

perience we had years ago with the "Highway Cow," the one who was named after the poem I asked for a couple of years ago and which was promptly furnished by several readers of "The Farmer's Advocate." Her stunt was pushing down rail fences with her nose. On one occasion she broke into a clover field and stuffed herself until she bloated. We put a gag in her mouth and she "rifted gas like a torn balloon." When she was finally empty we turned her into the orchard so that she could get rest and recover from the shock. Just as soon as our backs were turned she walked across the orchard, let down a fence and filled herself to the Plimsoll mark with half-ripened wheat. She was the limit, and the red cow when compared with the old "Highway" is an anaemic degenerate.

Having spoken of ducks in the previous paragraph let me tell you something about them. They were about the last thing on the farm that I would think of educating but I find them very apt pupils. Along in February they began to lay eggs in a dissipated way all over the place. We would find them in snow-drifts, on the ice in the old creek bed and all over the barnyard. In order to remedy the difficulty we were told to pen the ducks every night and not let them go out in the morning until they laid their eggs. A pen was prepared and I began in a resigned way to drive in the ducks every night. Ducks cannot be driven like other creatures. You can't hurry them. By nature they waddle along slowly and if you try to hurry them they begin to flap their wings. They cannot fly and their wings merely lift them off the ground so they lose their toe-hold and practically stop or fall over. If you crowd them they dodge between your legs and make all kinds of trouble. After I had mastered the secret of driving them—shooting them along slowly I settled down to penning the ducks every night as an added chore, but to my surprise it soon became unnecessary. After being driven to the pen a few times they learned what was wanted of them and went in themselves every night so that all I had to do was to close the gate of the pen so that they could not get out too early in the morning. They proved easier to train than anything else on the farm. I wonder why some vaudeville actor has not tried a sketch with trained ducks. It would be far more taking than a turn with trained dogs or seals or anything of that kind. Here is a chance for Prof. Dean to exercise his dramatic talents and make the fortune needed to back his dairy drama.

[Note—All Mr. McArthur's inquiries have been covered at various times in "The Farmer's Advocate." To take the pulse of a cow; stand at the left side, reach over the neck and take it from under the right jaw. The normal pulsation should run from 45 to 50 per minute in health. For over-eating the best treatment is to withhold feed (but not necessarily water) and give a brisk purgative of oil. If there are symptoms of bloating add turpentine. An ordinary cow should be given four ounces spirits of turpentine in a pint of raw linseed oil or sweet milk, repeating the dose two or three times if necessary at intervals of a half hour or less. In cases that are not extreme the turpentine will generally neutralize the gases and no further treatment will be necessary when there is no sign of bloating a pint and a half of oil may be given alone but it is not bad practice to add a little turpentine as a precaution.—Editor.]

### Nature's Diary.

By A. B. Klugh, M. A.

The voice of one of our most beloved musicians of spring now rings out in our thickets and fields. It is the song of the song sparrow. The day may be gray, snow may even be flying in the air, but when the song sparrow sings it is spring. Many birds sing in a dreamy way, not so with the song sparrow, he puts his whole heart into his song.

The songs of different individuals of this species all, or nearly all, belong to one type, so that we can easily recognize the species by the song, but there is an infinite variety among them. So well marked is this variety that one soon learns to tell individual birds by their song, for the song of each individual is always the same. Round my cottage at Puslinch Lake three male song sparrows lived, and I could tell by their songs where each bird was at any time when they were singing. These three birds had a regular route they followed day after day for weeks, and they followed each other in pretty regular order. One would perch on the woodshed, sing there, fly to the fence in front of the verandah, sing there, fly to the fence to the east of the cottage, sing there, fly to a little tree at the corner of the cottage, sing there, fly to the edge of the woods at the bottom of the garden, sing there and then repeat the round. The other two would follow, selecting the same perches, so that the three were nearly always singing from as

many points of the compass. This route was gone over by each bird from eight to twelve times a day. I said that nearly all song sparrows' songs belong to one type. I have in mind one which differed widely. It was a bird which lived in the centre of a large sphagnum (peat) bog—a rather unusual habit for a song sparrow. Its song had the three high opening notes all right, but after this, in place of the complicated warbling trill of the usual type of song, there was a low trill on two notes.

The song sparrow often goes by the name of "gray-bird", a name it shares with many other birds. It may always be recognized by the streaks on the sides of the breast and the dark blotch in the centre of the breast.

The song sparrow is worthy of our affection, not only because of its familiarity and its cheery song, but because it does no harm to agricultural products, but on the other hand consumes great quantities of weed seeds and numbers of injurious insects. It has a partiality for cut-worms, grasshoppers, weevils, click-beetles (parents of wire-



Song Sparrow.

worms) and crickets. It eats the seeds of a large number of weeds, consuming particularly large quantities of the seeds of several species of knot-weed or smart weed (polygonum) which are often troublesome weeds in damp places.

In the autumn the song sparrow does not go very far south, as it winters from Illinois and Massachusetts to the Gulf States. I have once seen it in Ontario in winter. On January 18th, 1904, I saw one at "The Rocks" on the river Speed, near Guelph. It was feeding on the seeds of the maple-leaved goosefoot, which was abundant there.

Another welcome spring arrival is the bluebird, the little bird which carries the blue sky upon its back. Its soft note drops to us as it flies over-high in the air.

This is one of the birds which will avail itself of a nesting-box in the orchard—if the house sparrows are kept away from the box—and it will repay the attention of consuming numerous insect pests.

The bluebird belongs to the thrush family, a fact one would hardly suspect from its plumage, as most of the thrushes have spotted breasts. Though the adult bluebird does not reveal the "family connection" in its plumage, look at a young bluebird and you will find the characteristic spotted breast.

The groundhog has awakened from its long sleep, and is now busy hunting up "early greens."

The spirit of spring has stirred the chickadee into frequent and enthusiastic utterance of his beautiful minor song, moved the white-breasted nuthatch to veritable volleys of "quanks" and started the golden-crowned kinglet out on its migration to the great North land, now released from the bondage of ice and snow.

### A Supervisor of Cow-testing for Ontario.

The Dairy Commissioner, J. A. Ruddick, announces that N. W. Coleman, who has been recorder for the Lanark Dairy Record Centre during the past two years, has been promoted to the position of supervisor of cow testing for the Province of Ontario. Mr. Coleman has shown special aptitude for this kind of work and has made a success of the Record Centre in Lanark.

Joseph Burgess, who has been supervisor in Ontario for several years, will be required hereafter to give more of his time to cold storage work. The administration of the Cold Storage Act, which is assigned to the Dairy and Cold Storage Commissioner, involves a lot of travelling for the purpose of inspection.

Dr. F. Torrance V. S., Veterinary Director General for Canada, informs us that a ministerial order has been issued prohibiting, for a period of three months from April first, 1913, the shipment into Canada of cattle from Great Britain, Ireland and the Channel Islands, on steamers carrying horses from Continental Europe.

### Horseshoers Want License Legislation.

The Master Horseshoers' Association of Ontario, held their second annual convention in Toronto, Monday, March 24th, with about 160 delegates present from the various provincial branches. The main topic discussed was the matter of special veterinary training for, and the licensing of, horseshoers. What the association would like to do is to get a bill passed by the Legislature making it law that every horseshoer must pass an examination and obtain a license before he can work at the profession. To prepare apprentices for this examination it was suggested that a special course should be provided at the Ontario Veterinary College covering more especially the anatomy of the legs and foot of the horse, common diseases of these caused by defective shoeing, injury, etc., and best methods of relieving these troubles through shoeing in a proper manner. The proposed legislation is only to affect apprentices and is not to apply to men already in the business.

There is little doubt but that harm is sometimes done horses by bad shoeing. Anything that will serve to raise the standard of this work in the country will be appreciated.

The natural outcome of the getting of better service is likely to be higher prices for the work but if these are not made exorbitant the horse-owning public will welcome the day of better horseshoers. People do not mind paying for a good thing. However the legislation has not yet been passed and some of the horse-shoers hold out little hopes of it being put through in the near future. The proposition is worthy of consideration but should be thoroughly looked into before being made law.

The report of the Association's organizer showed 2,644 to be the number of shops in Ontario employing 4,000 men and 237 apprentices. The Association has sixty-five branches and the officers are: President, George Church, Hamilton; 1st Vice-President, Fred King, Aylmer; 2nd Vice-President, Rodger Cropp, Simcoe; 3rd Vice-President, T. R. DeGreers, Toronto; Treasurer, C. A. Ostrander, Tillsonburg; Secretary and Organizer, E. Devlin, Tillsonburg.

### Co-operation Among Farmers.

A practical demonstration of the successful working of co-operation among farmers, of a given district, is seen in the County of Simcoe in what is known as the Smithvale Club, an organization effected last year through the instrumentality of James Laughland, B. S. A., District Representative of the Department of Agriculture, at Collingwood. This farmers' club started its organization with a membership of fifty, and has now grown to nearly the hundred mark. Meetings are held bi-monthly at which, after the general routine of business, questions of general interest are discussed, and debates on various subjects or addresses by members is the order or proceeding. Interest in these meetings is indicated by the large number present on every occasion, and much benefit has been derived by the members through the interchange of ideas in the various topics of interest to themselves. Co-operation in the purchase of supplies, seeds, corn, etc., is one of the big factors of this club, and is of very material financial benefit to the members. Another strong factor is the periodical gathering of the members for stock-judging contests. It was the privilege of the writer to be present at one of these contests a few days ago, held at the splendid farm of David Smith, Smithvale. The contest was conducted by Mr. Laughland, assisted by J. C. Steckley, B. S. A., District Representative in Newmarket, York Co. There was a large turnout, and the interest manifested showed the members were there for information. Shorthorn cattle, Leicester sheep and Yorkshire swine were supplied from the noted herds and flocks of Mr. Smith, Clydesdales from the studs of Wm. Laughland and R. Smith. Shorthorns, sheep and swine were most ably demonstrated by Mr. Laughland and Clydesdales by Mr. Steckley. After the usual descriptive lecture on the ideal to be attained, the members took a hand in the judging of the various animals, which, with their explanation of reasons for their decisions, made a most interesting and profitable afternoon for all present. There is scarcely a district in Ontario, or probably in any of the other provinces, but what could very profitably take a lesson from the Smithvale Club, and the Scotch descendants of Simcoe County.

H. VANZANT.

### Best on the Continent.

I take three other agricultural papers, two Canadian and one American but none of them are in the same class. They do not fill the bill like "The Farmer's Advocate."

Durham Co., Ont.

W. E. JEWELL.