Threshing Gangs Would Aid Production

There Will Be, However, Some Difficulties

B. C. TUCKER, Hastings Co., Ont.

THERE has been considerable discussion among farmers recently as to the practicability of the threshing gang scheme. Personally, I would welcome the scheme, as I have found the threshing time strenuous, a busy time, when, along with fall seeding and corn harvesting, it is the work above all other on the farm that makes autumn plowing impossible during the last few years, and if this time could be saved to the farmer by this scheme, then I conclude it would be a wise move.

It is necessary to look at this from more than one angle. What would be the thresher's view point? In the early threshing, before the completion of the harvest, he has to do a great deal of moving back and forth over his ground. Jobs are small; perhaps only a few hundred bushels in a place. Thus for the first two or three weeks he is out, he operates at a loss, although he perhaps is paying only three men besides himself. Now, what would be the result if he had a mow gang of, say, four men more. Even at the increased price per bushel, he would stand to lose a larger amount. It might be argued that he could take the farmers in rotation, but this, to my mind, is not workable, as one farmer cannot get ready, while some other a mile up the road, is compelled, to thresh in order to get grain to finish up a bunch of hogs nearly ready for market, or perhaps must thresh to get seed wheat for himself and for other farmers.

One of the greatest objections to this scheme is the matter of sleeping quarters. To run a sleeping van on frequent moves looks impracticable to me, and few homes are equipped sufficiently to permit sleeping quarters for eight men.

To sum up, therefore—while this scheme would permit of a larger acreage of wheat being sown, would permit of more fall plowing being done, which would mean a big increase in production the following year, yet the objections are real, and, perhaps, formidable, and I am of the opinion that the farmers should waive all objections in favor of the increased productions that must certainly accrue therefrom.

Horses' Sore Shoulders

And How They May Be Treated

J. H. R., Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph.

WHEN a horse has been properly fitted for hard work, the collar fits properly, and the driver observes reasonable precautions to avoid trouble, it is seldom that shoulder trouble occurs, but where the horse has not been prepared for work, or the collar does not fit properly, or the driver is careless, trouble is very liable to occur. When the horse has a long coat of hair in the spring it is good practice to clip the parts with which the collar comes in contact, as a preventive measure. In fact, in many cases it is wise to clip the whole horse.

Shoulder troubles are usually caused by ill-fitting collars, but in horses not accustomed to work, may occur even when the collar fits properly.

The most common shoulder trouble is practically a form of scalding. The skin becomes inflamed and tender, the hair drops out, and, if work be continued, the parts become raw. This is often due to neglect in cleaning the face of the collar regularly, also thoroughly cleaning the shoulders regularly, and failure to remove the collar at meal times to allow the shoulders and collar face to become dry, and then clean them before putting the collar on again. For treatment a lotion made of 1 oz. each of acetate of lead and sulphate of zinc in a pint of cold water, is probably the best application. This should be applied three or four times daily, and the animal should be given rest or worked in a breast collar.

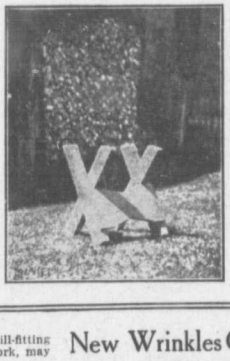
Abscesses or tumors may form on the shoulder as a result of pressure of the collar. One form of this trouble appears suddenly. A swelling of considerable size is noticed. It is not very tender or sore to pressure, and is found to be soft and fluctuating when handled. This is called a serous abscess. It contains a thin fluid, about the consistence of water called serum, which is situated just beneath the skin.

Another form appears more slowly. The horse evinces pain when pressure is put upon the shoulder. An examination reveals a swelling. The animal can work and evinces little pain except for a short time after he is put to work, until after he is allowed to stand for a few minutes. The soreness and enlargement increase, and while the swelling may not appear to the touch, as solid and hard as at first, it has not the fluctuating condition of the serous abscess. The walls are thicker. This contains pus or matter, and is called a purulent abscess. Treatment in either case consists in making a free incision through the walls of the abscess, at the lowest part, to allow free escape of the contents, and then flushing out well three or four times daily until healed, with a five per cent. solution in water, of one of the coal tar antiseptics or carbolic acid. In this case the patient must have rest, or be worked in a breast collar. Another condition from like causes is a fibrous tumor. This forms slowly, is more or less sore, in fact, acts much the same as a purulent abscess. In some cases it is not possible to diagnose definitely between a tumor and a purulent abscess with very thick walls, without exploring. A small incision is made right into the centre of the enlargement. If even a very little pus be present it will yield to the treatment for an abscess, but if no pus be present, the only treatment is dissection. The whole fibrous growth must be carefully dissected out, the wound stitched except a portion at the bottom to allow escape of pus, which forms during the healing process, and treated as an abscess.

A FOLDING SAWHORSE.

MR. ANDREW FAIRBAIRN, one of the veteran farmers of Peterborough County, believes in having a horse that can be hung up on the wall out of the way when not in use. It is a saw horse.

The illustrations herewith show the principal very clearly. The cross pieces are made of 2 x 4 scantling, firmly bolted together. The pairs are held rigid by a 14-inch board, nailed across as shown. A support is only placed on one side of a pair. This permits of the inner pair of uprights folding up compactly against the outside pair, when the horse is not in use. It can thus be hung up on the wall out of the way. The second illustration shows this very well (including Mr. Fairbairn).



The horse is quite rigid when in use, the two inner uprights resting solidly on the broad cross piece connected with the two outside scantlings. This handy horse is Mr. Fairbairn's own invention and is typical of his practical ingenuity in his regular farm work.

New Wrinkles Growing Alfalfa

We Don't Know All About the Crop Yet

By TOM ALFALFA.

WHAT a wonderful crop is alfalfa! We just get about to the point when we think we know all there is to know about it, when somebody somewhere springs a new one. I have been following all of my agricultural papers carefully this winter, and, as usual, the alfalfa men have given me something to think about.

Here is one from a Yankee cousin who grows enough alfalfa to cover two or three good sized farms, and who should know what he is talking about. He believes in letting the frost bury the seed. He prepares his alfalfa land in the fall, and when the land is honey-combed with frost in the spring, he scatters his seed broadcast. Alternate thawing and freezing then bury the seed. On corn land this grower frequently does no preparatory work whatever; he just goes out and seeds on the corn stubble in the spring when the land is honey-combed.

When I had gotten this far, I began to wonder about the weeds. Few of us keep our corn land so clean that there would be no weed seeds left to germinate the next year, and I began to see that alfalfa seeding overwhelmed by a giant crop of rag weed, lambs' quarters, blue weed, and all the other weeds that seem to grow to perfection in the corn field. But this ingenious Yankee claims to have gotten around the weed problem, too. He just lets them grow and they continue to grow until the alfalfa starts its new or second growth at the base. This is a sign that the first crop of alfalfa is ready to cut. He goes ahead and cuts his crop, weeds and all, and the next crop will be practically clean alfalfa. The weeds seeds all have been given a chance to grow, and the alfalfa will be ready to cut before any of them have formed seed. One great advantage that I could see in this early seeding of alfalfa is that the grower stands a chance of getting at least one good crop of hay the first year, and perhaps two.

Another alfalfa practice that has always been advocated by the "alfalfa experts," and that I see frequently condemned in my reading this winter, is the clipping back of the weeds when they are making their start in the new seeding of alfalfa. How often we have been told to set the mower knife high and clip the weeds off the alfalfa, "to kill the weeds and thicken the alfalfa." The newer argument is that weeds grow exactly the same way in the alfalfa field that they do in the corn field. If we want to kill weeds in the corn field, we cut them off at the surface of the ground or lower. We know that if we merely clipped off the tops half way up that they would grow shorter and bushier. Alfalfa growers are coming to believe that when they clip high to kill weeds in the alfalfa field, they are more apt to kill the alfalfa and thicken the weeds than to kill the weeds and thicken the alfalfa.

Amount of Seed Per Acre.

Some of the newer writers on alfalfa topics are getting very unorthodox in the amount of seed they recommend per acre. Twenty pounds an acre has been commonly advocated both in this country and the United States. The man who seeds with the frost early in the spring already mentioned, thinks that six pounds per acre is enough. He doesn't want too many plants, as with a smaller number of plants, big strong roots develop, and the tillering out will cover the whole ground.

I am curious enough about these new methods to want to seed some alfalfa on our corn stubble early in the spring and try out this new idea of seeding with the smaller amount of seed. I can already vouch for the good work that a cultivator will do in an alfalfa field. I know that alfalfa will tiller out extensively if given a chance. At the same time, I have a fear that with thin seeding, the hay might be too coarse. However, I will know more about this point when I have had some first hand experience.

3200 Weed Seeds Per Pound

But It Looked Like Good Seed Just the Same

T. G. RAYNOR, Seed Branch, Ottawa.

I PAID a visit recently to a country store in Central Ontario in seed inspection work. There was some hours between trains, and some time was taken in the examination of a sample of seed a farmer had brought to the store the previous night, which looked good to the storekeeper, and which represented a considerable quantity of well cleaned, beautiful looking, purple red clover seed. Fortunately the dealer intended to send a sample to Ottawa for its grading before purchasing for his retail trade.

A short examination of the seed revealed the fact that there was a considerable quantity of noxious weed seeds present that would make the seed unsaleable for seeding purposes in Canada. Besides an occasional buckhorn seed there were a lot of campions, presumably bladder campion seed, one of the worst weeds the farmers have to fight. As these campion seeds were picked out the dealer remarked, "Why, I wouldn't sow that seed on my farm! Nothing could hire me to do it!"

Presently two farmers from the locality came in, and they were invited to look at a fresh sample of the same seed, and pass upon its purity with the aid of a magnifying glass. A portion of the seed was spread out in a thin layer, and about 1,000 seeds were circumscribed by a ring. These farmers were asked to pick out anything they saw which wasn't good clover seed. After looking some time they each picked out a clover seed with the hull on, as a poss-

(Continued on page 10.)