THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

FARM.

70

Practical Points Gleaned at Farmers' Institutes in Central Ontario.

The territory covered in Division No. 8 lies in the Counties of Durham, Northumberland, Prince Edward, Hastings, and Peterborough. The depu-tation consisted of Mr. D. McCrae, of Guelph; Mr. D. W. Beadle, of Toronto, and the writer.

THE CORN CROP.

All were agreed that this was the crop, not only for the dairy farmer, but also for the man engaged in general or mixed farming. Mr. Birdsall, who farms one thousand acres, said that if he had to give up his silos he would feel like giving up farming too. There is still, and probably will be for some time, much difference of opinion in regard to the silo. One may who has 25 to 20 acres of come cash One man who has 25 to 30 acres of corn each silo. year tried the silo for five years, then gave it up. However, the balance of opinion is decidedly in favor of the silo, because (1) it is the cheapest method; (2) there is less space required to store the crop; (3) silage is succulent, and approaches most nearly to summer conditions of pasturage; (4) a supply of silage may be held over to supplement scant pastures. Cured corn fodder is valueless for this purpose.

HARROWING THE CORN FIELD.

Mr. D. H. Leavens reported that he had used his horse-rake for this purpose with very satisfactory results. His primary object was to gather up roots of quack grass, but it proved another case of killing two birds with one stone. Mr. J. B. Ewing, Secre-tary Northumberland Institute, last season tried a new form of cultivator on his corn field. Realizing that our ordinary scufflers went too deep, especially towards the close of the season, he constructed a triangular framework of plank ; through this he drove a large number of six-inch wire spikes. This gave him an implement with fine teeth four inches long. Byattaching a convenient pair of handles he was able to handle it easily; naturally it is a one-horse machine. Mr. Ewing considers it a grand success. Many farmers spoke of using the cultivating attachment of their seeders for cultivating the crops. By removing the center teeth two rows can be done at once. By this plan one man is enabled to do as much as two men with two of the oldfashioned scufflers.

SILAGE, FROM CORN HUSKS.

Nearly everyone looks upon corn husks as worthless; on most farms they are used for bedding in the stable. Mr. Wellington Boulter, the canning-factory magnate of Prince Edward, has proved that by siloing them they may be preserved as a valuable succulent feed. He had large quantities at his factories; these he stored in a silo at Picton. We saw a quantity of the cured silage at Mr. Boulter's stables at Demorestville. The husks were moist, bright in color, and but slightly acid. The dairy cows were being fed largely upon them, and were at the time of our visit giving a large flow of well-flavored milk.

SILOING CORN STOVER, MORE OR LESS DRIED-

GOOD RESULTS.

At Mr. Switzer's, Bloomfield, we saw a silo full of corn silage of the very best quality. The ears of corn shage of the very cest quanty. The cars had been pulled off for the canning factory, and the stover put up in good, large, well-built shocks until the whole was cut. When the stover was being siloed the outside of the shocks were quite dry. A large quantity of water was pumped over the cut corn to supply the necessary moisture. As I said before, the silage was in fine condition, and was the is said to make more honest men than the Bible. nearest to sweet silage of all samples I have seen. SUBSOILING.

does not necessarily mean *feeding* him; and besides, a horse's stomach was never intended to be a miniature storehouse for coarse, bulky foods, since it is of such small capacity. In this year of dear hay and comparatively cheap grain, this point should be especially emphasized.

COOKING FEED.

Mr. Stokes, Secretary E. Hastings Institutes, considered it much better to boil potatoes for all classes of stock, except, perhaps, dairy cows. We had always thought that horses objected to cooked potatoes, but Mr Stokes had not found this the case. The results of many experiments at different stations show that cooking or steaming does not usually affect the digestibility of roots and tubers. In some cases they are made more palatable. The potato, being very rich in starch, is generally considered greatly improved by boiling. It is an open question if this slight increase in digestibility compensates for the expense of cooking. Several times we heard of boiled turnips being fed to hogs with good results.

FEEDING STRAW.

Mr. A. E. Bailey, Campbellford, gave the following unique plan for utilizing straw profitably. Usually there is more or less waste in feeding it. He heats about four pails of water to boiling, adds two quarts flaxseed, and after stirring allows the mixture to cool. Then the thick, slimy mixture is poured into two barrels—two pails in each; several pails of cold water are then added to each barrel. He then fills a large box with silage and cut straw in the proportion of two to three, adding enough of his flax mixture to thoroughly moisten the mass as it is mixed up. This is left for twenty-four hours, when the whole is moist and warm. are used, keeping one filled ahead. Two boxes Mr. Bailey thinks very highly of his mixture and claims great things for it.

CLOVER CULTURE.

Mr. McCrae touched the right note when he said: "If we are going to farm successfully in Ontario, we must raise corn and clover." Lucern is coming strongly into favor in many sections. Several farmers stated that they had three and even four cuttings for soiling purposes last season. In some sections it winter-kills badly ; many farmers, knowing this, do not care to give it a trial. Cut before it is woody, and well cured, it makes excellent hay for both sheep and cattle. Sowed in meadowmixtures, one to two pounds per acre-it gives good results. In some sections the growth of Alsike clover for seed is a very profitable industry. It comes in as a good second on low, damp lands where Red clover fails.

"THE FARMER'S FRIEND."

Mr. Payne claimed that no matter how doctors might disagree, the Babcock test, at its present stage of development, might justly lay claim to this title. The very best thing practical dairymen can do is to remain in *status quo* until the perplexing questions allied with the most correct application of the test are definitely settled. The simple basis of fat per cent. was a very long stride in the right direction—a great advance on the old and sometimes present pooling system in cheese factories. He said : "I may say few revolutions have taken place without warfare. By this discovery we have light upon the many features of the dairy : the dairy department of the show ground, the milk pail, the churn, the dairy cow at home, the cheese factory, the creamery ; also the works of darkness wrought by the skimmer, the pump, and the strip-

FEBRUARY 15, 1896

Prefers a Cement Concrete Silo.

SIR,—My silo is built of Queenston cement concrete. The demensions are: Walls, 26 feet high, 12 by 12 feet (inside measurement); the walls are 18 inches thick at the bottom and 9 inches thick at the top, the batter being on the outside. Silo perfectly square, with 12 inches cut off in each corner and only one opening from top to bottom, which is closed with matched boards driven closely together at time of filling. The cost was \$67 worth of cement and \$38 for labor, not counting board and hauling gravel, which is near the barn. The silo was filled in October with four varieties of ensilage corn. Owing to my heavy crop of corn, I was obliged to make my silo 5 feet higher, temporarily, with boards, making total depth of ensilage 31 feet. The walls stood the pressure thoroughly; the silo is now half empty. The ensilage is per-fect, with the exception of a little that was spoiled on top, which is the case in any silo. Last winter, when I contemplated building a silo, I gleaned all the information possible from the best authorities, and came to the conclusion that a double board silo was the best, but in the month of June, when I had my material all ready on the ground, I wrote to Mr. Isaac Usher to come and lay out my stables as to ventilation, etc., and was persuaded by him to build a concrete silo, as being better and just as cheap. From my experience I can heartily recommend a concrete silo as the best, for cheapness and durability. It never needs repairing, rats cannot bore through it, and it is a perfect curer of ensilage. There are three or four cement concrete silos in my locality which are also giving entire satisfaction in every respect. Ontario Co., Ont. W. J. DEVITT.

Modern Maple Syrup and Sugar Making. BY W. H. BARBER.

Let us assume that some such outfit as that described in my last article has been secured, and we shall now follow the process, briefly, from the time the trees are tapped until the syrup and sugar are finished and placed upon the market.

Everything should be in readiness a few weeks in advance of the time for tapping, so that when the proper "sap weather" comes no delay need occur in opening the camp. In this section (Quebec) tapping is seldom in order before the 20th of March or the 1st of April; although sometimes, as two years ago, sap weather has come early in March, and it is best to be prepared, so that none of the "first run" need be lost; but we do not advise tapping the trees until the sap will run freely, as the hole will become dry and not produce much sap if a cold snap of several weeks' duration follows. It needs at least two men to do the tapping, and three or four can work advantageously. The first should be the owner himself, or some trusted person. He selects the place for tapping, and with a sharp hatchet or adz smoothes "rosses" the bark where the hole is to be bored. A second man follows and bores the hole, while the third drives the spout, and the fourth, if there be one, distributes and hangs the buckets and covers them, also keeping No. 3 supplied with spouts. A sharp, curved lip bit is the best for boring the holes, which should be $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches deep. The bit must be of suitable size for the spout used. The castiron spouts take a 9-16 inch bit, while the tin spouts take a 3-8 or 7-16 inch bit, according to the kind of spout used.

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Nearly everyone is firmly convinced of the value of *judicious* subsoiling. But note, I said *judicious*. Very often several years are required to overcome the injurious effects where cold, dead, hardpan clay or similar subsoil is brought to the surface in large quantities. Mr. R. J. Graham, Belleville, gave two cases which had come within his personal knowledge. The farm upon which the institution for the deaf and dumb stands was practically ruined for the profitable production of cereal crops. In regard to subsoiling, the greatest care should be exercised, both as regards time of doing and amount of subsoil stirred up.

THE BARE FALLOW.

Many farmers still remain true to this their old They will not accept the teaching of science love. that it is a wasteful and expensive method of culti-vation. While farming, Mr. Graham kept strict account of debits and credits of every field on his farm. He found by actual experiment that it took three crops to pay the simple cost of bare fallowing the field for one season. Again, near Madoc, we saw a field of 20 acres bare fallowed in '94, which last summer yielded 600 bushels of wheat -30 bushels per acre. Query :-- Would 30 bushels wheat, at 60 cents, pay the cost involved ?

OVER FEEDING.

It is certainly true that large quantities of hay are wastefully and extravagantly fed; especially is this the case with our farm horses. Many farmers remarked, rather pathetically, that this would not

We can best afford to wait for the end, and not sit in haste and often ignorant condemnation upon those earnest scientific investigators who are weighing the merits of "simple fat per cent." and "fat readings +2." It will resolve itself into the survival of the fittest.

FRUIT JOTTINGS.

Mr. Beadle said that the best soil for an apple orchard, looking to both quantity and quality of fruit, was a clay loam containing a large amount of lime. Apples from such soil usually possessed better flavor, higher color, and improved keeping qualities. A southerly exposure is not desirable, since it induces early, tender spring growth. There are many men of many minds; all things considered, the balance of opinion favors the month of June for pruning. A dressing of five or six hun-dred pounds of fresh wood ashes per acre will usually meet with a ready response from the apple orchard. It is worse than foolish to pile manure around the trunk of an apple tree. Mr. Beadle showed by diagrams (drawn from life) that often the feeding rootlets of such trees are found thirty feet distant from the parent trunk.

It is a great mistake to plant out a large orchard of one variety, since many existing varieties are not self-fertilizing.

GRAIN MIXTURES.

Every farmer who spoke of sowing mixtures of grains for feed was highly pleased with the result. mixture of oats, peas, and two-rowed barley is highly spoken of for sowing early in spring for a soiling crop for dairy cows. By sowing small plots of an acre or less, at succeeding dates, a good supply of nutritious food can be had, lasting until fodder remarked, rather pathetically, that this would not happen this year. Mr. Herkimer Aylsworth, Shannonville, spoke very strongly on this subject. He contended that horses would do better, feel better, and work better on a much smaller hay ration. His ordinary feeding ration was: Oats (fed at noon), 1 gallon; carrots, 1 pailful; hay (merning and night), 10 pounds. Fulling a horse

ana, ir possible, the sap gathered and reduced to syrup the same day—the quicker done, the better the quality will be. Having collected the sap in the gathering tank, the exit pipe is released, allowing the sap to run into the storage tank through a cloth strainer, thus straining the sap for the second time, as the top of the gathering tank is provided with a fine-perforated tin strainer. If the day is a cold one and ice has formed in the buckets, it will not be possible to strain all the sap in this way, and it may be necessary to place some of the ice directly into the evaporator. On this account many prefer to have their storage tanks inside the sugar house, but this is not to be recommended, as the sap is liable to sour on warm days late in the season. The best arrangement is to have the tank partly within and partly without the house. Then it can be pushed almost entirely within the house on cold days, or left outside as the weather moderates. A shed roof should be built over the tank when outside. Where much trouble is experienced with ice, a strainer may be placed in the storage tank, so that the sap will be strained as it passes from the tank into the evaporator. No effort should be spared to keep the sap perfectly clean from the time it leaves the tree until it enters the evaporator.

The work of boiling the sap is very important, and no careless or thoughtless man can be trusted with it. Before starting the fire, connection should be made with the storage tank, and the sap allowed to run into the pans to the depth of about two inches and the regulator set so that it will feed to that depth. The fire is now built, and it is important to be a good fireman to secure the best results. The wood should be laid crosswise, in alternate diagonal layers, so that the air can form a good draft through it and make a rapid, hot fire. The woodshed should be filled with good wood early in the fall of thet it will be safe the the fall, so that it will be perfectly dry. Although we use the utmost care to keep the sap clean, still some impurities will reach the evaporator, and these will rise to the top as boiling progresses and

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