Farm Experiences

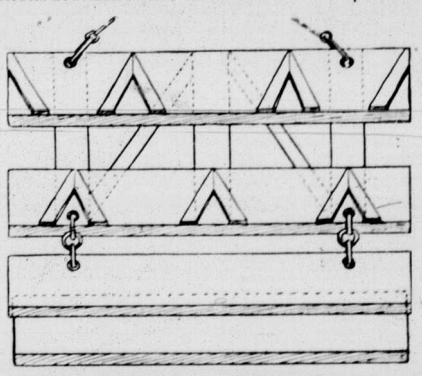
THE PROFITLESS LOUSY CHICK

As spring is here and the chirp of the chick is in the land, those of us who are interested in fowls are girding up our loins for the fight with the lice. Lice kill more chicks than disease and retard a pullet's growth so that many a pullet which otherwise would have made a winter layer does not begin to lay till spring. In the fight for the chick the louse comes off victor so often because the caretaker has so many other things to do that the fight is intermittent and often put off till the chick is ruined while lousie is always on the job. Besides, old Mrs. Louse is an industrious old body and none of her children have the measles or whooping cough. I am of the opinion that a great stride forward would be made if poultry keepers were to quit greasing and fussing with chicks, for all of these efforts to destroy lice are about as hard on the chicks as they are on the lice, and see to it that there are no lice on the setting hens or in the nests where they set or in the coops. It requires a little more initiative, a little more "do-it-nowitiveness," but much less time and work besides being greatly in the chick's favor. In the spring, especially in a country where the season is short, time should receive first attention, ranking ahead of all other considerations. Among the many methods advocated for dealing with lice I have found the following the least wasteful of time and also the most effective: Buy a jar of blue ointment at the drug store and a liberal supply of vaseline. Mix them well, using one part of blue ointment to two parts of vaseline. Once a month put a small bit of the mixture, about the size of a white navy bean, on each hen's skin, in the fluff about two inches below the vent. This spreads out on the skin and kills the lice or keeps them away, I do not know which, but I have never found lice on a hen which had received the blue ointment treatment. As soon as a hen goes broody put a very small bit on the end of a penknife under the vent, under each wing and on the skin at the back of the head. Use only a little as blue ointment is strong. Immediately fix the nest in which she is to set and sprinkle a little liquid louse killer into it and around it. Let the hen stay in her own nest for twenty-four hours or more till the louse killer evaporates. It is hard on the hen and on the eggs to put them into the nest while the liquid louse killer is fresh. Prevention is always better than cure and especially in the matter of fighting chicken lice, for it not only takes less time, but the chicks grow faster and feather better. Once a chick's skin has been greased it never feathers as well as it would have done if the greasing had been omitted.

Alta. W. I.T.

HOME-MADE FLOAT

Following is my idea of a land float that I made last summer. It did great work as I live in a gumbo country and the land is very full of hummocks, locally termed turtle back hummocks. It is very hard land to make smooth. The sketch shows the general makeup and the measurements are as follows: The planks



Bottom of home-made float

are 2 x 12's 12 feet long; the cleats are made of 2 x 4 cut like the sketch and spiked on the planks. The points of the cleats are placed 2 feet apart and the two planks are set 8 inches apart. The float is worked with the cleats down. These crush and pulverize the lumps while the following float smooths the ground.

Alta. T. F.

WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE?

We welcome contributions to this page from our readers. Each article should relate to one subject only; it should be the actual experience of the writer and should not exceed 500 words in length. Every farmer has some particular way of doing a thing which saves him time and which his fellow farmers could make use of to advantage. If you have a "good thing," would it not be a generous act to tell your friends about it? All the readers of The Guide are friends, so make this a place for "swapping" ideas. If you have nothing else to write about, give your experiences on any of the following subjects:

What work can be most profitably done on the roads in the spring? How can roads in your district be best maintained?

Which way have you found to be the most profitable in marketing your grain? By the load at the elevator, consigned to a commission firm, on the track, or how?

When do you figure on having your cows freshen? And why?

What provision do you make for succulent crops for your pigs during the summer? What crops do you sow, and when and how for this purpose?

How have you made provision for a plentiful water supply on your farm? Did you have any difficulty finding water? What method did you adopt or what led you to dig your well where you found water?

Have you an Automobile? If so, how much does it cost you to run it? Is it more economical than a team of drivers? Do you consider it a good investment for the farmer?

How much did you make feeding steers during the past winter? What did you feed, how much and so on?

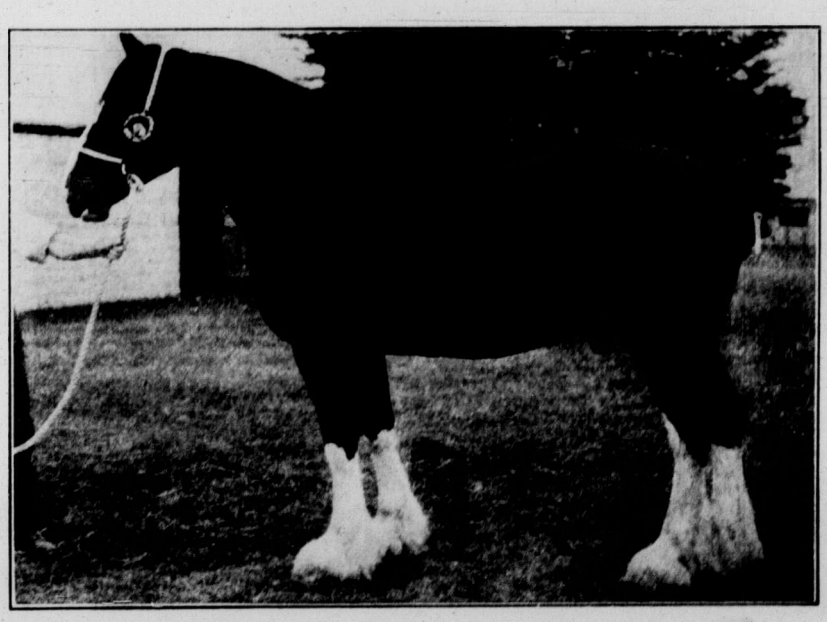
We pay for any of this material used at the rate of 25 cents per 100 words. Address all letters to Agricultural Editor, Grain Growers' Guide, Winnipeg, Man.

THISTLES IN GRAIN CROP

Among the many noxious weeds that take toll from the farmer every season, I think the Canada Thistle takes the largest share, and having many to contend with I have tried systematically to reduce the loss from this pest with a measure of success that may be valuable enough to pass on to others. When the wheat is headed out it is a common sight to see areas large and small cut out of good fields with the mower all over the country. This is done at the suggestion of the weed inspector or from a sense of duty to neighbors in hindering the spread of seed from these patches of thistles. When we consider the present price of wheat and the thousands of acres that will be cut down for thistles—much of it on good fallow—we must admit the loss is enormous. It would have a redeeming feature if the thistle was eradicated, but simply cutting has not the slightest effect in this direction. If thistles are cut at the flowering stage and the land plowed deeply and kept perfectly black all summer, Canada Thistle will be practically eradicated, altho it is possible and probable that a stray root-stock will survive, thus making a repetition of this treatment necessary. This cannot be done when the land is under crop. I don't like to cut down my wheat in June—no one does—so I pass on this method after four years of success. On fallow and fall plowing sown to wheat, oats or barley, the Canada Thistle is always six inches taller than the grain at a certain stage, usually about a week before the grain is in the shot blade. This is not the case with spring plowing generally, as the thistle has a setback in spring. If the patches are large I fit a small gauge wheel on the outer end of the cutting bar of the mower. The wheel from the walking breaker or cultivator will do with adjustments made so that it will take the place of the shoe usually found on mowers. This has bolt holes to raise or lower and the cutting bar is raised to about six inches high. Then all Canada Thistles are cut when a few inches above the grain. This done, they will make no more growth to speak of for that season; they will never flower or mature seed and the weed inspector will never need ask you to cut them again. I have invariably taken a good crop of wheat from such patches after doing this and maintain it is better farming practice for both myself and my neighbor than letting the thistle bloom and start to blow and then cutting the whole crop on the piece affected. A man with a scythe can do the same operation and a day's work would handle a pretty bad quarter section. Some may think that cutting a little of the wheat will do harm, but it rather results in a thicker stand if done at the right time—before the shot blade appears. I think if Guide readers will adopt this method of handling thistles in the grain crop the saving will be apparent to all.

How many farmers have not seen straw stack bottoms and heavily manured pieces of wheat grow thick and green and at harvest time be useless thru lodging? If such will take the mower set as directed for cutting thistles and cut about three inches of the top off the grain before it is in shot blade, this will correct the trouble and turn a loss into the best piece of wheat in the field. I have seen it done on a ten acre field and do it myself and it pays well.

T. W. W.



"Nannie." A splendid type of brood mare, and one of the most sensational Clydesdale show mares

COWS PAY STORE BILLS

I came to Saskatchewan about ten years ago and from that time on have prospered considerably financially and have now a small herd of twelve cows to milk. From my experience I always like to have some of my cows come in about the middle of November, some in December and the remainder in January. My reason for this is because the winter months are not usually such busy months for the farmer and consequently he has more time to care for his cows and therefore gets better results. Then again, the cows will give a good flow of milk till about the middle of March and then the first ones will drop off a bit in their flow, but immediately that the green grass affords them pasture they will increase in their flow of milk to nearly as much as when they first came in and will do this for perhaps two months in the spring. I feed my cows meal only during the winter months. In handling his cows this way a farmer can get from six to eight months good flow of milk from his cows. I ship my cream to the creamery and find that my cows can certainly keep the store bills and all little house expense bills cleared up to date, and that is a great help to the farmer who is trying to do his share in the world's great demand for sustenance, as well as clear all debts off his property. In addition, the calves raised during the winter are in splendid shape to put on the grass in the spring and are in good condition for keeping over another winter without much trouble or care.

Sask. PRAIRIE FARMER.

TO CURE PORK

One of the important problems that is confronting the farmer who wishes to keep his expenses as low as possible is the one of curing his pork for consumption during the summer months. The following is a quick, sure and cheap method which I have used for the last twelve years without a single failure.

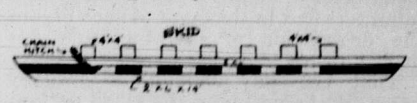
Before the carcass of the pig has become cool I cut it up taking out the parts I wish to cure. These parts I prod all over with a common table fork, so that no air bubbles or blood will be cased up inside. I then place a side of pork in a box that I have made for the purpose from common wood and about four feet long, two and a half feet wide and eight inches deep. Over this side I sprinkle two tablespoonfuls of saltpetre, then throw salt upon it until the meat is covered. Upon the top of this side I place the other side and treat in a similar manner and also the same with the hams. Every day for the first week pour the brine off the meat and add more salt if the meat is not covered with it; by the end of the second week the meat has become dry. I then take pepper and sprinkle all over the meat so as to prevent it from becoming mouldy, after that I place meat in empty flour sacks and hang away in some cool place until needed.

Pork cured in this manner will keep for two or three years, and it has not the briny or smoky taste that most cured pork has.

Man. H.E.A.

PORTABLE GRANARIES

From my experience of farming five miles or more from the elevator, the portable granary is the most convenient way of handling grain because teams are hard to get about threshing time. I like one 10 x 12 x 7 feet with a peak roof having a 3 foot rise. I made the skids of 2 x 6 inches as in the cut. Place three of these skids under each granary. Then use seven 4 x 4 inch x 10 feet for joists and sills and nail the flooring on top of these. Narrow flooring is the most satisfactory. Also use 4 or 5 inch lumber for siding as lumber wider than that will shrink a little and leave cracks wide enough to let the wheat leak out. Leave a 4 foot door at one of the corners and cut two holes, one in each end of the gable end of the granary, so that the end of the grain bagger pipe will go in. Then you will have a granary that will hold about



750 bushels of No. 1 wheat. When filling the granary it might be a good plan to string a wire thru the centre of the bin to keep the pressure of the wheat from shoving out the sides of the granary. Nail the siding on the outside of the studding. Some farmers prefer to use 2 x 6 inch for studding, but I find that 2 x 4 inch is sufficient if wire is strung across thru the bin about 4 feet from the floor.

I have eight or ten of these granaries and find them very handy to haul around in the fields and also for the thresher to set his machine close to and go right to work without occasionally having to wait for teams.

Sask. PRAIRIE FARMER.