

when the bale is stripped, the exterior of the wool is covered with thousands of fibres of the jute, which have been forced there by the dumping process.

It has been proved beyond doubt that Queensland was justified in passing a regulation a few years ago in compelling the supervision of all glassware used in butter factories and dairies. It was at the time found that many of the measures and instruments were absolutely erroneous, many robbing the farmer, and many the factory, while the thermometers told the wrong temperatures. According to the department's last report, despite the knowledge the manufacturers had that the regulation was in force, condemnations were made as follows: Cream flasks, 2 per cent.; cream pipettes, 5.5; milk pipettes, 12.3; acid burettes, 10.6. If the percentage is so high in a country where the system of inspection is in force, what must it be where there is no check?

Victoria lately carried out a scheme of recruiting slum boys for one of its state farms with great success. Left to their own devices, many of these lads would undoubtedly have gone to join the ranks of the criminal classes. Some of them were veritable Ishmaelites. A medical examination before entry into the institution showed they were stunted in growth, weakened in constitution and half-starved. Regular habits and good food, of course, worked wonders. Physical development was rapid. Each boy has a separate room, and is provided with equipment of the best. The taste displayed by them in the adornment of their quarters amazes strangers. The lads are trained in the various operations of the vineyard, orchard and farm. At vine-grafting, they turned out as many as 1,500 grafts in a day each. Regular lectures are given by the experts during the evenings, and the boy who formerly went to work listless and sullen, regarding his task as a drudgery, now takes a pride in it. The aptitude which might have developed into a skilled pickpocket is turned to nobler ends. The lads who have gone out of the institution at the age of 18 years have all done well, and some of them, at least, are at work on their own farms.

Word has been received officially in Australia that sheep entered in the Australian flockbooks will be eligible for inscription in Argentine books.

Several of the Australian states are now granting momentary help to farmers for silo-building. The farmer must agree to grow the proper kinds of crops, and conduct ensilage operations.

The wet-wool problem is a source of endless trouble in Australia. The point is to decide when it is really too wet to shear. If the men think it is on the wet side, they simply cease operations. To obviate the difficulty, a tester has been invented, and it is now on trial. The machine is a modification of the Richardson-Gillespie moisture estimator. The principle upon which it works is that calcium-carbide, absorbing free moisture, decomposes to form acetylene gas. The amount of gas made, where the carbide

is in excess, is in direct ratio to the amount of free moisture with which it comes into contact. In the chemical action, the hydrogen of the water combines with the carbon to form gas, and the oxygen of the water, combining with the calcium-carbide, forms slaked lime as the residue. The instrument consists of a spherical metal vessel, with a gas-tight screw-top, to which is attached on the inside a small holder for the carbide. This metal vessel is connected by an India-rubber tubing to a gauge glass, which is marked off in percentages. The wool is weighed and placed in the metal sphere. A small bottle of powdered carbide is emptied into the container, and the cap screwed down. The vessel is then well shaken, and the carbide comes into contact with the wool. If free moisture is present, gas is generated, and the amount is indicated by the position of the mercury in the glass gauge. The carbide has no effect on the yolk of the wool, water only being taken up, and the wool, after the test, is left quite dry. The percentage limit of moisture at which sheep are considered too wet to shear has been fixed at 8 per cent. in the case of Merino wool, and 10 per cent. for cross-breeds. But this is purely an experimental standard, and the value will be judged in the tests now being made.

As matters stand now on the wet-wool problem, however, the position is most unsatisfactory. In the award delivered by the Arbitration Court three years ago, there was a clause inserted that: "No shearer shall be compelled to shear sheep he has reasonable grounds to consider wet, on reporting same to the manager of the shed immediately." It was thought by both parties at the time that this would do away with wet-wool arguments; that all a shearer had to do if he considered the sheep too wet for him to shear was to report the matter, and that those who consider the sheep dry enough could go on. But an appeal to the police court in a wet-wool case resulted in a decision that everything depended upon the interpretation of the word "reasonable." The shearer found he had to prove to the satisfaction of the manager that the sheep were too wet. The Full Court upheld this view, so the shearer is now called upon, before he can knock off work, to prove that the wool is wet to the satisfaction of his mates and the manager. Thus, the position is exactly as it was before the Arbitration Court award. Meanwhile, awaiting the result of the tester on trial, the men decide what the majority think, and this the manager abides by.

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The condition of the weather will govern the length of time it will be necessary to keep a newly farrowed sow in close quarters, but she should not be denied access to the open air. Where they can do so without danger they should be out in the sun within 24 hours after birth, and after that let them run in and out at will. Neither the sow nor very young pigs should run in pasture if the grass is tall and wet with rain or heavy dew.—Colburn's "Swine in America."

FARM

Topics for Discussion

In recognition of the fact that valuable hints always are obtained from men engaged in actual farm work THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE has adopted the "Topics for Discussion" column, in order that our readers may see an open channel through which they may inform their brother farmers as to practices that are worth adopting and warn them against methods that prove unprofitable. Not only do we wish our readers to discuss the topics announced for the various issues, but also we desire that they suggest practical subjects on which it would be well to have discussion.

This notice appears under the "Farm" department, but the questions dealt with cover all branches of the farming industry. Letters should not exceed 600 words and should reach this office 10 days previous to the date of issue. They are read carefully and a first prize of \$3.00 and a second prize of \$2.00 awarded each week. Other letters used will be paid for at regular rates to contributors.

June 22.—Describe how to build an implement shed. Particularize as to dimensions of a building to house the implements on an average sized farm; state where you would locate it, how you would build it, and what would be the probable cost.

June 29.—What do you consider to be the farmer's place in politics? How can he best use his influence for the good of agriculturists in particular and the people in general? Please do not discuss the parties now striving for power or the relations of certain organizations to the policies of either party.

July 6.—What advice have you to offer on cutting and curing hay? At what stage of maturity do you advise cutting grasses or clovers with which you have had experience, and how can they best be made ready for and put into stack or mow?

July 13.—What has been your experience in handling a flax crop? How can it best be cut and threshed? Have you any advice to offer as to the best stage of maturity for harvesting this crop?

Cultivating the Corn Field

Weeds and drought are the two great enemies of corn. In the Northwest this crop is grown usually to clean the land and to put it in good tilth for small grain crops. Flax, wheat, and, in fact, any of the small grains do unusually well after a crop of corn. The second year after corn has been grown a crop of small grain will show a considerable increase, and the third year a slight one.

More stock feed will grow on an acre of drilled corn which is planted very thick in the ordinary 3½ foot row than when it is planted in hills by the check row system. It is much more difficult to keep drilled corn clean than corn which is in hills, but most people do not even keep hill corn as clean as it should be to prove most profitable. Two-thirds of the feeding value of the corn plant is in the ear, so that corn planted in hills should be seeded thin enough to give the ears a chance to develop. One-fifth more of digestible food material is contained in the ripe ear of corn than in the same ear when it is in the glazing stage. On this account it is advisable to get the corn planted in good season, and give it every condition favorable to early ripening.

Use the harrow or weeder on the land which has been planted to corn, at regular intervals, once a week or ten days from the time it is seeded until it is about five inches high. Whenever a crust starts to form on the soil after a rain, the weeder or harrow should be run over the field. This work with the machine destroys the weeds which sprout as a result of the rain and prevents a loss of moisture by evaporation. Either of these effects alone will be worth the short time necessary to go over the corn field with the harrow or weeder.

Corn can be harrowed before it is up and afterward until it is about five inches high. Har-



PRICES AND PROSPECTS CALL FOR AN INCREASED NUMBER OF BROOD SOWS.

Australia

is a nightmare to its evil reputation every newspaper; it market-place. Hun- their brains to sup- have debated the stled with it. Yet remains. Just now Melbourne firm has expect will get over treated with a solu- not only lay the fibre, but also permeate top any extraneous entry into the wool, be cuts made while t feature is that the l, instead of the ex- which the London the cost of dipping not be excessive. the company may covery, and put up h would be a great now is caused by the of the packs. Often,