CHAPTER VII

IMPROVED LIVESTOCK

Diversified farming, in so far as it involved a new emphasis on animal husbandry, introduced our farmers to the never-ending discussion of livestock improvement—of breeding, as well as feeding. In this respect, as in the matter of wheat raising, the settlers coming to Wisconsin from the eastern states brought with them favorable traditions.

The generation which came upon the stage after the close of the War of 1812 began the regular reading of agricultural periodicals, and these adopted improved livestock as a primary feature of the better farming campaign. The same generation began attending county fairs and state fairs. Moreover, it was just at that time that importations of purebred animals from abroad began to influence strongly the efforts of breeders in America. The American line of purebred Devons is traced back to the Patterson importations of 1817 and the years following. Shorthorns that are eligible to herd book registry rarely if ever go back to importations earlier than those of 1818. In fact, it was in the years 1818 to 1840 that this country acquired from England the beginnings of those herds, of choicest strains, which made some of the breeders in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Kentucky, Ohio, and Illinois almost as celebrated for their shorthorns as were formerly the Collings brothers, the Reverend Henry Berry, and Thomas Bates in England. There were earlier importations of animals of both the above breeds, but they attracted little popular interest; they failed to result in a persistent program of pure breeding or to exert a large influence toward improving the livestock of the country or even of a single state.¹

It was during the later years of the Napoleonic wars that Spain was compelled to give up her monopoly in merino sheep, among the cattle brought to the colonies were many Old Devons—the "red oxen" of New England; and there were probably some of the ancestors of the improved Durhams or shorthorns.
and from the importations of Consul William Jarvis in 1809, 1810, and 1811 the flock masters of Vermont and other states mainly supplied themselves with breeding stock. A few merinos had already reached the United States from France, particularly through the efforts of Chancellor Livingston, but the great movement for improving the wool industry dates from the Jarvis importation. Improved Leicesters, Cotswolds, Southdowns, and other English breeds followed rather than preceded the merinos.

In the matter of swine, experimentation with improved breeds began to be common during the same general period. In this department, also, American breeders built on the achievements of the English, who had produced their improved Suffolk, Essex, Yorkshire, Cheshire, and Berkshire breeds, all of which, together with the China pig and some others, were brought to this country and quickly gained popularity among the better farmers.

The state and county fairs were peculiarly adapted to promote a general interest in improved breeds of livestock. Good cattle, sheep, pigs, horses, and poultry really made the fairs. In fact, the county fair was first suggested in Elkanah Watson’s exhibition on the village green of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, in 1807, of two merino sheep. Always and everywhere it was the livestock exhibits that attracted farmers to the fairs and gave them such success as they had from an agricultural point of view.

When in the fall of 1851 the first Wisconsin state fair was held at Janesville, the State Agricultural Society made a special effort to secure a good showing of livestock, and they were reasonably successful so far as number of entries went. There were 52 entries of cattle, 68 of horses, 120 of sheep, and 20 of hogs. Among the cattle 12 are classed as shorthorns, 12 as Devons. The rest were “natives and crosses.” What the breeding of the shorthorns and Devons may have been we do not clearly know. We do know, however, that the exhibitors’

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names do not appear in the American Shorthorn Herd Book of nearest dates. Possibly not a single registered shorthorn or Devon animal was owned in Wisconsin at that time. Since, however, several exhibitors had family names which tally with those of contemporary shorthorn breeders in other states, it is not unlikely that the animals credited to them had been consigned for the purpose of being exhibited and sold in Wisconsin. Some of the animals also may have been "full-bloods," so-called, though not eligible to registry. Six each of the shorthorns and Devons were exhibited by an Illinois breeder.

The same query about purity of blood arises in relation to the exhibits of horses. No distinct breeds are mentioned. The animals are listed under three heads: horses, matched horses, and geldings. In only a single case, that of R. M. Wheeler's stallion "Hambletonian," was the pedigree referred to. In that instance a letter was placed in evidence from the Vermont breeder who sold the animal to Mr. Wheeler. He claimed to give the pedigree fully on the sire's side, incompletely on the side of the dam. This animal was evidently fairly well bred, but nothing can be asserted with confidence of the others.

The sheep were grouped under six heads: long wool, middle wool, merino, Saxon, poular merino, and crossbreeds. The long wools were all "Bakewell sheep," which means improved Leicesters. Middle wools included Southdowns and Leicesters. The merinos, Saxons, and poular merinos were probably purebreds. Mr. N. B. Clapp of Kenosha County certified that his breeding stock, Saxons, came from the importations of H. D. Groves of Hoosac, New York, and that he purchased them in the year 1844 in Dutchess County, New York and Litchfield, Connecticut. The poular merinos were brought from Vermont. Other merinos were probably of Vermont origin, nearly all of which belonged likewise in Kenosha.

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4 Wis. State Agric. Soc., Trans., 1851, 14.
oughbreds, carrying away prizes on their Clydesdales, the former in 1875 taking not only general prizes but also the "breeder's special premium" for the best draft stallion of any breed and the second best mare of any breed, also sweepstakes on horses for best stallion and five of his colts, and best mare with foal by her side. A son of Richard Richards, Griffith Richards, residing at Cambria, Columbia County, also captured prizes with his Clydesdales.

Within twenty years after 1880 the farm stock of horses had become profoundly and almost universally modified as a result of the multiplication of draft breed sires and their general distribution over the state. Nearly every farm had its "big team" or teams for the heavy farm work and for heavy hauling. Horses weighing 1400 pounds became as common as those of 1200 had been earlier. Driving horses, which continued to be useful for a time and somewhat divided the interest with draft horses, have declined in importance since the coming of the automobile.

A question has arisen whether addition of weight has not actually gone so far as to be uneconomical, particularly since the advent of the tractor, which affords relief from the heaviest farm draying. For some years a movement has been in progress looking toward a different type in the breeding of farm horses. It is now maintained, by some experts, that crosses between the large farm mares, compounded mainly of draft horse blood and the common stock, and purebred Morgan sires will produce the ideal farm horse. Many such are already to be found—fine, well knit, clean limbed, warm blooded animals weighing 1200 to 1400 pounds, fit for the plow, the dray, the self-binder, and all other farm work, and not ill adapted to the saddle or the road harness.18

While breeders very properly place the emphasis on purebred animals as the surest means of improving the quality of cattle, horses, and other livestock, it should be noted that very

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real improvement resulted also from the use of grades and crossbreeds. For a good many years the average Wisconsin farmer was loath to incur the expense involved in the use of high priced breeding animals. A purebred shorthorn calf might cost from $50 to $200; a grade calf would cost, say, $10. The temptation, accordingly, was overpowering to take the cheaper. This made farm breeding an uncertain process, with benefits far below those attending the general use of purebred males; but the net result was a decided improvement over the old-time "scrub" stock. Historically, it was very largely, even mainly, by the employment of such grades that the first general improvement of farm cattle came about, and the same statement will cover the case of farm horses, though when we come to the smaller and less expensive farm animals—pigs and sheep—we find a more general tendency to employ purebreds.19

Wool production in Wisconsin up to about 1870 followed closely the course of that business in the country as a whole. Wool growing for household industrial uses had been common from early colonial times, but wool growing as a commercial enterprise developed in the United States between the years 1808 and 1830.20 The influence bringing about the change was the development, partly through war and embargo, partly through the protection of infant manufactures, of the woolen industry as carried on by the factory system. Coincident with the beginning of the American factory production of woolens came the importations of merinos from Spain, begun by Consul William Jarvis, which totaled in about thirty months nearly 20,000 head. For a few years, under the stimulus of high prices for fine grades of wool, the country went mad over

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20 See L. G. Connor, "A Brief History of the Sheep Industry in the United States," Amer. Hist. Assoc., Annual Report, 1918. This is an invaluable survey of the field and is my chief reliance for the general facts referred to under this topic.
County. Among the exhibits of swine one is called a Berkshire, one a Byfield, one a Leicester, and a fourth a Neapolitan. In other cases the breed is not designated and nothing is said about purity of blood.

Considering the exhibition as a whole, there is no doubt that in the interest of Wisconsin farmers sheep held at that time highest place among improved livestock, while swine held the lowest place. Cattle and horses were merely of that degree of respectability which argues a rather languid interest in their improvement. The exhibits of shorthorns by Wisconsin men all came from Racine and Walworth counties, save one which was from Rock; while the Devons with one exception were from a single herd at Fox Lake, in Dodge County. Of course, in those pre-railway times distance and conditions of travel influenced very markedly the geography of the exhibits.

It is not to be inferred, from what has been said, that there were probably no good cattle in the state at that time. Indeed, evidence independent of the Transactions proves the existence from early times of improved cattle, particularly in Racine, Kenosha, and Walworth counties. But circumstances had hindered those who tried to improve their stock. Generally speaking, cattle grazed, as commons, the untilled lands in nearly every neighborhood. The herds mingled together indiscriminately, thus preventing careful, determinate breeding from selected sires. This evil continued till practically all the lands were taken up and enclosed, after which the herds were effectually separated. Since the prairies and openings of the southeastern part of the state were earliest brought into farms and enclosed, it was there that progress in livestock improvement first became practicable.

Passing over the intervening years until we reach the exhibits of 1860, we find 22 shorthorns receiving awards and several others "honorable mention." The most prominent exhibitors were Richard Richards and John P. Roe of Racine.

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"It was many years before public opinion demanded and enforced a law, which forbade owners to allow bulls to run at large. See Wisconsin, Laws of 1870, chap. 93."
County, Seymour Brooks of East Troy, Walworth County, and C. H. Williams of Excelsior, Sauk County. All of these men were at that time recognized breeders of registered stock. According to the Herd Book of 1859, Richards was owner of 4 pedigreed bulls and 6 cows. Roe had 3 pedigreed bulls and 5 cows; while Brooks had, in 1859, 1 bull and 1 cow and Williams 1 bull and 5 cows. None of the other exhibitors of 1860 are named in the Herd Book, though several other Wisconsin breeders appear in it. By that time we can claim for Wisconsin a definite status in the breeding of purebred short-horns, and we find equally good evidence to prove the interest in Devons. There were also, among the cattle, a few Alde-neys, Ayrshires, and Herefords.

After 1860 the breeders of shorthorn cattle increased very rapidly in numbers and also became widely distributed over the state. It is not possible, in this brief sketch, to notice many individuals. Racine County continued to hold a very prominent position. Richard Richards, who was in 1859 one of the best known Wisconsin shorthorn breeders, increased his herd gradually until by 1866 it counted 24 head of registered stock. But he dropped out of that department shortly after 1870, devoting his energies and great ability to the breeding of fine horses and fine pigs. Mr. George Murray of Racine was owner of a group of shorthorns which, under the name of the Slausondale Herd, was famed not merely in Wisconsin but all over the country as one of the choicest herds in Amer-

"Mr. Brooks, who was the son of a successful New York breeder, had a dispersal sale in June, 1857, and presumably sold most of his herd of 25 mature shorthorns and 20 calves. See Wis. Farmer, 1857, 213-214, 223. His herd was described by the editor of the Farmer as "undoubtedly the largest and best bred herd in the state." He adds: "If scattered through the different counties and used judiciously, it will tend to materially improve our stock." It must be noted that though the Herd Book of 1857 fails to credit Seymour Brooks with any registered animals, his bull "Samson," No. 2172, winner of the first prize at the state fair at Milwaukee in 1856 and at Janesville in 1857, is credited to William Ellsworth of Mayfield, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. This is an instance to show how slowly the records adjusted themselves to changes of ownership and it suggests that Brooks's entire herd were probably Herd Book animals.

"C. H. Williams, according to the Herd Book of 1857, was owner of 9 registered shorthorns. In 1858, at the state fair held at Madison, his Kentucky bred bull "Paris," No. 1955 (see cut) took first premium in the shorthorn class.
PARIS—DURHAM, OWNED BY C. H. WILLIAMS, EXCELSIOR, SAUK COUNTY.
First prize at state fair, 1858

BLOOMFIELD 3d—DEVON, OWNED BY THOMAS REYNOLDS, MADISON
First prize at state fair, 1858
PRIZE WINNING SPANISH MERINOS
Bred and owned by Charles M. Clark, Whitewater, about 1878

BLOOD HORSE—KING OF CYMRY
From State Agricultural Society Transactions, 1854–57
ica. In April, 1873, Mr. Murray held a public auction at his farm in Mount Pleasant, when visiting buyers were said to have numbered above 400 from both the United States and Canada. At that sale 21 cows and heifers brought the sum of $18,640, or an average of $887; while 9 bulls were sold for $5565, or an average of $619. This was one of the most successful sales held in America in that period. Mr. Murray bought choice animals in Canada, in Kentucky, and indeed wherever he could find individuals of the types and the breeding calculated to improve his herd. Throughout the decade of the seventies his stables and pastures just outside the city limits of Racine were a mecca for shorthorn breeders and fanciers, though his stock was rather too high priced to be available to the ordinary farmer.

Most of the prize winning horses exhibited at the Wisconsin state fair up to the Civil War were Morgans and Blackhaws. The latter were simply one strain derived by a process of careful breeding (with "blood-horse" stock) from the original "Justin Morgan," progenitor of the Morgan line. There were a few entries of blood horses, as the English thoroughbreds were called in the Transactions, but only a few. R. M. Wheeler's "Hambletonian," referred to above, was brought from Vermont in 1850. He traced back through the English "Eclipse" to Darley's "Arabian," 1700. On the side of the dam, however, his breeding was in doubt. Another blood horse, "King of Cymry," was imported into Wisconsin in 1854 by Captain McKinnon of the British navy and kept at Menasha. In his veins was some of the best blood represented on the English turf, and the claim was made, perhaps with justice, that he was the "first English thoroughbred horse ever imported into the state." The problem of pedigrees in the case of horses entered as blood horses was so serious that as late as 1858 the committee of judges ruled out the only two

*See Racine Journal, Apr. 16, 1873. Charles M. Clark of Whitewater, who was a rival shorthorn breeder, told the writer that at a later time he saw Murray sell at a Chicago sale his famous old cow "Duchess of Thorndale" with two of her heifers and one bull for more than $20,000! The heifers each brought $8000.

exhibits in that class because their pedigrees were unsatisfactory.

On the other hand, as early as 1852 T. J. Wood of Baraboo exhibited "Vermont Morgan," represented to have been of pure Morgan breeding in the Gifford Morgan and Sherman Morgan lines. Another Morgan sire, "General Gifford," was brought from Vermont about 1854 by John M. Clark of Whitewater. That horse was winner of the first prize at the state fair in 1857, where he competed with two Morgan stallions and seven Blackhaws. In 1858 there were again exhibited two Morgan stallions, one owned in Fond du Lac County, the other in Milwaukee. Both were approved as to pedigree. That year there was a notable showing of Blackhaws, "some of them splendid specimens of that stock—probably equal to any that have ever been produced." Among the prize winners were stallions from Waukesha, Dodge, Racine, and Milwaukee counties.

The Morgan (and allied Blackhawk) blood became so widely diffused through southern Wisconsin that, during the Civil War, the cavalry regiments from this state employed as mounts to some extent the medium sized, but strong, spirited, wiry, and fleet footed chargers descended from that famous Green Mountain stock.

In the years following the war occurred a remarkable development in horse breeding for the turf and for pleasure driving. The American thoroughbred, especially the horse of Kentucky breeding, was the favorite for these purposes. Interest was keen in every portion of the state, stimulated no doubt by the fairs and driving associations; in the actual business of producing fine horses, however, Racine County was easily the leader. Men from that county visited the cele-

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11 Ex-Governor Hoard told of his escape from rebel troopers through the fleetness and endurance of his Morgan mount.
12 The first law authorizing the "incorporation of associations for improving the breed of horses" was published April 1, 1859.
Above. An early pattern of the Esterly harvesting machine, 1844
Original in the McCormick Library, Chicago

The old cradle, or "cradle-scythe"
Original in the State Historical Museum
JOHN F. APPLEBY’S “KNOTTER,” WHICH BECAME THE SELF-BINDER

Original in the State Historical Museum
brated studs of Kentucky and brought back promising colts. Richard Richards, Murray and Kelley, J. I. Case, A. P. Dickey, Stephen Bull, William L. Utley, Gilbert Adams, and others entered the lists as breeders of thoroughbreds, and soon it was said, probably with truth, that Racine County had more standard bred horses than all the rest of the state taken together.

The Racine breeders sold many animals for shipment into the western states. Customers came from Minnesota, Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas, Iowa, Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana, occasionally from the Pacific states also. For example, in 1871 A. P. Dickey shipped 17 head of horses to Denver, Colorado, among them the stallion "Red Cloud," which was sold for $3000. Richards owned "Bellfounder" as early as 1866. He secured the more noted sire "Swigert" (see portrait, p. 125) apparently in 1869 from the Alexander farm in Kentucky. Within a few years he was shipping colts to most of the states named. After awhile J. I. Case, the manufacturer, who was a great horse fancier, had perhaps the largest, most valuable stud in the state. There were, however, as might be expected, prominent breeders in other counties. For example, Mr. Richard Pheil of Milwaukee developed about 1865 a fine stud which included "Escape," "Bill Tenney," "Crichton," and "Riga," also a number of thoroughbred mares. Other Milwaukee men owned excellent individual horses, as did men in other cities, so that by 1880 or thereabouts it had become comparatively easy for farmers in almost every part of southern Wisconsin to gain access to thoroughbreds for breeding purposes.

It must be said, however, that no very general movement to build up the equine stock of Wisconsin farms by crossing

\[32\text{ See Racine Journal, July 26, 1871, for an account of Dr. Champlin (veterinary surgeon) paying a visit to the Alexander farm and returning with "three blooded colts."}

\[33\text{ Racine Journal, Feb. 28, 1871.}

\[34\text{ Western Farmer, 1869, 116.}

\[35\text{ As shown by his account book (MS.), in possession of Mrs. Laura Richards, Madison, Wis.}
common animals with thoroughbreds ever took place, frequent as such crosses were in given localities. The common horses of Wisconsin, derived from various sources—Canada, Pennsylvania, New York, and the prairies of the West—were prevalently of very moderate size and weight. A farm team weighing 1200 pounds apiece was the exception rather than the rule. They ranged from 900 to 1300, the average probably being around 1100. It was because of the light weight of the horses that oxen continued to be used for the heavy, slow work of clearing and breaking. And even with the lands mostly under cultivation, farmers recognized the desirability of having horses of greater weight and strength than the common stock for the regular farm work. Since heavy horses also found a readier market, at good prices, than any other type save extra fine matched carriage teams, an added impulse was given to breeding for size and weight, for which purpose the thoroughbreds were not particularly beneficial.

When breeders began seriously to study the farmer demand, they met it by importing purebred animals of the heavy draft breeds, especially Normans or Percherons, and Clydesdales, afterwards adding also Belgians and English shires. The response was immediate. Activity in importing and breeding draft horses grew apace, and it spread over the state much more generally and more quickly than did the breeding of thoroughbreds. The counties of Rock, Columbia, Sauk, Dane, Dodge, Waukesha, and Milwaukee, aside from the southeastern counties, competed for recognition at the fairs. In 1880, for the first time, the State Agricultural Society offered prizes for draft horses under two classifications: (1) Norman; (2) Clydesdale and others. The winning Normans came from Janesville, Dayton, Stoughton, Okee, Ableman, and Mazomanie; the winning Clydesdales (and others) from Madison and Brooklyn in Dane County, and from Illinois.

To show that Racine was not inadaptable, we find George Murray and Richard Richards, erstwhile breeders of thor-

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*Like Racine County, where farm auction offerings of livestock were apt to specify colts sired by some great trotter like Swigert.*
oughbreds, carrying away prizes on their Clydesdales, the former in 1875 taking not only general prizes but also the "breeder's special premium" for the best draft stallion of any breed and the second best mare of any breed, also sweepstakes on horses for best stallion and five of his colts, and best mare with foal by her side. A son of Richard Richards, Griffith Richards, residing at Cambria, Columbia County, also captured prizes with his Clydesdales.

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merinos. Fabulous prices were paid for breeding stock. Flocks of purebreds became especially numerous in Vermont, the home state of Mr. Jarvis, but many were started in other states also.\(^{21}\) Then a period of manufacturing depression, due in part to English competition in woolens, forced down the value of sheep and resulted in sending many thousands of common and grade merino animals into the West, the states of Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois gaining largely therefrom. This created the sources from which the supply of common sheep in the forties and fifties reached Wisconsin.

In 1837, when Wisconsin began to settle up from the East, there were in the United States, it is estimated, 18,000,000 sheep, of which the three states New York, Vermont, and Pennsylvania had one-half. The factory demand having risen steadily for some years, the finest wool was then bringing up to 72 cents per pound and wool growing, naturally, was regarded as a most profitable branch of farming. This continued to be the case for about ten years and explains why it was that Wisconsin farmers, the moment wheat crops began to deteriorate, turned their attention to wool growing. It explains why for some years the interest in good sheep was so much keener and more general than the interest in better cattle, horses, or pigs.

Means of transportation from many parts of the West being almost non-existent, the market for wool in those sections was correspondingly poor and the prices of sheep low. That is why so many flocks, numbering thousands, were driven north from Illinois and Indiana to be sold to Wisconsin farmers at prices which made their purchase a strong temptation, especially since wool could be shipped cheaply from the lake ports via the Erie Canal to the eastern market. Under these conditions, wool growing began in Wisconsin a few years after the first settlements were made. It is said in 1845 there

\(^{21}\) Not infrequently as much as $1000 was paid for a ram. The furore became so great that, it is said, a good mother in Pennsylvania called her tenth son "Merino," as fathers in 1836 named male children ""Fremont" and in 1860 ""Lincoln."
were not over 30,000 head of sheep in the territory, yet in 1850 the census taker found 125,000 head.\(^{22}\)

We have already noted the prominence given to sheep at the first state fair in 1851. The merinos, paular merinos, and Saxons, exhibited from Kenosha County and from Fond du Lac, were a pledge of the effort at improvement of the stock of sheep which had already begun, purebreds being brought from Vermont, Massachusetts, and New York. It was only a few years until Wisconsin breeders were prepared to supply breeding stock of both sexes and all ages to their fellow farmers. The records of state fairs prior to 1860 testify to the existence of purebred merinos in Kenosha, Waukesha, Fond du Lac, Walworth, Milwaukee, and Dodge counties. Doubtless there were flocks in other counties as well. Long wools were exhibited mainly from Dane County.

The county of Walworth became the leading county in the production of fine wool sheep, and in that county the town of Whitewater was the most noticeable competitor at the state fairs, her breeders usually numbering four or five.\(^{23}\) In 1850 Whitewater had 3282 sheep, more than those in any other of 10 towns. In 1860 the number was 2734, which again was the largest number assigned by the census to any one of 22 towns. In 1870 the number had risen to 6030. Whitewater's nearest competitor that year was Sugar Creek, in the same county, where the number of sheep was 5449, while in Mount Pleasant, Racine County, it was 5432.

From the census returns of wool and of sheep one can compute, roughly, the average yield per head, and this enables us to determine where the improved sheep were to be found at the census dates. In 1870 Whitewater sheep clipped, on the average, nearly 6 pounds, and Mount Pleasant sheep about the same. In Brookfield, Waukesha County, the average was 4.7, in Bangor less than 3, in Castle Rock 2 pounds. Empire

\(^{22}\) The importations became even more numerous in the next decade. In 1854 it was said (see Wis. Farmer, 1854, 227) of sheep: 'They have been brought into this state this season by thousands.'

\(^{23}\) Included as from Whitewater, however, were men living in the adjacent town of Lima, which is in Rock County.
YOUNG PREMONT—FRENCH MERINO
Bred and owned by Giles Kinney, Whitewater. First shorn at two years of age. Weight of fleece, well washed, 34 pounds. From State Agricultural Society Transactions, 1859

PRIZE WINNING NEW YORK SUFFOLK PIGS
From Wisconsin Farmer, 1858
THOROUGHBRED HORSE—SWIGERT

After an oil painting in possession of Mrs. Laura Richards, Madison
in Fond du Lac County sheared nearly 5, Franklin less than 2, New Glarus nearly 4, Newton 3+, Norway 2.3,\textsuperscript{24} Orion 3, Pleasant Springs 3.2, Plymouth 4.7, Prairie du Chien 2+, Primrose 3+, Pulaski 3+, Sparta 4+. This comparison places in one category towns representing Walworth, Racine, Waukesha, Fond du Lac, Green, Rock, and Monroe counties, and suggests that the improvement of sheep, doubtless through the use of purebred merinos, had become very general in those communities. We know from other sources that this was true. Such general improvement had likewise taken place in some counties for which we have no representative towns in our list, for example Kenosha. A writer in the \textit{Racine Argus}, November 30, 1867, says: “Within a circle of about ten miles around Rochester, embracing a part of Racine, Kenosha, Walworth, and Waukesha counties, is to be found, we think, the most extensive wool-growing section of the state of Wisconsin. The quality is very superior . . . and this year, in the eastern markets, our wool ranks fully equal to that of Michigan and brings a price accordingly.”\textsuperscript{25} He adds that one of the dry goods merchants at Rochester had purchased that summer 185,000 pounds of wool.

It is seen that the suggested circle excludes Whitewater, and it is true that that town was not especially well adapted to sheep, most of the land save in the northwest and the southeast being too low. Her leadership was due to the breeders, not the general farmers, and the high average of the clip both in Whitewater and in Mount Pleasant was due to the high per cent of purebred merinos in the count. Unimproved sheep, such as were driven up from the south in the early days, would shear about 2 pounds of wool apiece. A good flock of merinos often sheared 6 or 7 pounds. Individuals yielded much more than that.

\textsuperscript{24} Norway cornered with Mount Pleasant, yet the difference between the two towns in this respect argues that the people of Norway had benefited little from the improvement of sheep which was going on in their vicinity.

\textsuperscript{25} Compare map showing distribution of sheep in Wisconsin. Connor, \textit{op. cit.}, appendix.
Wool growing encountered difficulties from price fluctuations at various times before 1870. But by that date the price was dropping so steadily as to discourage Wisconsin wool growers, especially those engaged in raising fine wool. The consequences were two: First, many flocks were sold for shipment to the great western sheep ranges, where wool could be grown more cheaply; second, the mutton breeds, long and medium wooed, were substituted for the fine wools. When the new dairying came into full vigor during the seventies and the eighties, many farmers dropped the earlier interest in both wool and mutton, devoting themselves to the more dependable business of producing cheese and butter.

Since 1870 sheep raising has been mostly on the decline in Wisconsin, but under the principles of diversified agriculture now advocated, it is held to be economical for every farmer to keep some sheep as a subsidiary line in connection with dairying, beef raising, or pork raising. Sheep, it is argued, will pasture the rougher lands, make best use of the coarser forage, and thus save what otherwise would be waste. A certain small per cent of Wisconsin farmers have already gone back to sheep on this new basis. The breeds used are long and middle wools.

Hogs are animals we have had always with us, but they have not always been the shapely, sleek, contented, and well-behaved creatures now to be seen on every farm. The original "prairie racer," product of devolution rather than evolution, was by no means a thing of beauty or an unqualified joy. He was tall, lean, bristly, with a neck nearly as long as his body and a fearsome tusky snout resembling that of the wild boar celebrated in the traditions of the chase. That this beast was troublesome is attested by the efforts of the pioneers to construct a satisfactory "hog-tight" fence. And even when they had it, in the nine- or ten-rail "worm fence," these hogs, so tradition says (doubtless with some exaggeration), would put their heads through between the second and third rails and root up three rows of potatoes! They matured very late, were unconscionable food wasters, and their flesh at best was
only tolerable. So they required to be improved, and improvement had a long way to go to reach the ideal.

As already stated, hogs of the above description were brought up in droves from southern Indiana and southern Illinois to be sold to Wisconsin settlers. Practically all of the original stock of the territorial period was obtained in that way, and the droves continued to come for a number of years after statehood, though then they sought out the newer settlements. They were woods-grown swine which had been permitted to multiply, at random, with no particular care on the part of their owners and, naturally, no attention to breeding for improvement. Crossed with the improved breeds, like the Suffolk, Cheshire, or Berkshire, and kept under favorable farm conditions with good and abundant feed from birth to maturity, the stock was susceptible of rapid betterment. Most of the farmers of southeastern Wisconsin, being accustomed to keeping hogs in pens and paddocks, and feeding them regularly, also having familiarity with the breeds which were considered the easiest keepers and best fatteners, were not content to continue long with prairie hogs. A very few years were sufficient to change these into a type unrecognizable by the Hoosier drover, or to supplant them entirely with new stock derived from Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, or some other part of the East. The rapidity with which pigs multiply made the process of improvement both easy and quick. A pair of good pigs was sometimes the means of transforming, in the space of five or six years, the pork raising interests of an entire county. The Wisconsin climate was too rigorous to favor the southern Indiana mode of hog raising, and besides, prairie settlers lacked the temptation of forests to serve for hog commons. All this tended to limit the number of hogs raised and also to encourage care and attention in both feeding and breeding.

Of the standard English breeds of swine the Suffolk attained earliest popularity at the state fair. In 1853 S. B. Edwards

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26 Many stories have been told to illustrate the fierceness of these half-wild hogs.
of Troy, Walworth County, who is said to have done more to advance the pork industry than any other early breeder, exhibited at the state fair a pair of imported Suffolk pigs six months old, and also a pair of imported Essex pigs. He made the Suffolks his specialty. However, there was but little interest in better swine, as shown by the small number of fair exhibits. In 1854 the entries numbered only 4, in 1855 none. In 1856 there were 22, mostly Suffolk and Essex. In 1857 the committee on award reported "that their duties were not very arduous, as the number of swine present was very small, quite too limited even for a county fair, but the quality generally was very good." The prizes went to Rock, Walworth, and Waukesha counties, and the Suffolk breed was the only one mentioned by name. That breed continued to be the favorite apparently until the close of the Civil War, although Yorkshires, Chester whites, Sheffields, and Essexes appeared among the exhibits from time to time.

In 1870, for the first time, the Agricultural Society’s report featured swine strongly in the account of exhibits at the state fair. Swine were grouped under three classes: (1) small breeds (Suffolks, Chinas, Essexes, etc.); (2) large breeds (Berkshires, Chester whites, etc.); (3) animals not on list of prizes offered. The winner of the largest number of prizes was Richard Richards of Racine, who had exhibits in both the small breed and the large breed classes. Richards concentrated, however, on the Berkshires, and the next year, 1871, he was shipping Berkshire pigs to distant California, where they arrived "safe, salubrious, and satisfactory."  

The date 1870 may be taken as fixing, roughly, the establishment of a new interest in swine breeding. Prior to that time comparatively few farmers raised pork as a regular business. But, wheat growing having become demonstrably unprofitable, and the old-time glamour having passed also from wool growing, resort was had to the hog because corn

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could be grown successfully to any extent and marketed profitably in the form of pork, the cost of breeding stock was but a trifle, and the increase rapid and certain. Hogs, indeed, saved the careers of thousands of Wisconsin farmers brought to the verge of bankruptcy by unwise persistence in wheat raising; so that the arresting term "mortgage-lifters" is not ill-applied to the porcine branch of farm livestock. The economy with which pork raising can be carried on in combination with dairying has enabled the business to survive all recent readjustments and to become in fact a permanent feature of Wisconsin agriculture. Purebreds of the several favorite breeds, such as Jersey reds, Poland Chinas, and Berkshires, are legion in all corn growing sections of the state.