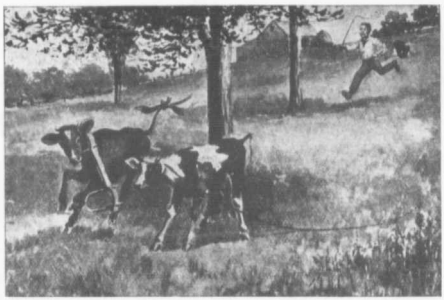
A Trainer's First Experience

Mr. Ed. Geers, famous as the trainer and driver of some of the fastest trotters, on the grand circuit and off it, relates the following as his first experience in breaking and training, not to say speeding:

"My ambition was to drive something—such as horses, mules, oxen and colts, and when I was a small boy my father unwittingly placed in my hands the means of gratifying this desire, by giving me a pair of calves, which were the pride of my life. Soon after they became mine, I commenced their education and training. I first put a rope around the horns of each and drove them around one at a time, for a few days, and when I thought them well enough broken, I hitched them up together. I put on the yoke, and to make sure they would not get away, tied their tails together hard and fast, and started



Mr. Geers' First Attempt at Breaking.
By courtesy G. N. Morang & Co.

to drive them down through the grove. They made a plunge or two, then one of them managed to slip the yoke from his head, and in this condition they started to run. They raced side by side for a short distance until they came to a tree, then there was trouble, and my inherited love for educating and training animals received a rather severe shock, when one calf passed to the right of the tree, and the other passed to the left, and it did not require the wisdom of a philosopher to see that either the calves' tails or the tree must give way, and it did not take long to determine the winner."

Finishing Range Mutton on Beet Pulp

The necessity of finishing Western meat products in better shape, as well as the establishment of abattoirs close to the fields of production, has been frequently emphasized in THE FARMING WORLD. The matter of slaughtering on the ground means the saving of freight on large quantities of waste products and also the avoiding of the usual losses by shrinkage, when meat is shipped in the hoof. The grain finishing of range beef and mutton will raise it a grade in the market, put more labor into it, and so increase both the gross and net returns to the producer.

The building of the sugar factory at Raymond, Alberta, has given a beginning to a nice feeding enterprise. Messrs. Gray, Ackers & Green, a firm of local sheep men, have drawn 3,500 from their range bands, and have them corralled right beside the factory. They have contracted for the pulp of the factory at 50 cents a ton, which is a very cheap succulent food to use along with grain and roughage. The sheep have now been up six weeks and already have a nice sappy appearance. The grain ration consists of oat and wheat sheaf, and as some of the grain was cut on the green side straw and top are all consumed. The sheep are all yearlings and over and were on their ratiop, in three weeks consuming about ten pounds of pulp daily and about three pounds of wheat and oat sheaf. The stock are principally Merino grades, with a dash of Shrop. or Oxford, which improves their weight and feeding qualities.

The sheep are not housed, as the Alberta climate does not require it. They are held in long pens of light, open build, twelve feet wide and four or five hundred feet long. The sheep eat through the two lower bars of the pen. The pulp and fodder are driven up the alleys between the pens and thrown off to each side. Water is available, but is not taken by the sheep when they get in a full ration of pulp.

The sheep will be shipped before the beginning of April, and will go principally to British Columbia. P. Burns, of Calgary, is the purchaser. A reasonable estimate of the financial aspect of the enterprise would be to put the stuff into the corrals at an average valuation of three dollars per head. The selling price will be as close as possible to five cents per pound and the average weight at finishing will be between one hundred and ten and a hundred and twenty pounds, probably a hundred and fifty pounds. This would give to the feeder two seventy-five a head for food and labor. The pulp only costs 25c. per head, supposing a sheep eats ten pounds per day for a hundred days' feeding, and the feeders estimate that the grain and roughage will cost under a dollar a head for the whole period, probably seventy-five cents, so that there is practically a dollar seventy-five left for labor and for investment returns.

J. MCCAIG.

Selecting Seed Corn

A good stand of plants is required for a large yield of corn, and to secure a uniform stand all of the grains of seed corn must be as nearly as possible of one size and shape. For this reason, the grains on the buttes and tips of the ears and ears with imperfectly shaped grains should be discarded when shelling and after the corn is shelled, it should be picked over, and all imperfect grains and trash removed.

A germinating test should be made. Put 25 grains on moist paper in a cigar box, and cover them with a moistened cloth. Tie the lid of the box down and set in a moderately warm room. At least 23 of the 25 grains should have sprouted before the end of five days. The amount of seed to be sown should be increased proportionately or other seed procured if less than this number germinate. Try the plates on your corn planter and keep changing them until the kernels are dropped regularly at the distances apart which have been found best for your locality. Without regular dropping, a good stand cannot be secured, and without it, maximum yields are impossible. All of this may appear to be a lot of trouble and expense, but corn returns from 200 to 400 times the amount of seed required and the work pays well. It is by the use of such methods that the yield of corn per acre has been increased more than one-fifth in ten years in Illinois and one-eighth in Indiana.

Destroying Smut in Oats

Mr. C. A. Zavitz, Experimentalist, Ontario Agricultural College, has, during the past two years, conducted a number of tests of remedies for smut in oats. Eight lots of oats of each variety were used for this experiment. After the treatments had been completed a few hours the oats were carefully sown on separate plots. When the oats were coming into head, they were examined frequently and all smutted heads were removed and carefully counted from day to day. The following table gives the total percentage of smutted heads of oats from each treatment:

Treatments.	P.C. of Smut
1. Hot water.....	.0
2. Bluestone (5 minutes).....	1.3
3. Bluestone (12 hours).....	.3
4. Bluestone (sprinkled).....	1.4
5. Potassium Sulphide (2 hours)....	1.7
6. Formalin (20 minutes).....	.0
7. Formalin (sprinkled).....	.0
8. Untreated.....	4.7

As will be seen, the treatment with hot water, formalin, and immersion in bluestone for 12 hours has given the best result. For the hot water treatment, grain was placed in a bag, which was then immersed in water at about 115 degrees F. Soon afterwards it was placed in water which was kept at a temperature between 130 degrees and 135 degrees F. The grain was occasionally stirred and was allowed to remain in the water for a period of fifteen minutes. It was then spread out on a clean floor to dry, where it was stirred occasionally. The solution of formalin used for the immersion process was made by pouring one-half pint of the formalin into 21 gallons of water, and the seed oats were immersed in the solution for twenty minutes. In the sprinkling process, one-half pint of formalin was poured into 5 gallons of water. The oats were then sprinkled with this solution and carefully stirred until the grain was thoroughly moistened. In the immersion in bluestone solution for twelve hours, the solution was made by dissolving one pound of bluestone in 25 gallons of water, and the oats were immersed in this solution for a period of twelve hours.

The smut in oats very frequently causes a great reduction in the yield of grain, and farmers would do well to treat their seed oats before spring. The formalin treatment is easily performed, comparatively cheap, and very effectual.

Eastern Good Roads

The third annual convention of the Eastern Ontario Good Roads Association will be held at Ottawa on March 17th and 18th. Among the speakers will be Senator Earle, Highway Commissioner for Michigan, R. McColl, assistant engineer for Nova Scotia, and A. W. Campbell, Commissioner of Highways for Ontario.