

is given off by the leaves. No tobacco-leaf will stand sudden changes at this period, and 2° an hour is the maximum raising-point.

When the blade of the leaf is dry at a temperature of 125° the barn is "fixed," after which all danger is over, and heat can be advanced and ventilation increased. There are no hard-and-fast rules to follow; everything depends upon the experience and understanding of the man in charge. Also, barns in different localities and leaf produced under the various cultural conditions have a great influence upon the method to be followed. Another point to be remembered is that as the curing-season advances and the leaves are gathered from higher up the plant-stalk the management of the barn has to be varied. Again, curing in a dry hot season is quite different to the method followed in the wet cold weather. Good curing is thus only possible when undertaken by one who has had some experience.

A flue-barn chart is supplied by the Horticulture Division on request, but it should be borne in mind that this chart deals with the first curing of the season. Lower lug leaves, uniformly ripe, are usually cured in dry weather about the first week in February. The cultural methods bestowed upon the tobacco have an immense effect upon the curing methods in the barns. Insufficient cultivation between planting and topping tells a sad story at curing-time. The application of too much nitrogenous manure produces large heavy leaves that will not respond to yellow-leaf curing methods. Again, too long a time spent in filling the barn—say, several days—gives bad results. However, with care and skill it is possible to cure a whole season's crop, even under wet-weather conditions, and produce 90 per cent. of bright yellow leaf.

The difficulties that are to be encountered in flue-barn curing have been mentioned so that those who are considering the matter may not enter upon it lightly, thinking that the erection of a flue-barn is the sum total of the matter. Careful application and attention to the small details are of vital importance in this work.

A flue-barn charge takes from four to five days to process. This, with one day to fill and another to empty, makes an average of a barn a week, which can be reckoned on with a season of about seven weeks' curing.

The tobacco from the flue-barn is removed to a bulking-shed, where it is bulked down upon the sticks—shingled in long rows or built in 4 ft. squares 12 ft. high. It mellows, and the colour improves during the three weeks of bulking. It is then ready for packing. Care should be taken that no tobacco is packed under pressure in cases with the leaf containing less than 12 per cent. or more than 14 per cent of moisture.

Ensilage and Dairy Cows.—In connection with the concluding article on temporary sterility of dairy cows in the March issue of the *Journal*, the writer, Mr. J. Hill Motion, wishes to remove any wrong impression readers may have gained as to his views on the winter and early spring feeding of ensilage. In a note on the matter he states: "The importance of ensilage as a winter feed for dairy cows has been well established in New Zealand. This method of pasture utilization is one which I would strongly urge in connection with the feeding of our dairy herds."