The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine.

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ever, this is not solving the problem; it is only shelving it. The appropriation of large sums of money for the purpose of creating new positions and raising salaries only aggravates an unhealthy condition. Agriculture was calling for attention, and $1,000,000 per year for ten years was appropriated by the Dominion Government under the Agricultural Instruction Act. This has not and will not remedy the ills from which agriculture is suffering. It applied a salve when an operation was necessary. This has nothing to do with the rural school, but the two cases under consideration are analogous.

What is good in the Department's scheme for improvement should be given staunch support, but they should be urged to go on and give us better schools, with curricula more suited for country children.

Making a Success of One's Life Work

BY ALLAN MCDIARMID.

A certain friend of mine has been all his life-time wanting to get on to a farm and make his living there, instead of being tied down to the job he is at. Force of circumstances made a school-teacher of him, and kept him at it ever since. There isn't much question but that he would have made a successful farmer, as he has plenty of ambition, a good head and a strong constitution. He doesn't like school teaching, but has made up his mind at last that it has to be his life-work and so is putting all his energy into it and has every reason to think that what he is doing is of value to his pupils, aside from whatever it may be worth to himself.

A contrast to this case is that of another man I have known for years. He has been on a farm practically all his life and I don't think that, if he expressed his mind about it, he would say that he ever took much pleasure in his work. He has a talent for the working out of problems of all kinds and is strong on theory, but should have a partner in the business with him who would put these theories into practice. He would have made a first-class college professor or a demonstrator on some of our Experimental Farms. Like my friend the school teacher, he's in the wrong line of work to bring him the greatest amount of happiness. But in spite of his discontent he has stuck to the job and has made a good living for himself and his family. Some people called him a "misfit". Maybe he is.

I have just heard the story of another man who had a life experience that reminded me of my two friends mentioned above. He told it to me himself, and although it isn't very flattering to him it is probably all true.

He said that he lived half a century before he found the kind of work he was fitted for. As a boy he worked in a wollen mill, but this was so little to his taste that he took the first chance to get himself fired. It wasn't long before he got work in a hardware store. But they put him at carrying kegs of nails up-stairs and he came to the conclusion that they were trying to break his spirit, so he quit that.

Then he tried farming. But the long hours and the hot sun were a combination that he didn't think favored his health, so he bought a valise and filled it up with photograph albums and went peddling. However, as he coundn't sell any of them he was forced to go out of business and find other employment. This turned out to be a job in a printing office. He didn't have to make any special effort to get himself kicked out of here, and after experimenting with several other business concerns of the same town he concluded to return to the country as a book-agent.

But the farmers didn't seem to be impressed with the importance of acquiring the knowledge to be found in his "History of the Revolution" so he rented a small farm and started in to milk cows and feed hogs. It wasn't long before he discovered that, to make any profit out of them, you must milk the cows at least twice a day, to say nothing of feeding and otherwise looking after them. This fact, along with others in connection with the hog-raising, caused him to lose interest in the life of the agriculturist and as soon as he could dispose of his live stock he took the fastest train back to the city.

Again he made the rounds and finally landed in a newspaper office. But this time the unexpected happened. He stayed on. He claimed to have found the work for which he was adapted. For the first time in his life he was contented and found himself making money. And it ended, in the course of time, by his getting control of the whole enterprise and in making something of a name for himself as well as for the publications that he sent out through the country that had so long refused to provide him a living. Now if one didn't know something of the ins and outs of this man's life they might suppose that there was only the one kind of work that he could have made a success of. They might come to the conclusion that anyone that didn't happen to hit the work that he was peculiarly fitted for would be a failure at everything else. It's a mistaken idea. We were given brains and a certain amount of ability to enable us to adapt ourselves to circumstances. We can make ourselves fit the job that comes to us, if we have determination enough to do it. The trouble with our friend that we have been telling about, was that, for the greater part of his life, he had been what he himself termed a "boozer". For some reason, best known to himself, he quit drinking at the time he got employment in the newspaper office. His change of fortune began with his change of habits. The energy he had wasted on his weekly sprees was now given to his daily work, with the result that could easily have been foretold. Drunkeness and laziness go together and they are too much of a handicap to give any man a chance to win out in the race in which we are all supposed to enter.

What I claim is that, if he had changed his ways sooner, he might have made a success of any one of the many occupations in which he had been engaged with such poor results; not even excepting the book agency. It's in the man, not in the job. The experience of that school teacher and the farmer I mentioned, are proof enough of this for me. A man may not be so happy at one kind of work as he would be at another that he thinks he is better adapted for, but if he is the right kind of a sport he will turn in and do the best he can with it. Happiness isn't everything. It will come some day but it isn't necessary when it comes to making our time here of value to the world, as well as to ourselves. In fact some maintain that the person who has experienced the most trouble and misery of various kinds in this life, is the one that has got the most out of it. I came across something lately that brings out this idea. It is a short poem by one Samuel Daniel, who must have lived some hundred years of ago, judging by the style of his verse, to say nothing of the spelling. But the sentiment he gives expression to is the important point and I can't help feeling that there is a good deal of truth in it, although it runs contrary to the general idea. Here it is:

"Not to be unhappy is unhappinesse
And misery not t' have known miserie;
For the best way unto discretion is
The way that leads us by adversitie;
And men are better shewed what is amisse
By th' expert finger of calamitie,
Than they can be with all that fortune brings,
Who never shews them the true face of things."

If that is true it doesn't matter very much, after all, if things don't always go to our liking, or if we find ourselves tied to a job that seems to afford us less "happinesse" than "miserie". Perhaps it was a matter of some importance that we should have learned a good many of the things that we did, after we had undertaken the contract that has turned out to be our life-work. Again we say, it doesn't matter very much what that work is, provided it does not affect our self-respect. We'll get out of it what we put into it, whether it happens to be running a State University or digging a ditch in our back field.

Nature's Diary.

A. B. KLUGH, M.A.

The Groundhog or Woodchuck.

The Groundhog, otherwise known as the Woodchuck, has a wide range in Canada, occurring from the Atlantic to the Rockies and as far north as Labrador, Hudson Bay and Great Slave Lake. In the Rockies and British Columbia it is replaced by an allied species known as the Hoary Marmot, Whistler, or Siffleur.

The Groundhog is an animal of the open forests, and its chosen habitation at the present time is just at the margin of a wood or copse where it joins a meadow. It rarely wanders further than a hundred yards from its burrow, except when it is seeking a new location for a home, which it apparently does every spring.

Its burrows vary greatly in their complexity. Some have but one entrance and a total length of but six feet. They usually have two entrances and several galleries with chambers at the end of each gallery, in which cases the total length of the galleries may be over forty-seven feet. Most of the entrances have a mound of earth in front of them, but some have not, and in these latter cases the burrow has been excavated from below upwards. The Groundhog is the original inventor of the "dry earth closet," as at the end of its main gallery it has a chamber in which it buries its excrement.

The Groundhog when pursued in its burrow frequently plugs the burrow behind it.

The young are born in a chamber in the burrow about the end of April. They number from two to eight, but usually there are four or five. They are blind for about a month, and do not come out of the burrow until the middle of June. The male seems to leave the burrow prior to the birth of the babies, and to return about the time they are old enough to come out to feed. An observer states that on July 6, at five o'clock in the morning, he saw a family consisting of the parents and eight young out feeding. The mother came out first and called; the father came out, then went back and brought out all the young ones. By the end of August the young are nearly full-grown, and they go off by themselves to dig burrows of their own.

During September the Groundhog is busy storing up a supply of fat to last it through the winter and early spring, and about the last of the month it retires for the season. It passes gradually into the dormant condition known as hibernation, a state which is not like an ordinary sleep, but is a state midway between sleep and death, for during hibernation all the bodily processes are reduced to a minimum. The rate of respiration is far slower than in ordinary sleep, as in hibernation the animal breathes only once every five to nine minutes. The circulation is so reduced that the blood scarcely moves through the arteries and veins, and the heart-beat is so faint as to be almost imperceptible.

The Groundhog awakes quite early in the spring, often before the snow has gone and certainly before its supply of green food is ready, and goes on quite extended trips, as is revealed by its tracks on the snow. The purpose of these trips has not been satisfactorily determined, though it has been surmised that this is the mating season.

This species can, and occasionally does, climb trees. Merriam says: "Woodchucks, when molested, and particularly during their youthful days, often climb up ten or twelve feet in shrubbery and young trees that abound in low branches, and not infrequently scramble up the trunks of large trees, which have partially fallen, or slant sufficiently to insure them against slipping. Occasionally, especially when hard pressed by a fast-approaching enemy, they ascend large, erect trees whose lowest branches are some distance from the ground. But, in order to do this, they must take advantage of the impetus of the rush, for they cannot start slowly upon the trunk of an upright tree and climb more than a few feet without falling. Neither can they stop and go on again before reaching a branch or other resting place."

If caught at some distance from their burrows adult Groundhogs, and more particularly young ones, will turn and put up a fight rather than run away. In such cases they will charge at you again and again, snapping their teeth, growling and biting your boots.

The Groundhog's chosen fare is clover, but in the absence of this it will eat grass, grain or garden crops such as lettuce. They feed mostly in the early morning and in the evening just before sundown.

During the day they frequently lie out in front of their burrows in the sun and sometimes go very fast asleep. Upon one occasion I saw one thus sleeping and approaching quite close and keeping hidden behind a little hillock I dropped a pebble on him. He started, looked all round, and seeing nothing unusual settled himself to sleep again. Another pebble dropped on him was evidently too much of an annoyance, as he descended into his burrow.

When Groundhogs become over-numerous they frequently become a nuisance, not only by their destruction of crops but by the numerous holes they make which endanger the limbs of horses and cattle. The surest way of eliminating them is to pour some carbon bisulphide down their burrows and fill up the entrance. The heavy gas from this liquid will descend to the end of the burrow, and will send them into a sleep from which there is no awakening.

Use the harrows freely on the full-plowed corn land and those fields that will be seeded last.