

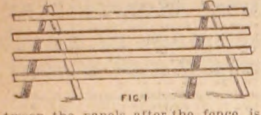
REAL RURAL READING

WILL BE FOUND IN THIS DEPARTMENT.

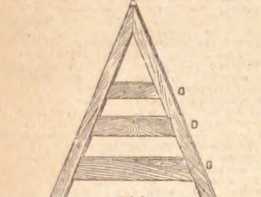
How to Build Board Fences Economically - Give Attention to Details - Prevent Washouts in Grain Fields - An Effective Game Trap - Notes Etc.

Board Fences.

Every farmer who builds board fence knows that the main cost is the posts and digging the holes and setting them. If we buy first-class locust posts they cost 20 to 25 cents each, and it takes two for each rod, and if we set cheap posts they rot off in a few years and the fence must be re-built. More than fifteen years ago, writes Waldo E. Brown in the Practical Farmer, I invented a fence which supports itself without posts, and I have had it in use on my farm ever since, and it has given good satisfaction. I call it a self-supporting truss fence, because it requires no posts; but to make it perfectly safe in exposed situations, stakes should be driven down in the notches between the panels after the fence is set up. The drawing above gives an idea of the fence. The panels can be made in the barn or shop, all ready to be put up and this is an advantage, for rainy weather can be utilized in making it. The boards are nailed to uprights of hardwood two inches square, and beveled at the top, so that when the panels are leaned together, the bevels will exactly fit each other. In setting up this fence, the panels are leaned towards each other, with the foot of the uprights from two and a half to three feet apart, and then short boards are nailed from one upright to the other, to hold the fence in place. Fig. 2 shows an end

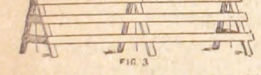


view of the fence, which is one of the trusses which takes the place of a post, and a b are the short boards nailed across from one upright to the other, to hold the panels of the fence together. A stake, three inches in diameter, driven in the ground, that against these short boards, and a nail driven through each board into it, makes the fence as firm as if there were good posts set in the ground. I have some of this fence made only three boards high, with a barbed wire stretched above it and fastened to the stakes, and this still further reduces its cost, for a board 16 feet long costs as many cents, but a wire of this length only 3 or 4 cents. It is not best, however, to make this fence in panels 16 feet long, as they are awkward to handle and will sag a little. I like to make a fence with panels just 11 feet long, as then three of them make just two rods, and by buying a part of the lumber 12 feet long and a part 14 there will be very little waste, as the ends cut off can be used for the short stay boards on the trusses. Fig. 3 shows the three-board fence with the wire above.



A Blanket of Snow.

A winter covering of snow on fields, grass, or grain, is extremely beneficial, preventing deep freezing of the soil, keeping the plants and their roots at an almost uniform temperature, and the almost daily freezing and thawing that occurs on land not thus protected. The covering of snow should be made as uniform as possible by placing branches of evergreens or any other obstruction about the open spaces in fields, and especially upon the knolls and other elevations where the wind sweeps away the fallen snow. These obstructions need not be placed in position until the ground is frozen solid, when other farm work is not pressing, and should there be an open winter the protection afforded by the obstructions alone will amply repay the labor and expense.



When to Starve a Horse.

Dr. C. E. Cary, B. S., D. V. M., of the veterinary department of the Dakota Farmer, says: "The horse's stomach is small, and if water is given immediately after feeding, a great portion of the food is washed beyond the stomach before the gastric digestion has occurred. This is a great part of the food is lost, and in many instances, is liable to induce indigestion, etc. Always water your horses before feeding, and never water them for two or three hours after feeding, and you will save food and have stronger and healthier horses."

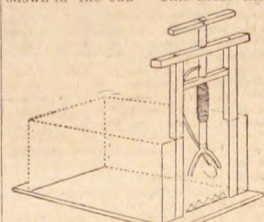
Attention to Details.

Careful attention to details very often is the turning point between a profit and a loss. This is more noticeable where the competition is strong in the farming line, while prices are low and fluctuating. Hence make the most use of each day. Have the man do some work that will be ad-

vantage. Do not let weeds go to waste, but secure them promptly when matured, look after the stock while at pasture, give the work animals healthy food, feed regularly, and do not water them too warm. If the harness, vehicles, or machinery have any weak points, repair in time and do not wait until a break occurs that may cause hours of lost time in a busy season. Keep the fences in good repair, thereby saving your grain crops and keeping on good terms with your neighbors. Sell crops and stock when a fair price can be obtained. If a neighbor has stock for sale cheap and you have the pasture, or feed, to still further add to its value, then make a deal. Trading sharpens the wits, and makes one more observant of honest opportunities.

A Game Trap.

Here is a trap, as described in Farm and Home, for catching any game that will take bait. For the bottom use a board 16 inches long. The sides should be 12 inches long and nailed or screwed to the bottom so that it will project 2 inches for the foot to rest on while setting the trap. Use two standards 16 or 18 inches long, which are screwed to one end of the middle piece is a round stick of hard wood to which is attached a coil spring. The fork may be made of wood or iron and is for catching the game when the trap is sprung. A piece of seasoned hickory is used to attach the bait on, as shown in the cut. This holds the



trap up when set and lets it down when the bait is taken.

Underneath the fork are fastened a number of spikes or pointed irons to make sure of holding the game.

All Around the Farm.

MAKE your farm productive and it will pay. A rich soil is an essential item in the growing of good crops. CHURN at as low a temperature as you can and wash the butter grains with cold water. LINSEED and cotton seed (cake or meal) is excellent, but all oily foods are liable to cause moulting. A WHEAT crop of twenty bushels per acre at 75 cents per bushel will give some profit, but it is much better to raise thirty bushels.

CORN fodder, put in shocks and left in the field during a good part of the fall and winter, loses from one-third to one-half of its feeding value.

When your birds have bowel disease change the food for a day or two and change the grit. One-half the troubles are from lack of sharp, hard grit.

The farmer who raises uniformly good crops does not suffer much from the fluctuations in price. The good crops pay a profit over production even when prices are the lowest.

By judicious feeding, well-bred 2-year-old steers may be made to weigh upward of two pounds for each day of their lives. At that rate of gain beef production can be made profitable.

CORN is the great food for fattening. There is nothing equal to it for making hard, solid pork that commands the highest market price. Swine, however, will be able to digest more of it, if allowed turnips, potatoes, carrots or beets and some bran instead of nothing at all but corn. Too much corn will make them "cloyed."

To Prevent Washouts in Grain Fields.

If comparatively level fields are sown to wheat or rye, furrows should be made that will quickly carry off all the superfluous water, says the American Agriculturist. The furrows should follow the lowest portion of the field, even if it be a tortuous course. It is best to do this immediately after seeding, but it may be done at any time before the ground becomes frozen solid. Of course, some of the grain will be destroyed, but by scattering, with a fork or shovel, the upturned soil, only the plants in the immediate channel will be lost, and this precaution often saves ten times that amount being drowned out or stunted in low places. If grain occupies the steep hillsides, furrows should be made from the lowest places leading down and horizontally around the hill, thus conveying much of the surplus water to the drier portions. If the furrows are gradually sloping, washing will be prevented. If the hill is quite steep several furrows should be drawn, thus diverting heavy rainfalls into several channels, with consequent less danger from washing or overflow.

Farmers and Fertilizers.

There are truths in connection with farming that are known and have been expressed many times, and yet are of a character that require repeating over and over and over again, so as to keep them constantly before the minds of farmers. One of these is a want of knowledge of the requirements of the farm as related to the application of fertilizers. Most of the states provide through their experiment stations for the determination of the fertilizing value of the various compounds that are thrown upon the market, and so far as this goes is of service and a protection against the undiscernable frauds

that might otherwise be practiced upon the farmers. But with all this, are they exercising as great care as they should in the selection of the goods they use? The requirements of the soil should be fairly well understood, and then a better estimate can be made of what is best adapted to the soil to which it is applied. There is a good deal of talk about fertilizers, but the various fertilizing elements exist in very different forms, which present very different commercial values as well as fertilizing values. It is important then that the farmer should become sufficiently acquainted with these values in the different forms in which they may be found, so as to be able to judge of the desirability of a fertilizer. When, as is the case in the State of Rhode Island, the difference between the selling price and commercial prices ranges from \$39.33 per ton to the small difference of two cents per ton, it can be seen how much may be saved by the application of a little knowledge.—Germantown Telegraph.

Sheep Showings.

ESPECIALLY when on dry feed sheep need a good supply of water.

Look over the flock and sell the sheep that show the least improvement.

INFECTOR sheep are often a drag when good sheep sell readily at good prices.

NEVER allow sheep to be frightened or run by a dog or in any way disturbed.

If any of the ewes have poor teeth it will always pay to feed them ground feed.

A SHEEP kept thrifty will shear a heavier and better fleece than one poorly kept.

In commencing to feed grain to sheep, feed a small quantity at first and gradually increase.

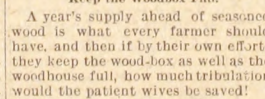
The farmer that is too careless to give sheep good care will do better with some other class of stock.

SHEEP of different ages and conditions should be sorted into different lots and the weaker ones have a little better feed.

WITH comfortable surroundings, which implies dry, warm shelter and regular feeding, a small amount of grain can be made to count.

How to Make Working Mittens.

Bed ticking is the principal and best material for home made working mittens, although they can be made of old bags or overalls. A. The full round thumbcut shows the back side of the mitten. B. The palm and the front side of the thumb. This should be made double or it can be faced with soft leather, for this is the part where all the wear comes. C is



the top part of the front side of the mitten and thumb. D the mitten complete. First sew B and C together, forming the thumb and the front side of the mitten, and then to the back (A), making the mitten complete. This is a much handier and better pattern than the old method, because there is no thumb to set, which is the hardest part of the job. The face can be replaced when worn out, also.—Practical Farmer.

Keep the Woodbox Full.

A year's supply ahead of seasoned wood is what every farmer should have, and then if by their own effort they keep the wood-box as well as the woodhouse full, how much tribulation would the patient wives be saved!

The Housekeeper.

GRATE and bottle odd bits of cheese ready for use.

ONIONS keep best when spread out on a dry floor.

Potatoes, before baking to allow the air to escape.

The tone of the piano is not so good when it is set back against the wall.

It is stated that cheese will not mold if wrapped in a cloth with cider vinegar.

Place a lump of camphor gum with the silver ware to keep it from tarnishing.

A good way to clean stovepipes is to rub them well with linseed oil while they are warm.

CORK that has been boiled may be pressed more tightly into a bottle than when it is cold.

ONE of the best remedies for bruises, where the skin has not been broken, is arnica and sweet oil.

WASHINGTON GOSSIP.

CONGRESS HAS BEEN SPECIAL- LY CONVENED TEN TIMES.

Mr. Cleveland Gets 1,500 Letters a Day—The First Assistant Postmaster General and His Ax—He Controls 230,000 Places—People Who Want Offices.

Extra Sessions.

Washington correspondence. Ever since the election the question of a special session of Congress has been the one topic of discussion on the Democratic side of the political fence, to the exclusion almost of probable prospect, and Cleveland's call to the President-elect himself is, of course, the only man who can tell with certainty now whether a special session will be convened; that is, if he has made up his mind on the subject. Everybody knows that opinions differ as to the advisability of calling Congressmen together before the usual time, a year hence, while some in favor of the scheme want the opening postponed until October, 1903. But whether an extra session is called or not, and no matter at what particular period of the coming year, the reason for so doing in case of a special convocation will certainly be the revision of existing tariff legislation.

Undoubtedly the McKinley bill will come in for the first round share of attention. In any event the gathering is bound to be attended with more than the usual amount of interest. Mr. Cleveland's proclamation, if he issues one, will be the eleventh of such a nature, and Mr. Harrison's successor at the White House will be the ninth executive to avail himself of the privilege of calling Congress to meet at the Capitol before the first Monday of December. A review of the Congressional Record shows that two Presidents—Madison and Hayes—convened special sessions twice each during their administrations, and since the latter's term none have taken place. Four of the ten on file had as their object some ultimate legislation relating to wars already inaugurated or in immediate prospect, and Cleveland's called by Mr. Jefferson, was decided upon to avert any threatened complications arising over the purchase of Louisiana from the French, with Spain frowning upon the deal.

The special session fathered by John Adams in 1797 probably precluded war with France through the active hostile preparations then authorized against the "tri-color" republic, but only two have ever been held in the history of the country. These were called by Van Buren and "Tippecanoe" Harrison, and some of the treasury laws then passed are still recognized methods of handling currency. If Mr. Cleveland lists to the plea of the ultra tariff reformers and proclaims in their direction next spring, the extra session then called will be the third in the history of the United States, which may possibly consider public financial matters, and the providing of course, the free silver business and Senator Peffer's new sub-treasury idea are left untouched.

Barring the long jump from 1813 to 1857, extra sessions have been regularly convened at intervals from six to fifteen years, but the last on record occurred in 1879, the middle of Hayes' administration, and since then the Congressional law has been "long term, short term and no special," so that the list of extra sessions is eight, or, three years, from 1797 to 1879, and the filibustering which made the latter a necessity shows how the political Darwinian theory had worked its evolution since the statesman of three centuries before the legislature upon giving the French a dose of retaliative medicine.

A resume of the ten sessions called by Presidents since John Adams' time reveals a total of three extra sessions, by order of Republican party holders, the one of Lincoln and the two during Hayes' term filling that side of the roster. If Mr. Cleveland puts himself on record for number 11, the session will be an equal in this respect to those called by Van Buren and "Old Tippecanoe," while presenting a contrast to that in Madison's first term, which had a sort of tariff tinge, because commercial relations with England and France were far from altogether placid.

Mr. Cleveland's Mail.

From now until his inauguration Mr. Cleveland's mail, notwithstanding his recently uttered protest, will certainly average at least 1,500 letters, daily. That was about the number President Harrison received in his office after his election, and it jumped to 2,000 per diem after his arrival at the White House. About nine-tenths of all such communications are from office-seekers. The rest mostly convey advice or suggestions, and are, for the most part, courteous, friendly and otherwise. "Better wear a shirt of mail," wrote one timid citizen to the present chief executive four years ago, while another gave notice of the subscriber's intention to slow him up with dynamite. As is customary with them at such times, cranks of all kinds in every part of the country are now "taking pen in hand" to address the President-elect by post. No wonder he wants to secure himself from the world until March 4.

Whenever a change of administration occurs a sort of fever for office seeking becomes epidemic among the people. For months after Mr. Cleveland comes in the time of a high price for patronage will be chiefly occupied with receiving applications for places under the Government, and the ante-room at the White House will be crowded at all hours with Congressmen and others seeking official positions and patronage. The "very hungry and very thirsty" will swarm upon Washington like grasshoppers upon a green vegetable patch, and the "swish" of the decapitating ax wielded by Mr. Clark's successor will be continually heard in the Post Office Department.

The First Assistant Postmaster General is conspicuously the man of awe and dread when a change of administration has come about. He disposes as he chooses of nearly all of the 230,000 offices in the Postoffice Department, which has ten times the patronage of all the other departments of the Government put together. All of these, except about 600 clerks in the classified service and 3,200 Presidential postmasters, he controls, chopping off heads and filling jars with the heads of applicants in the hollow of his hand 65,000 postoffices. However, 25,000 of these yield less than \$100 of salary yearly, and the incumbents in most of the great misfortune. Already the Postoffice Department is receiving scores of letters, daily from such fourth-

class postmasters, who are anxious to resign. One of them writes: "If I give up my postoffice plant for \$1,600 as a Democrat, will you appoint him and will you guarantee the security of his situation during the coming four years?" While wielding the ax Mr. Clark's successor will make his appointments usually in obedience to the wishes expressed by Congressmen as to the distribution of the patronage in their respective districts.

With the coming in of the new administration the swarm of office-seekers will arrive in Washington. All of them will reach here in high confidence of getting places under the Government, and nine-tenths of them will go away disappointed after eating out of their hearts with waiting and hope deferred. The great majority of those who succeed will be obliged to be content with positions much lower in the public service than they had expected to secure. In numerous instances individuals have been disappointed, and have departed here with aspirations for posts of high honor and emolument under one administration or another have been glad to get situations finally as messengers in the departments. History in this matter repeats itself every year; that one political party goes out and another comes in. Those who fall, as their money runs low, drift out of the hotels into the boarding houses, finally falling back on their old-fashioned roots. Last scene of all, which ends this sad, eventful history, is the appeal addressed by the disappointed office-seeker to his Congressman for a loan to pay car fare home. Undoubtedly the place hunters are mostly people of some importance where they live. But the fever for holding public office attacks them, and they abandon everything else to try for it. When they get it the glamour of the life holds them so that they are not satisfied to abandon it. Even the Congressman who fall of re-election are eager to get back into employment as clerks in the Legislative halls where once they exercised control over the affairs of the nation.

Capital Chat.

The Supervising Architect in his annual report recommends a special appropriation of \$50,000 for general repairs of the United States Custom House at Chicago. Secretary Noble has accepted the recommendation of the United States by the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railroad Company of 45,000 acres of land in the Red River Valley, in North Dakota, under the act of Aug. 5, 1892, and has issued instructions authorizing the railroad company to make indefinitely selections therefore of non-mineral unoccupied lands in the States of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana and Idaho.

The Democrats are inclined, it is now said, to let the question of the admission of New Mexico and Arizona go over to the next Congress.

Mr. Caldwell, of Ohio, is the author of a bill introduced in the House to reduce postage on first-class mail matter, except postal cards, to 1 cent per half-ounce.

Justice Harlan, of the United States Supreme Court, will sail for Europe as one of the arbitrators in the Behring Sea seal fisheries dispute.

G. M. Lambertson, of Lincoln, Neb., has been selected for appointment as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, to succeed Mr. Nettleton.

Mr. Campbell, of Missouri, will undoubtedly succeed himself in the United States Senate.

Members of the Interstate Commerce Commission look with seriousness upon the decision of Judge Graham, which limits to a somewhat extent nullifies the power of the commission. They feel that its natural sequel is an abolition of the entire commission.

Speaker Crisp, Representative McMillin, and Representative Catching, who as members of the rules committee are rather looked to to shape the policy of the House, held a conference of some length in the Speaker's room for the purpose of considering the plan and scope of an inquiry into the condition of the Treasury.

It is not improbable that a caucus of the Democratic members of the House will be called upon to consider the proposition to amend the bills now before the House for the change of the date of the meeting of Congress from the first Monday in December to the first Monday after the 4th day of March of each year.

The bill which passed the Senate authorizing the construction of a bridge over the Mississippi River above New Orleans proposes a structure of three unbroken spans, the main span to be at least 1,000 feet long and the height of the superstructure above high water to be fixed by the Secretary of War.

Shady Churches.

The early meeting-houses of New England were destitute of shade. The trees in the vicinity had been cut down for fear of forest fires, and curtains and window-blinds were unknown.

There was no "dim religious light" within the church, but in summer "the white and undiluted day," and in winter an atmosphere so cold that, as Judge Sewell pathetically records in his diary, "the communion bread was frozen pretty hard, and rattled into the plates."

As years passed on, trees were planted to protect the congregation from the garish sunlight. Sometimes the growth was dense, and cast a somber shadow over the meeting-house that made it so dark within as to annoy the minister. Two anecdotes, told in "The Sabbath in Puritan New England," illustrate how the clergy protested against these gloomy meeting-houses. A neighborly neighborly minister, preaching in a church thickly shaded by a large tree, gave out the text, "Why do the wicked live?" Peering in the dim light at his manuscript, he exclaimed: "I hope they will live long enough to cut down this great hemlock tree behind the pulpit window!" Doctor Storrs preached by invitation in a meeting-house overshadowed by the other departments of the Government put together. All of these, except about 600 clerks in the classified service and 3,200 Presidential postmasters, he controls, chopping off heads and filling jars with the heads of applicants in the hollow of his hand 65,000 postoffices. However, 25,000 of these yield less than \$100 of salary yearly, and the incumbents in most of the great misfortune. Already the Postoffice Department is receiving scores of letters, daily from such fourth-

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