

Farm Experiences

TO MOVE BARBED WIRE

My plan in handling barbed wire is to take a bar, say crowbar, to slip thru spool. Now have two blocks to slip on bar. Put bar in wagon in front of cleats on top box, which will hold bar from pulling out. When you start to unwind, fasten the wire to the end post and drive away, a man standing in the wagon holding a stick on the spool to keep it from running out too fast. In moving fencing, I make my own spools, which are large enough to hold half a mile of wire. First take the wire off the posts, put your spool on the bar, fasten end of wire to spool. Stand in wagon and turn spool by hand. In this way you can take up half a mile of wire on one spool. Now drive to new fence, tie wire to end post and drive away the whole half mile. Now tie wire to that end post. As to tightening this wire on the fence, I have a stretcher I got from a mail order house for 75 cents, which I think is the handiest thing on the farm. I take my stretcher and grab the wire with both ends and pull up. Staple as much as you have taut and move on. You can tighten 40 or 50 rods at a time.

Man. S. H.

FARM WATER SUPPLY

A good farm without water is one of the most unenviable propositions possible in this country, as besides being a source of

WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE?

We welcome contributions to this page from our readers. Each article should relate to one subject only; it should be the actual experience of the writer and should not exceed 500 words in length. Every farmer has some particular way of doing a thing which saves him time and which his fellow farmers could make use of to advantage. If you have a "good thing," would it not be a generous act to tell your friends about it? All the readers of The Guide are friends, so make this a place for "swapping" ideas. If you have nothing else to write about, give your experiences on any of the following subjects:

What work can be most profitably done on the roads thru the summer? How can roads in your district be best maintained?

Which way have you found to be the most profitable in marketing your grain? By the load at the elevator, consigned to a commission firm, on the track, or how?

When do you figure on having your cows freshen? And why?

What provision do you make for succulent crops for your pigs during the summer? What crops do you sow, and when and how for this purpose?

How have you made provision for a plentiful water supply on your farm? Did you have any difficulty finding water? What method did you adopt or what led you to dig your well where you found water?

Have you an Automobile? If so, how much does it cost you to run it? Is it more economical than a team of drivers? Do you consider it a good investment for the farmer?

How much did you make feeding steers during the past winter? What did you feed, how much and so on?

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continuous annoyance and drawback it definitely forbids the development of good agriculture. Such a farm was my lot to handle a few years ago and a honey-comb of thirty-five foot wells of no use was discouraging. I was new to the district and accepted the advice to dig deeper as water would be found anywhere if one went deep enough. After reaching fifty feet in blue clay with no signs of water I tired, chiefly because my next neighbor had just bored 200 feet in three places and got no water. I tried the willow method with no success so I tried another plan. Noticing that several of my neighbors had good wells

at fifteen feet I concluded that water must be on my land at that depth too. I had a twenty foot auger made from a nineteen foot rod of half inch square steel with a hand auger one and a half inches wide welded to it. For turning, a flat hardwood singletree is best having a square hole made in it to fit the iron rod and an iron plate bolted onto each side of the wood to hinder wearing. This will move up and down the rod and is better than a wrench for turning. By lifting one end it is easy to put great power on lifting the auger or in hardpan a man can stand on one end and another turn with a pipe on the other. I dug no holes

to start with and after the first two feet could bore with the auger alone. I could go down nineteen feet in two hours, being fortunate in never striking a rock in fifteen borings. I could not find that the lay of the land, presence of gravel, knolls or signs usually quoted had any influence on the presence of water as, on a level surface in a distance of two rods, I had blue clay to fifty feet at one point and sand with lots of water at fifteen feet at the other point. After trying all likely places near the buildings I bored in a small hollow thick with willow. I got a very strong spring in gravel at twelve feet, pure and quite soft, while all other wells around had been so impregnated with iron oxide that they were unfit for use. The roots of the willow reached down to the water and, despite the unpleasant position, by clearing off the bush and grading the place up it is now presentable and the oasis of the farm.

When I consider the labor others expended digging for water and the ease with which I found it, I think that in a district where water is found within twenty feet it is better to bore fifty holes one and a half inches in diameter than dig one well without the least idea of what one may find. I have several neighbors who hauled water ten years and dug wells all over the farm and then got water at twelve feet within two rods of the house door with this simple method.

Man. T. W. W.

How a Cheese Factory Saved a Community

The Story of Gentilly, Minnesota, and the Prosperity that Came with Dairying—A Churchman Who Believed that Spiritual Welfare and Material Prosperity Go Hand-in-Hand

In Polk County, Northwestern Minnesota, there is a little French community that has an interesting story to tell. Mainly, the story has to do with a cheese factory—probably the most successful, tho not the largest, cheese factory in the state. But that is not all of the story. There is a Catholic priest in this community whose efforts toward neighborhood development would make a complete story in itself. Then there is the history of the people themselves—and finally the new church. They follow in natural sequence, one after the other. The people attracted the priest; the priest established the cheese factory; and the cheese factory indirectly built the new church. Briefly, the story is this:

The Man with a Vision

About 33 years ago a group of French Canadians emigrated to Minnesota and settled in the fertile farming country about eight miles east of Crookston. Gentilly is the community in question. Taking up homestead and railroad land, they started to grow wheat; and the memory of Quebec's small, stony, hilly farms faded in the bright prospects of Red River Valley soil. But as the years went by these prospects themselves began to fade. Wheat did not return the fortune that was expected of it. The yields decreased; prices were low; and 40 or 50 families, disappointed, moved away from the community. Then came the co-operative cheese factory in 1896.

In the meantime—the year 1888, to be exact—a new priest had been called to take charge of the spiritual welfare of the community. Being French Canadians, and hence Roman Catholics, the people wanted a French pastor; and Father Theillon answered the call. Father Theillon was a young man then, but he had advanced ideas of the duties of the priesthood. He believed that spiritual welfare and material prosperity go hand in hand. For eight years he conducted his church and watched the progress of the people. He saw the decrease in yields and the small returns from wheat growing. He saw the farmers with a few cows feeding the golden butterfat to hogs. He saw family after family move away from the community. And then he saw the light.

The Beginning of Prosperity

In 1896 Father Theillon called some of his people together and persuaded them to build a cheese factory. There were not cows enough in the community to support a creamery, but a cheese factory might be operated successfully. It was established on the co-operative plan, with 30 stockholders and 57 patrons to begin. The sum required to start operations was \$1,200, but not a cent of money was paid by the farmers in cash. The stockholders gave their notes for \$1,200, the factory was built and equipped, and it was paid for out of the sinking fund. A cheese-maker was engaged and Father Theillon himself assumed the office of manager.

That was the beginning of prosperity at Gentilly. The disappointed movement away from the community came suddenly to an end. From that day the acreage devoted to wheat was reduced, and pasture, clover and corn took its place. More cows were kept, and the business of the factory rapidly increased. The first year only 391,020 pounds of milk were received; in 1909 the figure rose to a million; and last year the total receipts amounted to 1,296,387 pounds. That shows the interest of the people in the movement. And now with less acreage to grain, more wheat, barley, oats, etc., are threshed at Gentilly than were threshed before the cheese factory was started, due to higher yields secured by manure, rotation and cultivation.

Success of the Factory

The success of the factory, from the standpoint of efficiency, has been remarkable. It is said to be the best cheese factory in the state. Since 1909 the lowest net average price per year paid to farmers for butterfat was 33.44 cents in 1911, and the highest price was 38.47 cents in 1912. Of course, these prices include the skim-milk. Last year the factory paid \$1.45 per hundred pounds of milk or 36.49 cents per pound of butterfat. The average price received for the cheese was about 16 cents a pound, and of this amount the patrons received 14 1-3 cents. These figures are the more significant when it is considered that the factory runs only from

April 1 to December 1 each year, the period when the price of dairy products is the lowest.

Father Theillon says: "These figures quoted, eloquently prove that a cheese factory is giving better returns to farmers for their milk than a creamery. There is probably a little more work for farmers patronizing a cheese factory than for those patronizing a creamery, if we consider, for instance, the necessity of hauling milk daily most of the time to a cheese factory. But I am absolutely certain that our farmers are receiving at least \$4,000 more for their milk every season than they would get if they were running a creamery instead."

Cheese of the Best Quality

Every operation of the factory is calculated to make the most cheese of the best quality at the lowest cost. The whey in cheesemaking always contains a considerable amount of butterfat, and this is wasted in a good many factories; but at Gentilly the whey is separated and the butterfat is sold to the creamery at Crookston at creamery prices. This is one of the factors that keeps down the cost of manufacture—1 1/2 cents per pound of cheese last year. In 1913, also, the amount of milk to make one pound of cheese averaged 9.75 pounds, and one pound of butterfat made 2.55 pounds of cheese. That is good management. Furthermore, the Gentilly "First Premium" brand has been awarded many prizes in state and outside contests. The complete statement for last year is as follows:

Pounds of milk received...	1,296,387
Pounds of fat received...	51,390
Average test	3.95
Paid net to patrons for milk	\$18,753.02
Net to patrons, per 100 lbs. milk	\$1.45
Net to stockholders per 100 lbs. milk	\$1.48
Net to outsiders per 100 lbs. milk	\$1.42
Net to patrons per lb. fat ..	36.49c
Net to stockholders per lb. fat ..	37.65c
Net to outsiders per lb. fat ..	35.68c
Pounds of cheese made...	131,057
Pounds of milk to 1 lb. cheese	9.75

Pounds of cheese to 1 lb. fat	2.55
Money received for cheese sold	\$20,848.79
Price received per lb. cheese	15.91c
Net to patrons per lb. cheese	14.31c
Net to stockholders per lb. cheese	14.75c
Net to outsiders per lb. cheese	14.00c
Running expenses	\$2,030.64
Cost to make 1 lb. cheese ..	1.55c
Cost to stockholders per lb. cheese	1.25c
Cost to outsiders per 1-lb. cheese	2.00c

That is what the cheese factory, under Father Theillon's scrupulous and efficient management, has done for the people of Gentilly. But it must not be surmised that, in assuming this additional duty, the Father has neglected his church. Far from it. In fact, it is only since the cheese factory started that the church has come into its own. The parish is growing now; families have long since ceased moving away; the people are prosperous and thankful; and a great new church is in course of construction. That is the climax of the story at Gentilly. It has been Father Theillon's dream for years, but he is now no more enthusiastic in its fulfillment than are the people of his parish.

The New Country Church

The new church is a splendid edifice, superior to many a wealthier church in St. Paul or Minneapolis; and it stands practically in the open country. The funds are being raised by local subscription, and it will cost about \$25,000 when complete; but that does not indicate the true value of the structure, as the people of the community are donating a part of their services in addition to the money. Father Theillon himself gave \$5,000 to the fund from his saving of twenty-six years in the parish. Perhaps he had saved it for this very purpose. At any rate, money has no particular attractions for Father Theillon any more. He has his cheese factory and his new church. He is surrounded by a happy, prosperous grateful people. He has the personal satisfaction that comes from useful service well performed. And he is content.—The Farmer, St. Paul.