

ton from native pastures. Their stock has been improved and graded up with the best breeds of the Western and Eastern States. Besides this fact, the natural grasses and the mild climate of this interior region contain elements, which increase the sure health of animals from ten to fifteen per cent. above that of the same class of animals in the moister regions west of the Cascade Mountains. This is the testimony of butchers and stock buyers and drivers. It is noticed by travelers on the boats and cars, on which stock is shipped to market. Brought up on a farm, and accustomed to the care of all kinds of stock during earliest boyhood in Massachusetts and in Vermont, I never fail to notice and admire the large and perfectly formed sheep, and the tall, long bodied, well rounded cattle, and horses, also, of Eastern Oregon and Washington.

Raised on those high prairies and hills, seldom fed in yards, never housed, nourished on those native grasses, they attain a perfectness of form, and largeness of bone and muscle, and a degree of strength, vigor and nerve, rarely seen and never exceeded by animals of the same class, and bred in any other locality, east or west from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The cattle from Texas, Colorado and Wyoming, do not equal those from Oregon and Washington. They have for six years past attracted Eastern buyers, and in 1876 they began to appear in the Chicago market. A gentleman called my attention to the first lot of seven car loads, which stopped for food at Geneseo, Illinois, in 1876. He was surprised at their length, height and size, and beauty of form. He had been a farmer, and stock raiser in Illinois forty years, but had seen no such cattle from natural pastures. A few days later, January 1st, 1877, a Chicago stock buyer was interviewed on the C. & R. I. R. R. respecting the market for such cattle. His prompt reply was:—"They are the finest and largest we have ever received from pasture lands west of the Mississippi. Those four year old steers averaged 1,400 lbs. each on foot. They will always command the highest price of pasture fed cattle. They now sell quick at five cents per pound gross, while other droves command only  $4\frac{1}{4}$  and  $4\frac{1}{2}$ . We shall want all that your country, though so far away, can supply."

Two years ago, the President of the Stock Growers' Association of Iowa, resident at Council Bluffs, was in Prineville, Oregon, with three other stock buyers for Eastern and for California markets. He reported that 50,000 head would be bought, during 1880, for the Chicago markets. They were to be driven to Wyoming and Nebraska; to be wintered and fed and assorted for their several markets the two following years. The larger animals would be fattened to weigh 1,600 to 1,800 lbs., and would be sent to England. Bought in Oregon at \$20 each for three-year olds, they would command in Liverpool or London \$100, or more. With fair success in driving, and mild winters on the route, the purchasers expected a large per cent. on their investment.—But the fierce winds and intense cold of the winter of 1881-2 and the destruction of stock in Nebraska doubtless reduced their margins of profit and possibly their principal.

#### TWO CHECKS UPON MERE STOCK RANGES.

The business of raising herds and flocks upon natural pastures grew rapidly. It not only enlisted farmers but invited large speculators. Larger bands were bought and turned out upon those high plains. The first cost was the chief expense. The pay of a few herders and shepherds was a small item.—Stock multiplied so fast that the loss of ten or twenty per cent., by a hard winter, was more than replaced two and three-fold by the increase of the eighty per cent. saved. The result has been to rapidly overstock the ranges and eat them out. Lands, ten years ago covered with bunch grass eighteen inches and two feet high, are now almost bare of grass, except a few clumps under the dense scraggy sage brush. Flocks have followed the herds and cleaned many hills even down to the roots, leaving dusty barrens instead of green pastures. As a consequence, large stock raisers have sought new and distant ranges, scores and hundreds of miles from their first location. The whole upper country has been thus explored, tested and overrun by larger and larger herds and flocks, all of which is destined to be eaten out, and abandoned for newer and still more distant regions.

#### AN EVIL.

To overstock a pasture is to destroy its usefulness. Grass must have time to grow and go to seed in order to reproduce itself. If eaten off and kept bare it becomes dusty and subject to be blown away by winds, or to become hard baked in summer and useless. Herbage condenses the invisible vapors and nourishes itself. Barren hills and plains condense very little moisture. The waste of grass becomes the cause of the

loss of water supply in the interior. The stock raiser suffers from his own eagerness to overstock the ranges, and make his money in a few years. The process kills the enterprise. Stock raising in that way is checked.

Hard winters, deep snows and severe cold, comes without forewarning, and find many men without food for their large droves, and without power to care for them. The result is that thousands of cattle and sheep starve or freeze to death. These disasters close the accounts and the business of the improvident often with a heavy balance on the wrong side of the ledger. The herds and flocks finally concentrate in the hands of few more prudent owners.—The sales for Western and Eastern markets fall off for lack of supplies, and all careful observers see the beginning of the end of this style of stock raising. A gentleman, now in it, in southeastern Oregon, says, that two or three years more will finish it. The predictions of two years ago are in quick process of fulfillment.

#### STOCK FARMS.

Instead of buying up farms for stock ranges, as some have done, the wiser course is to fence as large areas of farms and pastures as will be needed for a given amount and variety of stock.—Cultivate enough to raise an abundant food supply for winters, and change pastures frequently and give time for the growth of natural grasses. Seed fields down with varieties of cereals and grasses. Make a single acre by good ploughing and tilling give the product of five acres in the natural state. Carry the product of that one acre, by deep and finest tillage and the use of fertilizers, up to six hundred and even a thousand per cent. above its product in the natural condition. The cost of labor will not equal a fourth part of the gain. Stock will be more easily cared for in home pastures and they will thrive better, and command higher prices and quicker sales. Farmers who provide for their stock at home, will find that their stock will not fail to provide for them. Stock farms will join and neighborhoods will be formed, and their united product of flocks and herds will far exceed in number and value all the results of stock ranges on natural pastures.

A few days since I received a letter from an Illinois farmer, well endorsed, and asking information about this country and closing with this statement:—"I have some money. I wish to buy land enough to keep stock and raise food for them." His plan is correct in a scientific and in a business view. The adequate food supply of stock is the first essential factor in the business, and without it the business cannot be a success. But the mere stock farm is not the model farm of Eastern Oregon and Washington in the future.

(To be continued.)