

hired by the year there are a great many days in the spring and fall when little else can be done except fencing, or ditching, or some kindred work, and the farmer who takes this plan is always "ahead of his work."

Well, having hired a trustworthy hand on the above conditions, give him charge of a team, and let him have full charge of it (provided he treats it well and keeps his team going all the time, if possible). Do not have him stop the team to do some small job around the barn. Do these yourself and let the team remain at work, for it is unremitting work that tells on a farm. When your man starts one piece of work, let him finish it before he starts to do anything else, for of all the slovenly sights seen on a farm it is to see several pieces of work started and left unfinished. I have seen on a farm two or three fields about one-third plowed and then left, a pig pen or sheep pen half built and left, an orchard half pruned and left, and it is needless to add that the owner of such a farm did not make much profit out of it.

Always have some inside work ready for a stormy day. You have a variety of such work. It may be cleaning up seed grain, getting the reaping machine in readiness for work, repairing a broken wheel-barrow, mending a rake, pitching manure out of a sheep pen, or any such work that will save much valuable time on a fine day when every minute counts. Keep your men going a reasonable number of hours every day, and they will be profitable.

#### Soiling Crops.

No farmer need depend upon luck for success in his dairy business. Every cow should get a chance to save her life, and she should not be condemned as unprofitable if she has been wintered on spare rations, and summered on short pasture. Under such treatment some of the best cows would be weeded out. It is not economy to do without soiling crops whether the pasture is abundant or not; the most economical method is to have a pasture, say one or two acres for each cow, and make up the deficiency by soiling. The cows should be turned into the stable during the heat of the day, especially if there are no shade trees in the pasture, and fed on some soiling crop.

No fixed rule will suit every farmer as to what soiling crops he should raise. Local conditions are the best guide. The prevalent error is in raising too much corn. A change in soiling crops is just as necessary as a change in grasses, or a change in winter rations, and the land will be benefited by the rotation besides. For the earliest soiling crop, rye should be sown in the fall. This may be sown after any of the grain crops are harvested; and no loss of land need occur, for a spring crop can again be sown after the rye is removed. This secures a soiling crop in April and early in May. Orchard grass and clover may now be out until early in July; but before this it is necessary to make calculations for the July and August droughts; and oats and peas mixed should be sown at different intervals between the latter part of April and the latter part of May. After these crops become exhausted, corn, sorghum, and Hungarian grass make excellent substitutes, and furnish food during the remainder of the season. If the season turns out favorable, so that very little of the soiling crops need be added to the pasture, these crops should be dried and stored for winter use.

The cardinal point to be remembered is, never let your cows go back in the yield of their milk, caused by scanty pastures or defects in your system of soiling.

#### Stock.

##### A Chatty Letter from the States.

[FROM OUR CHICAGO CORRESPONDENT.]

For the year thus far the receipts of live stock show a slight increase in cattle and a decrease in hogs and sheep.

Prevailing prices for live stock, compared with one year ago, show that cattle are selling as high for the best grades as \$5.75 @ \$6.35; while common to medium cattle are 25c. @ 50c. lower; 25c. decline in hogs, and an advance of 75c. @ \$1 in sheep.

The quality of the stock marketed thus far this year is really better than last, but the animals are nearly all of lighter weight, indicating the fact that feeders are continually turning their stock off at an earlier age.

There is a reasonably good demand for good to extra heavy draft horses for breeding. Prices range at about \$800 @ \$1,800.

All kinds of business in the country has been more or less demoralized by the railway strikes, and many business men fear that this kind of trouble has but fairly commenced. The general indications of a revival in business so strong a month or so ago seemed to cause the labor organizations to think it a fit time to make their demands. The result is that what promised to be a very encouraging revival of business confidence has at least been nipped in the bud.

The eight-hour labor system, already partially inaugurated, will necessitate a 20 percent advance in the price of manufactured products, as reduction from 10 to 8 hours' work, without a corresponding reduction in price, is equivalent to a 20 percent advance in wages. Hence if workers have more time they will not have any more money.

The advance in the price of sheep was very surprising, from the fact that it was so much larger than anybody looked for. April witnessed the sale of 90 to 130 lb. sheep at \$6.00 to \$6.50, just such as sold in the spring of 1885 at \$5.00 to \$5.25. The cause of the sudden advance was the exhaustion of the crop of good sheep in the corn growing districts. Sections in Wisconsin and Illinois, which usually send in 1,000 to 2,000 per week, have been entirely drained of mutton stock for two or three months.

It is estimated that about 137,000 Wyoming, Oregon and Washington sheep were corn-fed in Nebraska. They averaged 100 to 148 lbs., mostly about 120 lbs. These sheep are considered about the best that come to market. They are large framed, and when well fattened, as they nearly always are, make prime mutton.

The railways in the West refuse to give the sheepmen double-deck cars for their stock, but the latter are making a persistent fight and think they will win. If they do, Texas alone will send to the markets 1,000,000 sheep per year, where she now does not send 100,000.

American sheepmen are very fast learning the importance of making mutton, instead of putting their "eggs all in one basket" by depending entirely on the wool qualities of their sheep.

It is an easy matter to flood the country with sheep. The improved breeds of mutton sheep multiply very rapidly in breeding, and when mutton-raising becomes very popular, as it is likely to do since the recent boom set in, it is only reasonable to look for another over-supply

and consequently lower prices. Last year, when sheep were selling low and many shepherds declared that "wool was hardly worth the shearing," there was a wild stampede to get out of the sheep business. Now these same flock-like men are more likely to buy back at \$2.00 per head such sheep as they sold at 50c. to 75c. per head last year.

In large lots, good, healthy store sheep sold less than one year ago at 25c. to 75c. per head. They were just such sheep as sold at \$5.50 to \$6.25 after being fed corn all winter. It seems that men will never learn to hold fast to a good thing "through thick and through thin." Too many people want to sip the sweet without tasting any of the bitter.

The fine stock market is a little quiet, and is no doubt affected by the generally unsettled state of business. Prices for fine stock are low here, but they have not declined so heavily as in Great Britain.

The buyers of fine stock are more conservative than a few years ago, when stock improvement was a kind of craze in the West. They now demand something more than pedigree, and are generally harder to please than when so many greenhorns were buying fine stock for the first time.

#### The Saddle Horse.

Some superb saddle horses have ranged fully 16 hands high, but unless they are powerfully made in proportion, they look too weedy, and the broad-belt of day-light under them gives the impression that they are not adapted to bear the burden of a full-grown man's weight upon their backs; 15½ hands is a more desirable height for the model saddle horse. But he must be finished at the extremities, as if he was fashioned by the cunning hands of the ideal sculptor. His neck must be long and shapely, rising gracefully from the withers and arching superbly towards the crest, ending where his delicate and sprightly ears spring from the head. His eyes should be unusually full and brilliant, his jaw remarkably clean cut, his nostrils as generous as the palm of a man's hand, and the entire facile expression that of intelligence and noble breeding. The arch of the neck should be followed by a corresponding curve in depression at the saddle place, and this should be succeeded by rather a high crupper bone, which gives that lofty carriage of the tail that makes it appear like an unfurled banner. The limbs should be neat, yet broad in their chiseled flatness. The pasterns should be long and well inclined, for the ease and springiness of his movements depend upon the depression at the saddle place and the long, slanting pasterns. These break the jar of movement, like finely tempered springs, and give a grace and beauty and pleasing effect in solid or self colors that is much superior to piebald combinations.

Even when the physical proportions of the saddle-horse are thus perfect, he lacks everything if he is not animated by that proud, aristocratic spirit that broadly defines the difference between the cold-blooded cob and the high mettled race-horse.—[National Live-Stock Journal.]

The flockmaster who has once thoroughly introduced the use of hurdles in handling his sheep generally finds the innovation a valuable one.