries. *An excess* of corn feeding undoubtedly causes injurious effects in swine, but not in the way of producing parasites in the flesh, and constant exposure in the opon air undoubtedly decreases the profits; but by no law of cause and effect would it produce trichina or other parasites in the flesh.

Pig raisers, he alleges, have adopted a system of condensing a pig, as far as possible, reducing the bone, muscle and other parts to fat, so that the modern improved pig has become little else than a mass of animated lard. Such pigs are not desirable food, and people show their good sense by not desiring to eat them. This kind of improvement has lessened the demand for pig meat in cities *one-half*, and lessened its use very materially in farmers' families. Since the human stomach cannot digest lard four inches thick, we had better reduce the four inches, and grow *meat* instead of *lard*, and try to produce food more palatable, digestible and eatable. There must be more muscle and less fat; more length of body, and less clumsiness; more exercise, and less stuffing, which latter condition now characterizes pig raising too generally. The *rich* food must be kept from the pigs, or fed in very moderate quantities, until the mending up time just before slaughtering. My idea is that the body should be made first and the fat added afterwards. This will make healthier meat and more palatable, than to keep pigs in a continuous condition of over-fatness. To feed pigs *exclusively* on corn produces a feverish and unhealthy condition, and lays the foundation for bodily ailments. It creates inflammation of the bowels and disorders the stomach, which may prevail in a herd so as to be considered contagious, and leading to the erroneous conclusion that hog-cholera prevails.

The best remedy for bowel disorders lies in *prevention* rather than *cure*. Hogs should have the range of a clover-field, or be fed liberally with corn-stalks or the early maturing sorghum, and roots in their season, with plenty of pure water. When this is done the injurious effects of eating a large quantity of corn will be obviated, and even young pigs will keep healthy. If this system was adopted, there would be less of so-called hog-cholera and more lean meat in proportion to fat, which would help to create an increased demand for pork. He said, also, that to feed hogs *exclusively* on corn gives to the pork a peculiar oily flavor, and that waste-fed hogs make very oily and rank pork.

Mr. Edwin Moffat, the special agent of the U. S. Department of Agriculture in London, Eng., in his late report to Commissioner Loring, says that from 1842—prior to which year the importation of horned cattle and sheep into Great Britain was prohibited by law—to 1882, the number imported into Great Britain increased from 4,264 head of cattle, including calves, and 644 head of sheep (in 1842), to 363,700 head of cattle, and 1,124,391 head of sheep (in 1882).

The supply of horned cattle from the northern ports of Europe has fallen to the minimum of 1865. Spain and Portugal still ship in decreased numbers, while some have entirely ceased. The trade in sheep is lively, and a large increase, due to the fact that farmers in Germany and elsewhere are unable to realize remunerative rates for raw wool, on account of the enormous supply which Australia sends to the European markets. He shows, by tabular statements, that the decline in the importation of cattle from continental Europe to Great Britain is more than made up by the vast increase in shipments from the United States and Canada. Fifty per cent. (one-half) of all the cattle now imported to Great Britain, come from the U. S. and Canada. Ten years ago, but 7 per cent. came from America.

He states that, of late, American buyers of fine bred, live-stock for breeding, have exhibited great activity, and the exportation is rapidly increasing. He reports that at the public sales of live-stock, the pick of the flock is taken by American buyers, who bid too high for local purchasers. The English farmers and the press are complaining that American (which includes Canadian) buyers are carrying the best stock from their shores. As they get fabulous prices they should not complain. He adds that within the last six months over twenty companies have been formed in Glasgow, Edinburgh and London, for the purpose of buying western ranches in America and developing our cattle resources.

LOTUS.

How to Sow and Plant in the North-west.

Red Fyfe wheat is the best wheat to sow, being the most certain crop, and it also commands a higher price than other varieties. Last year it yielded at the rate of 29 bushels to the acre in most places. Black side oats give the best results, and last season yielded on an average 58 bushels to the acre, and 38 lbs. to the bushel. A correspondent, writing to an exchange, says:

I do not think that the chance is even fair for an average crop, not to say a good crop, unless the land is backset. I travelled over a large portion of this country last season, also the previous season, but did not see anything like an average crop where the grain had been sown on the sod.

Potatoes do well planted or ploughed in on the sod, requiring no further cultivation after planting, but as to sowing grain on sod I have not seen an exception where there was a fair crop. My opinion is that if a new settler centres his entire efforts on breaking and backsetting the first year, he will be financially further ahead than the one who endeavors to get a crop the first year. Many new settlers miss the first season by building when they ought to be breaking. Usually breaking cannot be continued later than the 10th July; the land by this date is hard and dry, making very hard work for the teams. Nor does the sod rot nearly as well when the breaking is done late. My advice to a new settler would be to tent or put up a rough shanty until he has got through breaking; he would then have July and August to go on with building or other work; the breaking would not be ready to backset before the 1st of September; the longer the breaking is left the better, so long as it can be done before the frost sets in.