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The National Stockman AND FARMER.

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RAISING, BREEDING, FEEDING, BUYING AND SELLING LIVE STOCK,
AND TO THE INTERESTS OF
AGRICULTURE AND THE FARM.

Special attention given to the preparation and revision of
MARKET REPORTS,
Which may be relied upon as full, accurate and authentic.

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PITTSBURGH, PA., JANUARY 6, 1887.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

MORE AND MORE.—In view of the many clubs of subscribers received in the past few days, we must repeat the thanks expressed a week ago to the friends who are using influence and effort unstintingly to increase the circulation of THE STOCKMAN. We will not make such invidious distinction among them as to pick out a few names for special mention, but assure all that their kind aid is most heartily appreciated. And many clubs are reported as yet in process of formation.

TOO MUCH IMPROVEMENT.—Once in a while somebody will turn up who seems to think that the work of breeding up American live stock to a higher standard is in danger of being carried too far and overdone. These rather scarce fellows would perhaps be surprised to know that some of the London papers lately severely criticised the address of a famous English agricultural orator, on the ground that he said almost nothing about the "needed improvement of the flocks and herds" of the United Kingdom. When it is remembered that English flocks and herds will average much higher in breeding than our own, it will seem probable that there is a *leetle* room for improvement in America yet.

NEW YEAR HOGS.—Conditions favorable to the hog trade have been multiplying of late, until the new year starts off with a boom all over the country. Hogs have been covering themselves with glory this week, advancing to a figure at this point unknown for many months, and other markets coming up to a correspondingly cheerful position. Those who are best posted have the most confidence in the hog trade through the remainder of the season, and it really seems that, unless something unexpected develops, the market will run along in satisfactory shape at least until the close of winter packing. Those whom swine disease has prevented from enjoying the opportunity which the mid-winter markets are affording are to be commiserated.

SOMETHING NEEDED.—Once in a very great while a farmer's family is met with which is overstocked with reading matter; but when one of this kind can be found there are a score or two which, for the best interests of the little home community, should increase the expenditures for literature. Now, at the opening of a new year, is a good time to make a new departure in this line. Have plenty of live, clean, wholesome, interesting reading matter in the home—better have too much than too little. And do not by any means confine it to newspapers. Give the grand modern magazine a place on your table, and add a well-selected new book as often as practicable. Get these things, use them, and have your children use them; and at the end of 1887 you will find that at least one kind of investments made in this year have been profitable.

PLEURO AT CHICAGO.—The people are becoming impatient over the delay in completing the work of ridding Chicago of pleuro-pneumonia. There is little use in beginning the work of purification if it is to stop at a point where all that has been accomplished is liable to be lost by leaving the seeds of disease to be spread as before. Somebody is at fault—we are not prepared to say who—but the people have a right to expect that whatever trouble may lie in the way of finishing the work be promptly removed. The Commissioner of Agriculture is complaining of the Illinois Board of Agriculture, and the latter in turn seems to think it is doing about the correct thing. In the meantime there is every opportunity for pleuro-pneumonia to become widely disseminated again in the great metropolis of the Northwest—a calamity which neither Chicago nor the country at large can afford to invite.

EXPORTING WHEAT.—The most gratifying fact in connection with the wheat trade of the past few months is that largely increased quantities of this grain are going abroad. Both in steadiness and volume the export trade has probably somewhat exceeded general expectations, since the crop of 1886 came upon the market. And there is no indication of an early abatement in the foreign demand. On the contrary, evidence is increasing that other exporting countries are pretty well denuded of supplies, and that the drain upon our wheat must continue at least until another year's crops have been added to the sum total of the world's production. The American "visible supply" at the close of the year was larger than ever before, but outside of this the available quantities of wheat in the country are believed by those who are best informed to be less than at any time within the last five years. In view of all this we cannot but consider the wheat situation as more cheerful than at any time since the great depression began. We shall base no prognostications on the facts stated, but will leave the reader to figure out probabilities after his own mind.

JANUARY MEETINGS.—This month is full of gatherings of farmers and breeders, all over the country, containing more dates for agricultural meetings than any other month in the year. A progressive point in connection with the January meetings has come to be the association of lectures, addresses and discussions with the dull routine of business which formerly characterized many of them. This feature gives them a greatly increased value, and affords a new incentive to attendance. There is now every reason why those within reach of them should make it a point to be on hand, while without this attraction those not directly interested in the business to be transacted could hardly be expected to go much out of the way to listen to a succesion of motions, resolutions and statistical reports. The farmers' institute feature of these gatherings should be enlarged and improved upon from year to year.

RANCHMEN VS. CHICAGO.—The press of the plains teems with caustic remarks concerning the great cattle monopoly at Chicago, and the feeling of antagonism to it is evidently increasing. St. Louis will probably profit by the manifestation of hostility to Chicago—but it remains to be seen how much ranchmen will profit by the new stock-yard scheme at the former point. It is probable that they may thus succeed in having a market free for a time at least from the damaging domination of the beef canners, but we are curious to see how such a state of things is to be perpetuated. What measures can be adopted which will prevent the great buyers from some day having as strong an influence on the cattle trade of St. Louis as they now have upon Chicago? Is it practicable to establish a market with any better safeguards against monopoly than exist at Chicago, or with any greater surety of competition in buying? We wish it were, and wish the ranchmen success in their effort, but feel a little perplexed as to how the desired end is to be secured.

THE OHIO VALLEY ASSOCIATION.—There seems to be but one kind of sentiment in all the country interested as to the propriety and importance of establishing an Ohio Valley Cattle-Growers' Association, as proposed and advocated by Judge Jones at various times in these columns. Nor, as far as expressions have been made, is there a disposition on the part of anybody to be particular about a time and place of meeting, further than a general desire that it be soon and as central as possible. The collection of stockmen at Columbus next week would have afforded a good opportunity for taking preliminary steps in the matter, and we had hoped that a call would be issued in time to take advantage of the favorable circumstance. However, it is now too late for that, and the next best thing (or possibly the best thing) is to make a call for another date. We are inclined to think, after talking with a number of stockmen on the subject, that the preliminary meeting will be well attended, whether held at Columbus or Pittsburgh, both of which would seem to have advantages over other points. Everything is ripe, and we believe the time for action has fully come.

ENGLISH DISEASE.—A part of the English press strenuously advocates closing the doors of importation against all kinds of live stock from other countries. Among these is the London *Live Stock Journal*, which discusses the subject at some length in the number just at hand. Among other things which the article contains is this statement: "There is little doubt that it is from foreign countries that we obtain most of those diseases among our live stock that have so frequently brought to the brink of ruin the whole breeding industry of this country." In view of the fact that few if any of the countries from which England imports live stock have had as much of disease in the last ten years as England itself has had, this expression seems a little strange. The United States is of course one of the leading countries proposed to be excluded from British markets, and the ratio of disease to the total of live stock here is a mere bagatelle beside that in England at any time in the period named. Without discussing the propriety, from the British stockman's standpoint, of shutting out all foreign live stock, it seems to us that it could not be consistently done on the ground taken by our able contemporary.

FRAUDS AT FAIRS.—At a number of agricultural exhibitions held last autumn, under our own observation, and no doubt at many more which we did not see, there were among the exhibitors of live stock occasional men publicly known to be unreliable both as men and as breeders. Breeders of character were compelled to throw their stock into pens beside stock of at least suspicious standing, if indeed it was not generally understood to base its claims to recognition on downright fraud. And in many fairs where no stock of this kind was shown it was simply because the frauds did not see fit to come out, and not because there was anything in the fair regulations to prevent their appearance.

We have seldom heard exhibitors complain of the doubtful associations by which they are thus sometimes surrounded, and have felt that they submitted more patiently than we would have done under similar circumstances. This is all wrong, and it is about time that a protest should be entered against the perpetuation of the evil. Boards of fair managers should be composed of men sufficiently well informed to be able to point out fraudulent breeders, and the regulations under which they work should compel them to shut their gates against every applicant of this kind who desires space. Fairness to honest exhibitors requires it if there were no other end to be served.

When stock is shown in the pens of a wide-awake agricultural society it should be understood that its admission is a virtual endorsement of its owner's claims to consideration from the public. If the visitor wishes to buy some of the stock on exhibition, the place where he sees it should be in some measure a guaranty that he will be fairly treated. If it is right to drive the swindling gambler or fakir from the grounds, why is it not equally incumbent on the management to expel swindling stockmen in the same manner? Come—while we are purifying our fairs, let us do it thoroughly! The better class of papers are trying to rid the country of these rascals, and why shouldn't you, Mr. Fair Manager, who have heretofore given this matter no thought, assist in the work? Lend us a hand, and let us unitedly make the year tell in the work of purification.