

no rain upon it; when well cured, I put it in the barn loft to use through the winter.

Those who have never seen a lot of fowls in the winter time, "putting themselves outside" a sheaf of corn fodder, cannot tell how very well they relish such "roughness". I have laid in a large supply of old lime plaster, and also decaying oyster or muscle shells, and have a box full of fine road dust put in dry for the fowls to wallow in when the weather becomes so inclement that they cannot enjoy this luxury out of doors. A load of gravel will be placed within reach of the birds, and forest leaves, gathered and saved for the purpose, will be frequently strewn over the floor of the poultry house, and screenings of wheat will be scattered among the leaves for the fowls to scratch after, and thus they will find pleasure in this useful and natural exercise.

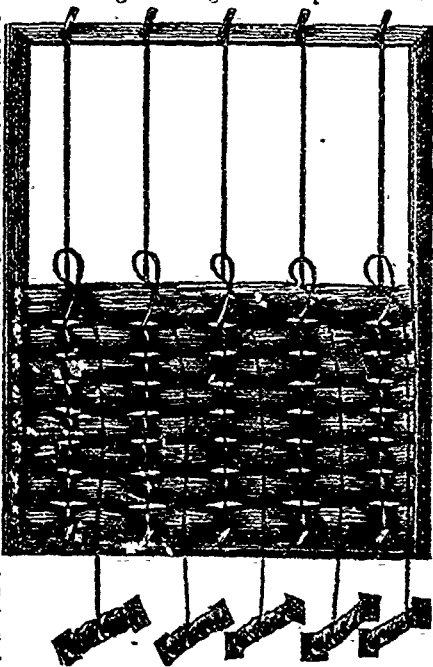
Give the birds plenty to do, and feather-eating will be much less frequent. Principal food in winter will be corn: but cabbage, turnips, and boiled potatoes, &c., will be served frequently; onions too will be fed occasionally, and all the tid-bits obtainable shall go in the bill of fare. A warm well ventilated house, and plenty of good, pure water, I shall not forget are essential to the comfort and health of my feathered family.—J. R. BAKER, in the *American Poultry Journal*.

## GLEANINGS FROM THE AGRICULTURAL PRESS.

### HOW TO MAKE STRAW MATS.

Every body who has had any experience with cold-frames and hot beds knows how useful straw mats are as a protection against frost. Not only are they much more easily handled than straw or hay, but they keep out the cold better, and the surroundings can be kept more tidy. Nor are they useful as a covering for sashes alone, there are many occasions on the farm when straw mats are more handy for covering things than any things else, as, for instance, to throw over a heap of potatoes, if the cellar should not be quite frost proof, or for lining the inside of a cold stable, and the like. To bind straw mats, the first thing to be provided is the frame. It may be nailed together of three-inch wide strips of a one-inch thick board, and it should be of a size that will suit the purpose for which the mats are to be used. For hot-beds the mats should be at least a foot longer than the sashes they cover, so as to overhang a little at both ends. Mats about seven feet long and four feet wide, are as large as can be conveniently handled. At each end of the frame, put in five or six pegs according to its width, and to these tie the strings serving as "warp" on which the mat is bound. To each bottom peg, tie also a cord wound on a "spool," as shown in the engraving, and the operation of binding can commence.

Now take a small lock of clean, straight, rye straw, and, turning the butts outward, make the first knot on the outside cord, by putting the spool above the straw and around the cord, as shown in the cut. Next, take a similar lock and, in the same manner tie that to the cord on the other side of the frame, and then, keeping the tops straight in the middle of the mat, the remaining knots are tied. The process is very simple and, once started, there is no variation till the mat is completed. The cord used should be tarred hemp twine, as it will last longer



than if not tarred. Straw mats properly made, not too roughly handled, and spread out to dry whenever they have become wet, will last three winters as a covering for hot-beds.

### Anti-Self-Sucking Device.

Prof. Sheldon says, in *Dairy Farming*, that the nose-piece, herein illustrated, effectually cured a cow of his of a persistent habit she had acquired of sucking herself. Various other devices for the same purpose had been vainly tried previously; but where they failed, this succeeded completely. It was made out of a piece of oak board, eight inches long, five inches wide, and about a quarter of an inch thick, and was shaped as shown in the cut, fig. 1. The cow's nostril was sprung or bent until the piece fitted, as seen in the fig. 2. Again and again the cow tried to get one of her teats into her mouth, but all to no purpose, for the nose-piece, hanging down, always came between her mouth and the teats. At length she gave it up in disgust, and went on grazing. The device formed no obstacle to her eating, as it floated over the grass without being any detriment whatever.

In making such a nose-piece, care must be taken not to make the two points of it too far asunder, as it would then easily slip off the nose. The points should be about half an inch apart, and nicely smoothed and rounded off, so that they will not hurt the cow.

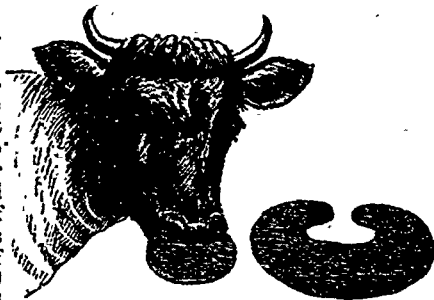
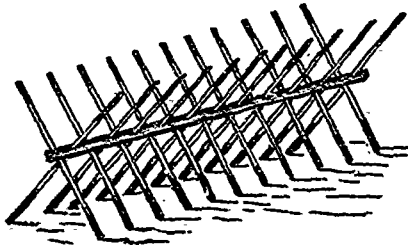


FIG. 2.

FIG. 1.

THE ROLLING HURDLE common in England, and used to a considerable extent in this country, is made somewhat like the old revolving hay-rake. Each is 12 feet long and made of stout poles bored with two series of holes 12 inches apart. Stakes six feet long are put into these holes, so that they project from them three feet on each side of the pole. One row of the holes is bored at right angles to the direction of the other, and when the stakes are all properly placed they form a hurdle, the end of which looks somewhat like the letter X. The engraving shows how the hurdles

are made. In using them a row is placed across the field, a strip of any desirable width being set off, upon which the sheep feed. After they have eaten up all the herbage on this strip and all they can reach by putting their heads through the hurdles, the latter are turned over exposing another strip of forage, and so on. By using two rows, the sheep may be kept in a narrow strip between them. By this means the droppings of the sheep are very evenly spread over the field, which is very richly fertilized by them. When the crop to be eaten off is a heavy one of clover, rye or other herbage, it is sometimes mowed and thrown on top of the hurdles, which then act as a rack, or pitched inside them. This may be made a valuable way of improving run down land, or, indeed, any other sort of land. A much longer iron hurdle has also been lately introduced, built fence-shape, with two wheels attached to a horizontal cross-piece at each end. As this is very durable, it would be the cheapest, perhaps in the end. Mr. Mechi, the well-known English farmer, uses them, and in England their employment has been extending since their introduction, half a dozen years ago.



### An Easy-Dumping Sled.

Our readers sometimes ask for illustrations of home-made farm implements which they can themselves construct during the winter