

# The Last Shot

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### SYNOPSIS.

At their home on the frontier between the Browns and Grays, Marta Galland and her mother, entertaining Colonel Westering, the chief of staff of the Browns, staff intelligence officer of the Browns, injured by a fall in his aeroplane. Two years later, Westering, now a major, and chief of staff, reinforces South La Tia, mediator on war, and speculator on the comparative ages of himself and Marta, who is visiting in the Gray capital. Westering calls on Marta. She tells him of her teaching children the follies of war and martial patriotism, begs him to prevent war while he is chief of staff, and predicts that if he makes war against the Browns he will not win. On the march, Marta, with the aid of the Browns Private Stransky, anarchist, decides war and plays out patriotism and is placed under arrest. Colonel Lanstron overhauling, begs him of, Lanstron calls on Marta at her home. He talks with Feller, the gardener. Marta tells Lanstron that she believes Feller to be a spy. Lanstron confesses it is true. Lanstron shows Marta a telephone which Feller has concealed in a secret passage under the tower for use to benefit the Browns in war emergencies. Lanstron declares his love for Marta. Westering and the Gray private plan to use a trivial international affair to foment war. Westering, chief of staff, and Lanstron, made vice, discuss the trouble, and the Browns' defenses. Partow reveals his plans to Lanstron. The Gray army crosses the border line and attacks. The Browns check them. Artillery, infantry, aeroplanes and dirigibles engage. Stransky, rising to make the anarchist speech of his life, draws the Gray artillery fire, and fights—"all a man." Marta has her first glimpse of war in its modern, cold, scientific, murderous brutality.

### CHAPTER X—Continued.

This was the very thing to whip her thoughts back from the knoll. He was thunderstruck at the transformation; hot color in her cheeks, eyes aflame, lips curving around a whirlwind of words.

"You name the very reason why I wish to stay. Why do you want to save the women? Why shouldn't they bear their share? Why don't you want them to see men mowed down? Is it because you are ashamed of your profession? Why, I ask?"

The problem of dealing with an angry woman breaking a shell fire of questions over his head had not been ready solved in the captain's curriculum like other professional problems, nor was it mentioned in the official instructions about the defense of the Galland house. He aimed to smile soothingly in the helplessness of man in presence of feminine fury.

"It is an old custom," he was saying, but she had turned away.

"Lanny's plan—mow them down! mow them down! mow them down!" she went on, more to herself than to him.

Was there nothing for her to do? Could she only look on in a fever of restlessness while action roared around her? The sight of several automobile ambulances in the road at the foot of the garden stilled the throbs of distraction in her temples with an answer. The wounded! They were already coming in from the field. She hurriedly made the defense of the Galland house. He aimed to smile soothingly in the helplessness of man in presence of feminine fury.

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Why Do You Want to Save the Women?

"Thank you, no! We don't want to waste time," he replied. "We must get them away with all speed so that the ambulances may return promptly. It's only a fifteen-minute run to the hospital, where every comfort and appliance are ready and where they will be given the right things to eat."

"Then we will give them some wine!" Marta persisted.

"Not if we can prevent it! Not to start hemorrhages! The field doctors have brandy for use when advisable, and there is brandy in all the ambulances."

Clearly, volunteer service was not wanted. There was no room at the immediate front for Florence Nightingales in the modern machine of war.

"Then water?"

The major surgeon aimed to be patient in an earnest, attractive young woman.

"We have sterilized water—we have everything," he explained. "If we hadn't at this early stage I ought to be serving an apprenticeship in a village apothecary shop. Anything that means confusion, delay, unnecessary excitement is bad and unmerciful."

Marta was not yet at the end of her resources. The recollection of the dying private who had asked her mother for a rose in the last war flashed into mind.

"You haven't any flowers! They won't do any harm, even if they aren't sterilized. The wounded like flowers, don't they? Don't you like flowers? Look! We've millions!"

"Yes, I do. They do. A good idea. Bring all the flowers you want to."

The major surgeon's smile to Marta was not altogether on account of her suggestion. "It ought to help anybody who was ever wounded anywhere in the world to have you give him a flower!" he was thinking.

She ran for an armful of blossoms and was back before the arrival of the first wounded man who preceded the stretchers. The wounded man in a white first-aid bandage which had a red spot in the center. Those hit in hand or arm, if the surgeon's glance justified it, were sent on up the road to a point a mile distant, where transportation in requisitioned vehicles was provided. These men were triumphant in their cheerfulness. They were alive; they had

story of two regiments, and particularly of two companies, and that is story enough. If you would grasp the whole, multiply the conflict on the knoll by ten thousand.

There had been the engrossment of transcendent emotion in repelling the charge. What followed was like some grim and passionless trance with triggers ticking off the slow-passing minutes. Dellarme aimed to keep down the fusillade from Fracasse's trench and yet not to neglect the fair targets of the reserves advancing by rushes to the support of the 12th. Reinforced, the gray streak at the bottom of the slope poured in a heavier fire. Above the steady crackle of bullets sent and the whistle of bullets received rose the cry of "Doctor! Doctor!" which meant each time that another Brown rifle had been silenced. The litter bearers, hard pressed to remove the wounded, left the dead. Already death was a familiar sight—an article of exchange in which Dellarme's men dealt freely. The man at Stransky's side had been killed outright. He lay face down on his rifle stock. His cap had fallen off. Stransky put it back on the man's head, and the example was followed in other cases. It was a good idea to keep up a show of a full line of caps to the enemy.

Suddenly, as by command, the fire from the base of the knoll ceased altogether. Dellarme understood at once what this meant—the next step in the course of a systematic, irresistible approach by superior numbers. It was to allow the ground scouts to advance. Individual gray spots detaching themselves from the gray streak began to crawl upward in search of dead spaces where the contour of the ground would furnish some protection from the blaze of bullets from the crest.

"Over their heads! Don't try to hit them!" Dellarme passed the word.

"That's it! Spare one to get a dozen!" said Stransky, grinning in ready comprehension. He seemed to be grinning every time that Dellarme looked in that direction. He was plainly enjoying himself. His restless nature had found sport to its taste. The creeping scouts must have signaled back good news, for groups began crawling slowly after them.

"Over their heads! Encourage them!" Dellarme commanded.

After they had advanced two or three hundred yards they stopped, shoulders and hands exposed in silhouette, and began to work feverishly with their spades.

"Oh, beautiful!" cried Stransky. "That baby captain of ours has some brains, after all! We'll get them now and we'll get them when they run!"

But they did not run. Unflinchingly they took their punishment while they turned over the protecting soil in the midst of their own dead and wounded. In a few minutes they had dropped spades for rifles and other sections either crawled or ran forward precipitately and fell to the task of joining the isolated beginnings into a single trench.

Again Dellarme looked toward regimental headquarters, his fixed, cheery smile not wholly masking the appeal in his eyes. The Grays had only two or three hundred yards to go when they should make their next charge in order to reach the crest. But his men had fifteen hundred to go in the valley before they were out of range. After their brave resistance facing the enemy they would receive a hail of bullets in their backs. This was the time to withdraw if there were to be assurance of a safe retreat. But there was no signal. Until there was, he must remain.

The trench grew; the day wore on. Two rifles to one were now playing against his devoted company, which had had neither food nor drink since early morning. As he scanned his thinning line he saw a look of bloodlessness and helplessness gathering on the set faces of which he had grown so fond during this ordeal. Some of the men were crouching too much for effective aim.

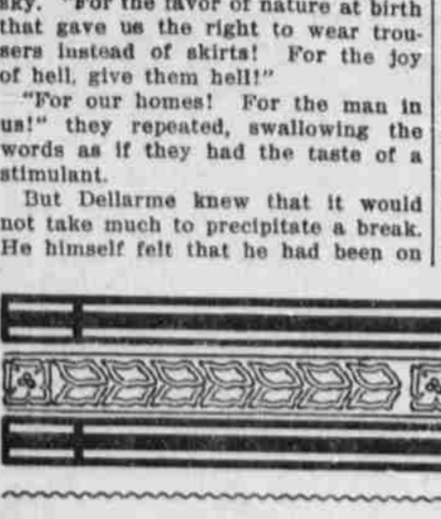
"See that you fire low! Keep your heads up!" he called. "For your homes, your country and your God! Pass the word along!"

Farched throat along parched throat repeated the message hoarsely and leaden shoulders raised a trifle and dust-matted eyelashes narrowed sharply on the sights.

"For the man in us!" growled Stransky. "For the favor of nature at birth that gave us the right to wear trousers instead of skirts! For the joy of hell, give them hell!"

"For our homes! For the man in us!" they repeated, swallowing the words as if they had the taste of a stimulant.

But Dellarme knew that it would not take much to precipitate a break. He himself felt that he had been on



Procuring Rest for Brain

English Physician Gives Advice to Those Who Suffer From Lack of Sound Sleep.

Many men and women, especially those past their first youth, find difficulty in procuring the sound, restful sleep so necessary to keep mind and body fit. Although physically the body is tired out, the brain is as alert as ever, and perfect oblivion is impossible.

An English physician gives some interesting advice on the matter. "Insomnia," he states, "is one of the penalties of the increasing strain modern life throws upon our brains. The man who works with his muscles and lives in the open air is rarely a victim of sleeplessness."

"The essentials for a good night's rest are mental repose, a requisite amount of muscular fatigue, comfortable body heat, and plenty of ventilation."

"The most difficult to secure is lessened brain activity. An excellent

plan is to take a brisk half-hour's walk just before bedtime, followed by a hot bath and a rubdown, and then a cup of warm milk and a biscuit or two as one gets into bed.

"If in addition, the mind be focussed on some pleasant but not exciting topic, a night's rest is assured to all but the most chronic sufferer."

"The type in which the sleeper suddenly awakes in an hour or so after having fallen asleep usually means that more outdoor muscular exercise is required."

Coming into Her Own. Woman is certainly coming into her own. Even in tender romance she is exerting an influence.

The young man had just been accepted. In his rapture he exclaimed: "But do you think, my love, I am good enough for you?"

His strong-minded fiancée looked sternly at him for a moment and replied: "Good enough for me? You've got to be!"—Judge.

that knoll half a lifetime. He looked at his watch and it was five o'clock. For seven hours they had held on. The Grays' trench was complete the breadth of the slope; more reserves were coming up. The brigade commander of the Grays was going to make sure that the next charge succeeded.

At last Dellarme's glance toward regimental headquarters showed the flag that was the signal for withdrawal. Could he accomplish it? The first lieutenant, with a shattered arm, had gone on a litter. The old sergeant was dead, a victim of the colonial wars. Used to fighting savage enemies, he had been too eager in exposing himself to a civilized foe. He had been shot through the throat.

"Men of the first section," Dellarme called, "you will slip out of line with the greatest care not to let the enemy know that you are going!"

"Going—going! Careful! Men of the first section going!" the parched throats repeated in a thrilling whisper.

"Those who remain keep increasing their fire!" called Dellarme again. "Cover the whole breadth of the trench!"

Every fourth man wormed himself backward on his stomach until he was below the sky-line, when his stiffened limbs brought him to his feet and he started on a dead run down into the valley and toward a cut behind another knoll across the road from the Galland house. The others followed at intervals.

Once across a road and up three series of steps of the other garden terrace, behind a breastwork of sandbags, the company rested. Most of them had fallen asleep on the ground after finishing their rations, logs of men in animal exhaustion. Some of those awake were too weary to give to each other more than a nod and smile. They had witnessed too much horror that day to talk about it. But Stransky foraged.

Marta, coming out on the veranda, saw him.

"You are tired! You are hungry!" she said with urgent gentleness. "Come in!"

He followed her into the house and dropped on a leather chair before a shining table in a room paneled with oak, wondering at her and at himself. No woman of Marta's world had ever spoken in that way to him. But it was good to sit down. Then a maid with a sad, winsome face and tender eyes brought him wine and bread and cold meat and jam. He gulped down a glassful of wine; he ate with great mouthfulness in the ravenous call of healthy, exhausted tissues, while the maid stood by to cut more bread.

"When it comes to eating after fighting—"

He looked up when the first pangs of hunger were assuaged. Enormous, broad-shouldered, physical, his cheeks flushed with wine, his eyes opened wide and brilliant with the fire that was in his nature—eyes that spoke the red business of anarchy and war.

"Say, but you're pretty!"

Springing up, he caught her hand and made to kiss her in the brushness of impulse. Minna struck him at a stinging blow in the face. He received it as a matfiel would receive a bite from a pup, and she stood her ground, her eyes challenging his fearlessly.

"So you are like that!" he said thoughtfully. "It was a good one, and you meant it, too."

"Decidedly!" she answered. "There's more where that came from!"

Then little Clarissa Eileen entered and pressed against her mother's skirts, subjected Stransky to childhood's scrutiny. He waved a finger at her and grinned and drew his eyes together in a squint at the bridge of his nose, making a funny face that brought a laugh.

"Your child?" Stransky asked Minna.

"Yes."

"Where's her father? Away fighting?"

"I don't know where he is!"

"Oh!" he mused. "Was that blow for him at the same time as for me?" he pursued thoughtfully.

"Yes, for all of your kind."

"M-m-m!" came from between his lips as he rose. "Would you mind holding out your hand?" he asked with a gentleness singularly out of keeping with his rough aspect.

"Why?" she demanded.

"I've never studied any books of etiquette of polite society, and I am a poor sort at making speeches, anyhow. But I want to kiss a good woman's hand by way of apology. I never kissed one in my life, but I'm getting a lot of new experiences today. Will you?"

She held out her hand at arm's length and flushed slightly as he pressed his lips to it.

"You certainly do cut thick slices," he said smiling. "And you certainly

"I want to Kiss a Good Woman's Hand by Way of Apology."

of the brigade staff brought instructions to the colonel.

"The batteries are going to emplace here for your support in the morning. You will move as soon as your men have eaten and occupy positions B-31 to B-35. That gives you a narrow front for one battalion, with two battalions in reserve to drive home your attack. The chief of staff himself desires that we take the Galland house before noon. The enemy must not have the encouragement of any successes."

"So easy for Westering to say," thought the colonel; while aloud he acknowledged the message with proper spirit.

Before the order to move was given the news of it passed from lip to lip among the men in tired whispers. Since dawn they had lived through the impressions of a whole war, and they had won. With victory they had not thought of the future, only of their charge. After hearing death whispering for hours intimately in their ears, they were too weary and too far thrown out of the adjustments of any natural habits of thought and feeling to realize the horror of eating their dinners in the company of the dead. Now they were to go through another hell, but many of them in their exhaustion were chiefly concerned as to whether or not they should get any sleep that night.

The satire of war makes the valet's son a hero; the chance of war kills the manufacturer's son and lets the day-laborer's son live; the sport of war gives the latent forces of a Stransky full play; the glory of war brings Dellarme quick promotion; the glamour and the spectacular folly of war turn the bolts of the lightning which man has mastered against man. Perhaps the savage who learned to hoist a corkscrew may have set fire to the virgin forest and wild grass in order to destroy an enemy—and naturally with disastrous results to himself if he mistook the direction of the wind.

Marta Galland's thoughts at dusk when she returned up the steps to the house were of the wreckage of the hot whirlwind of war left. She was seeing fathers staring and mothers weeping. Her experience with the wounded drawing deep on the wells of sympathy, heightened her loathing of war and of all who planned and ordered it and led its legions. She had been engaged since dark in completing the work of moving valuable articles from the front to the rear rooms of the house, which had been begun early in the day by Minna and the coachman.

are pretty," he added, passing out of the door as jauntily as if he were ready for another fight and just in time to see the colonel of the regiment come around the house. He stood at the salute, half proud, half defiantly, but in nowise humbly.

"Well, Major Dellarme!" was the colonel's greeting of the company commander.

"Major?" exclaimed Dellarme.

"Yes. Partow has the power. Four of the aviators have iron crosses already and promotion, too; and you are a major. Company G got into a mess and the whole regiment would have been in one unless you held on. So I let you stay. It all came out right, as Lanstron planned—right so far. But your losses have been heavy and here you are in the thick of it again. Your company may change places with Company E, which has had a relatively easy time."

"No, sir; we would prefer to stay," Dellarme answered quietly.

"Good! Then you will take this battalion and I'll transfer Grollier to Alvery's. Bad loss, Alvery—shrapnel. The artillery has been doing ugly work, but that is all in favor of the defensive. If we can hold them on this line till tomorrow noon, it's all we want for the present," he concluded.

"We'll hold them! Don't worry!" put in Stransky.

If a private had spoken to a colonel in this fashion at drill, without being spoken to, it would have been a glaring breach of military etiquette. Now that they were at war it was different. Real comradeship between officer and man begins with war.

"We shall, eh?" chuckled the colonel. "You look big enough to hold anything, young man! Here! Isn't this the fellow that Lanstron got off?"

"Yes, sir," answered Dellarme.

"Well, was Lanstron right?"

"Yes, sir."

"Wonderful man, Lanstron!"

"He knows just a little too much!" Stransky growled.

## HOW FARMER MAY HARVEST THE ICE CROP

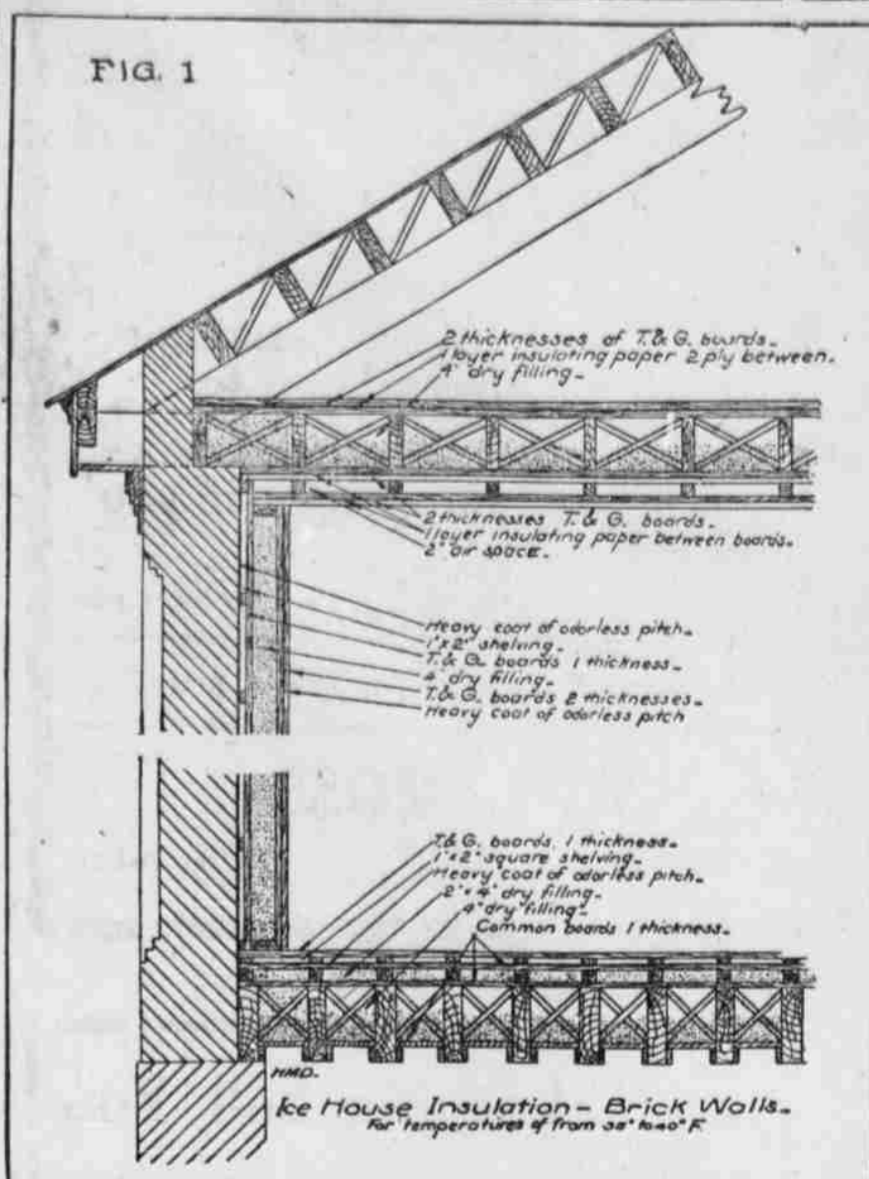


Fig. 1.—Diagram Showing the Insulation of an Ice House for Storing Ice Without Sawdust or Shavings.

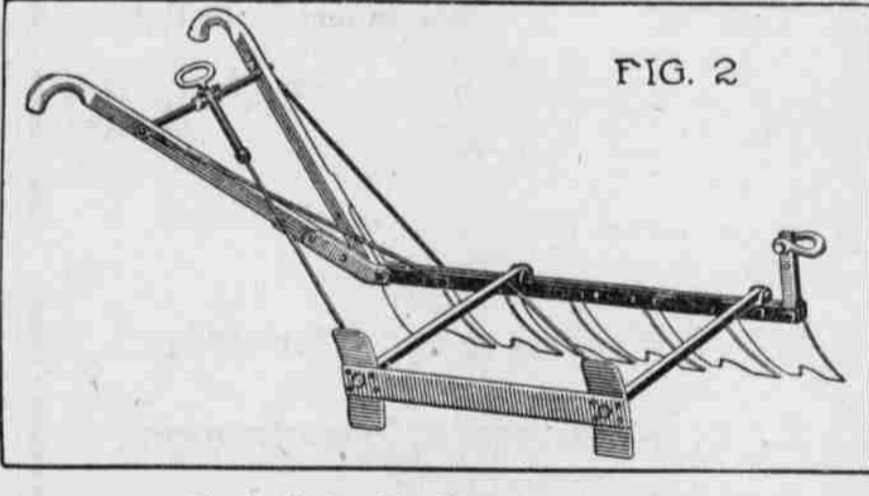


Fig. 2.—An Ice Plow With a Guide Gauge.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

In harvesting ice, very different methods are required for that which is not over four inches thick and ice from six to fifteen inches in thickness. The thin ice generally will be broken into fairly regular cakes, which will be loaded as best they may into sleds or wagons and hauled to the storehouse. Here they should be arranged in layers and adjusted as closely as possible. The spaces between the cakes should be filled with crushed ice or snow to cause the whole mass to freeze into a block of ice as solid as it is possible to make. It is more difficult to store and keep ice of this character than that harvested in regular cakes.

This ice is characteristic of the southern limits of the storage of natural ice. The supply is more or less uncertain and the storage period is long. The irregular form of the cakes makes it difficult to pack the ice so as to prevent air spaces, which may form air passages and cause rapid loss. Irregular blocks and cakes are less easily insulated than cakes of uniform size and thickness. If the mass is stored in a building without packing material about it, insulation must be provided in the construction of the house. The walls must be thick, well packed with mill shavings or dry sawdust, and tightly boarded on both sides of the pack material. A space of 15 inches between the walls, tightly packed with good insulating material, is none too much. An added safeguard would be to double both the outside and inside walls. The type of wall construction suggested in Fig. 1 would be suitable for a house intended for the storage of ice of this character.

Harvesting ice from six to fifteen inches in thickness permits the use of tools and implements that find no place in harvesting thin ice. The field may be laid off so as to cut the cakes to standard dimensions of 22 by 22 inches or 22 by 32 inches. Ob-long cakes have some advantages over square ones, as they can be lapped together to break joints as they are stored thus reducing the possibility of the formation of air passages in the ice heap.

In order to obtain cakes square or rectangular in form, a square made from light strips of boards with straight edges may be used. A square with sides twelve to sixteen feet long will serve the purpose nicely. Draw a line across the ice field parallel with each side of the square and with a hand marker or with a saw accurately follow this line. By the use of a plow with a gauge attached, such as is shown in Fig. 2, the field can be cut into parallel bands or ribbons. If the harvest is an extensive one and the water is of considerable depth, after the field is plowed at right angles to the first plowing the ice may be barred off in large masses or strips and floated to the shore or loading place, where it can easily be broken by an ice spud or bar into cakes of the dimensions outlined by the plow. The use of a plow is not confined to large fields or to ice that will bear the weight of a horse. On thin ice fields a plow can be used by attaching it to a light wire cable or rope pulled by a horse on the bank.

## FARMER MUST KNOW HIS COW

Feeding and Caring for Animal Is Not All That Is Necessary for Profitable Dairy Returns.

The man with the hoe is a failure unless he knows how to use it. The man with a cow is a failure unless he knows how to feed and care for her. Feeding and caring for a cow, however, is not all that is necessary to success in dairying; the farmer must also know whether the cow is actually profitable to him. The business man would laugh at such a statement, wouldn't he? Of course, he would. He would consider it a foregone conclusion that the farmer knows that or he would not keep the cow, and yet thousands of cows are fed year in and year out without their owner's knowing whether or not they pay. Are you sure you are not boarding a few of that kind. If not, investigate and make a few records of milk and butter yields.

## MOST PROFIT FROM POULTRY

Many People Making Comfortable Living Raising Chickens and Producing Eggs for Market.

Is there progress in poultry-keeping? Read the market reports. Look at the amount of poultry advertising done today compared with five years ago. How did the winter prices of eggs in the last five years compare with other years?

Thousands of people are today making a comfortable living and many have become independent by raising poultry and producing eggs for the market. It has been proved by experience that it costs no more to produce a pound of poultry than it does to produce a pound of pork or beef, yet poultry is always worth more per pound than any other meat and sells just as readily.

## FEEDING ROUGHAGE TO HOGS

Where Field Roots Grow Readily and in Good Form They Will Be Found Better Than Alfalfa.

Attention has been called time and again to the advisability of the feeding of roughage to swine during the winter. Some claim that alfalfa is the best for this purpose. In alfalfa areas it may be true that such roughage is cheaper than that obtained from any other source, but in areas where field roots grow readily and in good form, they will be found more suitable for feeding swine than the hay referred to. Both are good, and the important question in deciding which shall be fed is the cost.

Oat Straw as Roughage. Oat straw is a pretty good roughage when fed with plenty of grain.

Under certain conditions the only practicable way of obtaining a supply of natural ice is to catch it as it is