

## 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.

1. **THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE** is published every Thursday. It is impartial and independent of all cliques and parties. It is handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers, of any publication in Canada.
2. **TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.**—In Canada, England, Ireland, Scotland, Newfoundland and New Zealand, \$1.50 per year, in advance; \$2.00 per year when not paid in advance. United States, \$2.50 per year; all other countries, 12s. in advance.
3. **ADVERTISING RATES.**—Single insertion, 25 cents per line, in advance. Contract rates furnished on application.
4. **THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE** is sent to subscribers until an explicit order is received for its discontinuance. All payments of arrears must be made as required by law.
5. **THE LAW IS,** that all subscribers to newspapers are held responsible until all arrears are paid, and their paper ordered to be discontinued.
6. **REMITTANCES** should be made direct to us, either by Money Order, Postal Note, Express Order or Registered Letter, which will be at our risk. When made otherwise we will not be responsible.
7. **THE DATE ON YOUR LABEL** shows to what time your subscription is paid.
8. **ANONYMOUS** communications will receive no attention. In every case the "Full Name and Post-office Address Must be Given."
9. **WHEN A REPLY BY MAIL IS REQUIRED** to Urgent Veterinary or Legal Enquiries, \$1.00 must be enclosed.
10. **LETTERS** intended for publication should be written on one side of the paper only.
11. **CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**—Subscribers when ordering a change of address should give the old as well as the new P. O. address.
12. **WE INVITE FARMERS** to write us on any agricultural topic. We are always pleased to receive practical articles. For such as we consider valuable we will pay ten cents per inch printed matter. Criticisms of Articles, Suggestions How to Improve "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine," Descriptions of New Grains, Roots or Vegetables not generally known, Particulars of Experiments Tried, or Improved Methods of Cultivation, are each and all welcome. Contributions sent us must not be furnished other papers until after they have appeared in our columns. Rejected matter will be returned on receipt of postage.
13. **ADDRESSES OF CORRESPONDENTS ARE** CONSIDERED AS CONFIDENTIAL and will not be forwarded.
14. **ALL COMMUNICATIONS** in reference to any matter connected with this paper should be addressed as below, and not to any individual connected with the paper.

Address—THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE, or  
THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (LIMITED),  
LONDON, CANADA

stirs itself it can do a great good during the winter of 1914-15, and can reap all the benefit from the work, which will train speakers as well as impart valuable information. The opportunity is open. Will you avail yourselves of it? Do your own Institute work, and in conjunction with your District Representative keep up the agitation and education for better farming in your county—the kind of farming that will increase production.

### Nature's Diary.

A. B. Klugh, M.A.

A snake which is common along the borders of streams and ponds in Eastern Canada is the Water Snake. It is often termed "The Black Snake," but this name properly belongs to quite a different species, a species which is very rare in Canada. The Water Snake is universally detested and believed to be very poisonous, but is in reality quite harmless. If surprised it will, if possible, make at full speed for the water, but if cornered, it will strike at its enemy, though its bite is not as deadly as that of a cat, as it is entirely unprovided with fangs or venom. The Water Snake feeds entirely upon fishes, and frogs. Many yarns are current as to the huge size attained by these snakes. I have been told of specimens fifteen and seventeen feet in length, but such stories are mere fabrications. A large specimen may reach a length of four and a half feet, and I have heard on good authority of one which measured five feet, but this is the limit of length for this species. The color of the Water Snake is pale brownish, crossed by wavy dark brown bands on the forward portion of the body. These bands are much broader on the back, causing the back to appear dull brown, crossed by narrow lines of pale brown. On the posterior portion of the body the bands break into the blotches, of which there is a series down the back and another series on the sides, in alternation with those above. The abdomen is spotted with red and black. The Water Snake is viviparous and has from twenty-two to forty-four young in a brood.

A wide-spread but entirely erroneous idea in regard to one of our fairly common snakes is expressed in its name—Milk Snake. The snake is commonly supposed to suck cows and to consume such a quantity of milk that the yield from the cow sucked is materially lessened. Now, how such nonsense can ever be believed is hard to understand. In the first place would any cow

quietly allow a snake to suck her in spite of the prick of its teeth? In the second place a large-sized specimen of this species can hold in its stomach not more than two teaspoonfuls of liquid. Would this quantity be missed at milking time? I have searched for years for someone who has actually seen a Milk Snake sucking a cow. I have found but one person who declared that they had. One day while walking along a backwoods country road I fell in with a boy and we came across a dead Milk Snake lying in the road. I asked him why it had been killed. He replied, "Because they sucks the cows." "Have you ever seen one doing it?" "Oh! yes, lots of times." "How do they do it?" "Oh! they coils round the cow's hind leg, grabs a tit, and sucks till they're full." "Don't the cows mind?" "Don't seem to mind a bit." I told him that I wished he had a photograph of this scene. Now, it seems to me that this boy had an imagination so vivid that with very little training he would make a writer of thrilling romances or "stories" for the yellow journals.

Far from being detrimental to the interests of the farmer the Milk Snake is really a very beneficial species, as it feeds almost entirely upon mice and rats, and it is consequently a species which should be protected around the barn and outbuildings instead of stoned or clubbed to death. This snake is oviparous and deposits from eight to eleven eggs, which have a leathery skin, and are about an inch and an eighth in length and half an inch in diameter. The eggs hatch in about two months. The young snakes on hatching out are about eight inches in length, and three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter at the thickest part of the body. Daymond L. Ditmars records a remarkable two-headed young individual of this species, which lived for about a year and attained to about two-thirds the length of an adult specimen. It was fed upon young mice, and the two heads had energetic quarrels for the prey, though both throats led to a single stomach. In progressing there was a tendency for the two heads to disagree, and locomotion was slow and erratic. The movements of the two heads were entirely independent of each other, while one would be gazing about with quivering tongue, the other might be perfectly still.

A snake which is found in South-western Ontario, and is variously known as the Blowing Adder, Puff Adder, Flat-headed Adder, and Spreading Viper, is one of the greatest "bluffers" to be found in the animal kingdom. When surprised it takes a deep breath, flattens the head and neck until the latter becomes fully three times its normal width, hisses loudly and strikes repeatedly at its enemy. But it is all a huge bluff, as it possesses no venom, and even if the hand be placed within its range it never bites. If this maneuver does not frighten off the enemy, it then "plays dead" in a remarkably realistic fashion. Suddenly opening its mouth, it appears to lose all its strength, a convulsion passes over it, ending in a spasmodic wriggling of the tail, then turns on its back and lies limp and to all appearances dead. It may even be picked up and hung on a fence where it will remain limp and motionless. In only one way does it manifest life—if it be placed on its abdomen it instantly throws itself on its back, and once more goes limp. It seems to think that a snake to appear dead must be on its back. As soon as the enemy withdraws it "comes to life" and makes off at its best speed.

### The Outlook.

By Peter McArthur.

It is a great thing to be a farmer—just a farmer. No matter what happens the farmer's work will always be needed. As far as the necessities of life are concerned he need not worry, and after all, does anyone need much more? He can be sure of food, shelter and clothing at all times, and in all ages that has proven the soundest kind of wealth. Unless war overruns his fields and destroys his crops, cattle and buildings, he is beyond the reach of want, and even if this does happen he can soon recover what he has lost. Another seedtime and harvest will put him on his feet again. It is well to have these facts in mind at the present time when governments and business organizations are so completely bewildered by the calamity that has overtaken them. Whoever may be worrying, the farmer need not worry. He may rest secure in his lowly position.

"Where down below the gulfs of storm  
There is eternal lull."

Of course, if the farmer has ventured into business and has been a speculator he may not be able to realize on his dreams, but if he still has his farm he has no cause to complain. And the real farmer—the man who is just a farmer—will probably benefit by the adjustments that seem inevitable in the business world. If there is an enforced revaluation of the world's wealth that will put an end to inflated values and drain the water out of watered stocks, the farmer cannot

help benefitting. In producing his crops he renders a service to the community and service will always be of value. It is the men who have devoted themselves to taking profits and acquiring special privileges who will suffer in this "world revolution," and if such men are forced into productive occupations it will be better for them and for everyone else. Now that the worst that could happen to our civilization has happened, the one thing that remains for us to do is to begin laying plans for a better civilization. There is a chance for a civilization in which service will be the important thing, and not profits, and in establishing it the farmers will have more to do than anyone else. Their work is the foundation of every civilization, and if they do not allow themselves to be frightened or stampeded they can work wonders. The farmer of to-day is not the farmer of the past, and in that fact lies the hope of the world.

\* \* \* \* \*

The farmer of to-day is to all intents and purposes an educated man. He can read and write and think for himself. Moreover, he is a free man, jealous of the rights of freedom. In the past it was not so. In the days of Greek and Roman civilization the actual tillers of the soil were slaves. Up to a couple of generations ago it was practically the same in Europe. Now it is different. In all nations except Russia the heaven of education has penetrated the whole people. This is a fact that the war-lords and money-lenders have overlooked. When the present war is over, and governments weakened by the terrible struggle try to resume control, it is inevitable that their educated and thinking subjects will ask questions and insist on having an answer. They will want to know why war was declared, and why the money was produced to carry it on. The autocrats and money-lenders will find it hard to answer these questions, and the autocrats may find it impossible to regain their power or the money-lenders to collect their debts. The world cannot pass from the tyranny of the military autocrat to the tyranny of the money-lender. One depends on the other, and both must go together. Then the world can begin a new civilization such as has not been.

\* \* \* \* \*

The case of Canada is different from that of Europe, but we too shall have an opportunity to move forward. Up to the present time we have not been crushed by armaments, and the obligations we are assuming are being assumed of our own free will. It is our duty to help protect the Empire under which our freedom has been developed, but when that is done we can readily resume the arts of peace that we have laid down. It is quite true that our commercial and financial organizations are involved in this struggle, and that far-reaching changes are in sight, but we need not fear them. Canada is above all things an agricultural country, and its greatest wealth consists of the products of the soil. On a last analysis wheat, corn, grain of all kinds, cattle and horses are truer wealth than gold, and with a country capable of producing these in unlimited quantities we have little to fear. The coming adjustments will all be financial and commercial, and if we do not lose our heads we can shape them so that they will rid us of

"The social lies that warp us from the living truth."

We must see to it that when made the changes will give us service for service, and that neither force nor fraud can take unearned profits. The wealth producers of Canada, the farmers and laborers, outnumber by thousands to one the wealth takers, and in the end they are bound to rule. For the present they can go on with their work of wealth-production, and assume an attitude of "watchful waiting" while the financiers and captains of industry strive to extricate themselves from the difficulties into which they have been plunged. Their troubles are less due to the war than to their own profligacy and arrogance. The war merely brought their wild courses to a crisis. Their sails were all set for fair winds, and now that the storm has overtaken them must expect disaster. They would not listen to reason when there was time for reason, and now they should not complain. Up to the present everything possible has been done by the Government to tide them over the crisis, but if further assistance is needed it must be given with caution. As free men we cannot allow the war scare to fasten on us permanently evils under which we were beginning to chafe in times of peace and prosperity. Our party leaders set us a notable example of non-partisanship, and they cannot complain if we follow it should they attempt to resume business on a partisan basis. Surely we can show ourselves to be as broad-minded as they were. It was by taking advantage of our partisanship that the beneficiaries of special privilege worked their will in the past. It will be by being as non-partisan as our leaders that we shall rid ourselves of them for the future. There has never been a time in the history of the country when it has been so necessary for farmers to give their best thought to