

open space, until it reaches a depth of two or three feet of straw and manure, I fail to see the difficulty of getting it gathered up. And I contend that I know of no better way to convert large quantities of straw into useful manure than by feeding it liberally out of doors to grain fed cattle. In feeding straw it is necessary to use much more than the cattle will eat up clean, as by this means the cattle can always have a comfortable bed, and we aim to have them comfortable.

'About the first of December, or earlier, if the weather is severe, the cattle are given about four pounds of grain each day. The grain is all fed in the evenings in troughs about three feet wide, eight inches deep and raised about two and a half feet from the ground. The grain ration consists of a mixture of oats and barley chopped (barley principally) and bran, about one-third bran by weight. Finely ground chop gives best results and is most appreciated by the cattle. It is our plan to feed about sixteen hundred pounds of grain per steer during the feeding period, and the ration is increased in January to about eight pounds per steer per day and about April to ten pounds. This is continued until about June 20, when the steers are sold. If the grass becomes good in June less grain is needed at the finish.

'In feeding cattle on such a dry ration, watering is of considerable importance. Those who are so situated that cattle can have access to open water at all times are especially favoured for this work; the cattle need to drink frequently and in small quantities. Where water is not so easily available it must be kept in the trough as much as the severity of the weather will permit, as a large drink of cold water following long abstinence would chill any animal and cause temporary check to digestive processes. In regard to salt, we usually place a barrel in some convenient place and knock the head in.

'In carrying cattle until June, it is a great help if one has hay enough to feed for about a month after the snow goes, and by confining the cattle, so that they will not ramble too far, they can be made to at least hold their own during this trying period. The object in carrying cattle until June has been to wait for a profitable market. If the market on, say the first of April, was anything like equal to the market of June, I am sure that good results would follow the feeding of the same total quantity of grain in the shorter period.

'Now as to our business methods.—The steers are bought when cattle are at about the lowest, a premium over the market being paid for the privilege of selecting steers of approved type. In working out our balance sheet we have been in the habit of charging the grain fed to the cattle at the rate of 80 cents per 100 pounds. This we consider a fair price in an ordinary year. We charge interest, wages, and all necessary expenses and have been able with a margin of 1½ cents per pound between buying and selling price to have a balance on the right side of about an average of seven dollars per head.'

### Experiences of Others.

The question of outdoor winter fattening was discussed at considerable length at the National Live Stock convention. The view held by many western grain growers, that winter fattening cannot be profitably done in the prairie provinces, was freely expressed, but it was just as readily refuted by those who spoke from experience. A delegate stated that he knew of a carload of cattle fed in the open air during the winter of 1906-7 on prairie hay and water, the gain averaging 100 pounds per head. Another speaker explained that 90 head averaging 1,250 pounds in the autumn, were made to weigh 1,400 pounds by spring fed in a ravine in Manitoba. The feed consisted of straw and chaff that would otherwise have been burned, with grain chop. Charging for the grain and the labour, the steers made a clear profit of sixteen dollars (\$16) per head. After summing up the various arguments presented, the chairman of the convention pointed out that it was simply the old story—some men could make it pay, while others, too careless or too lazy to do the thing properly, would fail in the fattening of cattle as they would in any other undertaking.

There are thousands of wheat growers who spend their winters in idleness after marketing the season's harvest. Continuous good crops, desirable as they are, have