

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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DOMINION.

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your price below value then do not forget to try the Commission and see whether or not their claim that they would rather buy direct from the farmer holds good. It may mean \$10 to \$20 on a horse and at the same time the Commission will get the animal at no higher price than they would pay the dealer if he secured the horse and turned it over to them,—the Commission loses nothing; the producer of the horse makes \$10 to \$20.

The world's horse supply is being depleted by hundreds of thousands. The United States is sending large numbers to the war. Canada is being drawn upon and will continue to send surplus horses. In Europe horses are at a premium. Everything seems to point to a keener demand in this country and a better horse market in the near future.

Nature's Diary.

A. B. Klugh, M.A.

We have in Canada few flowers that are more curiously shaped than the beautiful little Fringed Polygala (*Polygala paucifolia*). As may be seen from the illustration (fig. 1) it somewhat resembles a flying bird or two-winged insect. Fig. 2 shows the modifications of the sepals and petals which give it its peculiar shape. The lower petal forms a little pouch, with a slit-like opening at the top, which contains the end of the style, the stigma and the six stamens. At the end of this petal is the fringe which gives the flower its common name. There are three petals, the other two lying close alongside the lower petal. The sepals are five in number, and are of very different sizes, the two lateral ones forming the conspicuous "wings" while the others are small. The petals and two lateral sepals are deep pink in color, except the fringe, which is white. Most people who look at the flower take it for an Orchid, because of its very irregular flower and its brilliant color, but it has really none of the characteristics of the Orchid Family and belongs to the Milkwort Family.

This interesting little plant is not uncommon

in many localities from Quebec to Manitoba, and is found growing in shady places, often at the margins of bogs. It sometimes gets the name Flowering Wintergreen, I suppose because its habit of growth and its leaves somewhat resemble the Wintergreen.

Everyone is familiar with the Blue Flag, which is such a common flower in marshes from Newfoundland to Manitoba, but few know its handsome little relative the Dwarf Iris (*Iris lacustris*) because its distribution is limited to sandy shores



Fig. 1—Fringed Polygala.

on Lakes Huron, Superior and Michigan. As may be seen from our illustration (fig. 3) it is a little plant with flowers out of all proportion to its size, the plant being only two and a half inches in height, while the flower is two inches across. The flowers are purplish-blue, and the sepals are handsomely crested. The Dwarf Iris grows in large patches. It does not grow out on the open shore but in little openings among the coniferous trees which fringe the shore. The flowers are very fragrant with a delicate perfume.

The heavy frost which we had at the end of May showed in a marked manner the value of

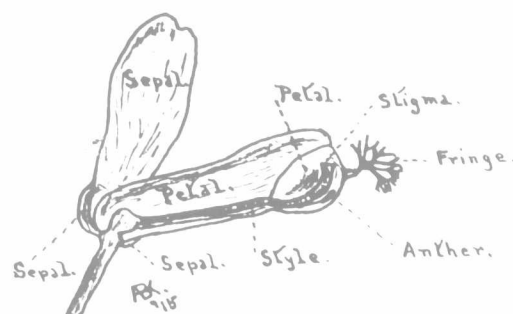


Fig. 2—Section of Flower of Fringed Polygala.

protective structure such as hairs and scales to young leaves. The fronds of the Bracken which were still tightly coiled and covered with hairs were uninjured, those which had slightly expanded were killed, while those which were well expanded had evidently developed tissues strong enough to withstand the effects of the frost and were untouched. The same was true of the young fronds of the Ostrich Ferns. When the frost came most of the Beeches had their leaves well expanded and these leaves were not affected, but some trees were later and their leaves were just beginning to

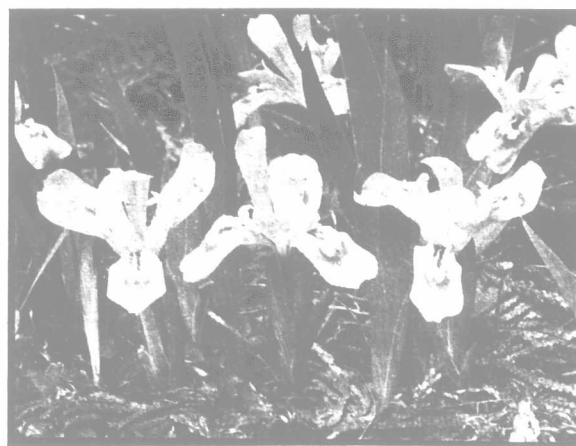


Fig. 3—Dwarf Iris.

expand. On such trees the young leaves were frozen, blackened and killed. It was also quite noticeable what a difference a very slight covering made in acting as a protection against the frost. Some delicate plants, such as the unrolling fronds of the Bladder Fern which were in comparatively open places were killed, but those which were under bushes, even thin bushes with few leaves were unaffected.

The other day I noticed some Chipmunks digging round under the dead leaves in the woods and wondered what they were after. By remaining perfectly motionless in a spot where they had

been busy I was able to find out. They were digging up sprouted Beechnuts. Some they ate immediately, some they carried off to their burrows. At times a Chipmunk would be within two feet of my face, but absolutely unconscious that I differed from any other stump it went about its Beechnut hunting and having found a nut held it up in its front paws and devoured it.

Is Incompetence Genetic?

In Thomson's book "Heredity" the first sub-heading reads: "Heredity Determines the Individual Life." Individual life is, in a greater part than we are sometimes willing to admit, what we had to start with or from. Spencer said "Inherited constitution must ever be the chief factor in determining character." Disraeli went farther and said, "Race is everything." It seems clear that all living things, animals and human beings as well, are what they are through heredity and environment, through inheritance and variation. Every child born is not a "chip off the old block" in fact no child is, while the child is something original, is a new being showing variations from the father and mother, it is also a combination of characters, many of which are present in its immediate ancestors. It may be possible that characters recessive in the parents appear strong or dominant in the offspring, but these are not new characters. It is a difference in degree not in kind. Few would deny that inheritance exists as one of the prime factors in our make-up. In the past some scientists sought to prove that every new life was something entirely new and not dependent upon or related to ancestors. Some believed that characters of body were inherited, but that no mind characters were handed down to the offspring, explaining mind characters which appeared related as mere coincidences. But mind characters are also hereditary. There are such influences as reversion and blended inheritance, and some go so far as to believe in teleony, the inheritance of acquired characters, and maternal impressions, but there is no getting away from the fact that the animal or the man is as the ancestors were in a greater or lesser degree.

Then comes the question: "Is incompetence genetic?" or in other words is a person entirely responsible for his own shortcomings and his own inability to accomplish that which he should accomplish in the work of the world? Then there is the influence of environment. Very often success or failure in life depends considerably upon environment which makes opportunity or deprives of it. But, willing to admit that many disabilities may be traced to inheritance, it seems to us that the man or woman should be able to develop enough character as to live down undesirable inherited traits and cause hitherto recessive and valuable characteristics to become dominant, and thus very largely overcome all handicaps inherited from weaker or incompetent ancestors. True, people are often rather hard on their weaker fellows who may have inherited the weakness from their forefathers for generations. We are speaking particularly of strength of character and ability. It should always be remembered by others that the individual is not only himself but a representative of the race of all that is and was dominant and recessive in his ancestors. On the other hand the individual inclined to blame his weakness upon his ancestors should never forget that "every tub stands on its own bottom" in this world, and it is his duty to live down weakness and develop strength of mind and character. Life is largely what one makes it, and not altogether ready-made for the man born to make a success or failure of it as his own efforts must do. Let us get away from the habit of blaming our forebears for our failures or ever placing the blame on those with whom we come in contact. At the same time, in criticizing others, it is well to remember that inherent characteristics are there, and may be so strong as to ruin an individual slightly lacking in will power.

Surely the Allied Nations and those standing back of them can turn out enough ammunition to more than counteract that of the Austro-German forces. If it cannot be done there is something radically wrong at home.

It may be necessary, owing to the shortage of hay, which is likely to result from comparatively dry weather and late frosts in Ontario, for many farmers to sow some substitute to somewhat increase the supply of feed for next winter's feeding. It is getting about time to sow millet, and a little more corn might yet be put in. One correspondent asks whether or not oats would be a satisfactory crop. We would not care to advise sowing much land to this crop at this late date even for hay, but if the season should bring forth sufficient showery weather no doubt they would grow and produce considerable satisfactory hay, provided they were cut when in the milk stage and harvested in good condition. Some effort should be made to supplement the hay crop.