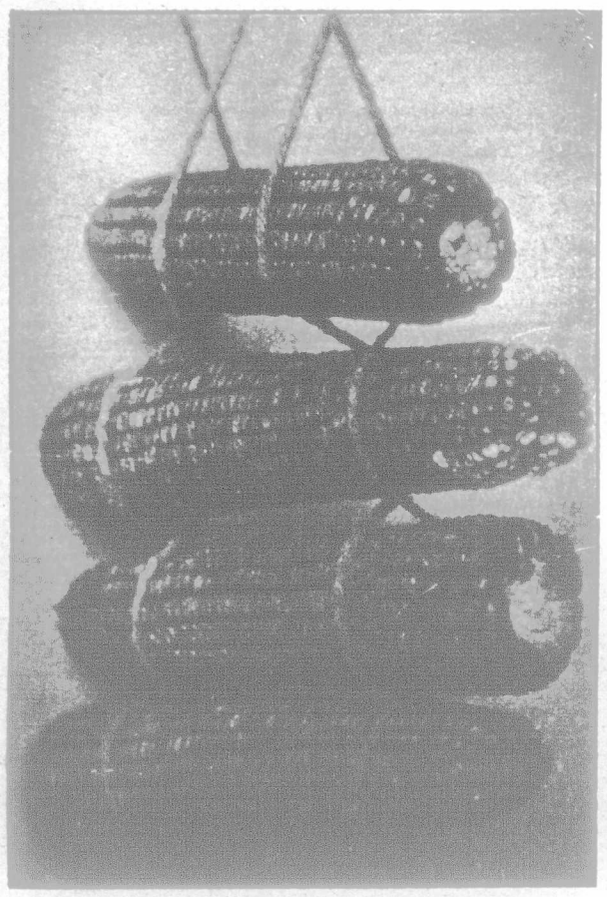
THE FARM.

Selecting and Storing Seed Corn.

In many sections of Ontario corn matured fairly well this year, and there was a large amount of ripened corn put in the silo. Many went through their crop before ensiling and picked out sufficient good ears to plant for next season's crop. By growing seed on the home farm one is sure to have it acclimatized, and they know the kind of stalk that produced the ear. In other words, it gives them an opportunity to select a certain type which they have fixed in their minds as an ideal. There



String Method of Handling Seed Corn.

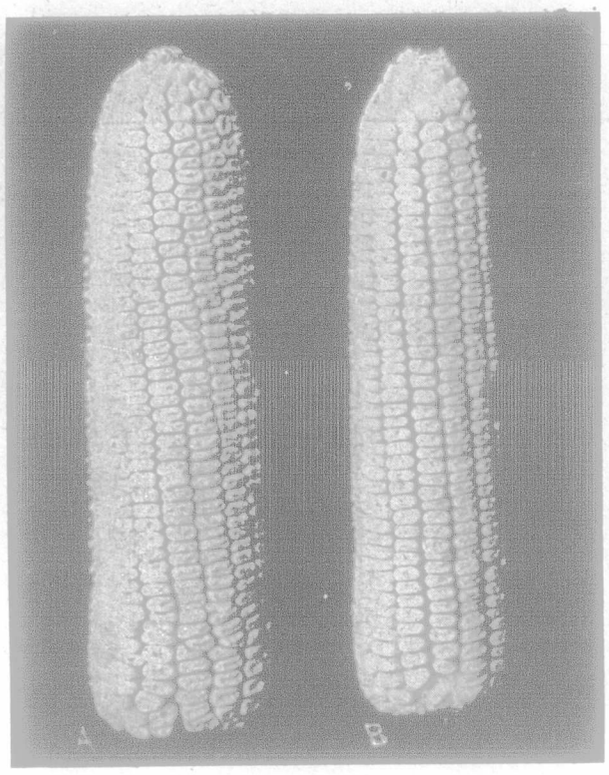
is possibly more corn in the corn-cribs throughout Western Ontario this year than usual. From the corn-crib some choice seed corn may be selected, although one does not have the opportunity of considering the size or height of stalk, nor the position of the ear on the stalk. There is still room, however, to exercise judgment as to the length of ears, circumference, regularity of rows, depth of kernel, color, etc. One may be able to husk enough good seed corn from the stooks standing in the field, or may pick it out of the corn-crib, to do for the 1921 planting. It is advisable to select plenty of seed, as when planting time comes some of the ears chosen will not meet with approval. A bushel of corn on the ear will shell, sufficient to plant two to five acres, according to the rate of seeding and whether planting in hills or drills. The small ears of any variety are not to be recommended, and the big, rough, coarse ears are undesirable. With the dents, an ear from seven and a half to nine and a half inches in length and from five and a half to seven and a half inches in circumference in recognized as being a good size of ear to select. The rows of kernels on the cob should be regular, with the same number at the tip as at the butt. The regular rows mean more corn, and, as with other crops, like tends to produce like. Thus the necessity of selecting the type of seed that you would like to have produced. Then, too, the kernels should be fairly uniform throughout. The kernels are more or less wedge-shaped, and one likes to see them of good depth. It doesn't matter whether the kernels are for seed or feed; the greater the depth the larger the production of feed. The shoe-peg type and the kernels that are very wide with rounded edges are undesirable. The width of the kernel should be carried well up to a square shoulder, and the point should be plump. Some of the features mentioned indicate strength and vitality in the kernel, which are essential to a good crop.

It is advisable to grow corn suitable to the locality. The big, coarse varieties are usually the heaviest yielders both of fodder and grain, but if they do not mature in your locality they lose a portion of their value. In Northern districts, where it is somewhat difficult to get a variety to mature in the short growing season, it is advisable to save home-grown corn for seed, if by chance it should mature sufficiently. The crop would be more likely to mature earlier the following year than if grown from imported seed. Those who have corn in the crib could pick out their ideal ears as they are feeding out the corn during the season and lay these aside for seed purposes. There is the danger, however, that unless the corn is dry when it goes into the crib there may be a tendency to heating, which would weaken or destroy the germ. Seed corn must be kept dry.

Some select a particularly good sample of corn from every view point, but when it is sown it does not give a good stand. The corn has deteriorated in storage. It may have contained a little too much moisture when exposed to low temperature. Moisture in the kernels does the damage, but, if the kernel is dry and kept dry the corn will not be injured by frost. It is possible that the corn may absorb sufficient moisture to cause it to be injured during zero weather, unless it is placed in a fairly dry building. For all the seed a person needs on the average farm, very little space is required to store it during the winter. Driving nails into a board and impaling the corn on these is a very good method. The string method for hanging up corn is also good and can be utilized to advantage when the corn is stored in the garret, granary or loft of the barn. The ears should not be allowed to touch each other. The corn impaled on the nails can be suspended from the rafters or joists just as well as that tied with string. Nails can be driven through the board on each side for the corn, or if finishing nails are used they do not need to be driven all the way through, as the heads are small enough to stick the corn on. When using the string method, two strings paralleling each other are placed about three inches apart and a cob of corn placed in the centre. The two ends of each string are then brought over the top of the cob and another ear of corn is placed in the crotch thus made. This goes on for the full length of the string and then the bundle is tied to a rafter or overhead beam.

Mice and rats are very partial to corn, and if it is within reach they will find it. It is very disconcerting to hunt up the boxes of selected corn in the spring and find that the mice have taken a portion of the best part of the kernels. The two methods described above for taking care of the seed corn keep it out of the reach of rodents. While there are different ways of preserving seed corn, the principle is the same in every case. Have the corn dry when it is put in storage; keep it dry, and have it where rodents cannot molest it.

Weak germination in the spring is very often due to the kernels containing too much moisture when stored in the fall, or to being immature when husked



Large and Small Types of Dent Corn.

The seed saved should be tested for germination before planting. For a high germination test the corn must be matured, well dried, and kept dry.

Save the Wood-Lot.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

Fortunate indeed, is the man who owns a wood-lot. When fuel is so high in price and hard to get at any price. It behooves us to look after what is left to us of our forests. Many farms with wood-lots on them are changing hands but no sooner does the new owner get possession than he turns around and sells the entire wood-lot to a mill owner. A law should be passed to prevent such an occurrence. In the district where the writer lives, many of the maples are dying off. This, no doubt, is due to drought. If the live stock were kept out of the woods entirely for a number of years, the seedlings would have a chance to grow up. In such cases the land should not be taxed. Many counties in Old Ontario are accepting the Government's reforestation plan by which a township or county provides the land and the Government will plant the trees and look after them for forty years, when they will be turned back to the municipality. We are appreciating, perhaps, just before it is too late, the importance of saving, at least, a portion of our forests. Not all of us yet realize that while a tree may grow in a generation or two, a forest will not spring up again perhaps for hundreds of years on soils thoroughly denuded and washed away.

The grandeur of the forest as it once was is hard to realize. To the early pioneers, its wealth of timber was a curse as well as a blessing. To cut or burn the trees off the land, to draw out the stumps, and to clear the fields for planting was the labor of months or even years; but the settlers accomplished it. Acres of the tallest timber went roaring up the broad old-time fire-places in winter, and the rest was hewn or sawed into lumber. As the forests grew thinner, timber ceased to be an incumberance, and the word lumber was first applied, possibly, because the woods "lumbered up the land," came to be a commercial term, and to stand for a commodity of rising value. The smaller the amount of timber standing the better was the price it brought, and the swifter, in consequence, was the disappearance of what remained. The merchantable wood was swept off from county after county. Many regions once celebrated for their forests are bare to-day, while modern lumbering is running through our remaining tree-clad areas as fast as the fires of old. Many a farmer, who formerly burned his own wood, now depends on the railroad for coal. In our cities, builders are hampered in their operations because the price of lumber is so high and the cessation of building raises rents. Alternate droughts and floods occur in devastated regions where once the forests acted as natural reservoirs that equalized the flow of the streams and rivers. The laws of nature cannot be violated with impunity. She gave the forests as mediums of natual irrigation. If we destroy the means we lose in the end. The law is inexorable. Men now see the trickling rills where in their boyhood they saw full brimming streams. And they also see bare sun-scathed hillsides where they saw dense primeval forests. It is cause and effect nothing more. But should not rational men learn the lesson?

Perth County, Ontario. JOHN DAVIDSON.

Seasonal Jobs Around the Farm.

At time of writing the weather has set in mild and farmers the Province over are utilizing every minute to get a little more plowing done. Reports indicate that there is less plowing done to date than usual, and unless the weather stays open for a few weeks this will have a considerable bearing on next year's crops. In many sections spring plowing does not give as good yields as fall plowing, unless the season should be moist. Every day's plowing this fall not only tends to insure a larger crop for next year; but it leaves a day to the good for spring seeding.

There is still time to look after the drains and outlets. It seems customary to allow this work to go till the very last and sometimes it is neglected. The drainage system cannot give the best results unless the outlet is kept clean. Then, too, if the water cannot get away freely there is danger of sediment lodging in the tile, thus lessening their efficiency. Take a shovel or spade and look over the outlets.

When it freezes up it is a good time to put a light dressing of manure on the meadow. Quite a few have done this in the past with beneficial results. Last year, at Weldwood, ten acres were top dressed at nine loads to the acre, and this field gave nearly double the yield obtained on the other meadows. To a large extent this is attributable to top dressing. We have found that this sprinkling of manure not only increases the hay crop but it leaves the soil in good condition for wheat or other crops the following year. Putting all the manure on the corn and roots is not the best practice. A ligh dressing applied frequently gives better returns in the long run than a heavy coat of manure put on at longer intervals.

Corn Impaled on Nails.