

## On the Farm.

### PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF FARM WORK.

Common sense teaches us farmers that we must devote our time exclusively to our work on the farm or we will suffer loss writes Elias F. Brown. For instance, one farmer told me the other day that he had some extra work to look after last summer and that he was foolish enough to hire an extra man to do his farm work while he galloped down the road looking after some one else's work. Now it might appear that a person could make a fairly good thing if he earns \$40 to \$50 per month at something besides farming, when a common farm hand can be hired for \$15 to \$18 per month. The difference between \$18 and \$50 is quite a nice little sum, yet when we come to count in the extras which the \$18 man has to have and which must be supplied from the \$50 salary it equalizes things considerably. Still I do not think here is where the great difference lies.

Every true farmer has some particular method which no hired man cares to follow except while in sight of the "boss," and it sometimes happens that all the interests of the farm do not get the attention they would if the owner was doing the work himself, as was the case of the farmer alluded to at the beginning of this article. This farmer said he tried his best to teach the man that was doing his work how to cultivate corn, but it was practically out of the question. He simply went over the field as a machine would, regardless of the requirements of the soil. As a result a shrinkage of 15 bushels per acre was experienced. A machine man on the farm is worse than an unruly animal, for they, the animals, can be tied down, with the assurance that they will come to time, but with the other fellow nothing can be done. Corn, like all other crops in one respect, has to be well cared for from the very beginning to get best results. Some places in the field may need deep cultivation, while others may require shallow, and if a man is so absorbed in something else that he does not notice this difference in these places he is not on the road to successful farming. Thus it may be easily seen that, usually speaking, if a man understands the requirements of his farm it would surely pay him as well, if not better, to stay at home and do his own work, or take the place of the \$18 man instead of accepting \$50 a month elsewhere.

### SUCCESS WITH CEMENT.

Before putting down a cement floor be sure that the building is where it is always to stand, for the floor cannot be removed says M. C. Thomas. Use the very best material. Do not use any of the cheap grades of cement. I prefer the Portland above all others, as cold or heat does not affect it. To begin, put down a layer of clean gravel six inches deep, slightly moistened and tamped down as firmly as possible. After this is done, commence on the floor. This should be laid in sections about three feet wide, so that a person can trowel across them. Procure a scantling six inches wide and two inches thick. Begin on one side of the barn and for a horse stall give it one-half inch fall from manger to hind feet. Stake and level the scantling, then apply the concrete, which is made by using six parts of clean, sharp gravel and one part cement, thoroughly mixed and just dampened enough to pack well. Wheel this in and have it five inches thick when it is thoroughly tamped. The tamping must be thoroughly done.

Now put on the top coat, which should be one inch thick, and is made of two parts of sharp, clean sand and one part cement, thoroughly mixed and tempered and of the right consistency to spread nicely. In smoothing it off, use a straight edge at first, and after it has commenced to dry, use a trowel to give it a smooth, glossy appearance. In putting on the top, smooth it off with as little work as possible, as too much work will cause the water and sand to come to the surface, making a bad job. If you wish to corrugate it, use a beveled board and strike it gently with a hatchet. After this remove the scantling and proceed as before. For a cow stable or hog house, the concrete need not be over three inches thick and the top coat one-half inch thick, and for a chicken house, still less. After the floor is laid, keep everything off until it thoroughly sets, and in ten days or two weeks it will be ready for any kind of stock.

### WARM THE SLOPS IN WINTER.

For convenience purchase an oil barrel, 50 gals size, saw one end off eight inches from top, fasten cap on with strong hinge, so it can be opened and shut at will. To prevent freezing, fix a box around the barrel, pack well with sawdust or chaffy manure. In bitter cold weather, hang a lantern in the middle of cap, also make a few gimlet holes for ventilation.

If the hog could take its choice of warm or cold slop in low mercury weather, it would very readily, through its instinct, pick out the warm. To winter swine as cheaply as possible, it is necessary to warm the ration in cold weather. This can very easily be done by placing three or four pails of water in the wash boiler and heating

on the kitchen fire after the cooking is done. In this way there will be no extra expense. This hot water poured onto other compounds in the barrel will warm slops ration enough for a goodly number of hogs. Warm pig house and plenty of dry bedding are also necessary for winter economy. Think of the vast amount of feed it will take, if the hog must sleep in the open air, with poorly arranged shelter, and drink its slops at 31 degrees. Warm the slops and save the feed.

### A CHEAP HOG SHELTER.

Comparatively few farms have good, warm and dry shelter for hogs in winter. Nearly every farm has shelter of some kind, but many hog houses are so open and exposed to the weather and cold drafts particularly, that the hogs are uncomfortable and consequently unprofitable. A shelter for 25 or 30 head can be made very cheaply of straw and rails. It answers the purpose very well and in the saving of feed and the comfort of hogs will many times repay its cost, which is only the labor necessary to erect it.

A double pen, one inside the other, is built of fence rails, two rail-lengths long and one wide, and 3 or 4 ft. high. The space between the two pens, 12 or 15, in. is filled with straw and well tramped. Other rails are laid across on top. On these the straw roof is placed. The straw is dampened, so that it will pack well. It is built well out over the sides of the pen, which should stand on dry ground. The door on the leeward side usually needs no protection. Nothing more is necessary except an occasional fresh bed of straw.

### WOMEN OF GRIT.

A company of California women is building a railway from Summerville to Stockton, a distance of sixty odd miles.

The majority of the stockholders are women, the directors are women, and the control of the building contracts is in the hands of women.

Mrs. Annie Kline Rickert is the president of the Stockton and Tuolumne County Railroad, which is better known as "the woman's railroad."

Mrs. Rickert, in addition to being a railway president is an owner of mines.

During the five years in which she has been riding and driving between Stockton and the mines, she has studied the needs and possibilities of the country with comprehensive eye.

Along the mother lode there are thousands of tons of ore, and on the other side of it in the timber belt there are thousands of feet of lumber to be carried to tidewater at Stockton. Apropos of the railway undertaking, Mr. Rickert tells this story:—"If we are women we know a little more about materials than the directors of the Valley Road did when they started. On a requisition sent in one of the items for the Valley Road was fish plates. A director gravely crossed it out with the remark, 'We haven't a director's car yet, so I guess the men can get along without fish plates.' On the woman's road it is an understood thing that the fish plates will be of steel—not of china."

Seventeen years ago Mrs. Rickert was left a widow without means, and with a little girl to care for. Mrs. Rickert bought a tent, and pitched it in the Mojave desert.

One day she was out prospecting in company with her little daughter, when she heard the latter cry, "Mamma, mamma, I have found some rock exactly like the specimen Mr. Pearson had at San Bernardino."

That was how Mrs. Rickert came to own a gold mine that produced as much as \$2,000 to the ton.

### A LAND OF BEGGARS.

You Are Held Up at Every Turn in Sunny Italy.

The destitution of the Italian poor is not to be matched outside of Ireland, and the sufferers bear it with the same sweet resignation, pathetically grateful for the smallest contribution, writes I. Zangwill. Beggars, blind, crippled, or with hideous growths, placed at every point of vantage along the grand tourist highway, undo much of the good the sight of the beautiful works upon the spirit.

In the more paying situations there is keen competition. Nowhere are deformed beggars more numerous and insistent than at Assisi, with its touching reminiscences of St. Francis, preacher to the birds, whose humble shrine naturally tends to soften the purse strings.

The Italian beggar holds out or pushes forward his deformity as if it were for sale. At any rate, it is on view—at a fee. If the Italian Government, which owes so much of its scanty revenue to its American, English, and German visitors, had any consideration for their feelings, it would pension off its beggars, even if it had to charge the stranger a pauper-tax on entry which would cover all claims.

The human misfits are not the only beggars. It might be roughly said that all Italy lives on tips. Even the comparatively respectable classes have become corrupted by the tourists; quite a well-dressed young lady, conning her prayer book in St. Peter's, suddenly startled me by demanding an alms. There is no possible thing that can be done for you which you are allowed to do for yourself, and nothing which can be divided into two duties is allowed to be done in one. We to the Italian who by doing too much interferes with tip the second or tip the third!

## The Home

### FOR A WINTER'S TEA.

Escalloped Oysters, old style—three pints of oysters carefully looked over for fear of shells. Put one layer of rolled crackers in baking dish, then one of oysters; with dots of butter, pepper, and salt on each layer of the first, with considerable of the oyster liquor and a few spoonfuls of rich cream over the top. Bake in a not too hot oven.

Fried Oysters—Drain oysters first in a sieve; no salt added. Roll in bread crumbs first, then dip in egg, then roll in cracker crumbs, well seasoned. Fry in a deep bath of fat.

Fried Chicken—Take chicken cut in pieces, boiled first, if not perfectly tender, dip in batter of egg and water, then salt and dip in either bread or cracker crumbs, and fry in a bath of fat.

Have coffee, tea, or chocolate, served with whipped cream; imperial rolls not biscuit, or buttered toast; olives or some kind of relish. If there is some one to serve the meal, the second course should be on a side-board, or side table, as it crowds the large table. For this, if preserves or ice cream are not used, lemon jelly is very nice, made as follows:—

Lemon Jelly—Dissolve 1-2 box gelatin in a little water, or by putting it dry into a small vessel set in one of boiling water. Juice of 3 lemons, adding enough water to make a pint. Strain through sieve, adding sugar to taste, taking care not to get it too sweet. Put in mold to harden. If one wants this jelly richer, add, when half hardened in mold, any kind of nut meats and figs chopped, or merely the nuts. These must be inserted all through the mold. For orange jelly substitute for lemons 3 oranges and half a lemon. Or, try the juice of 3 oranges and 1 lemon, using 1-6 box gelatin and pour mixture over sliced bananas. Serve with any of these dishes one or two kinds of cake, one preferable.

Hickory Nut Cake—One cup butter, 2 cups sugar, 1 cup sweet milk, whites of 5 eggs, well beaten, 3-1-2 heaping cups flour. Add, after mixing well, 1 full cup hickory nut meats. Or, take the same recipe as for plain layer cake, except instead of the 3-1-2 cups flour, take 3 cups. Put icing between the layers and on top. On each layer press the half kernels of common or English walnuts, figs chopped coarse, or sprinkle with fine candies; or, use the cake plain or the icing colored pink by using pink sugar, with almond or vanilla flavoring.

Boiled Icing—Boil 2 cups granulated sugar with 4 tablespoons water, one kettle within another, containing boiling water, until it drops from the spoon in threads. Have ready the beaten whites of 2 eggs and pour the syrup slowly into them, beating all the time. Flavor, and spread on cake while warm. This far exceeds the old method.

Have a small dish at each end of the table, of confections or salted almonds. If a large number of guests are present they should be served at small tables, each carefully set, and with flowers if possible. Salted almonds are easily prepared at home. First blanch the almonds by pouring boiling water over them. Then place in dripping pan, with a lump of butter and well salted, and set in oven. Watch and stir carefully till done.

### STORE AND KITCHEN CLOSETS.

Shelves covered smoothly with white marbled oil cloth are easily kept clean—something to be appreciated when a jar of preserves ferments and explodes or a bottle of oil is broken. Tins common as they are for holding all sorts of things, from pepper to bread, are not the best boxes. Highly glazed crockery jars with closely fitted covers are better in every instance. There is no possible action of china upon food, as there is of the metal compound, and the crockery is, besides, much more easily kept clean. China spice boxes, crockery tea caddies, coffee, boxes, bread and cake boxes, are by all odds the best. Of course, in the store room, as everywhere else, the most easily reached shelves should be devoted to the most often needed goods. A small pair of scales on a shelf, a "grocery wanted" slate inside the door, and an easily cleaned oil cloth floor covering will add to the comfort of the store room.

On the floor of the kitchen closet and on its shelves also oil cloth will be found a labor saving institution, although, of course, no pots or tins should ever be put in it in such a condition as to soil the most immaculate kept wood. Still, accidents do happen, and oil cloth makes them easier to bear.

### FOR DESSERT.

Whipped Cream—Put a good half-pint of thick double cream into a basin with two tablespoonfuls of fine white sugar, one tablespoonful of fresh lemon juice, a light seasoning of salt, and the white of a large fresh egg beaten to a froth; then set the basin in a bowl of very cold water, and whisk briskly until a firm froth rises to the surface; remove this with a slice and lay it on a sieve to drain, then continue whisking so long as any froth can be obtained. When thoroughly drained it is ready for use.

Egg Snow—Beat the whites of two or three fresh eggs to a firm froth, with a light seasoning of salt and a pleasant flavoring of some favorite essence; then have ready about a pint of new milk, also seasoned and flavored, and when it boils drop in the frothed egg about a tablespoonful at a time; when set, remove the pieces of snow with a slice to drain; then when quite cold use as required.

Fancy Rings or Croutons—Take some slices of stale bread or spongecake about half an inch thick, and stamp them out with a proper cutter, into either fancifully-shaped croutons or rings; soak these in a good uncooked custard, which has been seasoned and flavored according to taste, then drain them well, and fry them in hot clarified fat until colored a dainty golden brown; after which drain carefully, brush the surface of each over with white of egg, and sprinkle alternately with finely-chopped pistachios and almonds, or ornament in some pretty device with tiny strips or rings of angelica and candied cherries. These form a very effective decoration for a fruit solid or a compote of fruit.

### USES FOR BEEF.

Knowledge is power in marketing as in other things, and quite as satisfactory a cut may be obtained at less cost, then personally selected, as the butcher would deliver if left to himself. This rule applies to the farmer's wife who buys from a travelling dealer at her door, as well as to the housekeeper who has a wide range of choice in the city markets.

To Fry Steak.—In these days of oil, gas and gasoline cooking ranges it is sometimes necessary to fry steak. If properly done the meat may be made digestible; if poorly fried, the saints preserve us! We shall need their aid to live through the effort to assimilate the mass. A safe rule is to have the spider very hot and well greased, using suet or drippings; butter burns too quickly. Put in the meat and turn frequently. Do not cover, or the juices will simmer out, stewing and toughening the meat. Serve on hot platter with butter, pepper and salt added after taking up. Add half a pint of hot water to the brown contents of the frying pan and thicken with a little flour. Serve in a gravy boat.

Steak with Smothered Onions.—Have ready a sufficient quantity of sliced onions, and when the steak is removed from the spider turn the onions into it at once, covering it closely to let the vegetable cook in the grease and their own juices. Set the platter of meat into the oven to keep warm. The onions will cook in five minutes and may then be turned over the meat on the platter. Send to the table at once. Another way is to cook the onions while the steak is broiling, then put the meat into the spider, simmer five minutes and serve, using plenty of butter or dripping with the onions and adding salt and pepper to suit the taste.

Braised Beef.—Use a piece of solid meat from the rump or shoulder. Allow twenty-five minutes to the pound for cooking. Put into a covered dripping pan, one onion one turnip, and one carrot, slicing them. Lay the meat on top of vegetables, add one quart of hot water, cover the pan and put into a very hot oven. When half done salt to suit, and then baste every quarter of an hour. After the meat is taken out put a pint of water into the pan, let it boil up and strain it. In another pan melt and brown two tablespoonfuls of butter, add two tablespoonfuls of flour, stirring until smooth. Pour over it the hot water from the other pan, add a tablespoonful of Worcester or Tabasco sauce, with salt and pepper to suit, and pour over the meat. Rib of beef are sometimes braised.

Shaved Beef.—Freeze the desired quantity of the best round of beef solid enough to shave thin with a sharp knife. Put into an iron kettle over a brisk fire and let the meat stew in its own juice. When the redness disappears it is done; then add butter, pepper and salt and dredge in a little flour, using a small quantity of boiling water. Served with baked potatoes.

Chipped Beef.—One-half pound dried beef chipped fine, four level tablespoonfuls entire wheat flour, four level tablespoonfuls butter, one pint hot milk, a dash of cayenne pepper and eight shredded wheat biscuits. Melt the butter in a saucepan, add beef, cayenne and flour; stir briskly, adding the hot milk a little at a time, cooking until thick and smooth. Prepare the biscuits by dipping quickly in cold milk, draining thoroughly then warming in a buttered pan in a hot oven, covering the pan. Put the heated biscuit on a hot dish and send to the table with the beef in a separate dish to be added in serving.

### COST OF EUROPE'S FLEETS AND ARMIES.

It is estimated that Europe pays yearly for the maintenance of its fleets and armies \$225,000,000 and nearly as much again in the guise of interest on debts contracted for the prosecution of foreign wars. The daily expenditure needed for a conflict in which the five Continental Great Powers were engaged would amount to \$4,195,600. Over and above this sum it would be necessary to expend on the families of the soldiers about \$198,000. In other words, the annual cost of this European war, exclusive of indirect losses, would, according to the calculations of M. Bliokh, a Polish publicist, reach the fantastic total of \$1,747,126,000.

## Young Folks.

### GAMES WITH WORDS.

In the game of "The Stranger on the Island" the leader asks a number of questions which must be answered by the players in turn with words each beginning with the same letter of the alphabet. Here are the questions, and one set of answers are given as an illustration. Let A represent the leader, and B, C, D, E, and F, the other players:

A. There is a stranger on the island; what brings him here?  
B. Anxiety to see his friends.  
A. What has he brought with him?  
C. Amter.  
A. What will he take with him?  
D. Alligators.  
A. Where does he come from?  
E. Asia.  
A. Where is he going?  
F. Albania.

When the list of questions is exhausted, then it is gone over again, and the answers must all begin with B. A forfeit should be the penalty of a blunder.

Rhyming words in pantomime is a charming pastime. All taking part must be seated in a circle, in order that each player have a clear view of all the other players. One of the company must be selected to begin the game. He must think of some word which can be easily rhymed by other words, and tell what word it rhymes with, saying, for instance, "I have thought of a word that rhymes with cat; can any of you guess it?"

The players must not speak in answer to the leader's question, but whoever thinks of a word to rhyme must strive to act it out in pantomime, as plainly as possible. The leader watches the player who is acting the word, and as soon as he guesses what the person acting is trying to present, if ever thinks of a word to rhyme must say, "It is not—" calling out the word "represented," "that I thought of," and so on.

As each player acts out a word the leader must call out the word represented until the right word is acted. The leader must then resign his place, and the person who acted out the right word must be the leader, and think of a word, giving out the word to be rhymed with.

Suppose the person who first selects a word chooses "sting," and gives out "fling" to be rhymed with. One of the persons makes a motion with his hands of ringing a bell. Another player will by signs indicate a ring on the finger. The leader exclaims, "It is not a finger ring." One of the players will imitate wringing of clothes. The leader says, "It is not wring." Another represents singing, and is told, "It is not sing." A player will, perhaps, indicate a bee stinging. "Sting is the word; I resign my place to you."

### DICKIE'S SURPRISE.

Dick was a great "bird dog." He was naturally of a good disposition, but "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and following the lead of a neighbor's cross dog, Master Dick fell into one bad habit. At sight of a wandering pussy, he would fly after it with such an uproar that the frightened creature would shoot up into the nearest tree, with her tail like a feather boa. It was with much misgiving, therefore, that I one day accepted the gift of a pretty, half-grown blue-and-white cat.

Cutter had been raised in a shed behind a grocery, and seen no dog save an old toothless cur, with whom she had been on the most familiar terms.

In fact, Cutter's great characteristic was trustfulness. It seemed as if she knew nothing of bad treatment, and so knew nothing of fear. Accordingly, when Dick found her on a chair in the house, and started for her with a terrifying bark, she simply kept on washing her face. He stopped, evidently puzzled, and obeyed at once when I ordered him out.

But after dinner came the surprise. Dick went to sleep on a large rug in the sitting-room, after curling himself round so that there was a little vacant circle between his body and his legs. The cat, who had been playing at my feet, grew tired, and looked about for a sleeping-place.

Suddenly she spied Dick, and her indecision vanished. With the greatest deliberation she curled herself up in the circle of his legs, and went to sleep. I sat looking at the pretty picture, more interested in the outcome of the scene than in my book.

Presently Dick awoke. He raised his head lazily, and was about to drop it again, when he caught sight of the cat. I shall never forget the comical look that came into his eyes. No human countenance ever expressed utter astonishment more plainly than Dick's. For several moments he gazed at the cat, as if doubting the evidence of his senses, too much bewildered to bark. Then he slowly reached over and gently nipped the cat's ear.

Cutter gave her head a shake, as if to dislodge a fly, and slept on. Then Dick, who seemed to be experimenting gave the ear a harder nip. This time Cutter started out of her sleep, raised her head, comprehended the cause of her trouble, promptly clawed the dog's nose with one little paw, and straightway resumed her sleep.

For the next five minutes Dick's face was a study, as he lay looking at her. Then, evidently giving up the puzzle, he lay down again and slept, too.

After that there was not the least fear that Dick would hurt Cutter. Not that he seemed to develop any decided affection for her, but her perfect assurance in climbing over him, sleeping on him, or playing with his tail, seemed to "stump" him, as our boys said, and he submitted to her friendly familiarities with a very funny air of wonder and perplexity, but always without demur.