

The Farmer's Advocate HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN
THE DOMINION.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY
THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (LIMITED).

JOHN WELD, MANAGER.

Agents for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal,"
Winnipeg, Man.

1. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE is published every Thursday. It is impartial and independent of all cliques and parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers of any publication in Canada.
2. TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.—In Canada, England, Ireland, Scotland, Newfoundland and New Zealand, \$1.50 per year, in advance; \$2.00 per year when not paid in advance. United States, \$2.50 per year; all other countries 12s. in advance.
3. ADVERTISING RATES.—Single insertion, 25 cents per line, agate. Contract rates furnished on application.
4. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE is sent to subscribers until an explicit order is received for its discontinuance. All payments of arrears must be made as required by law.
5. THE LAW IS, that all subscribers to newspapers are held responsible until all arrears are paid, and their paper ordered to be discontinued.
6. REMITTANCES should be made direct to us, either by Money Order or Registered Letter, which will be at our risk. When made otherwise we will not be responsible.
7. THE DATE ON YOUR LABEL shows to what time your subscription is paid.
8. ANONYMOUS communications will receive no attention. In every case the "Full Name and Post-office Address must be given."
9. WHEN A REPLY BY MAIL IS REQUIRED to Urgent Veterinary or Legal Enquiries, \$1.00 must be enclosed.
10. LETTERS intended for publication should be written on one side of the paper only.
11. CHANGE OF ADDRESS.—Subscribers when ordering a change of address should give the old as well as the new P. O. address.
12. WE INVITE FARMERS to write us on any agricultural topic. We are always pleased to receive practical articles. For such as we consider valuable we will pay ten cents per inch printed matter. Criticisms of Articles, Suggestions How to Improve "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine," Descriptions of New Grains, Roots or Vegetables not generally known, Particulars of Experiments Tried, or Improved Methods of Cultivation, are each and all welcome. Contributions sent us must not be furnished other papers until after they have appeared in our columns. Rejected matter will be returned on receipt of postage.

Address—THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE, or
THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (LIMITED),
LONDON, CANADA

Bricks Without Straw.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate"

I have taken considerable interest in an article appearing on the first page of Sept. 4th issue, entitled, "The Man who Takes the Other Man's Price," and would heartily commend a careful re-reading by all subscribers to your magazine.

You might have made the matter still more forceful by adding, "And the Man who Pays the Other Man's Price," for these two considerations form the brand upon the farmer and provide a most dismal outlook for the agricultural profession. When a numerous and useful class of our citizens has no say in the "Meum" and "Teum" of commercial and National life; when, in the "give" and "take" of the product of its brain and brawn it is helpless, there becomes a situation somewhat analogous to that of the Israelite slaves in Egypt, who, when forced to the utmost in the making of bricks, were also required to find their own straw.

The situation is, indeed, galling to any who are not sufficiently Pecksniffian to lack sensitiveness—and the farmer who does not feel keenly the opprobrium of this helplessness is a dead-weight added to the already heavy burdens of his fellows. But it is by no means hopeless, neither is it devoid of redeeming features, if only it arouses the manly determination that farmers "never shall be slaves."

The farmer seems all along to be like Micawber—"waiting for something to turn up"; but now the crisis is reached and someone should proceed to place his world in a position consonant with its necessity, for large urban populations, with their attendant industrial activities, can never compensate for weedy wastes and deserted rural communities. Our national ideals demand the triumph of Canadian agriculture, and it is high time that great efforts be inaugurated to solve the "big problems" which "loom up mountainous on the horizon of the future."

Organization is a first necessity. It has proven its value in its initial stages in bringing producer and consumer together, and may be made a tower of strength applied to transportation, or the banking problem, or even Governmental policies.

Then education will do much, but there must be a different application of method than that now in use. The education which will help to save the situation must begin in our rural schools. To this end the introduction of the consolidated school system, and the addition to

the curriculum of a practical course in all those features attendant upon agricultural operations, would be of untold benefit in solving the labor problem and that of the depletion of rural population, which, if permitted to continue as they are, will one day prove a national menace.

This letter is becoming longer than I had intended, but, with your permission, will add another word. It has always puzzled me to know how our city dwellers can place the responsibility for the high cost of living upon the farmer, speaking as though he were exempt from its effects, when, in reality, he not only must accept the prices offered, but must also pay the prices of the high cost of living, for is he not a consumer? Has not his cost of production increased? And have not the prices received for his produce, in many if not most instances, remained stationary or else decreased?

You have certainly said a good word which should have the effect of helping the helpless to come into his own.

Elgin Co., Ont.

W. G. CHARLTON.

Nature's Diary.

By A. B. Klugh, M. A.

In the beech woods in September we find a peculiar little plant known as beech-drops. It is found only under the beeches, because it is parasitic upon their roots. It does not manufacture its own food, but lives upon the sap already made by the tree. It is about eighteen inches in height and purplish in color, and, in place of leaves, possesses only a few purplish scales.

We have two classes of plants which do not manufacture their nutriment from the raw materials which are used by most plants—water and soil salts. One group is known as the parasites. These grow on a living plant, which is termed the host, and draw from it the sap which it has elaborated for its own use. The other class is known as the saprophytes, and they live upon dead plant material. All the fungi (mushrooms, toadstools, etc.) belong to one or other of these groups.

We have also several saprophytes among the higher plants, for instance, the Indian pipe, and the orchids called the coral roots.

The Indian pipe is an attractive plant, with its pure white, waxy stem and flowers. It has no leaves, but in their places bears white scales. It is found in the deep woods, and from its white appearance is often called "ghost plant."

There are some birds which we see more frequently on the fall migration than at any other time. One of these is the rusty blackbird. The male of this species, as he appears in the fall, is black with much rusty coloration about the head, neck and back. The female in fall is dark grey, and with more rusty color than the male. Both sexes in the fall have a light line over the eye. In the spring the male is a lustrous, slaty black with greenish iridescence, while the female is slaty black, with some greenish reflections on the wings and a pale streak over the eye.

This species breeds in Northern Canada, in swampy thickets.

The season for woodcock shooting is now open, but the sportsman finds this bird far harder to obtain than it was some few years ago. In fact, because of excessive hunting, and particularly because of shooting out of season for the market, the woodcock has become very scarce in nearly all parts of its range.

The range of the woodcock covers Eastern North America as far west as the ninety-seventh degree of longitude, and as far north as Southern New Brunswick, Southern Quebec and Southern Central Ontario. It winters in the south Atlantic and Gulf States.

The woodcock is an early migrant, arriving in Canada early in April or even in March.

This species has three structural peculiarities—the eye is large and set very high in the head, the tip of the bill is flexible, and the three outer quills of the wing are shorter than the other quills, and are narrow and very stiff. The flexible bill and the large, high-set eye are adaptations to its mode of feeding, as it feeds on earthworms for which it bores in moist places and seizes with the movable tip of the bill. The eye being high and far back, is more out of the way when boring than it would be in the usual position, and, as it feeds at dusk, the large size of the eye gives it better vision in the half-dark. Often in damp places you will see little round holes which show where the woodcock has had its evening meal.

The call-note of the woodcock is a soft "que-rup", followed by a loud nasal "pack." In the mating season (early in May in Canada) the woodcock towers high in the air in the evenings and early mornings, and makes a fairly loud, sweet, twittering sound, probably with the short, stiff outer feathers of the wing.

The flight of this species is variable, not only in character, but in force and swiftness. Sometimes when the bird is flushed, its movements are seemingly labored and irregular as it zig-zags up

towards the tree-tops. At other times it flies with a swift regular motion.

While earthworms are staple food, it also eats such larvae of insects as are found in the ground.

The nest is a loose structure of grass and other vegetable matter, and is usually placed among the leaves in the more elevated portions of a swamp. The eggs are buffy in color, mottled or spotted with darker shades, and are generally four in number.

The woodcock is protectively colored, and, as long as it remains quiet, a woodcock on the nest is a very hard object to see.

It is high time that we had a law, and moreover a rigid enforcement of that law, prohibiting absolutely the selling of game birds, or, in fact, of game of any kind. Let those who would eat them go to the woods and get them. And even at that they should not be allowed to take too many, but there should be a limit set on the bag. The true sportsman goes to the woods for the enjoyment he gets from the outing in the fresh air, and not with a desire to make so much meat. Such a law would, therefore, not affect the real sportsman at all, but would put a curb on the game-hog and the pot-hunter, who are playing the mischief with our game, which we should consider it our duty to hand down to future generations as their rightful heritage.

Europe Through Canadian Eyes - V.

On the 16th of July we started for Lucerne by train. A rest from sightseeing had perhaps given our party a keener zest for it than usual. Anticipation ran high. We had not yet seen the snow-covered Alps. Though several peaks of these are visible from Zurich on clear days, the weather had been so persistently wet and cloudy during our stay, and the few days on which the sun did shine were so hazy, that only the nearer wooded hills were visible.

But again we were off, and all eyes on the look-out. Suddenly, as the train rushed on, someone called out, "See, there is snow!" "Where, oh! where?" was everybody else's cry. Following the direction pointed out, a whiteness on a distant peak could be observed. "But," said one objector, "that looks like mist." Yet even he was soon convinced that through the mist that clung around the mountain a patch of real snow was gleaming. But, as we still rushed along, our eyes soon feasted not only on patches, but on fields of snow, pure white, appearing on the slopes of rocky peaks that multiplied as we went.

Arriving at Lucerne about 11 a.m., we were promptly transferred to a steamer on the lake on which the city is situated. At once the visitor is struck with the singular and extreme blueness of the water. We have not been able to ascertain the real cause of this tinting of all the still waters of that part of Switzerland. The brawling streams are muddy enough. The "Rhône, so blue," as it flows out of the lake at Geneva, was, to us, but the culmination of many waters all of the same hue that we had sailed over or seen previously. There are some who say that as all water looks blue when clear, the exceeding blueness is due to unusual clearness only. But to us it seemed as if it might be owing to the presence of some chemical. Anyhow, it is blue. When after a sail of eight miles over the lovely lake, we landed and were taken on board mountain railway cars for the ascent of Mt. Rigi, we had the opportunity of seeing this color from a different angle. While we were looking down, the sky became overcast and in the gloom the shadow or reflection in the water of a mountain opposite was like deepest indigo.

Mt. Rigi is a little over 6,000 feet high, and the railway leading up to the summit from Vitznau, the village where we landed, is about six miles in length. The average slant of the floor of the car, as we went up, seemed to be about 15 to 18 degrees, or a rise of one foot in six. Each engine pushes up but one car, and is always below, never above the car, pushing as it ascends, backing as it returns downward. On the axle in the centre between two driving wheels, is a large cog-wheel projecting below the level of the rails and meshing into a sort of rail in the middle of the track. The boiler of the engine is built so as to be horizontal when on the incline, which makes it look as if broken down when seen on the level. It took about an hour to reach the top.

The crowd in our car had been together for more than a month, and, of course, felt perfectly free with each other. This will be borne in mind when their behavior that day is commented on. But what an excited lot we were! Most of the company were middle-aged, some much further on, some not yet at that stage. But as we ascended, passing now through a clump of forest, then emerging into the open where the lake below and the hills beyond were in full view; now crossing a bridge, with the tops of the trees bordering a rocky rivulet a hundred feet below