

## Farm

### Topics for Discussion

In recognition of the fact that valuable hints always are obtained from men engaged in actual farm work THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE has adopted the "Topics for Discussion" column, in order that our readers may see an open channel through which they may inform their brother farmers as to practices that are worth adopting and warn them against methods that prove unprofitable. Not only do we wish our readers to discuss the topics announced for the various issues, but also we desire that they suggest practical subjects on which it would be well to have discussion.

This notice appears under the "Farm" department, but the questions dealt with cover all branches of the farming industry. Letters should not exceed 600 words and should reach this office 10 days previous to the date of issue. They are read carefully and a first prize of \$3.00 and a second prize of \$2.00 awarded each week. Other letters used will be paid for at regular rates to contributors.

December 21.—How do you manage, feed and care for the boar in winter and summer? If kept for public service, what suggestions have you to offer as to his use, fee to charge, etc.?

December 28.—Should the boy who proposes to be a farmer be trained as an up-to-date farmer capable of taking part in discussions at public meetings and holding positions in public life? What can be done to overcome the scarcity of labor on the farm that makes it necessary for him to work from early morning until late night when he is too tired to read or study, or do anything to remove the picture of hard work to get more land and make more money. Too many farm boys are "old men" at 18 or 20 years.

January 4.—What should be the attitude of the farmer toward farmers' organizations? To how many can he afford to lend his best services and how can he be of greatest service to his fellow farmers and the industry at large?

January 11.—What feed and exercise do you give the stallion in winter, and what preparations do you make for the breeding season? Kindly discuss this question fully, especially the relation between winter exercise and feed and his use in the breeding season.

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### The Farm Workshop

In all parts of the West farmers have been forced to do considerable repairing of machinery and harness at home. This has led to the equipment of good workshops, and many farmers are almost as proficient with blacksmiths' and carpenters' tools as are the so-called trained workmen. However, there are few who argue that it is wise for a farmer to do his own blacksmithing unless he is far removed from a capable workman.

The suggestions given in the articles that follow will be found interesting and helpful. It can be seen that a shop can be built and equipped at a net cost of \$100 to \$150, depending on the size of the building and the variety of tools provided. The cash awards are made in the order of the articles.

### Farm Workshop Needed by Plowmen

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

The question of how far it is advisable to go in the equipment of a workshop on the farm does not depend so much upon the size of the farm as upon the aptitude and inclination for mechanical work possessed by the farmer, and of his relative remoteness from town or village where repairs can be made. A very small farm will well repay the outlay required for the purchase of a number of workshop fittings and tools, provided the farmer can, and will, make the best use of them.

Our workshop is 18 x 9 feet, and the forge 9 feet square. Whilst these dimensions are con-

venient, it is probable that one room would be sufficient in the majority of cases. The equipment consists of bench, heavy vise, 22-inch portable forge, 100-pound anvil, vertical drill and the usual blacksmiths' and joiners' small tools. The forge is convenient in size, but one a little less, say 18-inch, would not be of much disadvantage. The anvil is none too large. As for the drill, this is not nearly so much used as the other part of the equipment, and whilst it is invaluable on certain occasions, it could very well be omitted unless one intends to do a great deal of construction work or repairing. A set of stocks and dice finds pretty regular work, but a set of taps seems superfluous, as ours have only been used on one or two occasions in the course of several years. Undoubtedly the best investment was the forge and anvil, which are used on most days when plowing is in progress for the sharpening of plowshares. Here comes in the question of proximity to a town. It would seem that where a farm is situated close to a place where blacksmith work is done by a proficient man it would hardly be worth while to instal a forge, if the object is simply the saving of money; but where regular blacksmiths are few and far between, when it means the waste of half a day, or even a day, to take the work to town, then by all means get a forge and use it. The sharpening of shares, though not the only use to which the forge is put, is relatively the most important. This work is not at all easy to learn, and when one has learned to do it fairly well he cannot expect to compete, in quality of work, with the man at the forge in town, who makes a business of it; but he can adapt the drawing out and tempering of the shares to the condition found on his farm in a way he cannot expect from the blacksmith, who has to strike a mean to suit the general conditions of the district.

A forge on the farm, properly used, means increased yield of grain per acre. Where a forge is handy a share is taken off the plow and replaced by a sharp one, before it gets into bad condition; whereas if one has to take it to town and pay from 30 to 40 cents, besides the loss of time, there is a temptation to run a share much longer than is compatible with high-class plowing. On our own place we change each share once a day on breaking.

The other uses to which a forge on the farm can be put are so miscellaneous that it is not necessary to enumerate them, except to say that repairs to machinery form a large part of them.

Perhaps it is also unnecessary to dwell on the advantages of a workshop where joinery can be carried on. They are evident to everyone.

The necessity of keeping on hand a supply of nuts and bolts, rivets, buckles, colter-pins, rings, washers, clevises, leather and such things is well known to everyone who has had to repair breakdowns quickly, so as to keep man and horses from enforced idleness.

If the editor could see his way to give us some article on the blacksmith work of the farm, particularly as applied to shares, I am sure it would

be very welcome to a large body of readers. We all do it in some sort of fashion, but what we require is the right way from a man who has, by long practice, made himself proficient.

Sask.

F. E. K. R.

[Note.—We will be pleased to give space to articles from those who have had experience in blacksmithing, especially as regards sharpening plowshares.—Editor.]

### Farm Requires Tools and Workshop

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

The question under discussion this week is one that deserves a good deal more attention than it generally has received on the majority of farms. How comforting it is to know when busy in the field that if something breaks only a few minutes will be required to remedy the break, if you have a workshop properly equipped with modern conveniences. A workshop I find is a necessity on the farm and saves many dollars, besides most valuable time spent in going to town to have repairing done. On rainy days implements can be overhauled and the necessary repairs made when the men would otherwise be idle, and by so doing a good many days are avoided by having the farm machinery in good repair, making every hour count while in the field.

A good workshop has a blacksmith forge and anvil with the necessary tools for working with iron, such as a post drill, vise, hammers, tongs, punches, taps and dies, a large stillson wrench, various other wrenches, cold chisels, rasps and files, an emery wheel, grindstone, etc., and for carpenter work a strong work bench with a bench screw attached with a set of carpenter's tools for general work. The workshop is also a good place for storing farm tools, such as shovels, picks, crowbars and all the various small tools a farmer uses, and if the habit of placing the tools in the shop as soon as you are done with them is practiced, it gives a farmer much pleasure and satisfaction in knowing just where to go to get the tool wanted when it is required again.

On the ordinary farm a building 16 x 24 feet is a good size, with doors 12 feet wide, so that he can get through it with almost any farm machinery, and by placing the forge and carpenter's work bench at the rear end plenty of space is left for placing machinery to be repaired. Seven-foot studs are high enough for walls, and with a shingled roof it can be built for about \$100.00. A blacksmith equipment costs about \$40.00, and a carpenter's outfit costs about \$20.00. The building and equipment costs in the neighborhood of \$160.00. A farmer who is handy with tools can save yearly a cash outlay from \$20 to \$50, besides the valuable time it takes to go to town to have things repaired during a busy season.

I would strongly advise every new farmer starting up to get an outfit of tools and put up a workshop. If he cannot do this get a forge and anvil anyway and he can sharpen his own shares. For generally farmers in new districts are far from town, and by having a forge and anvil he can



Corn is Scarce in the West, but Horse-Power Soon Prepares the Seed Bed