

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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good reputation Now it is all important that we make an effort to set up such a standard for meat products that Canada will be a factor in the forthcoming competition of nations. Boost the grain-bin cross and let the blood-cross go on doing its good work in the improvement of our herds and flocks.

Stay With the Game.

Reports are current that many farmers in Ontario are liquidating their live stock and getting rid of even the breeding stuff, upon which the future strength of their herds and flocks must depend. We can easily understand why such action would, at first sight, appear proper, but when one takes the whole situation into consideration, grave doubt as to the wisdom of this course must arise. Naturally, one would not invest heavily in hogs or cattle at this time to feed unless he has plenty of grain and roughage to market through live stock. On the other hand, he who sells himself short of breeding stock is likely to be disappointed when he sets out to fill his stable or pens again next year. The "getting-back" may lose him just as much money as he made "getting out." The starting period of a herd or flock is never so profitable as later on when thoroughly established. Fewer sows are being bred this fall than has been the case for a long time. Considerable anxiety seems to exist in regard to this phase of live-stock farming, but unless the signs all fail hogs will "come back" and still be as good a paying proposition as there is on the farm. One can get out of hogs very quickly, but good prices may come and go before one is able to get stocked up again. Whatever may happen it is not a good plan to dispose of breeding stock and leave the future a blank. Farming cannot be so conducted.

The larger fairs, most of which are now over, have been well patronized this season, both in regard to attendance and exhibits. There was also noticeable a certain atmosphere of progress and prosperity which, if it be real, augurs well for the future of the country. History is made each year at these exhibitions, and those who contribute, if only in a minor way, are doing something for the good of the nation.

Another Chat With Duncan.

BY SANDY FRASER.

I hadna seen auld Duncan McGregor for quite a lang spell till last night, when he cam' across the fields to borrow a hay-knife, as he said. But I'm thinkin' that Duncan wis gettin' a bit lonesome, what wi' livin' alone as he does and then bein' about through wi' all the wark o' the hayin' an' harvest beside.

He was a guid man in his day, was Duncan. Many's the crop he has pit in the barn wi'oot ony ither help than his horses, and that before the time o' hay-forks an' grain-slings an' the like. He used to throw off every load by hand, the maist o' it over the top beam o' the barn. When it wad pile up too high for him he wad climb on to the mow an' roll it back, and so on till the barn was full.

One winter he had an auld aunt o' his keepin' hoose for him. She used to look after things for him while he wad be away threshing for the neebors. Duncan had one o' these tread-power, two-horse threshing outfits at that time and he wad aften be away frae Monday mornin' till Saturday night. Sae it wis up tae him to provide the auld lady wi' what wad keep her goin' the week, in the way o' stove-wood an' ither supplies. So I've seen Duncan get up on Monday mornin' (or maybe it was Sunday night) and gae oot to the bush wi' his team for a load o' wood. He would cut doon some o' the trees that were no' too big and mak' them into sleigh-lengths and tak' a load o' them hame. Then he wad get tae wark an' chop an' split it all up small enough for the stove. By this time he wad have to be thinkin' o' startin' for the place where he had left his threshin' outfit on Saturday night. And I've known him to get there sometimes, after daein' all this wark at hame, before daylight an' before the folks at the hoose wad be oot o' bed.

Sae last night, when Duncan cam' over an' got to talkin' about things in general, I managed to get him switched on to the track that I kenned wad tak' him off in the direction o' the lumber-woods an' to the auld days in shanty that he remembers better than he does the days o' last week.

After he had told me a few o' his stories I said to him; "but tell me Duncan, dae ye think ye ever made ony money by goin' awa' frae hame in the winter-time that way? Wages were mighty small in the auld days", says I.

"They were that", replied Duncan. "I guess it must hae been experience I was after. That's about all I got onyway. However, it's something that stays with a chap, which is mair than money will be doin'." The first year I left hame wi' my team, Sandy," went on Duncan, "I didna clear a red cent. I worked for a jobber, up the river a little way, and if ye've ever had onything to dae wi' one o' these fellows that has contracted to get oot so mony thousand feet o' lumber for so mony dollars ye'll ken that he didn't pay me ony mair than circumstances made necessary. I was keen to get on the job an' I guess he saw that, for he says to me, 'I'll gie ye seventy-five cents a thousand feet for all the logs ye will haul to the landing. But ye must supply yer ain oats for the horses. Bring in a load wi' ye when ye come.' 'All right,' says I, 'it's a bargain.' What like a bargain it was didna strike me until later on."

"As soon as the first snaw came I rigged up my sleighs an' loaded on about fifty bushels of oats an' started for the shanty o' my friend the jobber. I got there all right but frae that time on my luck wasna with me. It started to snaw the day I started to work an' I canna say for certain, but I think, sae far as I can remember, that it kept it up all the rest o' the winter. If the snaw wisna comin' doon oot o' the sky it was driftin' across the road frae west to east or frae north to south. And me drawin' logs at so much a thousand feet. Ye can see where I was gaein' to come oot at. There were days when I couldna get half a thousand feet to the landing, a'thegither. I mind one day on the way back to the shanty one o' my horses got off the road intae the deep snaw and pulled a shoe. I tried to find it but I couldna mak' it oot. It cost twenty-five cents in those days to get a new shoe put on a horse an' I can remember thinkin' that there was my day's pay lost in the snaw an' the horses wad have to get their oats juist the same.

"But we got the logs oot at last an' then it was to get them measured sae that we could get oor pay. They say that gin ye expect little it's little ye will get, so that's maybe why the boss handed me over fourteen dollars and sixty-five cents for my share o' the spoils. I took it wi'oot a word and went off to figure oot my profits. Fifty bushels o' aits, says I, at thirty cents a bushel will come tae fifteen dollars. Fourteen sixty-five for my work leaves me not mair than thirty-five cents in the hole, that is gin I dinna count that horse-shoe I lost."

"Sae that's the way it has been wi' me an' my warkin' for ither, Sandy" concluded Duncan, "an if there's ony moral tae the story ye're welcome to tak' what warnin' ye can oot o' it."

"Weel," I replied, "the moral I would tak' frae your experience, gin I were in your place, wad be that it's a fool thing to be warkin' for ither when a fellow has a chance to wark for himsel'. Gin ye have onyheid at all ye might better be rinnin' yer ain business an' gettin' all there was in it. I've tried leavin' hame once or twice mysel', in the winter time, an' lettin' ither look after my live-stock an' the rest o' the ranch, an' I never did it but I lost money by it. It wad aye tak' mair than the wages I got on the ither job to straighten oot things at hame when I got back in the spring. So I'm thinkin' that if a man has a business o' his ain, especially if that business happens to be along the line o' farming, he

canna dae better than stay right by the job till the last coo comes hame an' the time comes for him to quit for guid. Frae all I've seen or ken there's naething ever made by jumpin' frae this tae that an' back again."

"Ye're right, Sandy," says Duncan, lookin' around for his hat an' the hay-knife, "no mistak', ye're right. But I may as weel tell ye that I'm thinkin' o' gaein' up tae the woods again this winter, providin' I can get some young chap, or one o' the neebors, to look after the stock till I get back."

Nature's Diary.

A. B. KLUGH, M.A.

The Wild Life of a Thicket.

During the past few days I have been making a somewhat intensive study of the fauna and flora of a thicket on the shore of Lake Missanog, in the north of Frontenac County, Ontario. The main trees in this thicket are Poplar, Paper Birch and Cedar, and the chief shrubs are Alders, three species of Willows (the Glaucus or "Pussy" Willow, the Beaked and the Shining), the Canada Blueberry, and the Bush Honeysuckle. Of herbaceous plants there are a great many species, the predominating ones being the Bracken, Bunch-berry, Wild Lily-of-the-Valley, Twin-flower, Clintonia, Star-flower, Doybine, Rugose Goldenrod, Canada Goldenrod and Umbellated Aster.

In investigating the fauna of this thicket the first thing that strikes one is the great abundance of insect life. In the soil, under the dead leaves, on the herbs, on the foliage of the shrubs and trees, in the trunks of dead trees, and flying about overhead, are hundreds of species of insects. As in most habitats, the ants are the predominating insects, small ants which make little crater-nests in the sandy soil, larger species which tend aphids on the stems and leaves of various plants, and the largest of our ants, the Black Carpenter Ant, which makes galleries in dry dead trees and logs.

Locusts of several species abound in the thicket, the three commonest species being the Red-legged Locust, the larger Two-striped Locust, and the large Carolina Locust with its black wings margined with yellow. Two species of black crickets—the Large and Small Field Crickets—are very common, and there are many Meadow Grasshoppers and Katydid among the taller herbs and the foliage of the shrubs.

On the stems of the Alders and Willows are two species of Tree-hoppers, peculiar little insects, somewhat triangular in form when viewed from above, which hop long distances when disturbed. They have long beaks by which they suck the juices of the stems, and the females lay their eggs in slits in the bark which they make with their sharp ovipositors.

On the Willows are numerous kinds of galls produced by different species of insects, one of the commonest and most easily recognized being the Pine-cone Willow Gall, which is found at the tip of a branch and bears a resemblance to a pine-cone. This gall is formed by the leaves which develop from a terminal bud growing into mere scales, while the internodes of the stem fail to elongate. Another common gall is the Willow Pea Gall, which takes the form of numerous yellowish spheres, the size of small peas, on the underside of the leaves. There are also many other galls on the Willows, which are very favorite plants with the gall-forming insects, but they are not so readily recognized and most of them have no common names.

The flowers of the Goldenrods and Asters attract large numbers of insect visitors—chiefly bees, wasps and flies. Of the bees there are many species, among the more conspicuous being three species of Bumble-bees. Of the flies many are Syrphus Flies, some of them brilliant in their metallic coloration, while others resemble bees and wasps very closely, so closely in fact that a careful scrutiny is necessary before one is sure that they may be handled with impunity.

Flitting about are numerous species of butterflies—the Spangled Fritillary, Camberwell Beauty, Red Admiral, Clouded Sulphur, Tortoise-shell, American Copper, Wood Nymph, Little Silver-spot and the Fawn, and several species of Dragon-flies.

The commonest amphibian of this habitat is the little Spring Peeper, a diminutive tree frog, a little over half an inch in length with an oblique cross on its back. It has, like all the tree frogs, sticky disks at the end of its toes by means of which it can adhere to the trunks of trees and to leaves. Its squeaking notes, which differ considerably from its spring-time song, are a common sound, particularly in damp weather. The somewhat larger Common Tree Frog also occurs, and its rattling notes are frequently heard. The Leopard Frog, Green Frog, Wood Frog and Northern Frog are also found in the thicket.

The birds of this habitat are not very numerous as to species, the chief ones being the Chickadee, Wilson's Thrush, Oven-bird, Robin, Hairy Woodpecker, Flicker, Red-eyed Vireo and Whip-poor-will, the latter two being the only species which are in song at this time of the year.

The mammals of the thicket are the Chipmunk, Red Squirrel, Deer Mouse, Varying Hare, Common Shrew and Short-tailed Shrew.

The above is not by any means a complete list of the plants or animals which occur in this thicket, they are merely the commonest and most conspicuous, but the enumeration of them serves to show the great abundance of wild life which may be observed by an intensive study of a very limited territory.

Fall plowing and the winter hauling of manure go a long way toward solving the labor problem."