

The Farmer's Advocate

HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE DOMINION.

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JOHN WELD, MANAGER.

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Europe Through Canadian Eyes.-- 1

Editor of "The Farmer's Advocate":

There is little cause to dread a sea voyage at the present time from fear of seasickness. Among our fellow passengers on a journey to Europe and return only a small percentage felt any qualms of that miserable malady, and even of these very few were sick more than two days. Men seem to be more immune than women. Not more than two per cent. of the men either going or returning were sick, or at least admitted that they were, and they very soon got over it.

In imagination behold us on board a steamship at Montreal, members of a party of 77 gathered from almost every corner of the United States and Canada, taking Cook's Tour No. 2 run in connection with the World Sunday School Convention at Zurich, Switzerland.

It was almost insufferably hot and close getting on board the boat at dusk, but long before we waked up next morning the ship was steaming down the St. Lawrence and there was no more distress on account of the heat. Very much the other way. Until we landed back in Montreal nearly two months afterwards, heavy underclothes and overcoats were almost constantly worn. A gentle hint to those contemplating a trip across the big pond.

We experienced seventeen hours fog—the whistle blowing every two minutes—and two days heavy winds; all the rest of the time very fine weather.

Of the green isle we had but a distant glimpse as we rounded its northern end. The western islands of Scotland looked fine as they loomed up green and neatly tilled through the mists of the forenoon hours. "Bonnie Scotland" is a term that fits the country exactly. The sail up the Clyde from Greenock to Glasgow is a revelation to western and particularly United States eyes. We are so inclined to think that all the business enterprise and go of the world are to be found in America and that the old world is effete and decadent. What a busy scene! Through the energy of the Scotch people the Clyde has been transformed from a winding rocky creek into a tidal channel, whose shores for miles on both sides are but a succession of shipyards. The din of the rivetting hammer is constant. A ship-building yard is not a big yard with a ship being built in the middle of it, but merely the space occupied by the vessel under construction with the scaffold poles on either side, and room

for a man to walk between these scaffold poles and those of the next vessel being built.

Landing at five p.m. at Glasgow how free from vexatious customs regulations did good old Britain seem. Especially so in comparison to Canada and particularly the United States, which we so slavishly imitate. Very few were obliged to open grips or suit cases. The only questions asked were "Have you any liquors or tobacco in your baggage?" Being good Sunday School people, we were, of course, able to look the customs officer in the eye and confidently answer "No."

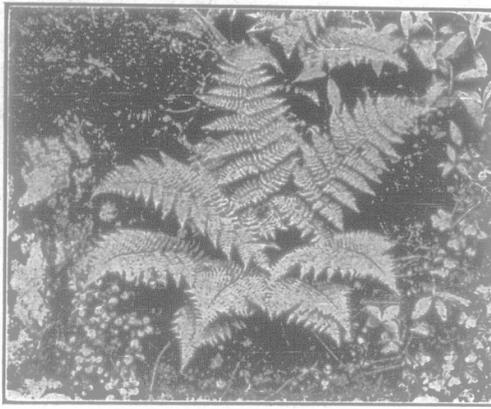
Our railway ride to Edinburgh that evening was through beautiful country splendidly farmed, of which more anon.

At present we must close with this further note, that as the train carried us swiftly across country we were able to see the passing landscape very well until after half-past nine. The time was June 23rd. T.B.

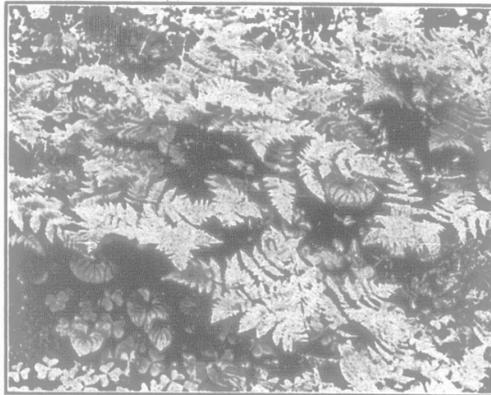
Nature's Diary.

By A. B. Klugh, M. A.

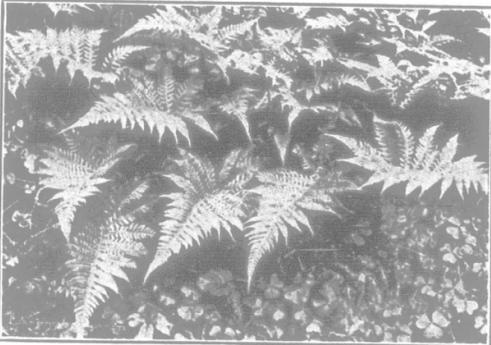
There is a beauty, a delicacy and an elegance about ferns which render them most attractive. They are favorites, not only with the botanist, but with the occasional stroller in the woods.



Spinulose Shield.
Photo Klugh.



Oak Fern.
Photo Klugh.



Beech Fern.
Photo Klugh.

The ferns are interesting at all seasons of the year, when they are uncoiling their fronds in the spring; when they wave in the light summer breezes; and when the evergreen species add a touch of green to the otherwise white woods of winter.

With the poets the ferns have come in for their fair share of attention, and while the poets have made a sad mess of many things in the world of nature they have written some not bad things on the ferns.

For instance, Twamley wrote:—

"The green and graceful fern,
How beautiful it is,
There's not a leaf in all the land,
So wonderful, I wis.
Have ye e'er watched it budding,
With each stem and leaf wrapped small,
Coiled up within each other
Like a round and hairy ball?
Have ye watched that ball unfolding
Each closely nestling curl,
Its fair and feathery leaflets
Their spreading forms unfurl?
Oh, then, most gracefully they wave
In the forest, like a sea,
And dear as they are beautiful
Are these fern leaves to me."

Some apparently unknown pen wrote:—

"Far upward 'neath a shelving cliff,
Where cool and deep the shadows fall,
The trembling fern its graceful fronds
Displays along the mossy wall."

And another:—

When frost has clad the dripping cliffs
With fluted columns, crystal clear,
And million-flaked the feathery snow
Has shrouded close the dying year;
Beside the rock, where'er we turn,
Behold there waves the Christmas fern."

Branch says:—

"Grew a little fern leaf green and slender,
Veining delicate and fibres tender;
Waving when the wind crept down so low;
Rushes tall and moss and grass grew round it,
Playful sunbeams darted in and found it,
Drops of dew stole in by night and crowned it."

The method of reproduction of the ferns was a puzzle until comparatively recent times, and it was assumed that they must bear seed like other plants, but no one could ever find that seed. There was a legend to the effect that anyone who possessed "fern-seed" could walk invisible. And truly enough they could, since the ferns produce no seed.

If you take a frond of the common Spinulose Shield Fern and examine the back you will find (if it be a fertile frond) little round, brownish spots, which are known as Sori or fruit-dots. These consist of clusters of minute cases which contain the spores. These spores when they germinate produce a little flat plant which bears the male and female organs, and from these are produced the fern as we commonly know it.

The Spinulose Shield Fern is a very common but very handsome species, having the most fine-cut fronds of any of our ferns. It is shown in Fig. 1, a photograph taken of a specimen in the New Brunswick woods.

Fig. 2 shows the oak fern, one of our most delicate-looking species. It resembles a miniature bracken, and has fine, shining, black stems. It is quite a common fern in rather dense woods.

In Fig. 3 we have the Beech Fern, a species very common in some localities and rare or absent in others. In the Province of New Brunswick it is one of the commonest species.

Credit Where Credit is Deserved.

Just now that the question of cheap rural loans is engaging the attention of Saskatchewan farmers, there is a somewhat considerable percentage of farmers who think they see in the legislation that may result from the Provincial Commissions' European investigations a cure-all for any and every financial ill besetting them, regardless altogether of what has been the judgment used that occasioned the need of financial aid.

"The sooner this idea is dismissed," observes "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal," "the less will be the disappointment and the easier it will be to inaugurate a workable scheme for cheaper loans to Saskatchewan farmers."

"No sane system can be adopted that will enable the negligent or careless farmer to secure the loans that he desires, and any farmer who up to the present year has found credit hard to secure will find it difficult for the same reasons through whatever system the Government of Saskatchewan may see fit to foster. There are, of course, exceptions.

"While we have been talking about the cheap money secured through the co-operative societies of rural Europe the conditions under which this money is loaned or the insignificance of the amounts loaned to each individual have been seldom mentioned.

"The money of these societies is guarded rigidly by a committee and only loaned to members in the very best of standing. Neither is it loaned for any purpose whatever but the committee states whether or not the purpose suits