

Ontario Crops and Live Stock.

The following information regarding agricultural conditions in Ontario is contained in a bulletin prepared by the Provincial Department of Agriculture, based upon information furnished by a large staff of experienced correspondents, under date of April 1st:

Fall Wheat and Clover.—These crops were protected against the intense cold of midwinter by a heavy covering of snow, much of which still lay on the land at the end of March. This has made it difficult for correspondents to report definitely, but the opinion most frequently expressed was that both fall wheat and clover would come from under the snow in practically the same condition in which they entered. It was pointed out, however, that the trying weather of April, with its alternate thawing and freezing, was yet to be met with before these crops reached the new growing season.

Fruit Trees.—Until the buds begin to swell, it will be too early to speak definitely regarding the effect of the severe winter upon orchards. There are, however, a few reports of injury to peaches and other tender-fruit trees, on account of the very low temperatures of January and February, although the most serious injury from that cause, as yet apparent, has been the splitting of a number of apple trees. On the other hand, so far, no damage from sleet storms has been sustained by orchards. Cotton-tail rabbits and mice are reported as doing considerable injury to young fruit trees.

Live Stock.—The unusual length and severity of the winter, the shortage of fodder supplies, and the great lack of bedding materials, have been most trying to live stock. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the general condition of the various classes of farm animals may be fairly summarized as being rather on the lean side, but healthy.

Horses, on account of their high value, have received more attention than any other class of live stock, especially in the case of working horses, which are, as a rule, in fine shape. Out-

side a few mild cases of distemper, no disease has been reported.

Cattle are also in good general health, considering that most of them have had but little more than a maintenance ration. Fat cattle are rather scarce, and there are not as many store cattle as usual, and neither are up to the average in quality, owing to the paucity of fodder supplies.

Sheep are comparatively few, but are in good condition, and early lambs are coming on nicely.

Swine are scarcer than usual at this time of year, and appear to have suffered more than other live stock from the long confinement of the hard winter. Early litters are not doing as well as usual. The scarcity and high prices of feed, and dissatisfaction with the market prices for hogs, are given as the reasons for the more recent falling off in numbers.

Fodder Supplies.—All kinds of fodder supplies are low, taking the Province over, except in some Eastern counties, and careful feeding must be practiced until live stock can be turned upon the grass. While a few correspondents report a surplus of hay, others speak of having to buy from outside points at stiff prices. All classes of grains are also scarce and high in value. Straw was never more appreciated; it has been scarce for feeding, and almost impossible to get for bedding. Roots have been in fair supply, and so has corn, which has been largely used both as silage and stover, to the saving of other more expensive fodders.

Methods.—The bulletin will give in detail quotations from practical farmers as to how they met the difficult situation of a long and steadily cold winter, with short supplies of fodder. The outstanding features of this feeding campaign were, briefly: Disposing of all unnecessary animals early; feeding only what would be eaten absolutely clean; freer use of the cutter, especially for straw, of which only the very poorest was used for bedding, sawdust, leaves, etc., being substituted; fuller adoption of the corn crop, more particularly as silage, which one correspondent describes as "the salvation of those who had it";

larger utilization of chaff for mixing with other fodders; purchasing mill feeds and brewers' grains, and cheap frozen wheat from the Northwest.

Bulletin on Weeds and the Seed Law.

A bulletin has been issued by the Seed Branch of the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, giving a full reprint of the Seed Control Act, 1911, which is the law governing the sale of seeds in Canada. This Act, with the regulations of the Governor-in-Council, names the weeds which are considered most noxious and are particularly legislated against, and defines the standards of quality in regard to purity and germination to which seed of various kinds must conform when sold for seeding purposes. The standards for four grades of timothy, red clover, alsike and alfalfa seed are given, and full information regarding the law, as applied to farmers, and the way in which it may be used for their protection.

The second part of the bulletin deals with seed-testing work and the application of the law through seed inspection. Seed laboratories are maintained in Ottawa and Calgary for the use of seedsmen and farmers, where samples are tested free of charge.

The largest part of the bulletin, and perhaps that of most interest to farmers, deals with weeds and seeds. About 90 different species are illustrated and described, and, with the use of the bulletin, the identification of both the growing plants and the seeds should be comparatively easy. The weeds considered noxious under the Seed Control Act are given first, in botanical order. This bulletin will be very interesting and useful to those interested in the identification and control of weeds, and the means to adopt to prevent their introduction and spread through commercial seeds. It is known as Bulletin No. S-6, and may be had free on application to the Publications Branch, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa.

TRADE TOPIC.

Spring is here, and fence repairing and building new fences will be found necessary on nearly every farm in the country. It is necessary to have something easy to work and effective for digging post holes. Standard earth augers are said to be good tools for earth boring. They enter hard earth, have an extension blade, hold fine sand, do not bind in the hole, will bore nine different sized holes, and are guaranteed to do the work with half the effort. These tools are manufactured by the Canadian Logging Tool Company, Ltd., Sault Ste. Marie, Canada. See the advertisement in another column.

GOSSIP.

The death is announced of John W. Groves, of Chicago, Secretary of the American Shorthorn Herdbook, who succeeded J. H. Pickrell in the office. It is believed that no pedigree register association has ever had the services of a more systematic and capable official. He was the owner of a fine farm and kept closely in touch with the stock-breeding industry. Owing to the absence abroad of assistant secretary B. O. Cowan on a six months' leave of absence, a special meeting of the directors has been called to select a successor to Mr. Groves.

The annual auction sale of Shorthorns from the noted Anoka herd of F. W. Harding, at Waukesha, Wisconsin, April 3rd, was largely attended by prominent breeders from many of the States and a considerable number from Canada, two of whom secured the cream of the offering for the highest prices. The cattle were of superior character, in fine condition, and brought good prices, the top of which, \$1,650, was the bid of Robert Miller, of Stouffville, Ont., for the roan yearling bull, Gloster's Fashion, born November 10th, 1910, a son of Leader's Fashion, out of a Duchess of Gloster dam, by Whitehall Marshal. Sultan's Test, a roan, born January, 1911, the last son of the renowned white bull, Whitehall Sultan, went to H. O. Weaver, Iowa, at \$1,305. Two other yearling bulls sold at \$505 and \$605. The highest price for a female, \$1,305, was paid by R. W. Caswell, of Saskatoon, Sask., for the roan yearling heifer, Cloner Sultan, calving January, 1911. The same yearling also paid the second highest price, \$875, for the roan yearling heifer, Gloster

Sultana 2nd. Seven other females sold at prices ranging from \$400 to \$760. The average for the Anoka offering was \$400.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

1st.—Questions asked by bona-fide subscribers to "The Farmer's Advocate" are answered in this department free.
2nd.—Questions should be clearly stated and plainly written, on one side of the paper only, and must be accompanied by the full name and address of the writer.
3rd.—In Veterinary questions the symptoms especially must be fully and clearly stated, otherwise satisfactory replies cannot be given.
4th.—When a reply by mail is required to urgent veterinary or legal enquiries, \$1.00 must be enclosed.

Miscellaneous.

BARN PLAN.

I wish a plan for stable under a barn 50 x 34 feet. I wish to keep both horses and cattle in same. Was considering placing horses in one end, then a hall, a row of cattle facing the horses, and another row facing a hall in other end of stable, boarding up tight in front of horses, and also cattle facing hall in front of horses. Kindly tell me how best plan would be to ventilate this stable. Wall is half concrete and half large brick; barn doors to face north and south. State in which end horses would be best. Intend placing another barn to south-west corner for grain barn.

D. M.

Ans.—Not knowing all the conditions entering into the building of this barn, we cannot state definitely which would be the best plan to adopt in its construction. No doubt your contractor could help you some, and we would advise that you see a few stables about the size you contemplate building before you decide definitely on a plan. We think the plan you suggest is a good one. After the horse stable is taken off one end, it will leave the remaining portion of the barn practically square, so it will be immaterial which way the rows of cow stalls run. We would suggest that you provide a few box stalls in the cow stable for cows at time of parturition; also for calves. These could take the place of regular stalls at one end, or might be placed behind the cattle. A small box stall could also be provided in one end of the horse stable. There is some dif-

ference of opinion as to which is the better way to arrange the cow stable with the cattle facing each other, making one feed alley, or with them backing each other, making one litter alley. A little advantage is found, we think, in having the cattle face each other, as it is a great saving in feeding, whereas the cleaning of the stables is not facilitated by the other method unless the alley is wide enough to drive a team through and clean out in a sleigh. Where feed and litter carriers are used, or even where they are not used, and stables cleaned with the barrow, a little time is saved, especially in feeding, when the rows of cattle face each other. Board the partition separating the horse stable up tight. If a basement for stock is to be put under the other barn, it would be better to place the horse stable at the east end of the present structure, as we understand it, so that an opening could be made from the cow barn into the basement of the other new barn, which basement might be used as a manure and watering shed, or be divided into box stalls for stock. The best system of ventilation we can recommend is the Rutherford system, or a slight modification of it. This system allows for the admission of fresh air at or near the floor. Intakes are often placed under the floor. At the O. A. C. the intakes are above the floor, and a cloth screen inside turns the air upwards, preventing drafts. The intakes should be placed on as many sides of the building as possible. The size of the intakes should provide at least 15 square inches per head of cattle or horses in the building. No openings should be less than 4 x 10 inches. Outlets should begin at the ceiling, be controlled by keys, like a stovepipe, and come out at the peak of the roof. Outlets should have twice the capacity of the intakes, that is, they should be at least 30 square inches for each animal stabled. They should never be less than 18 inches across. They should be constructed with two layers of board, with one inch air space between. Sometimes constructed of single boards matched, they give satisfaction, but the two-ply system usually gives the best results.

LICE ON CHICKENS.

What would be the best remedy for destroying lice on young chickens, and also what would be effectual in killing mites?

E. E. S.

Ans.—Insect powder dusted into the down, or a little lard rubbed on the heads.

SOFT-SHELLED EGGS.

1. Is it the lack of sufficient sand given to hens that causes the egg shells to be soft?
2. What is the cause of hens starting to eat eggs?
3. Is there any remedy for it? If so, what?

4. Will it be injurious or beneficial to hens to allow the warmth or heat from the pigpen to go into the henhouse? Or would you advise keeping a tight board partition between the two departments?

E. R.

Ans.—1. No; although plenty of grit in some form is beneficial. Lime should be kept before the birds constantly in liberal quantities. Oyster shell is a convenient one. Lack of exercise and over-fatness tends to cause soft shells.

2 and 3. Soft shells, or any condition such as laying from roosts, which may cause the eggs to become broken, and give the hens a taste of egg meat. Exercise helps to guard against the trouble.
4. It is not advisable. Better have a tight partition.

SMALL SILO.

1. Would a silo eight feet across and fifteen feet high, filled, keep in good shape for feeding?

2. How long would it feed three cows, and is it good for sheep?

3. How much corn would it take to fill it, and would dry and green corn, mixed, be all right, and would you cut it up together?

S. J. T.

Ans.—1. The chances are you would not have very great satisfaction from such a silo, as there would be too large a percentage of deteriorated silage. No doubt you could preserve feed that way with care, but we would not recommend the building of so small a silo.

2. It would probably hold about 12 tons, and if the waste did not prove excessive, should feed three cows about 200 days. A little may be fed to sheep, but silage is not so good a feed for sheep as for cattle.

3. About an acre of reasonably good corn should fill it. In so small a silo, where setting is not as free as in a large one, we would not care to risk much dry corn. Put the corn in within two or three days after cutting. Chop it up fine, and tramp well.