

## The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE  
DOMINION.

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city after each milking. Think of it! The dear girls would get all the beauty benefits of the early morning air speeding to the farm to milk the cows. Five o'clock a. m. would find them on their way and the auto owners could give up golf and clubs and would enjoy the healthy outdoors and the beauties of nature. The girls would require to rise about 4.30 every morning and the milking should be all over and they should be back home for breakfast around eight o'clock. In the evening they should get to the farms between five and six, so that they could get home for the dinner hour between seven and eight. Of course all this work should be given, as is the deluge of advice, entirely free. It is all in the interests of production, patriotism, thrift, etc., the importance of which some of our safety first platform orators seem to think is understood only by those who dwell in urban centres.

Besides the value of the work, the cows might actually increase in milk flow. Experiments carried on somewhere in the United States showed that by massaging the udder carefully each cow gave from one-half to one pound more milk at a milking. The gentle touch of the soft and deft fingers of the fair milkmaids, as compared with that of the hard hand of the farmer, might act in a similar manner, and besides, the milkers would be so plentiful that they could take time to massage the cows' udders as well. This should mean millions of pounds of extra milk during the coming summer. And cleanliness! Why it would be "certified milk". Think of it! But the cows—gaudy colored sport suits might irritate them. They might be a little nervous and if so would not "give down" properly. And too, the girls, brave with their own two or three educated city cows, might require considerable persuasion to go in a field of forty plain, uneducated country cows. If the farmer did not object we're afraid the cows would. But the suggestion is, while impracticable, of more value than hundreds which emanate from the city.

We forgot the backyard gardens. Urban Canada will be busy enough farming these. Fifty per cent. of our people live in cities and it will take them all to keep the weeds out of the few acres of backyard gardens they will have, while the other fifty per cent. of Cana-

dians are busy farming several million acres of land and listening to free advice from the city experts who are sure to learn a lot from this year's practical experiences on gardens 20 feet by 30 feet. Our farmer friend also pointed out that the cost of printing Government literature on backyard gardens would have bought a lot of vegetables, but that is another question. If it increases the production of food products it will have served its purpose.

How about the girls, the auto owners, the farmer and the cows? If a cow will give 5,000 lbs. of milk to the big, rough farmer in smock and overalls, she should give 10,000 lbs. if milked during the season by a patriotic young lady with soft and perfumed hands and wearing a sport suit. It is said also that cows milk better to music. The girls might sing or take along their grafonola. Oh, there are many ways to help the farmer!

### Nature's Diary.

BY A. B. KLUGH, M. A.

The Phoebe is with us once again, and its cheery song "Phoebe-phoebe-phree-u-ee-phoebe" sounds from bridge and garden and orchard. This species is one of the Flycatchers, that is it belongs to the family Tyrannidae, a group of birds of medium or small size with bills somewhat flattened and hooked at the extreme tip. All our Flycatchers, with the exception of the Crested Flycatcher, are gray, or olive-gray above, and whitish, more or less suffused with olive, beneath, and are among the hardest birds to recognize specifically by appearance alone. Each species has, however, characteristic calls, song, or attitudes which enable the student of birds to identify it. Thus the song of the Phoebe is unmistakable, and so, to the practised ear, is its call-note. It has, moreover, the peculiar habit of wagging its tail, not up and down after the manner of several of our birds, but sideways.

The Phoebe has quite a wide range in Canada. It occurs sparingly in Newfoundland and in the Maritime Provinces, and is common in parts of New Brunswick. In Western Quebec and in Ontario it is very common, and it is common in many localities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. It is mentioned as the commonest bird along the Athabaska River.

This species arrives in Ontario from March 24th to April 15th, and leaves about the first of October. It spends the winter from the Gulf States south to Mexico and Cuba.

The Phoebe is one of our most familiar birds, as it is not a species of the deep woods, but takes up its abode about the habitations of man. In fact in the wilder parts of the country it is found only along rivers or the shores of lakes, where it builds its nest on ledges of rock, and in some cases on the ends of fallen logs which overhang the water or among the roots of an up-turned tree. Its favorite nesting-sites in settled districts are on the timbers under a bridge or in an outhouse or drive-shed. The nest is composed of grass, rootlets and mud and is decorated on the exterior with moss. The eggs are from four to five in number and are pure white.

The Phoebe raises two broods in a season, and not only does it use the same nest for these two broods, but returns to this nest year after year. Before laying each set of eggs it adds an additional layer to the nest, so that in time it attains a considerable height. Just how high a Phoebe will build its nest is a point upon which I have no definite information and if any readers of "The Advocate" have any very "tall" nests on their premises I should be glad to know their height and something of their history. My own observations on this point were interrupted by a tragedy. At my summer cottage a pair of Phoebes had a nest on the scantling of the verandah immediately over the door. As the cottage had been unused for some two years, and as the nest was then about three and a half inches high, I judged that it had already been used for two years. Since the bird was constantly disturbed at the opening and closing of the door I decided to move the nest. I nailed up a large tin cracker box under the wide projecting eaves of the woodshed, and removed the nest, which contained fresh eggs, to its new site. The move did not disturb the birds at all and they reared this brood and a second that year. Next year they added still further to the nest, reared a brood, and made a second addition, and this addition made the nest so high that there was just room for the female to squeeze in between it and the top of the box. I was wondering what course the birds would take the next year when one morning before the second set of eggs was completed, I found the female dead on the nest. The male appeared disconsolate for a day or so, then left for a little while and returned with a new wife. Mrs. Phoebe No. 2 had a look at the nest, but she evidently did not like "sky-scrappers" and the pair left the vicinity.

Since the Phoebe lives in such close association with man its economic status is of much interest. Its food consists of 90 per cent. animal matter and 10 per cent. vegetable matter. The animal part of the food consists of insects with a few spiders and some "thousand-legs". Of the insects taken the majority belong to the order Hymenoptera to which the bees, wasps, ants, sawflies, gallflies, etc., belong, those belonging to the order Coleoptera, (Beetles), coming next, those belonging to the order Hemiptera (Bugs), ranking third. Now we find a bird eating many Hymenoptera we have to enquire as to what species of this order it shows a preference for, as while many of the insects

of this order are injurious, such as the sawflies for instance, others are highly beneficial, since they are parasitic upon other very harmful species. In the case of the Phoebe we find that while it eats a few of the beneficial Hymenoptera it takes more injurious and neutral species, among the latter the ants being conspicuous. Among the beetles eaten there are some troublesome pests of the garden, such as the Cucumber Beetle. In addition to the insects already mentioned the Phoebe eats many grasshoppers and flies. The main food of the nestlings consists of young grasshoppers. The vegetable food is eaten mainly in the winter, and consists of wild fruits, and in the summer the vegetable food amounts to only one per cent. of the food, and consists of wild Raspberries, Elderberries, etc.

Thus on the whole we see that the Phoebe is decidedly beneficial and is a most desirable tenant of the farm.

## THE HORSE.

### Old London's Hackney Show.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

A new and special feature of the 33rd annual show of the English Hackney Horse Society, held in London recently, was a class for stallions suitable for breeding Army and artillery horses, and in this the Prince of Wales showed a grey—he was almost white—named Findon Grey Shales, which has immense bone, wonderful substance, and great depth through heart and loin. He is of the old Norfolk Trotter breed, and though he is in the Hackney Stud Book he has not a drop of modern Hackney blood in his veins. That the judges, and also the crowd, liked him was soon apparent, and he was placed second to Whitegate Commander, a very powerful brown, shown by John Jones of Wrexham.

It is claimed for the Hackney that he is in big demand as an artillery horse, and since the outbreak of war large numbers of both pure and half-bred Hackneys have been purchased by the English Government. In 1915 the Italian Government took 17 high-class stallions for the purpose of breeding artillery horses, and last year a further 26.

Stallions of all ages were quite a good lot on the whole. The best in the younger classes was Salford Victor, a chestnut three-year-old, shown by Sir Lees Knowles. Salford Victor's sire was the London champion Hopwood Viceroy, while his dam was the famous brood mare—and one-time champion—Knowle Halma.

The best older stallion was W. Briggs' Adbolton Kingmaker, by King's Proctor, which was champion when a three-year-old in 1911. He was bred by A. W. Hickling, of Adbolton, Notts, and is now looking better than ever he did before. He cost Briggs 600 guineas at the Adbolton dispersal. Dr. Bowie's A I's Ambassador by Mathias A I, was reserve. This horse is powerfully built, and has fine hock action, while he is a dark brown—a very desirable color, rarely seen among prize-winning Hackneys.

At the head of the yearling fillies stood Ernest Bewley's Danum Queen, a well-grown, upstanding chestnut by Adbolton Kingmaker from Ambitious Becky by Beckingham Squire. She has the style and character one might expect from such a pedigree, with the best of legs and feet, and excellent action.

In two-year-old fillies, Thomas William Boan's Mersey Flashlight led, and is a short-legged filly with good bone, well placed shoulders, and a fine mover all round. She is by Woodhatch President.

In three-year-old fillies Ernest Bewley's Adbol Bountiful was winner. She is by Mathias from Towthorpe Iris by Forest Star, has a fine forehead, her shoulders being nicely placed, and she is well ribbed up and well balanced. She has excellent legs and feet and made a very good show. She won in her class, too, Junior Cup and Challenge Cup in London last year, and was first and champion at the Royal. H. V. Sheringham's Creak Lady by Antonius, which was second to the winner in London and at the Royal, made a very good second. She is a well-grown filly, with good limbs and fine quality and action.

Mares, four years and over, over 14 hands, not exceeding 15 hands 2 inches, saw Philip Smith's Northern Glory, a brown with rare combination of blood—she is by Mathias from a Garton Duke of Connaught mare—win premier honors. She is a short-legged, level mare, with fine quality, and her action is excellent.

In four-year-old mares and upwards, over 15 hands 2 inches, first went to John Makeague's Slashing Dorothy, a well-known winner, bred by the late Sir Walter Gilbey. She is a big mare.

Amateur driver classes were introduced. In that for barren mares or geldings, any age, exceeding 14 hands, the result was never in any doubt, for Mrs. Tilbury's famous veteran, Gaythorn, which, perhaps, never made a better show, stood right out from the rest. Mrs. Putman's Haydon's Blighty, which won in the novice harness class for 14 to 15 hands on the previous day, was second, and Mrs. F. E. Colman's Crystal of Nork, third. Walter Winans got reserve for one shown with a full tail. This innovation some people thought an improvement. It is, at any rate, to be preferred to some of the short docks which prevail among Hackneys.

The amateur class for single harness ponies, not exceeding 14 hands, had six entries. Premier honors went to W. W. Bourne's Tissington Bauble. Bourne was also second with another good mover in Melbourne Fane.

The class for barren mares or geldings, any age, exceeding 14 and not exceeding 15 hands, professionally driven, had at its head perhaps the best harness horse

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