

# The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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IN THE DOMINION.

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Agents for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal,"  
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for feed, it will be found that the cost of keeping live stock has increased very materially of late years. "At prevailing prices for feed, says Prof. Day, who is never rash in valuations, "it takes a good cow to leave any considerable margin between the value of her product and the cost of maintenance, provided the foods are charged at market prices."

Just so. And the moral of it is—Give no quarter to the "star-boarder" cow.

## Wages and Progress.

In matters threatening our pocket-books we are all of us prone to think that what has been should always be. After wheat had been up to two dollars a bushel it seemed like ruin to have it sag back to a dollar, or down to sixty cents; yet the decrease in price of wheat and barley was one of the best things that ever happened Ontario agriculture, because it led to a soil-saving system of mixed farming, dairying and hog raising. So with labor. Farmers once accustomed to get all the help they wanted at ten or twelve dollars a month, look aghast at the thought of twenty-five. Considering the former narrow margins of profit they do not see how any can be made at the advanced scale of payment. Probably it could not by the old methods. Therein lies the point. The old methods have had to pass. The cradle, the self-rake reaper, the scythe, the single-furrow plow, and the narrow implements have had to go, or soon will go. Advancing scales of wages have been the prime cause in relegating them to limbo. Dear labor, by creating a demand for labor-saving implements, first of all stimulates invention, and then expands the market for the inventor's creations. Great changes in farm practice have come about in a decade, and others are due. Electricity may be one of the next means of economizing labor in house and stables. Of course, all these means of economy cost money, and with regard to the labor situation itself, perhaps the most discouraging feature is the scarcity of efficient help at any price. Individual offers of tempting wages

do not wholly avail to attract help in such a case, until enough farmers are offering attractive wages and working conditions to divert a volume of labor from the factory to the farm. Even then the effects of gregarious habit, aggravated by a one-sided system of public-school education will operate against the farmer's securing all the help he wants. But this point is aside from our main text. The chief point we are making is that high wages stimulate progress in methods. A writer in the "Scottish Farmer" illustrates this fact in the following paragraph:

"Where labor is plentiful and cheap, agricultural methods make no progress at all. In some parts of the world practices prevail which have scarcely varied for hundreds of years. I have a letter from a country in the East, and although most of us have read the same kind of thing before, I will quote a sentence referring to harvest work which is going on at present:—'The grain is cut with a hand knife and loaded on to a donkey's back, and then taken to the threshing floor, there to await further progress.' Considering everything, the farmer of this country won't stick yet, though workmen should get somewhat scarcer."

## Nature's Diary.

By A. B. Klugh, M. A.

To one accustomed to looking down into the water of lakes and streams the floor of the ocean near shore presents a most interesting sight. As we look down into the clear water we see the large brown Sea Cucumbers with their cluster of feathery tentacles at one end; if we touch one of them with the end of the boat-hook

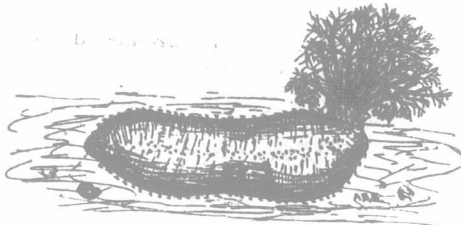


Fig. 1. Sea Cucumber (with tentacles expanded).

the tentacles are slowly withdrawn and the animal then takes on that resemblance to the vegetable which gives it its name. Attached to rocks by their flat bases are the Sea Anemones, with their flower-like rosette of tentacles of various hues—some pink, some purple, some yellow, some orange; touch them and they instantly become mere brownish masses of india-rubber.



Fig. 2. Sand Dollar.



Fig. 3. A Chiton.

Lying on the bottom we see round, flat objects; if we fish one of them up we find it is an animal known as the Sand Dollar, an ally of the Star Fish, which reveals this affinity only in the star-shaped markings radiating from the centre. Adhering closely to rocks with their sucker-like foot are the peculiar animals known as

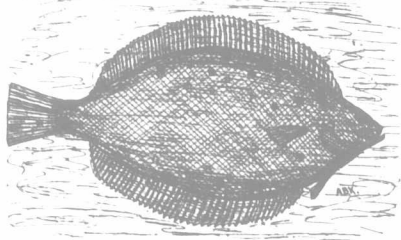


Fig. 4. Flounder.

Chitons, forms which are really allied to the snail, but which look more like Sow-bugs without any head. They are delicately colored in white, pink, and green.

Where the bottom is muddy we see two kinds of fish which look very different from anything

to be seen in our fresh waters. One of these is the Flounder, a flat fish with both eyes on one side. This species has become adapted to swimming on its side, and the side which is uppermost is brown, while the lower side is white. When the Flounder is very young it swims in the usual fish position, and its eyes are placed as in most fishes, but as it grows older it turns on its side and the eye on the underneath side travels round to the other side.

The Flounders are hard to see until one becomes accustomed to looking for them, as they resemble the mud in color and lie partly buried in it. They lie perfectly motionless, but if one touches them, or the mud near them, with the boat-hook, they give a flip and shoot off to a considerable distance.

The other fish commonly found in shallow water on our Atlantic coast is the Sculpin, a fish with an immense head, thus having the appearance of a Chinese dragon. The head also bears several long spines, which add to its ferocious appearance. The Sculpin is colored in black, white, and yellow.

On the bottom we see Starfish of many kinds, the common "Five-finger" red, whitish, or greenish in color, the Sun-star with its numerous rays, which are red, with white-tipped spines, and the richly colored purple stars.

While looking at the bottom we are very likely to witness a sight which will surprise us—a shell moving very rapidly over the sea floor. We may think at first that we have discovered a shell-fish which can move extremely quickly; but we soon make out several red legs projecting from the mouth of the shell. It is a Hermit Crab. This little crab lives in the shells of Whelks and Sea Snails, and has become peculiarly modified, as the posterior part of the body is not protected by a crustaceous covering. The abdomen is quite soft, and has lost all its appendages except the last pair, which are modified into hooks which hold the animal in the top spiral of the shell it inhabits. The front part of the body is protected by a hard covering as in most crabs. The first pair of feet are much larger than the others, and are provided with claws. The first right foot is much larger than the left, and besides the usual functions of capturing and crushing the prey it serves as a lid to close the mouth of the shell. The smaller left claw is shaped to fill out the parts of the opening not covered by the right one, thus making a close fit. The next two pairs of feet are used for walking, which the crab does very rapidly, carrying its house on its back.

As the Hermit Crab grows it is obliged to find a larger shell, and it often tries several before it finds one to fit. If the desired shell is already occupied by a crab inferior in strength it proceeds to take possession by violence. It then carefully examines the empty shell with its feelers and legs, and if it proves satisfactory, the crab withdraws its abdomen from the old shell and darts it quickly into the new one.

## Night Thoughts.

By Peter McArthur.

The question is "Who left the gate open?" Well, I was not the last one through it anyway. What's that? I would probably have left it open if I were? O, very well, but I wasn't the last one through, so there! Anyway, I was the one who had to get up to chase out the stray horses, and because I didn't wait to put on my boots or anything else I had a cold by head and had bid sneezing away. This is the first time I have tried the Kneipp cure which recommends that middle-aged and elderly people should run about in their bare feet on the dewy grass. I don't think much of it. But there seemed to be nothing else for me to do. Three smashing big horses had strayed in from the road about half-past eleven, and I was awakened by their wild rushing around the house. The dog was after them and making things lively. They got mixed up with a loose piece of wire fencing, upset a hen coop with a batch of chickens in it, awakened the ducks, and then stopped in the corner of the lawn to snort and defy the dog. As it was bright moonlight I saw that they were strangers and proceeded to drive them out. By clapping my hands and yelling I so much increased the noise that was being made by the dog that they started around the house in the other direction, snubbed themselves on the clothes line and finally reached the lane and galloped towards the road. In the midnight stillness their hoof-beats sounded hollow and thunderous and they disappeared so quickly that I could understand some of the old ghost stories in which phantom horses disappeared in the twinkling of an eye. One mo-