

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

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JOHN WELD, Manager.

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all grades scrubs. What this cow has done should prove an incentive to owners of grade cattle to take more interest in their herds and improve them just as if they were pure-breds. The pure-bred sire is indispensable in any herd, and the pure-bred herd is indispensable in any county, but the good grade must form the bulk.

Reliable Crop Reports.

Crop reports are of more value to readers than is information about any other enterprise, industry or operation, except, perhaps, war. The sporting page has its patrons, the comic section its devotee, but those who finance, manufacture, buy, sell, govern or rule must needs keep informed regarding crops. Upon the prospects mirrored on the acres of the country depends the whole machinery and financial status of the nation. The kernel of wheat and its innumerable contemporaries which are sown in the spring-time are responsible to a large extent for the industrial activities throughout Canada, but how much more important are the acres of grass that must nourish the 19,190,000 head of horses, cattle and sheep, and to a large extent indirectly sustain over 6,000,000 head of swine.

The wheat crop has a wonderful influence upon activities the world over, because of its availability for human food and the various lines of endeavor made active by its movement; yet other farm crops are quite as important when we consider the enormous significance of the manifold branches of industry dependant on the outcome. The wheels of our factories are now receiving extra oil because conditions in the West are so promising. A bumper crop will bring prosperity to the people, increase their buying power and affect the agricultural and industrial life of Canada.

Climatic conditions are very largely responsible for the aspects in the country, upon which

the prosperity of all other branches of public life depends. How necessary is it then, that those interested in work apart from actual farming should be correctly informed. We have through different departments of our Governments a means of learning how conditions are from time to time, and this information is just as reliable as are the sources from whence it comes. Requests are sent out by the various branches of the Provincial and Federal Government asking for a report on crop conditions. It is the duty of producers to respond accurately and to the full extent of their knowledge.

A bull or bear representative from a large wheat exchange may take a comfortable night trip in a pullman through the country and bring back a report favorable to his own particular interests. He sees to it that such report is heralded throughout the country, reaching both producer and dealer in wheat. This is of a prejudicial complexion, and if the grower would see to it that untainted reports are submitted to the Governments and to the Press, his business would be strengthened while the uncertainty in other branches would be dissipated.

At the Fourth Conference of the Fruit Growers of Canada, held at Grimsby, Ont., last September, the late Robt. Thompson, then Manager of the St. Catharines Cold Storage and Forwarding Co., advocated that the Government should collect information regarding the fruit crop through an unprejudiced representative. Using the cherry crop of 1914 as an example Mr. Thompson said: "I do not suppose there is one man in a thousand in this country who would have admitted that there was a large crop of cherries. The growers do not want to admit that the crop is large, because they have a false impression that if they made such admission the price would be lower, but as a matter of fact it is the other way." The philosophy of this statement is very plain. If consumers expect a large crop and reasonably low prices demand will be increased to such an extent that the revenue to the producer will be far in excess of that when the buying public expect high prices, the grower finds a large percentage of the crop on his hands as the cherry grower did in 1914.

It is the duty and to the advantage of agriculturists to see that accurate crop reports are submitted. Whatever the medium may be through which the information reaches the reader, the producer himself is the most reliable source. May the information be unbiased.

What We Owe

As Canadians at home go about their daily routine of work, worry and pleasure, it is very easy to forget the men in khaki at the front—the men who have made the supreme sacrifice and left father, mother, brother, sister, wife and small children, or sweetheart—men who have put off civilian clothes and put on the King's uniform—men who have left all and risked all that those who remain behind may be safe from the monster which rolled over Belgium leaving nothing but desolation, destruction and death in its wake. Where would we be to-day were it not for the boys in khaki? These men stand between their homes, their families, all Canadians and the grey-clad Prussians who wreak vengeance on innocent and helpless non-combatants, including women and children. The debt those of us who stay at home owe the men who have gone, and are going, to fight our battles can never be paid. It will take more than a patriotic outburst of enthusiasm as the troops swing by to square with those whose lives have been laid down that we may live in peace and plenty, enjoying the freedom they have saved for us. It behooves every stay-at-home to make what sacrifice he can to help our armies in the field—to give some measure of relief to the terrible suffering caused by this awful conflict. If we cannot go we must pay. No amount of money we can give could compare to the giving of a life, an arm or a leg in the cause of freedom and right. The other day a business man remarked that he had given \$400 to the patriotic fund, and while he could ill afford it, according to his own words, he felt that he might have given his only son. He could give the money much more easily than he could part with his son. Quite true, and all should give freely and willingly. Thousands upon thousands have given sons, brothers, husbands and sweethearts, and just now all Canadians should bend every effort to supply all the munitions, all the

comforts, all the encouragement possible to the boys on the firing line or about to leave for the front. When each one does his or her own individual duty the load will be lighter for the fighting heroes. It is our duty to help. All cannot fight, but everyone can help.

Nature's Diary.

A. B. Klugh, M.A.

A bird whose visits to the flower-garden always excite interest is the Humming-bird. The many ways in which this feathered jewel differs from other birds accounts for the interest which it arouses—its dainty sipping of nectar from the blossoms whilst it hovers in front of them, the humming sound made by the tiny wings which vibrate so rapidly that one does not see wings at all only a blur, and the iridescent flashing of its plumage.

In the East we have but one species of Humming-bird, the Ruby-throated, though many people are led to believe that we have two, because of the fact that the male has a ruby throat, while in the female the throat is white. In both sexes the back is green.

The Ruby-throated Humming-bird builds a neat, compact little nest, placing it on a limb, and decorates the outside of the nest with lichens, thus making it very inconspicuous and very liable to be passed over as a knot. In this nest it deposits two tiny eggs. On the Pacific Coast the common Humming-bird is the Rufus-backed, in which the back is copper-red, with a beautiful iridescence. Neither of these species have any song, a sharp and often long-continued squeaking being their only vocal effort.

The other day I ran across one of those floral effects which make the heart of the nature-lover sing. In an open space near the shore of Lake Huron the ground was covered with huge masses of red, white and blue. The red was the Painted-cup, a flower perhaps more intensely scarlet than any other blossom we have. We have numbers of pink, rose-purple, carnine, and deep red flowers but very few scarlet ones. The white was the Fringe-leaved Houstonia, a pretty little, low-growing plant. The blue was the Blue-eyed Grass.



Fig. 1.—Lymnaea.



Fig. 2.—Planorbis.

This latter is of course not really a grass at all, but one of the Iris Family, the name probably originating from its very narrow, grass-like leaves. I took a color-photograph of the scene, so that in the winter days when wild-flowers are no more, I can see it not only in my mind's eye but on the screen.

In shallow water at the margins of lakes and ponds and on the bottoms of pools we find many different species of fresh-water snails. Though there are many species they belong to two main types—one with a long-drawn-out spiral, as shown in fig. 1, and which we may term the Lymnaea type, from the name of the Genus to which most of the species belong, and the other, as shown in fig. 2, the Planorbis type, in which the spiral is practically flat. These snails belong to the Mollusca that Phylum (or grand division of the Animal Kingdom) which includes the Clams, Oysters, Whelks, and all other shell-fish, a group which is represented in the sea by an immense host of species, and which also includes the land snails.

The fresh-water snails feed very largely on green Algae, and are in their turn used as food by a good many species of fishes. Their eggs are found in gelatinous masses, either floating free in the water or attached to the stems and leaves of aquatic plants.

The species shown in fig. 2 is Planorbis campanulatus, the specific name referring to the bell-shaped aperture of the shell. This is a very common species, but there are other species equally common which differ from campanulatus in the shape of the aperture and in the number of whorls in the spiral.

Fig. 1 is Lymnaea stagnalis, the specific name here referring to the character of the water in which it is usually found. Other common species of this genus have shorter spires.

Some day, when we have more observers of the wild life of our country we shall have common names for these common but little-known forms, but at present we have only the scientific names to call them by. And when the study of nature becomes more widely spread we shall have a great agency for keeping the boy, and the girl, on the farm, for those who love to study the wild things will not readily exchange the country with its wealth of life for the "desert" of the city.

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