for him to employ the sweeps already mentioned, and one of the several efficient stackers which do all the heavy work of lifting the green material and which are not particularly costly.

To sum up, the vital differences between the ensilage of to-day and that of years ago are two. Firstly, ensilage years ago generally called for the plough in the provision of the crop to be conserved, whereas to-day, as a rule, it lessens the need for using the plough. Secondly, ensilage in the past was a laborious and therefore a costly task, whereas to-day, by labour-saving practices which are not necessarily costly, it need not be avoided on the score either of outlay or labour.

A fairly common error is the making of silage at a later date than is desirable. One of the respects in which silage is often superior to hay lies in the fact that the herbage for silage may frequently be removed early enough to allow of the development of a fresh leafy aftermath before the advent of the dry summer period, during which such aftermath is apt to be particularly valuable. Further, silage from material mown when unduly mature is of inferior feeding-quality. There should be no avoidable delay in the closing of fields for ensilage. Before closing fields for haymaking or ensilage, any stones, fencing-wire, dead grass, &c., likely to cause stoppages in mowing should be carefully removed. It is frequently well worth while to top-dress fields with superphosphate just before closing them for hay or silage, and this is specially likely to be the case if these fields were not top-dressed during the preceding twelve months. Fuller information and a bulletin regarding ensilage are available from local officers of the Fields Division.

The Potato Crop.

In many districts the main crop of potatoes may very suitably be planted during the coming month. In view of the abnormally low price of table-potatoes at the present time particular interest attaches to the fact that field trials have given definite indication of superior yields when the tubers used for seed are of table size instead of the customary seed size. The explanation lies in the fact that tubers of table size are on the whole not so badly affected with virus troubles as the smaller tubers. The present low price of table-potatoes offers an excellent opportunity of reducing the influence of virus troubles by using table instead of seed potatoes in planting this season's crops. The Agronomist advises that if it is intended to cut tubers of the Aucklander and Majestic varieties for planting, then the cut tubers should not be allowed to become dry. Hence it is advisable with these varieties to do the cutting immediately prior to planting if possible, to keep the cut seed in moist sacks, and to plant into moist soil.

Successful crops of potatoes are most readily secured on rich open loams. Field trials have shown that in the main potato-growing districts, which as a rule consist of good soils, the use of 3 cwt. per acre of superphosphate is to be recommended strongly, while on less fertile soils it may be well worth while to use potash and nitrogenous material such as sulphate of ammonia or blood and bone in conjunction with superphosphate.

Further information relative to potatoes appeared in these notes in the *Journal* for September, 1930; much useful information is also contained in the recent departmental publication, "Questions and Answers on Potato Certification," which is obtainable free on application. A summary of recent trials and recommendations regarding the manuring of potatoes in the South Island appears elsewhere in this issue of the *Journal*.