

The Farmer's Advocate AND 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.

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is published every Thursday.

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Fort Do Not Make Safety.

After countless millions have been spent to construct, and the people of Europe taxed to pay for them, it has been quickly demonstrated that there is no safety in a fortress. A few weeks ago we read that no force could take Liege, that Namur could hold out for an indefinite period, and that Antwerp was absolutely impregnable, and yet they all fell, and the last two in such a short time as to cause the world to wonder. Antwerp, a second Gibraltar, went down after a bombardment of only forty hours. What does it all mean? Simply that the monies spent in piles of earthworks and masonry, behind which the people of the country felt secure, is money thrown to the winds, and the taxed populace after paying the high price for it have no safety. It is folly to think that one man can invent and build something for the destruction of which it is impossible for another man to invent and construct a machine formidable enough. There is no safety in the fortress. There is a way to shake it, and this way has been found in guns. Even guns are not indestructible, and they too are comparatively easily put out of action. What is the significance of all this? It is quite plain that something higher and nobler than fortifications, which are unsafe and unstable at the best, and guns, which are the great destroyers, must work the world out of militarism and war into peace if permanent peace ever comes. There is no use in relying upon so-called impregnable fortifications and the most powerful of big guns for safety. Man must make his safety and his strength from different material and by a different process.

There is a mistaken notion abroad that only persons of leisure and wealth can be artistic. Nonsense! The people of the farm are in closer touch with the beautiful in nature than the idle rich of the cities and towns. No pile of brick and stone compares in charm with the autumn-tinted wood. The seeing eye in the midst of these develops an artistic sense.

Universities and the War.

Few people stop to realize the detrimental effect this war is bound to have, for a time at least, upon the intellectual forces of the world. We have no estimate upon the numbers of men and professors and the most highly educated in their land which have gone to the war from Germany and France, two of the leaders in education, but from the English Universities the toll has already been heavy. Many of the best of the graduates are at the front, and the numbers of students now in attendance do not compare very favorably with those of last year. At Cambridge it is said that there are only 1,500 in attendance at the present time against 3,500 last year. From Leeds University at least 150 students are already in action. Edinburgh has 1,000 below normal in attendance, the medical faculty alone being 450 short. From Pembroke College out of a student body of 270, 200 are now at the front, and in our own universities recruiting is going on. It is estimated that at Toronto no less than 900 students have been formed into a militia body. Truly, the old system is being followed out. The country is called upon to send nothing but her best, and nothing but the best is good enough. The brains of the world as well as the brawn are daily furnishing the endless chain of human food for the cannon's mouth, and all other modern means of life destroyers.

Nature's Diary.

A. B. Klugh, M.A.

Among the Hawks which aid the farmer by destroying injurious rodents is the Marsh Hawk. This bird has a great many phases of plumage, the commonest being a slaty blue and a rusty red, but may always be recognized by its white rump. This species occurs from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and is very common in some localities. The Marsh Hawk feeds mainly on field mice, ground squirrels, etc., but varies this diet with frogs, snakes and an occasional ground-hunting bird.

The little Sparrow Hawk, which is common throughout the Dominion, feeds during the summer months almost exclusively on insects. It does occasionally take a chicken or a wild bird, and for this reason is unjustly condemned as a harmful species. At different times and in various places the makers of the laws have been swayed by popular prejudices, not only to the extent of excluding all Hawks and Owls from protection, but of offering bounties for them. While such a law was in force in Ohio, the township clerk of one village paid bounties for eighty-six Hawks, of which forty-six were Sparrow Hawks. He examined the stomachs of these and found that forty-five contained only the remains of Grasshoppers and Beetles, while the remaining one contained the bones and fur of a field mouse. This was the injurious species which the people were paying to have destroyed.

The Sparrow Hawk is our smallest Hawk, being only from ten to eleven inches in length. The male and female differ a good deal in appearance. The male has an ashy-blue crown, a cinnamon-brown back, a whitish breast, tinged with tawny and usually with a few black spots, a chestnut tail, with a broad black bar near the end, and has black patches at the base of the bill and near the ears. The female has a cinnamon back, with numerous black bars, a buffy white breast with many streaks, a chestnut tail with numerous narrow bars, and she lacks the distinct patches on the head.

All the Hawks which we have so far been discussing, and which make up not only by far the greatest number of species, but also by far the greatest number of individuals we have seen to be beneficial. Now we come to the injurious species, the species whose evil deeds are responsible for the prejudice against all birds of prey. One of these, the Sharp-shinned Hawk, is fairly common; the other, Cooper's Hawk, is rather rare. Both species range clear across the Dominion. Now, how are we to tell these injurious species from the beneficial ones? Firstly, they are neither large Hawks, Cooper's being about eighteen inches in length, and the Sharp-shin about twelve inches. Secondly, they have long tails and short, rounded wings, a characteristic which shows up when they are in flight. And thirdly, they are very rarely seen in the open, but make dashes from cover and back again, not sailing round in the manner of most of the beneficial species.

That the food of the Sharp-shin consists almost entirely of small birds is shown by the fact that out of 107 stomachs examined 103 contained the remains of birds. While the Sharp-shinned Hawk is fairly common in most localities it is not often seen, and the only place where I have found it abundant is at Point Pelee on Lake Erie

during the fall migration. For a few days in September this species is present on the Point in countless numbers, and I have looked overhead and seen a hundred and fifty at one time. Point Pelee is one of the main, and perhaps the main migration highway for the birds of Ontario, and the Sharp-shins seen there during the migration are scattered far and wide over the Province during the breeding season. Before the Sharp-shin migration wave arrives, birds of all kinds are abundant and very much in evidence on the Point, but as soon as the Sharp-shins come all the birds stick so closely to cover that unless one hunts very diligently in the bushes he would think that the Point was almost destitute of all bird-life except Hawks. In spite of this precaution the small birds suffer severely, and little heaps of feathers scattered here and there over the ground mark the spots where a Warbler, Sparrow or Thrush has furnished a meal for a Sharp-shinned Hawk. Olive-black Thrushes seemed to be the most frequent victims, probably because the height of their migration at the Point coincides with that of the Sharp-shins.

From what we have said of the food of our Hawks, we can see that the great majority of them are the allies of the farmer, and that those most frequently seen and shot are really among his best friends. When we come to discuss the Owls we shall see that this is even more true of these nocturnal birds of prey.

THE HORSE.

What of the Farmer's Gelding?

The horse market does not seem to be on safe ground, and buying or selling horses at the present time is rather a risky business. Many geldings are fed off the farms of this country each year, and sold when finished to city buyers to go on the streets as draft horses. We have always urged that any horse not needed on the farm for breeding purposes or for work is a bill of expense and should be disposed of, but that horse should never be sold in low condition, and as much attention can be profitably be given to putting meat on his carcass as upon that of the steer being finished for the butcher's block. It has always been, and always will be, poor policy to offer horses thin in flesh, and not ready to poke their heads through a collar and do a hard day's work. The horse dealer or the city teamster wants horses as hard as nails and in fairly good condition. It does not take long to bring a horse down in flesh at hard work, but it requires months and months to build him up if he is in harness every day.

Owing to the unsettled condition of the market many who have horses to sell may have become a little panicky, and others again may see very high prices ahead as a result of the depletion in the horse supply caused by the war. We would not build too much on either view, but we do not think it would be good business on the part of those who have heavy geldings to market some time between now and next spring to rush these to the sales stables at this time. Things are moving very slowly, and low offers are being made for even the best class of horses. Low-grade animals are hard to dispose of, and prices down toward the unprofitable margin are being realized. The farmer who has one or more geldings in his stable need have no great anxiety about the outcome. If he keeps the horse and puts him in good condition during the winter months when there is plenty of time to feed him up and make him appear to the best advantage before the buyer. It is impossible to forecast what the prices may be before next April, but it is hardly likely that they can go any lower, and we feel sure that they will be enough higher than at the present time to warrant keeping them over winter. One thing is certain, the horse will sell to better advantage if he carries flesh than in the average or thin condition in which most of them are found after a hard summer's work.

There are not too many big, heavy geldings of quality in the country at the present time. The slowness of sale is not due to over supply, but is more largely caused by the general depression in business which has come over the world since the great conflict in Europe began. There has been a cutting down all the way round, and firms and individuals are not buying horses in the same numbers until they see a break in the war clouds, and a chance for the resumption of business somewhere approximating conditions before the war broke out. If the farmer has the right kind of horse he should keep him, unless offered as much as he thinks the animal is really worth. There is always a better demand in the spring, and unless the war goes bad indeed it is almost sure to be better then than now.

If the geldings are kept high prices for feeding stuffs should not induce the feeder to skimp the supply given to the horse in preparation for sale. There can be nothing gained by wintering the animal unless he is placed in good condition when offered next spring. It will not require heavy feeding on oats. If the horse is not working