

on a tear and she will jump on top of a two-foot fence and break it down. It is not good policy to stretch the fence unless the day is sunny and warm, as it will come loose when warm weather arrives.

About five inches above the woven wire a barbed wire should be placed and drawn tightly, but not so tight as to loosen the woven wire. This is sufficient for hogs, but it is not a bad plan to put another barbed wire at the top to turn horses or cattle that might be running on the outside. A fence put up in this manner will hold even the little pigs, and there will be no trouble with hogs getting out. The fence will last twenty years with very little repairing.

If one is trying to feed a balanced ration, inconveniences take up much time. By taking a week's time and assembling the pens, lots, and buildings, from half an hour to an hour can be saved every day. In a few years this saving in time would mean a great deal, besides the profits gained by extra care due to greater conveniences. In arranging things so the feeding operations will be more convenient, one of the first to look for is a place where the pens may be arranged about a central point. Sometimes the fences radiate like the spokes of a wheel. This makes all the feeding floors and troughs close together. The plan will work nicely for six or eight lots, but if a large number of runs are needed, extra fencing will be required.

The best method is to arrange the lots in a line or two lines for large herds, and go down the line with a push-cart or small sled and a horse. The longitudinal fences should be portable so that they may be removed when the lots are to be sown to any kind of a pasture crop. These lots should be built across some grass field and contain about an acre each. If there is no pasture to start on, smaller lots may be planned and sown to some crop, like rape, in the spring. In this case the lots can be sown to some suitable crop in the fall and to some suitable crop in the spring, giving each crop a chance to get started before turning the hogs in.

It is a good plan to have two lots adjoining if forage crops are to be used. If a well or pond is close it will add to conveniences. Then, of course, there must be some buildings close. Besides the crib, it is necessary to have a small feed house, which need only be an enclosed shed with boxes for ground feeds and a room for a feed cooker. This plan will put the fertilizer on the land where it can be farmed when the pasture becomes killed out. By running three permanent fences parallel, the desired distance apart, crossing the portable fence from the middle to the outside fence as desired, the space between these fences can be cropped and made ready for pasturing while the space between the other two is cut off into lots. The manure from the hogs will have put the strip into good condition for seeding. A top dressing of stable manure will help to make each set of grass better than the previous. This plan of rotation can be very easily used in case forage crop is used.

Johnson Co., Ill. W. H. UNDERWOOD.

### What is a Futurity.

The term "futurity" as applied to many of the classes at larger exhibitions is becoming more common, yet its full significance has not been revealed to many of the spectators, and there are probably many exhibitors who do not yet realize the meaning of the word. Our Western show circuit has adopted the principle at some centres, but it has not become general throughout Canada. Since 1911 the National Draft Horse Breeders' Futurities have been held at Iowa State Fair, and since that time the International Exposition at Chicago has adopted the system, and it now covers all breeds of draft horses, Poland China swine and Shorthorn cattle.

The aim of the futurity is to encourage breeders to fit and grow their stock while young, and when it should be grown. The age at which animals should be shown for these prizes is optional, but in the case of horses it has usually been set for yearlings. They must be entered some time in advance, and one principle which has worked out fairly well in the States is to set the entry fee at \$5.00—\$1.00 payable at time of entry, \$1.00 payable at a later date, and \$3.00 thirty days before the time of showing. In this way breeders are encouraged from the very first to fit and grow their young stock, and at the season of showing the futurity classes are looked upon with intense interest and buyers flock there, for they know that the winner of such an event must be exceptionally good. The principle is an adaptation of the old racing stake, whereby many contribute a small amount that the successful one or two may reap a considerable reward. In the past premiums for young stock have been small, but under the futurity plan they have grown so large that the cost of fitting and showing is in considerable comparison with the prize received. The stake in these cases is made up by entry fees, contributions by associations and private donations, and on the whole are far more enticing to exhibitors than the ordinary prize list

premiums. Furthermore they encourage breeders to advance their stock while it is young, and thus the futurity encourages feeding and rearing in a way that the ordinary classification deals with very little.

### Sorghum alone for pasture.

As years go by it becomes more and more impressed upon the stockman, and especially the dairy farmer, that he must have some sort of special feed in order to carry his cattle over the dry season which almost invariably comes in July and August. If it had not been for the feeding of forage crops or summer silage many of the herds of dairy cattle would this summer have shown a much greater falling off in milk production than they did. Many new crops are being tried from year to year to furnish feed for cattle. Most of our readers are familiar with the pasture mixture, commonly known as Prof. Zavitz' annual pasture which consists of 51 pounds of oats, 30 pounds of early amber sugar cane, and 7 pounds of red clover, but few have tried sorghum alone as a pasture plant.

W. Baty, a prominent farmer of Middlesex County, Ont., had tried the pasture mixture without the success which he thought he should have had. Three years ago he put Prof. Zavitz' mixture on sod and pastured it from the time it was big enough until it was closely cropped off. He did not get a very good stand. The next year the field was worked up well and sown to the same mixture, and again the results did not satisfy the owner. The following year the field was in clover, and this year this clover sod was ploughed and the entire eight-acre field sown to sugar cane alone. The sugar cane was sown in rows twenty-eight inches apart, and the drill set so that it made a seeding of twelve pounds per acre. The crop was put in about the first of June, and cultivated a few times to kill all weeds. It came on rapidly, and had it not been for the fact that Mr. Baty had some fears of an outbreak of army worms on his farm it would have been turned on much sooner. However, at time of writing fourteen cows have been pasturing on the field about five weeks, and there is an abundance of feed left. The sugar cane being eaten off is sprouting out at the bottom and sending up new shoots, and a very large quantity of feed has been grown on the field. Mr. Baty intends to try this crop again, and is sure that he gets far more feed than by sowing the pasture mixture. By sowing the crop in rows much less injury is done by the cattle tramping. They feed up and down the rows, and when we saw the field recently very little of the sugar cane was at all injured by the tramping of the cattle.

### On Sorghum Poisoning.

Readers who follow our columns closely will remember that on page 1520 of our Aug. 27th issue there appeared an article entitled, "A Troublesome Annual Pasture." A. J. Anderson, a correspondent outlined how he had found some of his cattle dead in a field of buckwheat, oats and sorghum. He believed his cattle had been poisoned. Since publishing the article with a short editorial note at the foot we have received from other readers of the paper several letters. We stated in the foot note that sorghum and buckwheat did not contain any poisonous principles. This is correct as far as the normal plants are concerned, but sorghum, which is badly stunted by drouth, may shoot up a growth which contains sufficient prussic acid, a deadly poison, to kill any animals which may eat it. Plants in a field might contain this while others of normal growth contain no poison whatever. In all our experience with sorghum sown alone and sown with other crops to make a forage for cattle we have never previously heard of a case of poisoning of this kind. It is quite possible that Mr. Anderson's cattle were poisoned, and a note of warning of this kind should do no harm. Stockmen who are interested in forage crops should not be too strongly influenced against this as a crop for feed, as it is seldom indeed that such a condition occurs, but as previously stated a certain kind of growth of the plant may prove poisonous. Experiments in the United States proved that under certain conditions the plant contained enough prussic acid to prove fatal.

The Canadian Parliament knew no party at its last session. It was a body with no divisions. It is a pity that the partisan press had not the good judgment of the party leaders. Some of the most ridiculous statements have been made in an endeavor to make political capital out of a situation which really demands that a sounder, safer and fairer view be taken, and that the people be united instead of stirred up by a return of mad bitterness.

## FARM.

### The Valuation of Alfalfa.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

The majority of the farmers of this province are apparently beginning to realize the value of alfalfa as a soiling crop, and a great deal of the credit for this present state of affairs might be fittingly attributed to the work of the experimental farms and the many articles which have appeared from week to week in the agricultural journals of this province. Yet, notwithstanding the fact that great value has been thrust upon it by some of our most successful farmers, yet there are many who are apparently ignorant of its possibilities of bringing within reach of every farmer a soiling crop which is seldom excelled. A great deal of this discouragement might be traced to many sources.

Firstly, the sowing of poor seed and seed which is unsuited to the climatic conditions of this province. The fact that good alfalfa seed has been very scarce and the price very high has tempted many farmers to sow poor seed and the result was a disappointment, and in no few instances a complete discouragement. The second cause might be traced to poor drainage. Alfalfa to give the best results must be sown on land which is thoroughly drained either naturally or artificially. The third cause is pasturing the first year, this is a serious mistake which many farmers are making. During the fall months when other pastures are poor many farmers are induced to utilize their alfalfa as pasture. But if good crops are to be realized growers must avoid taking this step in the wrong direction, as the stems and leaves do not reach maturity until the third year, they are consequently very delicate the first year.

Alfalfa to be a success must have land suited to its conditions, but it need not necessarily be rich. It has not been admitted as a pasture crop as much as red clover has, but it is valuable as a green manure, and is also satisfactory as silage when used in conjunction with corn. The harvesting of alfalfa is very important, and there are in this connection a few points to be remembered. About the best time to cut is at the commencement of bloom, cured as quickly as possible, and every precaution taken to preserve the leaves as far as possible.

Alfalfa has won particular favor among the dairymen of Ontario, nevertheless it is in my estimation a valuable asset to almost any department of the farm stock. And while the writer does not expect it will reach its limit of possibility as one of the farmer's essential crops in the scope of a year or two, yet he does believe that in the near future farmers will realize in a greater measure its value on the credit side of the farm accounts.

Halton Co., Ont.

A. R. LINN.

### Organizing in Lambton County.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

The Osborne Farmers' Club met on Tuesday evening, September 1st, for the purpose of reorganizing the club on the lines proposed by the provisional committee of the County of Lambton, who were appointed last June. F. J. McMahan presided. Our aim is to form a club in each school section in the county as far as possible. There is something to gain and nothing to lose. We will produce a better product, graded, and true to name, as represented, and as the cost of production will be known, we will be able to put a price on our goods that will leave a fair margin of profit. We will be a better people, a stronger nation, for we are the back-bone of the nation and the Empire is depending on us for food, and if the war cloud should over-shadow Canada the organized farmers will be able to put up a better fight than otherwise.

The wholesaler, retailer and business man generally fear the strength and power of the organized farmers, and so they do all they can to keep us from organizing. They will tell us that it is impossible for farmers to hold together, we are too narrow minded and suspicious of one another, and they seem to think we do not know enough. I wonder if there is some truth in what they say? We produce the necessities as well as the luxuries. Is it not reasonable that we should have some say as to their value? Then in our dealings with the manufacturer we will pay spot cash, and so eliminate his bad debts, or rather we will save that much for we realize that under present conditions we are paying the other fellow's bad debts. Let me appeal to the farmers to form clubs in the school sections over the country. The constitution of the Lambton County Farmers' Co-operative Association will be sent on request to anyone desiring it.

Lambton Co., Ont.

PETER GARDINER.