

The Trapper.

BY ROBERT G. HODGSON (BOOKLET RIGHTS RESERVED.)

STRETCHING BOARDS.

I might say that in the case of the skunk I always fasten a straight piece of No. 9 wire about a foot in length to the post of stretcher by means of a string. Then, after the hide is on the stretcher, run the wire down the tail, which will keep the tail from shrinking up and losing its proper shape.

Stretching boards can be made out of almost any soft wood, such as pine, cedar, basswood, etc., and dry goods boxes are especially valuable for this purpose. In making stretchers, they should never be made wedge shape, neither should a "neck" be placed on them, as is so often seen. If the stretcher is not the correct shape it knocks a good deal off the price of the hide. The stretchers for muskrat and skunk are much the same shape and are much wider in comparison with their length than any other pelt. The muskrat stretcher should be about twenty-four inches long, six inches wide at the base, five and a quarter inches at the "shoulder" and from there taper bluntly toward the nose. The boards for skunk should be thirty-six inches in length, seven to seven and a quarter inches at the base, and six inches at the "shoulder", which would be about nine inches from the nose. In thickness, boards should never be over half an inch, and for muskrat about one-quarter inch, for mink, weasel, etc., three-eighths inch in thickness.

The boards for mink, weasel, marten, fisher and otter are about the same shape, but vary in size. They are narrow and long, and to give you an idea of the shape a stretcher for mink should be, they are about three feet in length, five inches wide at base, four and a half inches at shoulder, tapering sharply from there towards the ends. The edges of all stretching boards should be chamfered all along the edges, and this can be done with a broken piece of glass—only use care not to cut your hand.

The fox, wolf and coyote stretchers will be a little different pattern from any of these, and larger. The average size board for fox should measure about four feet long, six and a half inches at the base, and about five and a half inches at the shoulder.

The knife is a very important part of the trapper's outfit, for unless it is in good condition you will spoil many pelts. You want a knife with a thin, fairly pointed blade, that will take an edge and hold it. Never use a dull knife; for if you do you are almost sure to spoil many good pelts. If a knife is too sharp, unless you are careful, you also run the chance of making a slit in the hide. You might better have the knife sharp, however, than dull, for if you use care with a sharp knife you will not make any cuts in the pelt.

A hatchet of some kind is an absolute necessity to the trapper engaged in the business on any sized scale. With it you can cut your trap stakes, notches in logs to make sets, and in innumerable other ways find many places where it is really necessary. Of course, it goes without saying that you want a hatchet that is both light and strong, can be easily carried, and if necessary demands can be used to cut down a good sized tree. Such a hatchet you will find in one of the safety axes on the market, which answers well all trappers' requirements, and can be readily carried in a holster, fastened to the belt, out of the way.

The trapper should always have on hand an assortment of repair links to repair the chain, replace old links, etc. These you can buy at almost any hardware store, assorted sizes in a box. It is also a good idea to have on hand some extension chains. These are chains, the same length and size as regularly supplied with traps, but they have a spring snap on one end and a ring on the other, the snap going onto the ring of trap chain and making it a good deal longer. These chains come in handy where an extra length of chain is required to make the set; or, worked on the principle of "Give a calf enough rope and it will hang itself," use them on traps used for trapping aquatic animals, so that they can more easily reach deep water and be taken quickly.

SCENTS.

There is no question whatever that a good decoy when properly used is a great aid in trapping. So many amateur trappers are, however, under the impression that they will do wonders, that they expect these baits to attract animals from one state to another, or draw them when there are none to draw, or put animals in your traps when they are set in the most careless manner, which even the animals of least suspicious nature would not think of entering. A good scent is, as I say, a good investment, if you can secure a good one. Do not, however, expect it to do wonders for you in the manner given. An animal is not always in the mood for being attracted by a decoy. In the running season (the spring months), if a decoy is any good at all, it will get you results then. I know my readers would like me to name a decoy for them to use. This would not be fair for several reasons, because a scent I might find good would not prove satisfactory to you at all, and it would not be fair to name one decoy over others which might be just as good. In buying or making up a scent, you will find the nearer it resembles some natural odor attractive to the animal, such as an ingredient that appeals to the animal's sexual instinct, the better decoy you will have. Some certain things you can secure from the animals themselves will be found very attractive to them, and especially so during the running season.

Muskrat musk is very attractive in some degree to nearly every fur-bearing animal. In the spring months you will find it in two small sacs under the skin, on the stomach, near the tail. Carefully cut these small sacs off and squeeze the contents into a bottle, to which an equal quantity of alcohol or whisky should be added. The musk of the mink can be secured and preserved in the same manner, but mink musk is only attractive to the mink.

English Home-Grown Wheat Prices.

Arrangements were made some time ago by the British Board of Agriculture, the Wheat Commission and the Ministry of Food with reference to the prices of home-grown wheat of the 1919 harvest. Under these arrangements millers buying English wheat receive a subsidy sufficient to bring the price to a parity with that of imported wheat, thus placing the home grower on a fair footing with the foreigner. This enables millers to purchase home-grown wheat of this year's harvest at such prices as will produce for the whole crop an average Gazette price of 71s. 11d. per quarter of 480 lbs. equivalent to 75s. 6d. per quarter of 504 lbs.

However, while the average price is guaranteed the market is free. Consequently, each sample of wheat must be brought on its merits. If of a milling value above the average it may be worth more than 75s. 6d. per quarter of 504 lbs. On the other hand, samples of inferior quality or out of condition may only be saleable at prices below the average. Anyway, the seller of wheat has to make the best terms he can just as he did in the ordinary pre-war conditions of the open market. No seller has a right to call upon a miller to buy home-grown wheat at 75s. 6d. or any other price.

Some farmers have asked what inducements there are to the miller to pay the best price he can to the farmer. He has the fact that English wheat is good business for him, carrying as it does a subsidy, as compared with imported wheat at 60s. But should he generally not pay the price, so that the Gazette average did not reach 71s. 11d., the Government guarantee would come into play and the grower of each acre of wheat would be paid the difference between 71s. 11d., and the average Gazette price for the seven months, September, 1919—March, 1920, inclusive. Complaints have reached the Board of Agriculture that some millers have declared that they are not allowed to pay more than 71s. 11d. per quarter of 480 lbs. This is not the case. They can pay any amount they regard the wheat worth to them for milling purposes, knowing that they will be repaid a subsidy on every quarter of home-grown wheat they buy whether it be good or bad. The miller has a call on the best imported wheats at 60s. per quarter; the subsidy brings the price of English wheat into line. So long as on the average the millers are paying throughout the country 71s. 11d. per quarter for home-grown wheat the farmers are getting what they were promised by the Government. As a matter of fact, the average price so far paid seems to have been somewhat above the average guaranteed—the Gazette price is now about 73s. No doubt for poor quality wheat some millers have paid less than the 71s. 11d.; but it is obvious from the Gazette price just quoted that for higher qualities the same or other millers must have paid more than the 71s. 11d.

An idea prevails among farmers that there is a fixed price for wheat in the markets. It may be of interest to note that the returns under the Corn Returns Act received last week from the various markets throughout the country, showed that an average of 80s. 11d. per 480 lbs. had been realized at one market and that in 12 other markets the average was over 75s. per 480 lbs. ALBION.

Questions and Answers.

Miscellaneous.

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1. A rented a farm from B subject to sale with six months' notice. C bought the farm this fall and gets possession the first of March. Can C do anything about the farm, except the fall plowing, without A's consent?
 2. Does A have full control of the straw that has been produced the past three years? The straw of the last two years is still in stack.
 3. Would you advise selling hay now or keep it until next spring? W. S. H.
- Ans.—1. C may do the fall plowing, draw out the manure and possibly cut wood, but other than that he cannot do work on the place without A's consent.
2. Yes. In some agreements there is a proviso that the straw must be used on the place, in the case of a rented farm.
 3. Hay is a big price at present, but we see no reason why it should not be as high or higher later on, unless it is that many are holding back their hay for a higher price. Should there be heavy shipments of hay in the spring, it might cause a depression.

O. P. W. F. Review.

What will prove to be a landmark in the history of the Ontario Provincial Winter Fair is the publication of a handsomely illustrated Review, comprising thirty-two pages and covering the period from 1883 to 1919. Away back in 1883, just thirty-seven years ago, the first show was called the Annual Christmas Fat Stock Show, and was held under the auspices of the Agricultural and Arts Association of Ontario. The Hon. Chas. Drury, then a member of the Provincial Legislature, later Minister of Agriculture, and father of the present Prime Minister, was a member of the Management Committee. The exhibitors of different kinds of stock and the financial history of the Fair are well displayed in this attractive booklet, all of which is handsomely illustrated by the various personalities which have contributed and are still contributing to the success and development of this important agricultural institution. An interesting feature of the contents is a list of the horse and cattle championships for the last thirty years or more, with the names of the winners in each year.

Sale Dates.

- Dec. 10, 1919.—Hon. Peter Smith, Sebringville, Ont.—Holsteins.
- Dec. 12, 1919.—Ontario Hereford Breeders' Association, Guelph, Ont.
- Dec. 17, 1919.—S. J. McKnight, Epping, Ont.—Shorthorns.
- Dec. 17, 1919.—Oxford County Holstein Breeders' Club semi-annual sale at Woodstock, Ont.
- Dec. 17, 1919.—T. H. Legge, Temperanceville, Ont.—Clydes and Shorthorns.
- Dec. 18, 1919.—Southern Counties Ayrshire Breeders' Club Sale at Woodstock, Ont.
- Dec. 18, 1919.—Brant District Holstein Breeders' Sale, Brantford, Ont.
- Feb. 4, 1920.—Miller & Dryden, Shorthorns.

POULTRY AND EGGS

Condensed advertisements will be inserted under this heading at four cents per word each insertion. Each initial counts for one word and figures for two words. Names and addresses are counted. Cash must always accompany the order for any advertisement under this heading. Parties having good pure-bred poultry and eggs for sale will find plenty of customers by using our advertising columns. No advertisement inserted for less than 60 cents.

A CHOICE LOT OF SILVER WYANDOTTES—Cockerels and yearling hens, at \$2.50 and \$3.00 each. Frank McDermott, Tavistock, Ont.

BARRED ROCK COCKERELS, THREE each. From best laying strains in Ontario. Buy early and get your pick. J. F. Worden & Son, Linton, Ont. R.R. 8.

CHOICE BARRON S.-C. W. LEGHORN cockerels, bred from best trap-nested egg-producers in Canada, \$4 each. C. Dickinson, Port Hope, Ont. R.R. 3.

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FOR SALE—BARRED PLYMOUTH ROCK cockerels, pullets, hens. High-class barring; strong bone; heavy egg production. Jno. Fenn, Plattsville, Ont.

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PURE-BRED BRONZE TURKEYS AND Toulouse geese. Can furnish trios not akin. George Coursey, R.R. No. 1, Lucan.

PURE BARRON SINGLE-COMB WHITE Leghorn cockerels from high-record hens. E. Crowley, Prescott, Ont.

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WANTED

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