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FARM.

Farmers' Institute Cleanings.

Supplementary meetings for Ontario were held in several districts during February, the regular meetings, contrary to the usual custom, coming on later. In East Middlesex there have been eight supplementary meetings held. The delegation, consisting of J. W. Clark, Cainsville; A. C. Hallman, Breslau, and A. B. McDonald, Appin, report that while they have seen meetings more largely attended, yet on the whole attendance has been good, and interest in the subjects and discussion following addresses is quite up to the mark of any former period.

A few years ago, and for many years in succession, no subject was so much asked for as the silo. For some years back the bacon hog had the lead; so much so that an institute speaker, in criticism of a certain meeting, said that there they didn't care to talk about anything but hogs. This season these gentlemen report that while the silo and the bacon hog are still live subjects, there are others which excite greater interest. These are, "Improvement and Feeding of Stock," "Noxious Weeds," "Growing and Curing of Alfalfa," and possibly "Poultry."

CALF REARING.

Mr. Hallman, in his treatment of the stock question, lays special emphasis on the raising of calves. He claims that skim-milk calves are not necessarily inferior to those fed whole milk. His calves, after they are four or five weeks old, get skim milk only, and that by measure. Five or six quarts each per day, in three feeds for a time, and never more than eight quarts a day, he supplements with bran, fed dry, after a time adding grain—hay, of course, being supplied throughout. He made the statement that improvement in stock-breeding is of little or no account unless accompanied by improvement in feeding. He believes that dairy cows generally are not fed nearly up to their capacity, and, in consequence, do not return full profits.

ALFALFA.

Mr. Clark said that in his neighborhood alfalfa was so much thought of that some farmers were turning to it in preference to corn and the silo. He grew no other kind of hay, cut it three times in the season, and all kinds of stock were fond of it. He had with him a sample of the hay ground fine, for which he had a contract with some supply house, who sold it for poultry food. It looked like tobacco dust, such as greenhouse men burn to rid their plants of lice, and which is said to be excellent, dusted in the feathers, for lice in poultry, but smelt sweeter. The principal lack in the ordinary management of poultry in winter was said to be that of grit, and of meat in their food ration.

MIXED AND MUDDLED.

At the Stormont and Russell meetings, Mr. C. W. Nash is reported to have said that in some districts farmers had better cattle 25 years ago than to-day. In the early days Shorthorn sires were used on the native stock, then came the dairy era, and the Ayrshire was introduced to increase the milk flow; with co-operative dairying, the Babcock test system of paying for milk, and buttermaking, Jersey bulls came to the front, and then the impressive Holstein, so the combined result was described as "the worst mongrel on earth." Mr. Nash advocated using a sire for two generations, in other words, inbreeding, a doctrine which farmers will do well to consider long before adopting.

Mr. D. M. Wilson (Dairy Instructor) condemned turnips, apples and rape for milch cows, and advised cooling cheese-factory milk during week days to 60 and 65 degrees, and on Saturday night and Sunday morning to 58 degrees. He thought cheesemakers could not do the business just making cheese at one cent per pound.

POTATO BLIGHT.

In further addresses, which were practically the same at all points where Institute meetings were held in Eastern Ontario, the subjects of potato blight, warbles in cattle, insect pests, etc., were discussed.

Regarding potato blight, Mr. Nash insisted that spraying with Bordeaux mixture should be done when the plants are very young, just two or three inches high, and that it should be repeated about three times during the season. These precautions are essential to success with potatoes, as Mr. Nash was of the opinion that there is no blight-proof variety, and that only insistent care can secure a good crop. Where the soil is particularly rich in plant food the blight is likely to be worse, owing to the fact that the plants make such rapid growth at first. Spraying just as soon as the plants appear is, he said, useful in preventing injury from bugs as well as blight. Scabby potatoes might be prevented by sprinkling the potato chips before they were planted with flour of sulphur.

As regards smut in oats, Mr. Nash said that it could be prevented by wetting the seed thoroughly with

a solution made by dissolving four ounces of formalin in ten gallons of water; this quantity being enough for twelve bushels. The grain should be spread out and sprinkled wet with the mixture; kept so for two or three hours, then sown.

WARBLES.

Warbles in cattle, the speaker held, are becoming an evil very hard to remedy, but remedy is very necessary, since the insects retard the fattening of cattle greatly, and lessen the value of the hides. About the most practical way of getting rid of them is to squeeze them out. If every farmer would do this the country might soon be clear of warbles. Farmers should also put forth every effort to prevent destruction of birds, even hawks and owls, as the birds are our great protectors against insect pests.

BETTER SEEDS.

At the South Brant Institute meetings, Mr. Hutton dwelt on the necessity of buying only the very best quality of grass seed. Out of 523 samples of timothy tested last year, every sample contained from 100 to 1,200 weed seeds of various kinds per pound. Red and alsike clovers showed the same proportion. Only the best and plumpest seed of any kind of grain should be planted. In corn, for instance, a difference of six or seven bushels per acre may be obtained by putting in well-developed rather than shrunken seed.

Mr. Metcalf emphasized the importance of growing clover as a fertilizer, and Mr. Hilborn urged farmers to improve their home surroundings. By planting a few trees and shrubs each year, much may be done. Trees should be grown around buildings, as often in case of

followed by wheat seeded to clover. Twitch grass might be disposed of by plowing well in the fall, and cultivating and ridging the land up for winter. Cultivation is also effectual against bindweed, and most other weeds. Good drainage also is of great importance.

In speaking on "Dairying," Mr. James recommended the use of the scale to test the cows, and so facilitate the weeding out of poor ones. A balanced ration for cows is advisable, alfalfa hay being particularly valuable, owing to its balance of composition. Dehorning may be easily done, by applying Gillett's lye or caustic potash to the embryo horn when the calf is three to ten days old.

Mr. Thompson spoke on the "Feeding and Breeding of Swine," and recommended farmers to keep the right type of rangy bacon hog. He grew his hogs on roots and apples, fed meal dry, and gave water in the trough once a day. In pens he would recommend the "upstairs" platform for the hogs to sleep on.

PAINT THE BUILDINGS.

In North Brant the meetings began at Mulligan's schoolhouse, where Major Sheppard, of Queenston, and Mr. J. S. Pearce, of London, were the speakers. Major Sheppard said he was ashamed of the appearance of Ontario farm buildings. In the Maritime Provinces, and even in Quebec, the farmers generally either painted their buildings or washed them with some preparation that gave them a clean appearance, and acted as a good preservative to the outside building material. . . In regard to the improvement of country roads, he would adopt a system of road-building to do away with statute labor, and engage a commissioner who

knew his business, to look after the keeping of the roads in good condition. He would also compel by by-law, the use of wide tires on wagons.

Mr. Pearce spoke on the selection of seeds. Seed should be cleaned thoroughly two or three times through a good mill to rid it of everything but the largest, heaviest seeds. He advised hand-picking a few of the best heads of grain in a field, sowing this in a plot by itself, and repeating the operation to note results. By proper care the amount of yield could be increased five to ten bushels per acre. Only the best grass seed should be bought. Corn should be selected true to type, and tested before being planted. Farmers, he thought, should grow their own mangel and turnip seed from perfect roots.

SUGAR-BEET GROWING.

At Cainsville, Mr. Lampkin, in speaking on the culture of sugar beets, advised the liberal use of seed—18 pounds to the acre. He would not manure just before planting, but in fall before, or for a previous crop. Deep and thorough cultivation, a little further from the roots each time, is very beneficial. Thinning should be done when the third and fourth leaves appear. With good care a profit of \$30 per acre should be realized from sugar beets.

ORCHARD SPRAYING.

The travelling deputation, consisting of Mr. H. Jones, of Maitland, Grenville Co., and Mr. Mason, of Essex Co., encountered very stormy weather at Thornbury, Grey Co., and attendance was small. Mr. Jones spoke on "How to Manage Orchards." Heavy clay soil, he stated, is not good for an apple orchard, but clay soil, which is porous or well drained, is all right, provided it has a good amount of humus. Clay soil should be underdrained. As to situation, a gentle slope is usually best. Clean cultivation, following a cover crop of clover, is very satisfactory in an orchard. Barnyard manure is the best fertilizer, but if it cannot be spared, then wood ashes or artificial fertilizer may be applied instead. The first spraying should be done just when the first buds are bursting; the purpose at this stage being to combat the tent caterpillar and the bud moth. The second, to destroy the codling moth, should be given as soon as the blossoms fall. Two or three later sprayings will be beneficial against apple spot. When pruning, one should not cut the lower limbs off, and have all the fruit grow on top of the



Laura [112].

First-prize Shire mare in aged class and champion mare of the class, Canadian Clyde and Shire Show, Feb. 1905. Owned and exhibited by John Gardhouse & Sons, Highfield, Ont.

fire one building has been saved by trees growing between it and the one burning.

ORCHARD CARE.

At Ohsweken, Mr. Hilborn spoke on the "Care of Apple Orchards." Heavy clay land should be tile-drained and plowed in the fall when preparing it for an orchard. Trees should be set in rows, 30 ft. one way and 40 the other, the best quality of fruit being obtained by keeping the orchard in sod and letting the pigs run in it. A mulch of coarse manure should be put under the trees. Pruning should not be done before the 20th of February, and a tree should not be too severely pruned at one time.

Mr. F. Lewis, in speaking on "Raising Dairy Calves," said that the first thing of importance is that the calf shall be well born. A calf should always be left with the cow for the first few days. After being taken away it should be fed whole milk until it commences to eat other food, such as bran or oats, and then changed off gradually to skim milk, with a little oil meal and whatever grain, etc., it will clean up. It is very necessary that young animals be kept growing and in good flesh all the time.

WEED KILLING.

At Kirkton, Mr. R. Thompson, St. Catharines, and Mr. D. James, of Langstaff, were the speakers. Mr. James took as his first subject "The Destruction of Weeds," and illustrated his theories by telling what he had accomplished on a farm. Unremitting watchfulness, he said, is the price of success. He strongly recommended a hoe crop, with thorough cultivation,