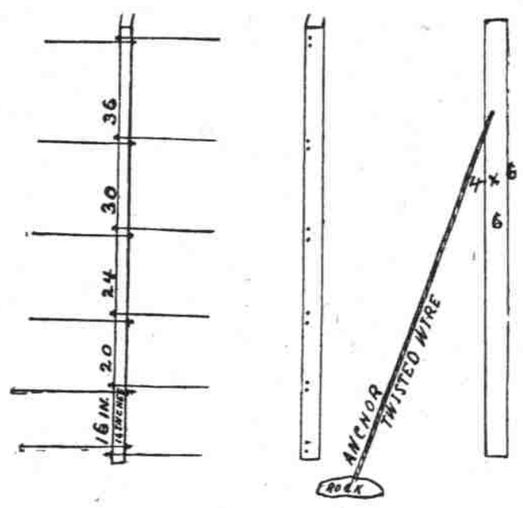
BUILDING A STAVE SILO.

There is Nothing the Farmer Can Do This Summer That Will Pay Him Better—No. 27 of the Sunny Home Stock Talks.

Messrs. Editors:- I have recently received a number of letters from friends making inquiry concerning silo building, and I think an answer through The Progressive Farmer might perhaps be of interest to other readers. We belive that at the present time the concrete silo is the most economical to build, taking into condsideration the permanent nature of a structure built of this material; but as the cost of this form is considerable and the material for its construction not easy to obtain in all



sections of our territory, we will discuss another mode of construction that is within the reach of every farmer of any means at all, and one that will give as good results, no doubt, for ten years or more.

How to Build a 100-Ton Silo for $35 Cash Outlay.

We refer to the stave silo built of 2x6 or 2x8 pieces. By having the staves got out of one's own woods a hundred-ton silo (16 feet in diameter and 24 feet high) can be built for thirty-five dollars of actual cash outlay, not counting the hauling or rough work performed by the regular farm force. Or it can be made to cost one hundred dollars or more by having an expensive foundation or roof, neither of which is at all necessary (especially the roof) in the South. Moreover, if the farmer is not burdened with ready cash and yet wants a silo, he can use old mother earth for his foundation, with the result that the silage will keep equally as well as where a stone or cement foundation is used.

A Silo is Easy to Build.

We have built several by simply leveling the surface of the ground, setting up the tub, then digging out the center of the space enclosed and throwing the clay thus obtained around the inner edge of the staves and tamping solid. Some of these have been erected five years and are apparently in as good condition as when first put up. Good heart pine seems to last about as well set up on the ground as on a wall, and there is no chance for the air to get in around the bottom and spoil some of the silage, as sometimes happens if care is not taken to cement the connection between the staves and the wall when using the stone foundation.

It Doesn'e Pay to Have a Roof.

The matter of a roof we have tested quite thoroughly and invariably have had less loss of silage on top when the silo has been left open so that the rain can fall directly on the feed. This is reasonable, as the silage is obliged to rot on top in order to seal the mass, and of course the wetter it gets the surer it will rot, and therefore the air will penetrate to less depth than if it be allowed to dry on top. Another advantage of the open top is that when the silage gets up to near the top of stakes, short pieces of boards can be tacked on the inside of the staves extending above the top for four or five feet, and on these pieces a piece of canvass or fine mesh poultry netting can be used to raise the height of the silo that much; thus when the silage settles, as it will settle four or five feet in a twenty foot silo, the silage will be even with the top of the staves, thus increasing the capacity of silage by about ten tons and doing away with the extra height of four or five feet of staves (saving considerable in timber) and at the same time lessening the danger of damage from wind by having less height.

The Round Iron Rod

should be used for hoops, and instead of having lugs for tightening the ropes, use pieces of timber 4x6 set edgewise to the circumference of the circle and taking the place of one stave in each side of the silo. Through these pieces, about two inches from the outer edge, holes should be bored at intervals from top to bottom the distance apart we wish to space our hoops. This plan calls for each hoop to be in two pieces, and the half hoops will need to be about ten inches longer than one-half the circumference of the silo. Then a four or five-inch thread should be run on either end of each half hoop, these ends passed through the holes in the 4x6 pieces, when a half-inch thick cart washer and a nut will be all that is needed to complete the job.

Spacing for the Hoops.

Use ¾-inch rods at the bottom of the silo and ⅝-inch for the upper two-thirds of the height. The distance apart these should be spaced will depend on the height of silo used: the deeper the silo, the closer, of course, the hoops should be placed at the bottom where the pressure comes. On a twenty-foot silo, eight hoops are sufficient; on a 24-foot silo ten, and for a 30-foot, eleven or twelve. We prefer our timber to be tongued and grooved, as it is very much less work to erect a silo when the material is tongued and grooved than when it is simply jointed, and it stands up better when it is empty.

Before beginning to empty the silo take some pieces of half-inch lumber four inches wide and make a hoop for the inside of the silo, at the top nail securely to each stave, and your silo will not fall to pieces when empty and dry.

A Bit of Preliminary Work.

Before starting to erect the silo take the rods (hoops) and bend them to about the shape they will need to be when in the silo. An easy and quick way to do this is to plant two posts in the ground about three or four inches apart; spike a piece across the top to keep them from spreading. Thrust the end of a rod between the posts, twist it around until the bend is about right, shove it through a couple of feet further and bend again, and so on.

The Best Thing the Stockman Can Do.

When ready to erect, the first thing to do is to set up the 4x6 pieces and stay them well from every direction; then set in about two staves at intervals on the circle between the 4x6s, put in your bottom, top and middle hoops; then fill in with the balance of the staves, keeping them plumb and driving them well together.

There is nothing the stockman can do during the summer that will pay him any better than building of one or more silos. The drawing herewith will explain the manner of using the 4 x 6 pieces, and also method of erecting the silo.

A. L. FRENCH.

R. F. D. 2, Byrdville, Va.

MORE APPLES NEEDED.

Mr. Grabs Writes About Keeping and Marketing the Fruit.

Apples ought not to be quite so scarce as they are at the present time. Besides having a fair at home last October I went up near Pilot Mountain and secured a few loads of apples of fine quality. I tried to ship from the Blue Ridge Mountain —but, by some mishap, I failed to find a man to furnish me a barrel. I proposed to furnish the empty barrels in the best of shape and to pay the freight both ways, and yet I failed to find a man to favor me in this. However, this last winter season there was a fair crop of winter apples in the mountains. I intend, in this article, to say something about the possibilities for winter fruit here in North Carolina. We have not the best climate for fruit, nor have we got a very fast fruit market, but the possibilities are good —very good. Right where we should get in shape for the best in all this there is usually a stop.

Thousands of fine fruit trees are planted, but the cultivation is not what it should be. Not half the winter fruit of our Blue Ridge Mountains is saved. The mountain people could much easier save their winter fruit than produce it, however cheap the production may be, but it seems the most of them have not learned this.

About six or eight years ago, apples being very scarce in the country, and over the world, I went in late gathering time to Wilkesboro, intending to go out into the Brushy Mountains in search of apples, but I was told at once that "you need not go: a Yankee has been all through there and has about cleaned up all the apples, by furnishing the empty barrels and paying forty cents a bushel for the apples, those furnishing the apples hauling to the depot. I saw many of that "trading" man's barrels at the depot labeled "Blue Ridge Mountain Baldwin"—a long popular name. These old-fashioned, red Limbertwigs were shipped to England—but they were all needed here in the South for that season, and would have been cheap for our people, at the price paid. That project was an object lesson for me, and should be for those who would procure apples for winter use.

If an enterprising "Yankey" could do such a thing as to collect carloads of "Blue Ridge Mountain Baldwins" at a low price while apples were comparatively scarce ("while men slept") why not get him to come while they are plentiful all through the mountains, and buy up not only a few carloads, but hundreds of carloads, and fill the cellars of Raleigh and Greensboro and High Point, and the many other towns and villages?

Mr. W. C. Phillips, late from Pinnacle (near the Pilot Mountain) is now located at High Point. Mr. Phillips could at once tell a man (having or owning a big cellar) that the thing to do is to just brush out the old cellar, and roll in the few carloads of apples, and ventilate—wide open at night, to let in all the cold; but keep the cellar well closed during the day.

There is positively no strange mystery about keeping our winter apples successfully and safely, in a small cellar or in a large cellar—in a bushel box, or in a hundred bushel box. Put the apples in the cellar, inside of such cool or cold air, as your conveniences will allow. This method will hold good in any State—however cold or however far South you may be. No amount of machinery, however costly and scientific it may be, can possibly compare with the preserving power of the breath of "Jack Frost"—and if you are never able to go lower than forty degrees in the direction of the "frost line," you can just roll in your barrels of "Blue Ridge Mountain Baldwins," and have them on from October to Easter.

W. F. GRABS.

Stokes Co., N. C.

Stunting Corn.

Will Mr. Williamson reply?

Now, if Mr. Williamson's stunting process proves with all of us to be as profitable and satisfactory as it has with Mr. Williamson, we can then see what a fool we have all along been for losing so much sleep over the corn stunting habit of our free negroes and some of our white tenants, too. We have watched this seemingly unavoidable stunting process going on about us more or less every year, with a great deal of displeasure; counting the apparent loss as we passed by. But if Mr. Williamson's success in this improved stunting corn practice proves to be as good with others as with himself, we can truly say to one another along the line, farmers, "what fools we mortals be."

Mr. Williamson—we do not once doubt—has been thoroughly convinced that his stunting plan is all right or he would not practice his plan, let alone advocate it in public print. But what we want to know from Mr. Williamson now is, how does he know that there is more in the stunting of his corn than there was in the side application of the fertilizer? Did Mr. Williamson make repeated comparative tests upon different soils and different seasons by the actual weighing of the different yields and actual measurements as to the area under his comparative tests? or did he form his conclusions as many of us have done before, by the mere looks of the thing?

We would like to hear from Mr. Williamson on this subject, as many of our people are making these pointed inquiries of our bureau about these tests.

With the Aldrich system of planting corn and cotton after the double row alternation and rotation plan of Mr. Williamson, and the breeding of new varieties of cowpeas to suit our different purposes, by Mr. Brabham and Dr. Mason, we feel very much like there is something doing along the right line by our farmers, which is gratifying to the whole progressive family of our farmers.

This progressive turn of the minds of our Southern farmers away from the all-cotton system to the more sensible rotation plans, and the inclination to build up the land upon a permanent plan of rotation is like the dawn of a bright new day for our Southern farmers. It looks like our people were about ready now to call the farmer that can make a reasonable profitable crop from his land and leave the land richer than before he grew the crop, the best farmer of the future; that is the kind of farmers that the whole country must now look to, to turn the tide of the long-practiced robber system of skinning the land, by continuous crops, of its soil for present gain and future devastation.

Cheer up, farmers, you are on the right road.

J. C. STRIBLING.

Anderson Co., S. C.

Do not wait for extraordinary opportunities for good actions, but make use of common situations.—Goethe.