

## The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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DOMINION.

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successfully with others in the same line, and to depict agriculture as the basic and the dominant industry in the community.

When one counts his gains in terms of money prizes only, showing is seldom a profitable enterprise. The exhibitor to be fully rewarded must derive considerable satisfaction from the knowledge that he has helped to make the fair a success and has given prominence to that particular phase of the industry in which he is most interested. It is in this spirit that showing at the fall fair should be undertaken, and not with monetary gains uppermost in mind. Everyone can help in one way or another, and the community as a whole will enjoy the local fair better when all have done their bit.

This issue is dedicated to the cause of better fairs and better farming. Let us all do our part to boost the former and thereby assist in the improvement and upbuilding of Canadian agriculture.

### How the Scotch Instituted Fall Fairs.

By SANDY FRASER.

The fall o' the year is an unco' busy time on the farm, what wi' the threshing o' the grain an' the silo filling an' the plowing an' the ither three hundred and seventy-nine smaller jobs that ye find waitin' for ye ilka mornin' before ye've had time tae swallow doon yer breakfast. And in the middle o' all this rush comes the fall fair. (It was juist a plain "cattle-show" in my young days.)

Wi' hired help but little better than a memory o' days gone by, and the crop o' small boys on the farm being mair or less o' a failure these years, it speaks well for oor farmers that they have kept the county fairs going as weel as they have, and that they still bring oot their live-stock and ither produce for the edification o' their neebors an' the general public. They find the time, some way, scarce as it is.

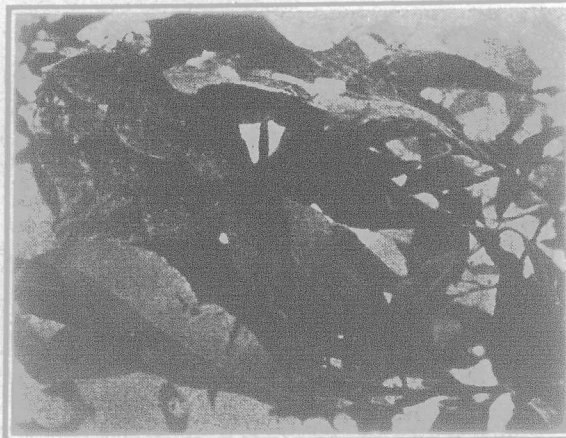
This thing we call "time" has something queer aboot it. Ye may think ye haven't a minute tae spare for anything but yer regular wark and then something happens that compels ye to leave it for maybe a couple o' weeks or mair. And when ye get back to it ye find that things hae been rinnin' along, while ye were away, the same as if ye had never been oot o' sight o' the barn, or taken time tae straighten yer back.

I ken a young chap that comes o' a family o' great workers and who isna likely to disgrace the name, sae far as earning his living by the "sweat of his brow" is concerned. And here, what does he do, this year, but ups an' gets married right in the middle o' the harvest time, and gaes awa' on a wedding-trip, tae boot.

And I hae na doot that when he gets back an' comes tae think it over, he'll come tae the conclusion that it was the mair profitable time he ever spent in a' his life. The work gets done, some way or ither, and ye are ahead by the value o' the extra experience, whatever it was.

And so it is wi' the fall fairs. We hae the time to take a day or twa from the work, gin we only think so. And maybe, dae oor share as exhibitors an' prize-winners as weel. I'm afraid there's mair farmers comin' tae the exhibitions noo to show off their new Overlands or McLaughlins, than come wi' their Clydesdales or Shorthorns, however.

It puts me in mind o' somethin' I was readin' the ither day. One city chap was sayin' to anither: "Here's more talk in the papers about free seeds from the Government. Do you think the farmers really care for the free seeds?" "I don't know," says the other, "Most of them would rather have a free distribution of automobile parts, I guess."



The Dark Dolomedes on Her Nursery Web.

I hae been wonderin', lately, how the first cattle-show came intae existence and who was responsible for startin' it. They tell us that Adam was the first man and that he was given the job o' christening all the animals. He had to gie each o' them a name, but we hae no record o' where he pinned ony red ribbons or medals on the ones that belonged to his particular friends. Cain would likely hae made a mair up-to-date cattle judge than his auld father.

But as to who got the idea first, o' an exhibition, I hae been wondering, as I said. In the natural course o' events, thinks I, it ought to hae been a Scotchman. We ken where he has always stood in "all the arts o' peace and war." And some o' us have heard the real truth aboot the discovery o' the North Pole, as to the time Peary got there and found a Scotchman juist ahead o' him. Mack had climbed the Pole and was nailing to it the tartan o' the Clan McGregor, but the matter was hushed up an' a Yankee got the credit, as usual.

I hae a set o' auld books by me that used to belong to my grandfather, or John Knox, or somebody, and which are supposed to be able to supply ye with reliable information on any event that took place bein' the time o' the flood, and maybe a wee bit later than that. When



A Turn in the Road.

I get stuck on ony point I generally gae to them to see gin they can help me oot. Sae, the ither day, when I was meditating on this question o' the origin o' the fall fair I thought I wad juist look the thing up and see whether the auld books or the cattle-shows were born first. And here is what I found. I'll juist gie it to ye word for word: "As early as 1723, a 'Society of Improvers in the Knowledge of Agriculture in Scotland' was instituted. This had a short existence, but the necessity of such an association was felt and another arose in 1755. This also did not succeed well, but in 1783 a number of gentlemen met in Edinburgh and founded one destined for permanency, the well-known 'Highland Society'. Originally intended for the general improvement of the Highlands, it gradually extended the sphere of its operations over the whole of Scotland, and confined its efforts more and more to the advancement of agriculture."

Further on I read that some o' the mair important objects o' the Society were as follows: Agricultural meetings, and general shows of stock, implements and dairy produce, held in the principal towns of Scotland. Encouraging a system of district shows for the improvement of breeds of stock most

suitable to the different parts of the country. The promotion and encouragement of a proper system of agricultural education, and to grant diplomas to students who shall pass the requisite examinations. The establishment of an agricultural Museum, illustrative of the vegetable products of the country. Monthly meetings during the winter session for the discussion of agricultural subjects. The periodical publication of reports and prize-essays on all branches of agriculture.

It wasna lang after this that organizations o' a somewhat similar nature were started in England and elsewhere, but, according tae the record, the "sons o' auld Scotia" were first again. And when we visit some o' our big provincial fairs, this fall, we might dae worse than to remind oorselves o' the debt we owe to a generation that is gone, and without whose work and thought the farmer wouldna be the man o' influence he is to-day.

But I must say na mair aboot farmers, (or Scotchmen) for gin their ability is great their modesty is even greater, and we all ken that when a man falls in love wi' himsel' he's in little danger o' rivals.

But as the chap wi' the Ford car said to me the other day: "How are people going to ken ye're there gin ye dinna toot yer horn."

### Nature's Diary.

By A. BROOKER KLUGE, M. A.

A large spider which is fairly common along the borders of lakes and streams, in late summer and early autumn, is the Dark Dolomedes, (*Dolomedes tenebrosus*). This is the largest of our Canadian spiders, often having a body seven-eighths of an inch in length and legs with a spread of four inches.

The Dark Dolomedes does not make a web for the securing of prey, but runs about on the banks, on rocks and logs, and captures insects by springing upon them. It can run as easily on the surface of the water as on land, and can also dive and remain under water for some considerable length of time.

While this species does not construct a web for capturing insects it makes one for quite another purpose, for it is one of the nursery-web weavers. The female, late in the summer, lays from 250 to 400 eggs in a silken egg-sac. She then carries this egg-sac about with her, holding it up under her body by means of silken threads which run from the hinder end of the egg-case to her spinnerets and also by means of the claws of her chelicerae (a pair of mouthparts). As soon as the eggs begin to hatch she hangs the egg-sac in a shrub, or in the top of a tall herb, and weaves a large tangled nursery-web about it. The spiderlings remain in this web for several days and the mother remains on the outside of the web on guard. Though usually very timid, when Dolomedes is guarding her nursery she shows no fear and is, in fact, frequently decidedly aggressive. The young, after having molted, leave the nursery-web and shift for themselves. The adults die in the late fall and the young hibernate in sheltered places, emerging in the spring and becoming full-grown by the summer.

The Dark Dolomedes is dark brown in color, with gray and black markings, and on the hinder end of the body there are three black chevrons.

This species is one of which people are often much afraid, believing it to be venomous, and it is sometimes erroneously called a "tarantula." As a matter of fact it is entirely harmless and I have handled dozens of them with my bare hands, though from the vicious manner in which they seize a stick when it is brought near them when they are guarding their nursery, I deem it advisable to keep one's fingers away at this time. I have, however, cut the branch on which a Dolomedes had her web, and carried the web, with the mother on the outside, and the children within, to my tent.

One of the most exquisite of the many beautiful webs which are woven by our various species of spiders is that of the Filmy Dome Spider, (*Linyphia marginata*). The web of this spider is usually found on low bushes and tall herbs in shady places. In such places these webs are often very common, but they are so fine and delicate that they are almost invisible unless the light falls upon them at the most favorable angle. When seen against a dark background, with the sun shining on them, their marvellous delicacy can best be appreciated and they shine like inverted bowls of fine-spun silver.

This web consists of a maze of threads extending in all directions, and in the centre of this maze is a dome-like sheet from two to five inches in diameter. The spider hangs beneath the apex of the dome, and when an insect strikes the maze of threads and falls upon the dome, the spider pulls it through the dome and feeds upon it.

The spider which makes this wonderful web is only about one-sixth of an inch in length. Its cephalothorax (the front division of the body) is yellowish-brown, margined on each side with a light stripe, while the abdomen (the hinder division of the body) is yellowish-white marked with dark bands and stripes.

The condensed history of Shorthorn families given in the Shorthorn Annual is excellent, and might advisedly be read by every-one interested in the breed. This is but one of the many good things published in this year's annual.

Pure-bred seed is within the reach of every farmer, and it brings results in crops just as it does in live stock.