

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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buyer of fat cattle is to the packer. Such expert selection of feeders would take the guesswork out of the first and most important step in feeding."

The packing business, like that of farming, is a business of small margins on the amount of goods handled. Unlike farming, however, it has been signally profitable—through specialization. This specialization extends even to buying on the yards as well as to the division of labor in the curing plants. Rarely does the man who buys cattle buy hogs or sheep, and a degree of expertness is thus secured that is the wonder of the uninitiated and the foundation of the success of the packing business. The farmer who sees the market through the press and visits it once a year to sell or buy a load of live stock cannot know it like the man who is there from day to day. A small saving per pound in buying or an equal gain in selling may and does mean much to the farmer whose single buy or sale often determines his yearly labor income. Co-operative live-stock shipping associations can well serve a doubly useful purpose in providing expert facilities for buying as well as for selling. Only the occasional man is experienced enough to get the most out of the market. Joined together, the members of a club or shipping association could effect a considerable saving. Fortunately such a marketing service is already available to some extent in Ontario through the Live-Stock Department of the United Farmers' Co-operative Company. The man who can sell, however, is not necessarily the man who should buy, because the considerations are not altogether the same. Specialization on the market as well as between the farm and the market will, we believe, result in greater satisfaction for the feeder.

Make an Occasional Holiday Possible.

The holiday idea is taking stronger hold upon the farming community, and rightly so. In days gone by rural folk have been loath to leave the fields for a day or two in the city, or a week at some summer resort. In many cases it is impossible to leave the farm even for a twenty-four-hour period, owing to having no one to look after the milking and chores. Consequently, year in and year out the farmer and his family have toiled

incessantly to produce the necessities of life. The advent of the automobile to the farm has changed things. After the chores are done in the morning the family can soon be miles away from the daily scene of their activity and spend a day in visiting or in pleasure beside some lake or river. This has an educational value, as new ideas and new impressions give one a different viewpoint on their own work. An effort might advisedly be made on every farm to relieve the entire family from work for a few days at least during the summer months when nature is at her best. If all cannot go at once, then arrange to go in relays, or volunteer to do a neighbor's chores while he and his family are away so that he may in turn relieve you. In every home provision should be made for the mother to have a real holiday away from the daily routine of work. The father gets away on a business trip, or at least he comes in contact with new scenes more frequently than the mother, but far too often it is the mother who plans for the children's comfort and sacrifices her own pleasure. Let the husband, and children, if old enough, plan on giving mother a real holiday this year and we venture to say that those who do so will be amply repaid for any sacrifices made. No matter what occupation one is engaged in a change of scene is beneficial to both mind and body. "Haven't time" is not a good excuse for not taking a vacation. A person constantly engaged in any productive occupation cannot afford not to get away and see what others are doing.

A Trip Westward.

By SANDY FRASER.

Force o' circumstances an' the C. P. R. are takin' me oot tae the "wild and woolly West," an' it's only fair that I should be sendin' ye a word as to my progress an' impressions. It's about as easy writin' on a movin' train as it is walkin' uphill on roller-skates, but I'll dae my best.

I've been travellin' towards the "land o' the settin' sun" for nigh two days now, and my opinion o' this "Canada o' ours" isn't much to brag about at present. I can juist shut my eyes an' see a succession o' rocks an' spruce swamps an' poplar trees passin' before them, wi'oot end. We're livin' in an unco' big country, but there's an awful lot o' it that wad hardly be suitable for a garden. They say that Nature never lets anything go to waste, but I'm afraid she'll have to soon show us what the biggest part o' the land lyin' between North Bay an' Winnipeg is good for if we're goin' tae continue tae believe in her household economy. Maybe we'll be mining the rocks and be growin' cranberries in the swamps some day, but it will be a while I'm thinkin'.

Weel, it's weary wark, this travellin'. I'm that tired sittin' on a soft seat that I have half a notion, at times, to be gettin' off the train an' runnin' behind for a spell. I need the exercise, all right, but at the same time I want tae get the worth o' the money I paid for my ticket oot o' the C. P. R. The first mornin' on the train I wakened at half past four, as usual, — can't get over a bad habit in a minute, I guess. There was some satisfaction tae think, however, that I was puttin' space, at the rate o' forty miles an hour, between me an' the coos that I had been in the custom o' milkin' at that time o' the day. Through time I'll not be wakenin' up sae early, I hope. This mornin' it was seven o'clock when I got my eyes rubbed open. Every time the engine stops an' starts again it gives everything sic a jerk that it's a wonder that naebody gets put oot o' the neck. At night it jars ye awake so I suppose ye sleep all the better between times. There ought to be a fortune in it for the mon that can invent a way for a train to start wi'oot makin' ye think somebody hit it wi' a sledge-hammer. It don't do tae hae yer head too close to the top o' yer bed at night. Ye're liable to be raisin' mair than hair on it, gin ye do. But on the whole, the C. P. R. deserves all kinds o' credit for puttin' this road through when it did, even if they did use all the half-decent land there was for layin' their track on. It must hae taken some courage to get that first survey finished.

One thing travellin' through a de'il-forsaken country like this does for ye is to make ye appreciate the privileges ye had back home. I'll observe Thanksgivin' Day next fall if I see Glengarry again. It's something tae be thankful for that one is livin' in Auld Ontario, after all. A little way back, before we cam' tae Fort William, I saw an Indian encampment in the bush beside the C. P. R. tracks. I had an idea that the Indian was about a thing o' the past, alang wi' the buffalo, and I guess his time is short all right, for at the camp I saw this mornin' one o' the braves was cutting the wood for the breakfast fire, or maybe it was the chief o' the tribe. I can see the beginnin' o' the end when the squaw start to claim "equal rights," an' mak' the men work.

Fort William is a town that looks like business, I'll say that for it. And there is some scenery around about it that makes up for the lack o' that some further east. There's not much money in scenery, maybe, but the right kind rests yer eyes when ye've been seeing nothing but poplar trees for what seems to ye like three weeks. Those grain elevators at Port Arthur an' Fort William are quite an institution in their way. To see those round grain tanks at a distance makes ye think ye are coming to one o' the auld Roman temples wi' their pillars an' such like. They'd make grand silos those grain tanks only it wad

take some time tae fill them wi' an ordinary silage cutter an' a six-horse engine.

At the present time o' writin' (if the hieroglyphics I'm makin' can be called writin') we're headed for Winnipeg, over country that's improving a wee bit in appearance, but aboot which the less said the better, even yet. The "magnificent wheat fields of the West" aren't showing any greater indications o' puttin' in an appearance. I'll write ye anither letter in a few days givin' ye further particulars o' my progress, that is, gin I survive the efforts o' the engineer on this train to bring me tae an untimely end. I'm thinkin' he must be a retired cow-boy wi' the idea in his head that he is still ridin' some bucking broncho on the Western plains, judging from the way he handles that locomotive. She's rearin' an' plungin' in great shape just noo, a' richt.

Nature's Diary.

By A. BROOKER KLUGH, M.A.

FISH CULTURE ON THE FARM.

On a good many farms there are areas which are of no use agriculturally but which may, without undue expense, be made available for fish culture.

In some cases an existing pond may be enlarged and otherwise improved for fish-raising, in other cases an area of swampy ground may be excavated and turned into a pond, while in other situations an excavation may be made near a stream and part of the water diverted to supply the pond.

There is one vital consideration which must be very carefully taken into account in the construction of any pond, and that is to make sure of a sufficient supply of water at all seasons. Many such projects have failed because of neglect of this factor. There must be enough water to maintain a high water level even in the driest seasons, and a sufficient depth of water to preclude the danger of all the water becoming too hot in summer, or freezing to the bottom in winter.

Some sites which might strike one at first as being suitable are not really so. Such a site is along a stream in a deep, narrow valley, as in such a place there is always the danger of disaster from flooding, with the resultant loss of fish and damage to the banks of the pond.

Extended flats or swampy places make the best sites. In such a place one is nearly always assured of an abundant supply of water, there is little danger of over-flows, and there is usually an abundant growth of aquatic plants which add much to the value of the pond.

The size of the pond, and the depth of water it is possible to secure, will depend very largely on the location, and these factors will in turn determine the species of fish it is best to use in stocking the pond. If the pond can be made of fair extent, say two or three acres, with water not less than ten feet deep in places, and if the pond is spring-fed with cool, clear water, it is suitable for the culture of the Small-mouthed Black Bass—one of the best of all fishes, both as a game fish and as food. If it is of smaller extent, but of fair depth and with clear water, the Yellow Perch, or Speckled Bass may be used. If the pond is fairly large, but with a muddy bottom, a fish which will do well and will yield a good supply of food, but nothing in the way of sport, is the introduced German Carp. Any pond, large or small, deep or shallow, as long as it has a soft bottom, will suit that hardy species the Common Catfish, a fish which is really of much higher quality as a food-fish than is generally conceded. Sometimes it might be desirable to cultivate two or more species in the pond, but this is a matter which requires careful consideration and a good knowledge of the food-habits of the various species. It is rarely wise to introduce the poorer kinds of fish into a pond in which the better kinds will thrive, and if Black Bass will do well, no such fish as Carp or Catfish should be introduced as they are well-known spawn-eaters.

In making a pond particular attention should be given to the construction of the banks, and where the banks are built up on existing turf it is very important to see that all grass, weeds and roots are removed, and that the earth is well broken, as this allows the earth of the banks to assimilate with the foundation, leaving no seam for seepage which often leads to serious leaks.

If a pond is quite large and Black Bass are to be raised, there should be a gravelly shoal at some distance from the banks, for use in spawning. Over this shoal there should be a depth of about two or three feet of water. There should also be patches of water-plants to which the fishes can retire. It is also necessary to see that there is plenty of natural food, such as minnows, crayfish and frogs.

The bottom of a pond should be completely freed of snags, logs, boulders and other obstructions, for it may be necessary, at some time, to seine the pond, an operation which is rendered ineffective, if not impossible by the presence of such objects. At the height of the desired water level there should be drain-ways to carry off surplus water from heavy rain-falls, and the openings of these should be screened with fine-mesh netting to prevent the loss of small fish.

A mistake which is made by some of those who attempt fish-culture is over-stocking. Thirty pairs of Black Bass or Carp or a hundred pairs of Speckled Bass, Rock Bass, Perch or Catfish to the acre is a good estimate.

It is naturally important to see that there are plenty of aquatic organisms in the pond to furnish an abundance of food. Crayfish, minnows and frogs may be introduced, and it is desirable, at the time that the young fish are hatched, and are beginning to feed, to supply some very finely-chopped crayfish meat or fish.

When the fish are spawning they should be disturbed as little as possible.

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