

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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THE DOMINION.

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Agents for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal,"
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prison walls spring up and vice versa. A real live, industrial home located in the broad expanse of the country would economically combine education and training with employment that would make it a very light burden to the country. Who says we could not afford it when millions of dollars are being sent to other countries in a charitable way, and thousands of dollars are expended annually entertaining our home-manufactured criminals? Why not expend the same money on the child and give him a chance to avoid a future of misfortunes? The life of a city depends upon infusions of country blood to keep it healthy. Children from unnatural urban homes could be reared in the healthy environments of a country life and be returned to the city if they so desired, a stronger race and able to take their place on a level with more fortunate individuals. Fewer congested centres, larger metropolitan areas with more industrial schools for children, would check one of the most prolific sources of poverty, degeneracy and crime and erect a wall of protection around the lives and property of our countrymen.

Nature's Diary.

By A. B. Klugh, M.A.

During the thaws which occur in the latter part of winter and in the very early spring, if we take a walk beside a stream we are very apt to find, in the soft snow, tracks somewhat as shown in the figure. These reveal that a raccoon has awakened from its winter slumber and has taken a nocturnal walk. The raccoon lays on a store of fat in the fall and then usually sleeps fairly soundly during the first part of the winter, though an old one is liable to be out and about at any time. But as spring approaches, it only requires a little mild weather to bring them out of their retreats, only to retire again when another cold wave comes on. It will be noticed that the raccoon in walking leaves only the tracks of the hind feet, this being due to the fact that it places its hind feet on top of the tracks of its front ones. When it bounds or jumps along, however, it leaves the tracks of the hind feet in opposite pairs and

those of the front feet one behind the other, between and just behind those of the hind feet.

This species makes its nest in a hollow tree, or in a cavern under a ledge of rocks. The young are born in April or May, there being from three to six in a litter. The family remains together for about a year, by which time the young are full-grown. The nest is usually near a stream, for not only is the raccoon very fond of aquatic forms, such as frogs, crayfish and fish, but it has the peculiar habit of washing its food before eating it. This custom has been observed in wild raccoons, but has naturally been more closely watched in tame ones. They will take a piece of meat, carry it to their drinking-pan, dump it in and souse it well. Not until the meat is white and flabby is the raccoon content to eat it. They will often go hungry rather than eat a piece of meat which they are not able to wash.

Raccoon Tracks.

The raccoon is an omnivorous feeder, its bill of fare including practically everything that walks, swims or flies, which is small enough for it to capture, also fruits and seeds of various kinds. In its rambles among the tree-tops at night it secures squirrels and birds, it will wait patiently at the edge of a stream to scoop out fishes which come within its reach, it digs out turtles' eggs, and on the ground it hunts insects, small mammals and snakes. It also robs bees' nests in hollow trees, and digs bumblebees' and hornets' nests out of the ground, as its thick fur gives it protection from the stings of these insects. Along the coast it resorts to the sea-shore to feed upon oysters.

In the vegetable line its favorite food appears to be corn in the milk and wild grapes. In securing the former it often does a great deal of damage, stripping down the husks and sometimes breaking the plant.

closely, says of this species: "Compared with most of our flesh-eating beasts, raccoons are regular stay-at-homes. Of course there are exceptions, and undoubtedly many of them are possessed of the wandering habit, but I believe that the majority of them return regularly at day-break, however they may have passed the night, whether peacefully gathering wild grapes or berries in the thickets or robbing the farmer's hen-roost."

The raccoon has a wide range in Canada, being found from the Atlantic to the Rockies, though it is far commoner in some localities than in others.

THE HORSE.

Indiana legislators do not even invite criticism of their Stallion Enrolment Law—they enforce it.

If the American Trotting Horse Breeders' Association carry the legislation they have under consideration the owner of a promising young speeder need not be suspicious of a "man with a watch" when he is driving his horse to water.

Horses do not require salt as an article of food, but they do relish it as a tonic. It is the referee that neutralizes the disorders in the stomach, and in the case of mares in foal it aids the nourishment of the foetus.

The American Trotting Horse Breeders' Association has a new rule up for consideration. Heretofore drivers were very careful when trying their horses on any recognized track lest they should be marked. Under the proposed rule the young animal may be given a fair speed test without his time being used against him in future races.

How shall We Get Larger Horses?

There are two ways known to stockmen whereby they may procure a heavy animal—feed and breed. There are rumblings also that a heavier animal must be offered on the market—a good horse supported on good feet and limbs, and breeders of fine quality will eventually look about to incorporate more weight with good quality. Clydesdales, Hackneys and Hunters will all stand a little more avoirdupois in their upper regions and this has been brought home to Old Country breeders by the remarks of Thomas Patterson, of Australia.

Judging from show-ring appearances, Mr. Patterson was prejudiced against some of England's most popular breeds of horses. No connoisseur of horse flesh would criticize them very severely for lack of quality, but through them all he saw where weight had been sacrificed for quality of limb and pastern, or otherwise, for show-ring points. Just how far Mr. Patterson's opinion is worthy of consideration it is hard to say, judging, as he

was, from the standpoint of the Australian horse industry. No doubt, it was valuable to a large extent, and Scotland and England cannot afford to disregard their desires altogether, for last year ten pure-bred Clydesdales were exported to that country, which shows that there is just a beginning made which may ultimately materialize into something of value to breeding countries.

In Canada he might have been able to offer the same criticism, but the quality which is here reached will never be dispensed with in order to attain weight. When weight comes about it will be in addition rather than in the place of quality which now exists. In addition to the breeding of heavy draft horses weight can be fed into them to some extent and this is not altogether



The Voice from Across the Sea.

European Farmer—"Brother, if you would escape my condition, put your foot down good and hard."

One afternoon in September I was travelling through the woods, and when beneath a tall black cherry tree I noticed cherries dropping to the ground. Now, whenever anything is falling from a tree it is worth while to investigate that tree. In this case investigation revealed a pair of raccoons up toward the top of the tree. With my field glass I was able to observe their movements closely, and what interested me most was the way in which they used their fore-paws as hands. They would reach out, grasp a cherry and convey it to their mouths, just as readily as a monkey. After a first survey they did not pay the slightest attention to me, but went on with their feeding for over half an hour, and finally I left them thus occupied.

Cram, who has studied the habits of our wild