

### Advantages of Loose Feeding.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Having had experience in loose feeding for ten years, and with forty head of export cattle each winter, my opinion of this system of feeding will probably be of interest to some of your readers.

I feed three times a day, silage and cut oat straw mixed, chopped grains (1 of corn, 1 of barley, 2 of oats, by measure), and turnips uncut morning and night. At noon the cattle get meal and all the hay they can eat, clover and timothy mixed, and of good quality. The quantity of the meal ration is about one pound per each hundred live weight of cattle per day, the last two months. Of course, at first it is very much less, being about two pounds each per day, and gradually increased.

I consider loose feeding vastly ahead of the tied system, for a great many reasons, which I shall enumerate as they occur to my mind. It most nearly approaches the natural conditions of feeding, as in pasturing. The animals like to pick about and select, as it were, what is most suitable to their individual tastes, and, in thus moving about from one manger to another, will eat and fill-up more than if tied. This filling-up is a very important part of cattle-feeding, as all good feeders know, for if the bullock doesn't eat well plenty of roughage, and fill up till he will lie down and grunt, he is not going to get fat, or at least put on the gain he should. Now, there is no comparison between the systems of loose and tied, as far as filling-up goes. Men will come into my stables and say, "My, how full your cattle are," "Is that steer bloated?" and, "I can't get my cattle to fill up like that." No, they can't, because their cattle haven't the needed exercise to make them fill up like this; they haven't a chance to pick about till they think they have gotten all the good things there are for the whole row. Again, some cattle will eat more of one thing than another, and vice versa. I say, let them have it; their appetite craves it, and their system demands it, in order to put on the maximum gains. But they will say, "Won't some steers get more than others?" Yes, decidedly so. They know better how to feed themselves, as to quantity, than the feeder does. Some bullocks have greater capacity for feed than others, and will put on gains accordingly. Go into my stable at night, an hour after feeding, or after any of the feeds, and you will hear them grunting and puffing as though very uncomfortable, and frequently I see a beast lying stretched right out, like a young colt at pasture. They can't do this tied; they haven't the freedom and comfort; can't lick, scratch, rub, and tear up and down the stable when they feel like it. Do the most you can to add to the animal's comfort, and get his stomach well filled with the proper ration of meal and plenty of roughage, and he will put on the beef. The exercise obtained by being able to move about develops a more evenly-fleshed carcass, not so inclined to be patchy. No tied cattle would ever carry off the grand championship prize for carload lots at the International, that court of last resort in the feeder's art.

It requires a lot of straw to properly bed loose cattle, and (well bedded is half fed) a steer won't gain well unless he is lying down a good part of the time, and he won't lie down unless fairly well bedded. He doesn't want to be plunging to his knees every step.

About fifty square feet of space for each bullock is what my cattle have, and they do quite well with this, but more can be put in if you have lots of straw. However, I think this about the least I like them to have.

The number in a stall makes no difference, in my opinion, providing they have the space and manger room, and are cattle of about the same age and weight. I have four stalls into which I put numbers from four to fourteen or sixteen, and I see practically no difference. Be sure to have the manger of a very generous size (mine are not big enough). It should be not less than 30 inches wide in bottom, with front sloping out; then they can't throw hay out, and no fear that they won't be able to reach their feed. Allow about 30 inches running manger space for each animal, and board all up but 16-inch spaces for cattle to put heads in. Always have a few more feeding places than number of cattle in stall, and keep a lump of rock salt in one end of manger, to which they can always have access. Have manger three feet high, so as not to have to clean out stalls too often. They can eat till manure is level with manger bottom, or nearly so. I clean out once in the winter, and after cattle go out in spring. Have water in stall; one small basin is enough, with water supplied from large tank through float.

The advantages are: Not half the work; no cattle sickened or off-feed, and better gains. The hardest and most disagreeable parts of attending a big stable of cattle tied are cleaning out stables, and tying in when let out to water. When loose, they are just to feed and bed, seeing that the water-boxes are clean. It is just exercise for one man to attend forty or fifty head of cattle when fed loose. As to amount and cost of gains, experiment stations here and in the United States

have proven the largest and cheapest gains with loose feeding. My gains on forty head, with five months' feeding usually average 300 pounds, and, of course, individuals make very much larger than that, and others, of course, smaller.

I never have any cattle sick or off-feed, or bloated; no trouble in these ways whatever. Toward the finishing period, should one not come up to eat for one meal, the others eat all up clean, and by next meal time he is ready for his feed; whereas, had he been tied, with his feed put before him, he might have eaten it up, and then been sickened or off-feed—starved, as my father used to call it. There are never any starved cattle when fed loose.

The manure from a loose pen is rather hard to fill, just on top. After getting down in, it fills quite as easily as from a barnyard heap. Have doors 8 feet wide, to admit wagon or sleigh right into stalls. The manure in a loose box does not heat, as it is tramped too tight, and, as the liquids, solids and straw are thoroughly mixed, it is of the best quality. Of course, it is the quality of the feed that makes the quality of the excreta.

ARTHUR L. CURRAH.

Oxford Co., Ont.

### Bovine Tuberculosis in England.

How prevalent tuberculosis is among dairy cows in England is indicated by 73 samples of milk being found tuberculous out of 676 samples examined by the Health Department of the London County Council. In addition, a veterinary inspection of 4,455 cows on 184 farms supplying milk to London, resulted in 74 cows being found suffering from tuberculosis of the udder. The medical officer strongly urges the early re-introduction into Parliament of the Dairies and Milk Bill, which was one of the innocents slaughtered in the last session, owing to lack of time for consideration.

## THE FARM.

### Syrupmaking Then and Now.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

An article has been solicited from my pen on the manufacture and cost of manufacturing maple sugar, syrup and wax. Although I have not so large a business as some of my neighbors, I have been in the business a considerable length of time, beginning with the birch bark for catching the sap, and pots on an open fire for boiling, which



Tapping the First Tree.

made the business quite laborious. The barks were placed on the snow, and as that melted they, on reaching the ground, were some considerable distance from the tap and sap-spout, which gave the wind a chance to blow the drop on the wrong side of the bark. After many years we procured a pan set on an arch or furnace for boiling the sap, which we caught in tin kettles hung to sap spouts, which were of metal, instead of wood.

Finally, I procured a modern sectional evaporator, size 3 x 10 feet, for \$100. My sap kettles cost from \$10 to \$12 per hundred, with sap spouts. This price does not include the covers, for which we purchase the tin and make at leisure. I have between 500 and 600 kettles, which I hang on trees from 2 feet to 8 feet in diameter.

I gather with tin buckets, and carry it to the camp on a sled drawn by a horse. My hauling tubs have faucets to empty them.

We build our camps on a slope, so that gravitation will carry the sap into the tank, without lifting the hauling tub from the sled. As my sap leaves the hauling tub, I strain it through flannel, and again I strain it as it flows into the tank that feeds the evaporator, which is below the main tank. Again, I strain the hot syrup through flannel, to remove a sediment called sugar sand, which is a combination of malic acid and lime, I believe, always present in maple sap.

For the next season I have procured felt strain-ers to strain the syrup, and will strain the sap through cheese-cloth. When we strain through the flannel, we find it necessary to use a settling tank. I use a pot for making sugar. For an arch, I used sheet-iron, in shape like a section of pipe, set on end on a brick-and-mortar base, just large enough to receive the bottom of the pot, so that the flame cannot reach the sides of the pot, with a door in one side and a pipe in the other leading to the smokestack of the evaporator arch, which, being tall, gives it a good draft.

The size of my camp is 16 x 20 feet, with a woodshed on the end of it about 10 x 20 feet, with a trolley to carry the wood into the main building.

The average annual yield of sugar is about one pound per kettle. On some large trees we hang two buckets. The sugar is worth 12 cents per pound. We purchase syrup cans for 12 cents, and sell the syrup in can for \$1.25 per gallon. One gallon will make 9 pounds sugar. We test the density of syrup and sugar with the thermometer, which makes it of a uniform quality, or consistency.

Now, this yield is over and above much that is consumed by the operators and visitors, as those who have sampled any of these delicacies know that they are a luxury in the sugar-camp, as well as elsewhere. The prices that I have quoted are local, and are advancing. D. W. DIMOCK.

Cumberland Co., N. S.

### Mutterings Not Loud, But Deep.

THE POORHOUSE IN SIGHT.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I am late in sending subscription, on account of hard times. Please do not say, as some people do, that if a farmer cannot make money now, with prices where they are, he had better get out of the business. What about the big wind-storm we had last spring, that put our old rail fences out of business, which had to be replaced with wire? How about the old barn that lost most of its shingles in the same storm? Of course, it is easy to forget the terribly wet spring and dry summer. And who knows but that some of the tile manufacturers will donate to some of us farmers four or five thousand tile, as partial compensation?

I am not a grumbler. I once worked with a man for five years who often said I was the most hopeful person he ever met. No, it is just a case where history repeats itself. Fifty years ago my grandfather was asked how he was getting along farming. He replied he was not farming, but was just getting ready. So with myself—I am just getting ready. I work enough, and read everything in "The Farmer's Advocate," and bulletins, until Professors Geo. and Wm. H. Day, and C. A. Zavitz, are just as familiar to me as some of my neighbors.

Well, what does it all amount to? Where is the rub? Well, it is just in this, that people are everlastingly yipping about the rich farmer. We are continually reading about such men as S. A. Freeman, with his three hundred acres of land and seventy milk cows. In fact, everything a farmer grows is made the subject of boast until his crop is sold, and then the other fellow reaps the profit.

Now, I am not criticising such men as Mr. Freeman. They certainly deserve credit. But usually their experience is of very little use to a poor farmer on the road to the poorhouse, with "The Farmer's Advocate" in one pocket and a bulletin in the other. A YANKEE BADGER.

Oxford Co., Ont.

### Muck on Corn Land.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I have been drawing muck about a mile, putting it on next year's corn land. O. A. C. advised to try it at about 20 tons per acre, and gain knowledge by experience. Would be pleased to hear from any of the "Readers" the results of their experience. Ours is a sandy loam; we expect to put 12 tons of farmyard manure per acre along with it. We are greatly interested in the Essex Corn-growers' Association, and wish them every success in raising Canadian-grown corn. Our attempts at raising dent-corn seed have not been very successful. We read and re-read "The Farmer's Advocate" and Montreal Witness carefully—two dear old friends. Our young folk are greatly interested in the dog-muzzling business. We all hope the order may be countermanded in time to allow farmers' dogs, in the spring, to do their