

discussion ensued, in which Mr. Sexsmith, M. P., Mr. Owen, M. P., and Mr. Broder, M. P., and others, took part, and a resolution was unanimously passed, endorsing the views of the speaker and emphasizing the desirability of passing a law which would provide that concentrated feeding stuffs bear a tag stating the protein and fat content.

Sheep Shearing.

Reference to sheep-shearing in early April may appear to some unreasonable, but it is a fact that most breeders of pure-bred sheep nowadays shear at least their show sheep, and, indeed, all their yearlings, in April or earlier. Sheep that are in really good condition may safely be sheared in any month in winter if kept warmly housed for a few days after the operation, and gradually accustomed to more airy surroundings. There is really economy in shearing the young sheep in April, because they are more comfortable without their coats on the warm spring day, and hence thrive better, gaining more rapidly both in weight of flesh and growth of wool. There is economy of time, also, in getting this work done before the busy season, when cultivation of the land and seeding commences, after which, except upon rainy days, shearing is not likely to be attended to before the end of May. Of course, shearing at this season must be done without washing beforehand, and many owners fancy there is a considerable loss in selling wool unwashed at the difference in price prevailing for this and for washed wool, which is greater in this country than in any other that we know of, and may be due to an arrangement between buyers. But even as our markets are, there is probably less loss than is generally believed, especially in view of the fact that the new crop grows so much faster on the thrifty sheared sheep, and will be reaped and realized on the following year. Especially if the sheep are affected with ticks or lice there is economy in early shearing, as the animals will not thrive in such company, and will rub against fences, pulling out and wasting wool, besides being liable to get cast on their backs in the field in the effort to bite the parts where the vermin are operating, and die before being discovered. In the case of breeding ewes producing their lambs in April, of course it would not be wise to shear in that month, as they are generally in comparatively thin condition, and would not generate sufficient animal heat to keep them comfortable. But if the lambing is well over by the end of April, and the ewes are in good condition at that time, they, too, may profitably be sheared, and the lambs, at least, and, better, the whole flock, dipped before going out to grass, as all will thrive the better for the cleaning-up process. The old custom of plunging timid sheep into river water by thoughtless men and boys, as has been commonly done, is little short of unpardonable cruelty, and not infrequently results in illness, if not permanent loss of health in the case of men, as well as of sheep. Indeed, the writer recalls more than one instance of sheep dying in the hands of the washer on being forced to jump from the river bank, plunging head first into the water. If washing before shearing is done, the sheep should be quietly led into the water and gently handled, to avoid unnecessary fright or worry.

Lambing in England.

In the portions of Old England where sheep are kept in flocks of many hundreds, the lambing season involves a large amount of preparation, work and care, partly owing to the fact that but little provision in the way of permanent buildings is made for the shelter of the sheep, which spend the winter months in the open fields, hurdled upon turnips, which, for the most part, they scoop for themselves, clover hay being fed to them in racks, also in the field. In a country so subject to frequent and long-continued rains in winter, one can readily imagine that such quarters are far from being comfortable at times, and need not be surprised when told that, in the case of long-wooled sheep lying out over night on land reduced to the consistency of mortar during the day, the sheep have not infrequently been found tied to the ground in the morning by reason of their wool being in contact with the frozen mud. The care of a flock of two or three hundred lambing ewes, where the lambs come principally in January and February, in a country where wet weather and cold nights are common in those months, is certainly no sinecure, and temporary shelter must be provided, which is usually by means of double rows of hurdles surrounding a large square on the highest part of a field, with straw or heather packed between the hurdles to shield the sheep from the cold winds. Subdivisions are made in the square by hurdles for the different classes, a simple plan being to provide a pen for backward ewes; another for forward; a lambing, or parturition, pen; one for single lambs; another for doubles. Single pens are also provided for individual ewes, in which

they are placed with their newborn lambs for a few days, if necessary. Temporary roofing for the protection of the young lambs is provided by means of hurdles thrown upon poles tied with wire to other upright poles, and the skeleton roof covered with straw, laid on in the order of thatch, and bound with straw ropes to keep it in place. A portable house, on low trucks, is provided for the shepherd and his assistant, in which they sleep, cook and eat during the lambing season, and a portion of which is used for storage of the necessary grain feed, this also being used in summer in the fields where the lambs or show sheep are fed grain while on pasture. Strange as it may appear, these temporary lambing provisions are considered more healthful for the flock than are permanent buildings, which are usually badly ventilated, and more liable to harbor the germs of contagious diseases. Moreover, it is not advisable to have sheep too warmly housed, as the lambs are more susceptible to chill when turned out. And the temporary yards are considered more economical, as, where a permanent yard is used, all food has to be taken to the yard, whereas, in the other case, the yard is taken to where the food is. The site of the lambing pen is arranged for years ahead, the cropping being set out so that the pen will be on a piece of sound old sod, adjoining which is a field of turnips for the sheep, and, where the lambing continues to a late period, mangels; a field of wheat will have provided a stack of straw for litter, and this straw stack will be the point around which the yard is set up. On the spot giving the least amount of trouble will, therefore, be growing roots with young sprouts for the lambs, mangels for the yard, straw for litter and shelter, and a haystack. A southern aspect is



Overstone.

Yearling Shorthorn bull; bred by Lord Lovat. Sold for \$2,730, at the Birmingham Show and Sale, March 4th, 1909.

preferred; the straw stack is built lengthways from east to west, the unlambed ewes being on the north side, and the lambs on the south. The faithfulness to duty of the English shepherd is one of the finest features of the business, and, as his reputation as a skillful manager depends largely on his success in raising a good crop of lambs, his ambition is stimulated by his success, which is augmented in some instances by the owner offering a premium on the percentage of lambs raised from the number of breeding ewes. The success of some shepherds in the management of a flock is remarkable. For instance, in a February issue of the English Live-stock Journal to hand, one farmer writes: "I have 480 breeding ewes, and up-to-date this winter have not lost one; have 100 more ewes to lamb." Another writes: "Four hundred and fifty-five ewes have lambed, only four being left to lamb." Still another writes: "In my flock of 625 ewes, 400 have produced 550 lambs, with a loss of only 2 per cent. of ewes."

Stable Driveway.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I intend to build barn and stable. Could some of your subscribers answer the following questions? I intend to haul manure direct from stable to field. Now, do your readers who advocate this method have doorways wide enough to drive through with a team to an ordinary wagon, seeing that it would take a door seven feet wide, or more? Which is the best, hinged or roller doors, and would it be better to have double door for so large a space? Would also like to know how to put in swinging stanchions, so as to be adjustable to any size of cattle.

Waterloo Co., Ont.

HARVEY GAMPP.

THE FARM.

Corn and Its Cultivation.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

For two reasons, the study of corn and its cultivation has received a great deal of attention throughout a large portion of Ontario during recent years. In the first place, this is essentially a dairy Province, and no crop can be grown that will produce as large a quantity of nutritious food for dairy cows as the corn crop, properly harvested, and preserved in the form of silage. Secondly, the corn crop fits into a rotation very conveniently as a cleaning crop, furnishing all the advantages of a summer-fallow, and at the same time yielding a harvest which exceeds in value that of almost any other farm crop than can be grown in Ontario. These being the conditions, a few words on corn cultivation are in order.

Corn will thrive well on almost any soil, provided that it is well drained, either naturally or artificially, and that it is not deficient in fertility. Corn is a heavy feeder, and requires an abundance of nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash in the soil for best results.

The preparation of the seed-bed must be thorough. Some prefer fall plowing; others think spring plowing is better. There are advantages in each of these methods, and the method which is best to adopt can only be determined by knowing the nature of the soil to be prepared. One of the advantages of fall plowing is the destruction of cutworms, which sometimes are very troublesome in the spring. In either case the soil must be thoroughly cultivated, and in fine condition before the seed is planted.

Of equal and perhaps of greater importance is the selection of seed of the very strongest vitality and best germinating condition. This is absolutely necessary to insure success with our climate, because seed that is weak in vitality cannot possibly give the young plant that vigorous start in life which it must have in order to mature its crop before the frost of autumn. The poorer seed may grow, but will be just a little too late, and unprofitable in the end. The best grade of seed is that which each grower selects intelligently from his own field at harvest time, and which is thoroughly dried before hard-freezing.

weather, and stored in a dry, airy place, free from rats and mice through the winter, provided, of course, that his crop has reached the stage of perfect maturity before harvesting. In case the intending grower has not secured his seed in this way, he should by all means purchase it on the cob. This may be a little more expensive than buying it shelled, but the quality, in almost every case, is better, as corn, unlike other small grains, cannot be shelled and stored in bulk for any considerable length of time without its vitality being injured. The writer never shells his seed corn until the day before he expects to plant. This may be a little extreme, but it is safe. Besides, shelled corn that is offered for seed has been selected, in many cases, at least, by what is known in corn districts as "the scoop-shovel method of selection." The purchaser knows no difference. Home-grown seed is preferable to imported seed, unless the imported seed has been grown as near as possible in the same latitude as that in which it is to be planted. Seed grown in districts where the season is longer than ours, is almost invariably too late for our season.

In regard to varieties, the grower must select the varieties that he is reasonably sure will mature. In Southern Ontario, the larger, heavier-yielding varieties may be grown. In central and northern Ontario, only the early varieties will succeed.

The soil having been prepared and the seed provided, it should be planted, three to five grains in each hill, with either two-horse planter or hand planter, in hills three and one-half feet apart each way. This method of planting has many advantages over planting in drills. It admits of freer circulation of air, and more sunlight, thereby hastening maturity, and producing a heavier yield of grain. Another advantage of