

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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DOMINION.

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prominence it deserves, and not subordinate it to soil fertility and live-stock husbandry.

Pay For Milk by Test.

One of the anomalies of agriculture in Ontario is the hesitancy in adopting quality payment for milk in the face of rising values for milk and milk products. In 1916 a "Dairy Standards Act" was passed, but, like so many other products destined for a more favorable market, it now reposes in cold storage. At the recent convention of Eastern Ontario Dairymen it was shown that adulterations of milk more than doubled during the past year. One man sold \$550 worth of water, and his license, in the shape of a fine, cost him \$50. Another man netted \$300 after paying a similar fine. Does this indicate that in a time of greatly enhanced prices for dairy products, the dishonest farmer is to be encouraged while the careful dairyman, whose skill has resulted in milk pure in quality and above the average in fat content, shall be penalized for the benefit of his more careless and indolent neighbor? Does it mean that farmers do not want to be paid for their work on a basis of quality, or does it mean that heretofore the Government has been afraid to trust to the desire for honesty and fair dealing by the masses? Quality is urged for all farm products, but the majority of men will not produce quality in their business unless they are paid for it; and especially not if they are penalized for it.

The present Act may need revision before enforcement, but payment by test is right, sound and fair in principle, and the necessary revision should be made. Those interested should be called together and an Act devised which can be enforced. Some factories in Eastern Ontario have paid by test for many years. Market milk in many large centres in the United States is paid for on a butter-fat basis. It can be done in Ontario, because it is being done. It should be done because it is right and fair, and means improvement in the quality of our dairy products.

Some Scotch Yarns.

By SANDY FRASER.

One day last week I was lookin' through some auld papers an' trash that I had in a box that has been doon in the cellar since I dinna ken when, and I cam' across a wee book that, by the looks o' it, must hae come oot frae Scotland wi' some o' the first settlers. I hae been lookin' through it noo an' again since, whenever I had the time, an' some o' the things I've found in it are not to say vera bad, in their way. As the auld wumman said when she read the dictionary; "They're bonnie stories although they're unco' wee."

For instance, one o' the first I read was an illustration o' the thrifty habits o' some o' our auld ancestors. A wee laddie, whose parents had died, was living wi' his uncle, who was one o' these auld chaps that hae brought economy doon to a science. One day a friend cam' to the hoose, bringing wi' him his English greyhound. As soon as the little lad saw the dog he ran to him an' pittin' his arms around the animal's neck he says to him: "Oh doggie, doggie, dae ye live wi' yer uncle too, that ye're sae thin?"

Along the same line was another where one man asks his neighbor's hired man gin the dog his master kept was a greyhound. "Oh, I guess so," returned the other; "ony dog wad get to be a greyhound around here."

Then there's quite a few stories about the preachers. This is the way one o' them always started in to perform the marriage ceremony. "My friends, marriage is a blessing to a few, a curse to many, and a great uncertainty to all. Do you venture?" If this warning was wi'oot effect he wad say: "Then let us proceed."

Another minister used to pray for rain, or dry weather, or whatever his congregation thought they needed for the good o' the crops at the time. Once, after a lang wet spell, when a wind was needed to dry up the grain for the harvest, he prayed in this way: "O Lord, we pray thee to send us a wind: no' a rantin', tantin', tearin' wind, but a noohin' soughin', winnin' wind." Na doot he got what he wanted after such plain directions as that.

They must hae been a pretty lang-winded bunch, these auld Scotch preachers, I guess. It seems that some o' them wad talk for a couple o' hours on one text and then, after singing an' praying, they wad look up another text an' preach for twa or three hours on that. One wee lassie, that the book tells about, was sae tired an' hungry at the beginnin' o' the second sermon that she got her grandmother by the hand an' cried out: "Come awa' granny an' gang hame; this is a lang grace an' nae meat."

Noo an' again a meenister wad try giving the same sermon the second time, when he wad be feelin' like takin' a rest for a week, or so nethin' like that. But it was unco hard to fool a Scotch congregation that way. They had a guid memory for an auld sermon. They used to call it "cauld kail het again."

But they had considerable respect for their preachers juist the same. Another story I found in the book proves that. It seems that a certain minister was makin' his rounds, callin' on the members o' his congregation. He cam' to one place where there was naebody in the hoose, but on further investigation he found the man an' his wife oot at the barn where they were fanning some grain in the auld-fashioned way wi' a sort o' round sieve, or "riddle" as they were called. When the man saw the preacher at the barn door he stopped his wark an' stepped forward to welcome the visitor. But by accident he put his foot on the edge o' one o' the riddles, which immediately turned up an' hit him a crack on the shin. This made him pull up pretty quick an' start rubbing his leg, instead o' pavin' his respects to the minister, who, seeing the pain the other was in, started to express his sympathy. But the man kept on rubbin' his leg an' twistin' his face intae all sorts o' shapes, until his wife, kenning mair about human nature than did the preacher, said: "Noo, meenister juist gang ver wae intae the hoose an' we'll follow when he's had time to curse a wee whileie. I'll warran he'll sune be weel eneuch."

There's ony amount o' these "preacher" stories in the book. Here's one mair o' them. A minister was talking to one o' his church elders an' says he to him: "I suppose, John, that ye could preach a sermon versel' by this time." "Oh, na sir," replied John, "I couldna preach a sermon, but maybe I could draw an inference." "A'richt then," returned the other, "I'll try you. What inference would you draw from this text, 'a wild ass snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure'?" "Weel sir," says John, "I wad draw this inference, she wad snuff a lang time afore she was get vera fat on it."

In this story the man is called a clergyman, but they weren't above makin' a joke at his expense, for a' that. Dr. McKnight, his name was. It seems that, in coming to the kirk one Sunday, he had been caught in an unco heavy shower o' rain an' got soaked tae the s'kin. When he got intae the vestry he began complainin' tae the beadle, an' says he, "Oh, I wush that I were dry; do you think I'm dry; do you think I'm dry eneuch noo?" "Dinna fash versel', Doctor," says the beadle, patting him on the shoulder. "Ye'll be dry eneuch when ye get intae the pulpit."

Here's one mair, in which the minister gets the best o' it. The Reverend Mr. Dunlop was walkin' up Main Street in Dumfries one day when he was accosted by a couple o' young men who had planned to "tak' a rise" oot o' the "meenister". "Maister Dunlop, hae ye heard the news?" said one o' them. "What news?" "Oh, the deil's deat!" "Is he," says Mr. Dunlop, "Then I mair pray for a couple o' faithless bairns."

There's ony number o' yarns o' this kind that I could be giving ye, but I guess maybe ye've had enough for the present. Perhaps ye can stand this one to

finish off with. It's a meenister that tells it, sae na doot it's true. He happened to overhear some men talking in a railway station not far frae Glasgow. The argument was about Nelson's signal at Trafalgar when he said, "England expects every man will do his duty." "It's an unco thing," says one o' them, "that he hadna a word for auld Scotland." "Oh, that's a'richt," answered one o' the ithers. "Nelson only said 'expects' o' the English, he said naething o' Scotland, for when it cam' to 'duty' he kenned the Scotch wad do theirs."

Nature's Diary.

By A. BROOKER KLUGH, M. A.

This is the season of the year when the tyro in nature lore has a chance to make a beginning in the reading of trails and tracks. This study of trails is extremely fascinating and from it much concerning the habits of many animals may be learned, much indeed that cannot readily be learned in any other way. Many of, in fact most of, our predaceous mammals are nocturnal, so that except for an occasional lucky incident, we see but little of their mode of life. But when the white mantle of winter lies over woodland and field they leave impressed upon it the record of their wanderings and their actions, and he who follows may read. And not only the predaceous mammals but also many of the vegetarians among the quadrupeds are out and about, and to paraphrase "Little Bow-peep," they leave their trails behind them.

The ability to read a trail correctly, like everything else, comes only with practice. The expert will see and interpret many things which to the uninitiated are impenetrable. The reading of a trail and our knowledge of the animal that made it go in a circle—the more we know of the habits of the animal the better we can interpret the trail, and the more we practice the reading of the trail the better we know the animal.

The value of the knowledge which we acquire from studying tracks in the snow is by no means confined to the winter, but is, on the other hand, particularly useful at other times of the year, when a little stretch of mud or sand, a little patch of moist earth or a piece of clayey road, may bear prints which will give us a good deal of information, if we possess the skill to detect and interpret them. I have in mind a bit of sandy beach beside which I camped for six weeks, and on which I found records of fox, bear, otter, mink, skunk and raccoon, though we never caught a glimpse of any of these animals in the vicinity of the tent.

The more attention we give to trails the more prone we become to notice, almost unconsciously, any trace of an indication that an animal or a man has passed that way. If we are much in the woods, sooner or later our training is almost certain to be a great, perhaps even vital, service to us. The following of a trail in which fairly distinct tracks are left at very close intervals is naturally not a hard matter, but it is quite another thing over ground where no distinct tracks at all are left and where one has to go by the displacement of a bit of foliage here—the presence of a snapped twig on the ground there—the turning over of a few leaves here, and so on. The ability to follow such a trail with certainty is no tyro's job, and can only be done by those who have spent the greater part of their life in the open.

Speaking of following an obscure trail reminds me of a very useful tip to remember if you should happen to be lost in the woods, without a compass, when the sun is not visible. If you knew the position of the sun you could of course tell with a fair degree of accuracy the points of the compass, since you know approximately even if without a watch, the time of day. To find the position of the sun, choose as open a spot as you can find, place your knife-blade, point downwards, on your thumb nail and turn it slowly round. As you turn the blade you will see the reflection of the steel on the polished surface of your nail. Watching this reflection carefully from all sides you will find that while the blade throws a reflection on three sides, there is one position in which it will throw nothing but a shadow—obviously the sun is on the other side. Try it out at the first opportunity, so that you may be used to it when you really need it. Of course if you haven't a knife—well, a man who goes into the woods without even a knife deserves to be lost! To be able to determine accurately the points of the compass by the sun and a watch is often useful. The rule is to point the hour hand at the sun, then half way between the hour hand and 12 o'clock is due south.

The Chickadees and Nuthatches are blithe little birds which remain with us throughout the winter. Tie a few bits of suet or fat meat in a tree for them and you will not only have the joy of watching their appreciation of your bounty, but they will remain about the place and spend more time hunting up hibernating insects and their eggs than in eating the suet.

Word reaches me that in certain portions of southwestern Ontario, particularly in the Niagara Peninsula, a large species of hare, previously unknown in Ontario, has appeared. It is reported as so numerous in some localities as to be a menace to crops, and is said to prefer the open fields to the woods and thickets. I have so far not been able to get any definite information concerning this animal, and I should be extremely glad if any reader of "The Farmer's Advocate" who shoots one of these large hares would communicate with me. While I should be interested in any information concerning it, I particularly wish to know if it turns white in winter and if the ears are longer than the head, as measured from the extreme back of the head to the tip of the nose.