

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

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A Backward Season.

A backward season in the spring means rush for the farmer until the crops are harvested in the fall. Last year the weather was exceptionally favorable and the seed went in without a hitch. One operation seemed to follow another in logical order, and with little or no outside help farmers produced and harvested a remarkable crop. The volume of the harvest last year was taken as an indication by many people, unacquainted with rural conditions, that the agricultural industry was gaining in strength, and that farmers were capable of producing much more from the land than has been the custom in the past. Circumstances are vastly different this year. Seeding has been belated; grain was sown past the time when corn should be planted, and seed for the latter crop went into the ground at a rather late date. It is hard to catch up once we get behind the way we have this year. There are many cases where the land was worked while yet unfit, but from all appearances it was not an unwise move to get the seed in, where possible, even under unfavorable circumstances.

There are still fields that were too wet to seed, or where the grass got beyond control, and there are low spots where the seed never came or the young plants have been drowned out. These should not be abandoned and allowed to grow up with weeds. Buckwheat, which can be sown almost any time this month, will keep the weeds in check, and the grain will furnish a substitute for oats or barley or serve to mix with them. Millet is another crop that will furnish a very good roughage for cattle, and it, too, can be sown this month. Japanese Panicle is the best variety to sow early, but if seeding is delayed until the last of the month perhaps Hungarian Grass would give a better yield. Swede turnips should not be forgotten, for with a little extra labor a field of roots will furnish succulent roughage that cannot be excelled even by silage. Partial summer-fallow, followed by rape, will clean a field and furnish very good pasture for cattle, sheep or hogs later in the season. Make a war on weeds, and do not allow any fields to lie neglected through the summer months.

Duncan's Toast List.

BY SANDY FRASER.

Ye'll mind I wis tellin' ye aboot bein' over at Duncan McGreggor's the ither day an' what like a sermon he preached to me before he remembered that he hadna given his horses their dinner an' went off tae the barn, leavin' me sittin' beside the stove smokin' my pipe.

When Duncan cam' back he started in again wi'oot loss o' time. "Talkin' aboot prohibition an' that sort o' thing," he says, "reminds me o' what seems noo like the best time o' my life. I suppose the last few years hae been juist as useful tae me in a way, seein' that I should hae a wee bit mair sense noo than when I wis young and as a consequence be in a better poseetion to mak' use o' my time. But it's the same wi' a man as it is wi' the colts an' calves an' lambs that we will be raisin' on the farm, I'm thinkin'." While we're young we will be tearin' around, kickin' up oor heels an' feelin' as though this world wis a guid enough place to live in for aboot a thousand years, an' then some, maybe. But as we get aulder we cool doon quite a bit an' we begin to learn a thing or twa frae all the hard knocks we hae been gettin', and it's a pretty thick-headed sort o' an individual that hasn't been sobered doon an' had some common-sense pounded intae him by the time he has to quit here an' start in on the next round, wherever that may be.

"Hooever, I like tae be thinkin' an' talkin' aboot the auld times, an' I find it's one o' the best ways o' forgettin' the worries o' the present. Ye may think we wasted a guid many hours o' valuable sleepin' time in drinkin' toasts tae oorselves an' oor friends and tae 'bonnie Scotland' and sae on, but it wis a great way to promote sociability an' friendship. Ye can say that for it."

"I suppose, Duncan," says I, breakin' in on his moralizing, "that ye were sometimes hard put to it tae find objects enough to serve for all the toasts ye wad want to be drinkin'?" I've heard of some queer things in that line at several o' the banquets an' celebrations that my auld uncle used to be tellin' aboot. He wis quite a gay lad in his day, too, I used to be thinkin'. He used to say that when the company had drunk to everything they could think of they wad aye go back to the auld stand-by an' ilka person wad drain their glasses to 'the land o' cakes,' which wis anither name for Scotland, as ye may ken."

"Weel, we used to drink to the health of quite a number o' things in the course o' an evenin', sometimes," returned Duncan, "but I canna recollect that we ever ran oot o' subjects an' quit drinkin' on that account. Sae lang as the drink didna rin oot we were a' richt."

"The first 'toast' wad generally be 'to oor noble selves' and everybody could drink tae that, ye may be sure. Then someone wad get up an' raise his glass to the day when we wad hae 'mair friends an' less need o' them.' Or to 'them that loves us, or lends us a lift.' One auld chap I mind of used to always bring up this one: 'to thumping luck an' fat weans.' And anither one he had wis 'here's health to the sick, stils to the lame, clathes to the back an' brose to the wame.' And anither that I remember wis, 'to them that willna wish us weel, may the deil rock them in a creel.'"

"One that we used to drink tae oorselves noo an' again ended up wi' 'and may the mouse ne'er leave oor meal pock wi' the tear in it's e'e,' and a second somethin' the same; 'may we ne'er want a friend or a drappie to gie him.'"

"I suppose," I said, "that when ye had a wedding in the place that ye would hae a few toasts fittin' for the occasion."

"Oh aye," returned Duncan, "or a funeral or a christening or anything like that. There wisna a celebration o' any kind that we didna hae something tae fit it. At one wedding I mind o' this one being given; 'to a cozy but an' a canty ben, to couthie women an' trusty men.' And then anither along the same line; 'to the ingle neuk, wi' plenty o' bannocks an' bairns.'"

"I ken well that this health-drinkin' business wis carried a wee bit too far in those days," went on Duncan. "However it wis intended to create guid feeling among friends an' neebors and maistly it did. This reminds me o' one mair. 'To the day we are climbin' the hill o' fortune, and may we no' meet ony friend comin' doon.' Ye can see there is a considerable amount o' good-will in it all, Sandy, at ony rate," said Duncan, stoppin' for a meenute to light his pipe.

"Oh aye," I replied, "while the effect o' what ye were takin' lasted there wad be guid will enough. But what aboot the next day? Dae ye mind o' ever havin' a wee headache or anything like that?"

"Oh aye, I've had my experience," said Duncan. "There's always twa sides tae ony story, especially the one wi' a drink in it. Onyway that's a' a thing o' the past and ye willna find those sort o' doings in the Auld Land to-day. If Scotland isn't what they call 'bone-dry' altogether, it's gettin' nearer it ilka year. What sociability there is there noo ye will find maistly over a cup o' tea. Not entirely, of coorse, but there's not the whiskey drinkin' there noo that there wis once upon a time. It's like a story I mind o' hearin' one time aboot a 'drinkin' party that took place at Castle Grant, not far frae my ain auld hame. As it got on towards mornin' an' maist o' the guests were gettin' to have aboot all they could absorb, a couple o' Highlanders were on hand, by order o' the Laird, to carry these drinkers up-stairs tae their beds, it being taken for granted that by no ither means could they ever arrive at their sleeping apartments. But one or two o' the party, for some reason or ither, were able to walk a little and made oot to get up-stairs wi'oot help, much to the surprise o' the attendants. 'Weel, weel,' said one o' them, 'what-ffer is the world comin' to. It's sair changed times at

Castle Grant when gentlemen can gang to bed on their ain feet."

"Sae ye see, Sandy," concluded Duncan, "what kind o' an opinion they had o' the prohibition mov ment in Scotland aboot a couple o' generations back."

"Yes," says I, gettin' up an' puttin' on my cap. "I guess they didn't bother votin' on the subject in those days. Beer an' wine wad be poor consolation for some o' those auld chaps, I'm thinkin'."

"It would that," replied Duncan. "It was in time they died."

Nature's Diary.

A. B. KLUGH, M.A.

We have in Canada two species of Chipmunks, the Common Chipmunk, *Tamias striatus* of the east and the Little Chipmunk, *Eutamias quadrivittatus* of the west. The former is about 9½ inches long and ranges from the Atlantic to Manitoba, the latter is about 8 inches long, always carries its tail bolt upright, and ranges from Manitoba westward.

The Common Chipmunk is a species of the deciduous forest, and in regions where the forest has been cleared away, it inhabits the stone-piles, stone fences, the brushy borders of fields, and such patches of woodland as remain.

The home range of the Chipmunk is of very limited extent, Seton placing it at about two acres.

This species lives in burrows which are perpendicular for the first few feet, then horizontal for some yards, and then rise to a chamber a foot or so high and two feet in diameter, which is carpeted with soft grass. There is never a pile of earth at the entrance to these burrows, and in many cases this is accounted for by the fact that the Chipmunk has dug the burrow by tunnelling in at some point some distance away, and driving the tunnel to the surface at the point which is now the entrance. It then fills up the hole through which it started the tunnel, and which has a pile of earth about it. In some cases it is believed that the earth has been carried away in the cheek-pouches, but as far as I know no one has ever seen a chipmunk thus transporting the earth. In fact, common as this little animal is, there is a great dearth of observations on its exact procedure in burrowing, and if any of my readers have seen chipmunks thus engaged I should be very glad if they would communicate their observations to me.

There are galleries off the nest-chamber which are used for the storage of food.

The main food of the Chipmunk consists of nuts, acorns, berries and the seeds of various plants, though it also eats insects and occasionally snails, flesh and bird's eggs. In the spring I have noticed them digging up and eating sprouting beechnuts.

Its name *Tamias*—a steward, one who stores and looks after food—is well deserved, for this little animal lays up great stores of provisions. It stores nuts of various kinds, acorns, seeds of various plants. I have also noticed it storing the fruits of *Rubus villosus* the Thimbleberry, and observed one individual thus engaged for four days, carrying them from a patch of canes of this plant to its burrow. It happened that my tent was just beside its burrow, and we noticed that Thimbleberries were disappearing from a pile of this fruit which we had gathered, and set on the camp shelf. We shortly discovered that the thief was our little striped neighbor, who evidently thought this fine accumulation of berries was for his special benefit.

This species can carry large quantities of food in its cheek-pouches, as they can accommodate about a dozen hazel-nuts, four acorns of the white oak, or half a pint of seeds. It sometimes makes temporary hoards in some convenient place and then removes the food stored in them to its main granary at its leisure.

It uses these stores in the late fall, before it becomes dormant, and also in the spring when Chipmunk food is scarce.

The young, which number four or five, are born in the nest in May. By June they are sufficiently grown to make short excursions out of the burrow. By August they are full grown, but they appear to remain in the parental burrow to hibernate.

In the spring and particularly in the autumn the Chipmunk becomes musical. It sits up on a log or stump and utters its "Chonk-chonk-chonk-chonk" notes for considerable periods at a time. Both males and females join in this chorus, which resounds in all directions through the woods.

The time at which the Chipmunk hibernates depends entirely on the weather. If heavy frosts come in September it retires beneath the ground then, but if warm weather continues until the end of October it postpones its hibernation until the end of that month, and in southwestern Ontario it is occasionally seen as late as December in unusually mild seasons. The Chipmunk is not arboreal to any marked extent, but can climb trees with comparative ease if the occasion demands, and often does so to secure nuts or to escape an enemy.

The chief enemy of this species is undoubtedly the weasel, as this blood-thirsty little beast is able, with its long lithe body, to enter the Chipmunk's burrows, and if it finds a family at home it kills them all. Foxes and hawks also take their toll of this species.

There were great things claimed for the future of back-yard gardening, but the outcome seems to be that the majority of urban dwellers are content to let the farmer do the farming. It was not such a gloriously exhilarating pastime as many suspected.

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