Farm and Home.

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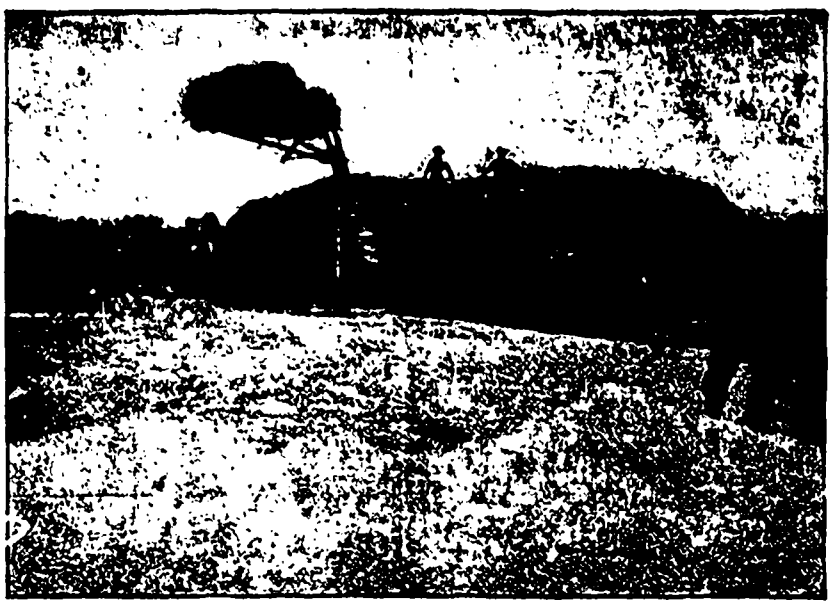
All Around the Farm.

IN THE ALFALFA HARVEST.

The alfalfa crop all depends on the way the spring starts out. If weather is warm and some rain falls so that the alfalfa does not suffer for moisture before water can be had from irrigation ditches, it makes a rapid growth and is in blossom June 1. If it has grown under good conditions it will be from 2½ to 3 ft tall and yield 2 tons p a. Its blooming is the signal for mowers to put in their work. What is cut one day is raked into windrows the next and left there to cure. Like clover, alfalfa suffers by much handling. If the weather remains fair the juice-filled stems are dried sufficiently to stack by the third or fourth day.

Before the advent of the machinery now used in stacking, the "putting up" of alfalfa was a very heavy piece of work, and one crop was scarcely harvested before another was ready to cut, for if water is properly applied, in about six weeks from the time of cutting, alfalfa is in bloom again as long as the warm weather lasts. But with the later inventions it is estimated that 40 tons may be put in the stack in one day, provided three gatherers or "go-devils" are used. With these machines and the stacker the work is all done by horse power. The hay lies in windrows. The gatherer takes it up and carries it to the stacker, which runs upon three wheels, one under the driver's seat and one at each corner near the horse's heads. All over the field, be it far from the stack or near by, the horses come in pushing the load before them; a load that almost hides them from sight of one directly facing them.

Having deposited its load upon the stack, the stacker lowers to the ground the part of the machine in which the hay is lifted. This is similar in shape to the rake of the gatherer, with a light frame attached to keep the hay from falling off as it rises in the air. The horses bring in their load and are driven squarely up to the stacker, the rake teeth of the gatherer sliding between the rake teeth of the stacker. The man in charge of the stacker places a fork against the hay so that when the horses are backed the load remains on the carriage of the stacker. The word is given to go, and the boy in charge of the horse attached to the stacker leads him out. Slowly and safely the load of hay rises above the stack, as illustrated, and is carried around until it reaches the point somewhere on that stack 40 ft in length where it is most needed. The foreman "trips" it by a rope and the hay falls to the stack. The horse is backed, the carriage lowered and everything is in readiness for another loaded gatherer. [S. E. Howard, Weld Co, Col.



Stacking the Alfalfa Crop.

CULTIVATE CORN SHALLOW.

Because many prominent corn growers advise it, as do experiment stations where the two methods of deep and shallow cultivation have been tested.

Because loose soil is exposed to the air and dries out. With a shallow cultivation there is less loose soil and therefore more moisture above and about the corn roots.

Because 2 in of loose soil will, for all practical purposes be as good a mulch as 4 in.

Because deep cultivation, especially the latter times over will destroy and injure the roots of the corn that grow out from 2 to 5 in below the surface of the ground, and because no corn plant will give its best results whose roots have been mutilated in this way.

Because in a field where there is not an unusual growth of weeds shallow cultivation will kill and destroy them as well as deeper plowing.

Because there is less soil exposed to washing rains and carrying away by winds.

Because in a wet season the shallow method is equal to the deep cultivation, if not superior; and in a dry season there is no questioning its superiority.

Because we believe that 2 in is sufficient and that a stirring of the soil to a greater depth than 3 in between the rows of growing corn will lessen the yield.—[J. L. Irwin, Nemaha Co, Kan.

CARE OF THE POTATO CROP.

The modern method of growing potatoes is much cheaper, easier and faster than 20 yrs ago. A boy can care for more acres than his father could then. Soon after planting run the smoothing harrow over them, or, if hard, lumpy or well crusted, use a spring tooth, with lever set, and run it 2 in deep. As soon as one can follow the rows, run a cultivator between the rows as deep as possible and stir all the soil between the plants; if it will not "get there," use a one-horse plow, and the deeper the better. Make ridges and furrows, deep and wide. In a day follow with a weeder or smoothing harrow and level off. After this, have the wheels set on the cultivator so it can not run more than 2 in, and insist on it that it never goes deeper.

The roots will be 18 in long and meet between the rows by the time the foliage is 10 in high and they must not be cut off. The practice of beginning with shallow cultivation and going deeper each time is both harmful and foolish. Long feeding roots are essential to rapid growth. If planted 4 in deep, as they should be, I would not hill up at all, but continue constant, shallow cultivation until midsummer and after every shower, to prevent crusting, until digging time. Potatoes do not require so very rich soil, but it must be mellow, loose and moist. The constant working will naturally work some dirt toward the plants and they will not get green.

Take good care of the leaves. The best way I have yet found is to use a spray atomizer. We load it with bordeaux mixture and paris green to kill bugs, flea beetles and ward off blight. It is applied by hand, and every part of the hill covered. We use a strong solution of bordeaux and paris green because we apply such a small portion to each hill. A few quarts is enough for an acre. The bordeaux mixture has an invigorating effect on plant growth and drives away flea beetles as well as preventing blight.—[C. E. Chapman, Tompkins Co, N Y.

THE RUTABAGA CROP.

The rutabaga contains 10 per cent dry matter, while the mangel contains but 9 per cent and the turnip 9½. The rutabaga and the carrot are about equal in nutritive value. When timothy hay is worth $9 a ton, a ton of rutabagas are worth 3.21 and a ton of potatoes 2.89. The rutabaga or Swede must not be confounded with turnips; it is a much more valuable crop.

The rutabaga is an indispensable crop to all who keep live stock, horses, cows, pigs or sheep. There is a general opinion among dairymen that rutabagas are not fit food for the dairy cow. This is mostly prejudice. The sweetest butter I ever ate was at a hotel last winter; the maker of the butter was present and assured us that the cows from which this butter was made ate a bushel of rutabagas per day. If precaution is only taken to feed to cows just after milking, as much as a bushel a day can be fed without deleterious results in the butter. For pigs, boiled turnips mixed and fed warm with meal make an excellent growing and fattening ration, and for wintering sows or shote stock there is no better or cheaper feed than raw turnips (rutabagas), and for sheep the flock that does not receive a daily ration of turnips is not the profitable one.

The ground intended for rutabagas this spring was plowed last fall and harrowed. In late April rather a light coat of horse manure was applied. It was plowed under 4 in deep and harrowed once since. It was planted June 15. Top-dress lightly after plowing with any short, fine manure and harrow thoroughly. Had I any rough, strawy manure I would apply it before this last plowing. Sow in drills 36 in apart and scatter some good acid phosphate in the drills to give seed a quick start. Sow with a hand drill at once 2 lbs p a. The horse cultivator should be run between the drills every 10 days until after thinning, which should be to 10 in apart in drills.—[J. A. Macdonald, P E I.

Sow 10 Lbs Clover on every acre of your crops. It will make a thick mat several inches high by plowing time and will be a fertilizer equal to 10 tons of manure per acre. Its long roots go down where no others do and bring up phosphoric acid and dissolve plant foods.

Forage Crops on Sand—The species of salt bush which are at all likely to be adapted to the climate of Mich are annuals and will not make a permanent sod. The soils of Newago Co are well adapted to the salt bush, but I somewhat question whether these annuals will make a profitable growth in Newaygo Co climate. L. A. W. might get some seed and try planting in a small way. A legume which the Mich exper sta have tried somewhat extensively seems far more promising than the salt bush. The sand lucerne has been raised 3 yrs, and on June 4, was a swamp of forage, although the soil on which it is growing is a very light sand. We chose purposely the very lightest sands on the college farm for the test of this legume, and find that it does splendidly on just such very sandy soils as are to be found in Newaygo Co. We have harvested from this light sand over three tons of well-cured hay per acre per year, and the plants are still very promising, being neither winter killed nor seriously injured by the drouth. The sand or hairy vetch may be sown in the fall with a fair expectation of a good crop next spring.—[Director C. D. Smith.

Baling the Hay Crop—Every large hay grower now bales his hay. The most popular size for a bale is 100 lbs. A bale of this size is more easily handled and thus adds value to the hay. There are many persons who make a business of baling hay, going from farm to farm like those engaged in threshing wheat. They charge a certain price for baling and furnishing the wire, regulated somewhat by the prices of hay. Every farmer who raises more timothy hay than is necessary to meet the requirements of his own farm should bale it before carrying it to market. The farmers in every thickly-settled community would do well to sow timothy enough to justify them in buying a baling press, which in the marketing of 300 or 400 acres of hay will pay for itself in a single year. The press may also be used in baling clover hay and wheat straw, the latter being worth $4 p ton or more baled.

A Stone Boat is very serviceable on the farm. To make one as illustrated

take two pieces 1 chestnut 2x4x5½ ft. Taper one end of each piece from 1 in back to 2 in at the end. For the bottom, spike to the 2x4 in pieces a 2 in chestnut plank crosswise. Then take three pieces of an old wagon tire 5 ft long, weld a ring in the end of one piece and bolt in on the bottom to draw by in the middle, as at *b*. Bolt the two pieces on the outer edges of the boat, the bolts to run up through the side pieces. Three bolts at each side, as at *a*, is enough. To keep the sides from splitting, two ½ in bolts may be put through at each end.—[Timothy Sedgwick, Litchfield Co, Ct.

The Canada Thistle can be eradicated by careful and persistent spudding in such a way as to prevent the plant from appearing above ground, by early after-harvest cultivation of the stubble ground, by frequent introduction of hoed crops into the rotation, by seeding much with clover, taking one or two crops of hay, then plowing the clover sod shallow early after harvest and cultivating frequently through the fall, and by summer fallowing.

The Cattleman who has built a silo and is handling to the best advantage his corn crop from the time it is planted until turned off the farm as a finished product, is taking the shortest cut I know of to prosperity.—[A. P. Ketchen, Ont.