

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL
IN THE DOMINION.

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JOHN WELD, MANAGER.

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is published every Thursday.

It is impartial and independent of all cliques and parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers, of any publication in Canada.

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Cropping Roadways.

Bad management may exhaust the crop-producing capacity of a soil faster than excessive cropping. Lack of drainage results in a loss of nitrogen. Working heavy land while wet puts it into unfavorable condition. Letting weeds and injurious insects multiply is unquestionably bad. The soil is more than a repository of plantfood. It is a medium in which vital processes are supposed to go on. Beaten roadways bear no crops, and, according to the old-fashioned "rest" theory, should be very fertile. But what kind of a crop would you expect on such land, if fresh-plowed?

We noticed a striking object lesson a fortnight since at the Ontario Agricultural College. The fifty acres or so devoted to field experiments are divided into numerous plots with narrow paths between, and here and there a temporary cross road in addition to the central lane. Every year a block of these plots is plowed up and sown to annual pasture mixture. This year's area includes a driveway which has been plowed across and seeded with the rest. The course of it was as plain as though a swath had been mown through the field. On this old roadway the oats, sorghum and clover were very thin and short, though vigorous on either side. Yet this roadway had been "resting" for from one to three years. Unnecessary trampling of land is apparently bad, and, on heavier soil than that at the College, results would be even worse. We must keep life in our land by judicious working and cropping. The beaten driveway is all right for a road, but not for farm land.

Bush fires in the North and business difficulties in the West should remind us to be grateful for the manifold comforts, securities and blessings in the steady-going, old-settled East.

Nature's Diary.

By A. B. Klugh, M. A.

A locality which is well worth a visit at this time of the year is the peat-bog. Here we can secure flowers which cause people on seeing them to exclaim "Oh! What lovely flowers! Whose greenhouse did you get them from?" And they do indeed rival in beauty the choicest productions of the horticulturist.

For the full enjoyment of a trip to a peat-bog two things are requisite; one is a pair of water-proof boots, the other a little bottle of mosquito dope.

Peat-bogs are of different types, depending upon their age; those of more recent formation have open water in the centre and a very thin layer of peat-moss, upon which it is not safe to walk, at the water's edge; the older bogs are covered completely with peat-moss and much grown up round the margin with Tamarac, Black Spruce, and bogshrubs.

The foundation of the bog is the peat-moss, which belongs to the Genus Sphagnum. A peculiarity of this moss is that it is continually dying at the bottom and growing at the top.

It is in the peat-bog that we find most of our Orchids. Now people generally have an impression that the orchids are all foreign plants, and can be grown only in hothouses; but as a matter of fact we have in Canada a great many species. In Wellington County, Ontario, for instance, I found twenty-five species.

The most striking Orchid which we find in our bogs is the Showy Lady's Slipper. It is a large species, growing from two to three feet in height, and has very handsome pink and white flowers. The lowest petal is, in the Orchids, called the "lip," and this "lip" of the Showy Lady's Slipper is shaped like a rounded sack.

Another Orchid quite common in bogs is the Yellow Lady's Slipper. In this plant the lip is yellow, while the rest of the petals and sepals are striped with yellow and brown, and are spirally twisted. This species is often very sweet-scented.

In the shaded parts of the bog we may find the Stemless Lady's Slipper, a rather low species with a long purple lip. When we see this species we are apt to wonder why it is called "stemless," when it apparently has quite a long stem. The reason is that a stalk which bears only a flower is, botanically, called a scape or pedicel, while a stem bears leaves as well. In this case the stalk bears only a flower.

Out in the open of the bog are other very beautiful and interesting Orchids; there is the purple Calopogon, the sweet-scented Rose Pogonia, and the attractively-shaped, beautifully-colored Arethusa.

Among the low bog trees towards the margin we find yet other Orchids; the tall, yellowish-white, ragged-fringed Orchis, the White Lady's Tresses, with its flowers wound closely, and spirally, round the stem, the white-flowered Rein-orchis, with its deliciously fragrant blossoms. There are many other species to be found in our bogs, but those mentioned are the most striking.

It is not in the Orchids alone that the bog flora is interesting. There are the Pitcher Plants with their leaves shaped like pitchers, and delicately colored with red and green. These pitchers contain a little water, and at their mouths are downward-pointing hairs so that insects crawling into them cannot crawl out again, and are drowned in the water. It is believed that these leaves are able to digest the partially decomposed insects, and thus add to the scant nutriment the plant is able to get from the bog soil.

The flowers of the Pitcher Plant are as attractive as the leaves. The petals are dark red and arch over the pale green flat-topped style.

Another remarkable plant found in the bog is the Sundew. There are several species of Sundew, the commonest being the Roundleaved Sundew. The leaves of these little plants are covered with long hairs, and at the end of the hairs are little drops of a sticky liquid. The Sundews catch insects and feed upon them. The insects alight upon the leaves probably mistaking the glistening drops for nectar, and stick fast. Then the hairs begin to fold inward and also secrete a digestive fluid which digests the insect. It is usually insects which feed upon plants, but in this case we see this condition reversed.

Some of the shrubs in the bog have very attractive flowers, for instance, the Sheep-laurel has deep, pink, cup-shaped blossoms, and the Leather-leaf, and the Andromeda, have clusters of little white bells.

There are plenty of other very interesting plants in our peat-bogs, but those mentioned are probably the most striking species.

THE HORSE.

Tongue trucks on the wide binder relieve much of the strain on the horses' necks.

Give the horses water as frequently as possible during this season, and in small quantities at a time.

It pays to clean the sweat from the animal's coat before turning him out to pasture for the night.

An American veterinarian gives this advice on the shoeing of young horses: "Don't allow young horses to wear a set of shoes more than a month. Have them removed, the hoofs levelled and the shoes reset if they are worth it."

Rich, concentrated feed, high in nutrient value and easily digested, is necessary for the hard-worked horse. This is a good argument for continuing the oat ration, even though the work horses are out on grass.

Be careful not to overheat the horse. Many drivers of drays and delivery wagons in cities take an old straw hat, put holes through it for the horse's ears, and fasten it over his head to protect him from the sun. Why is this not practicable with the farm team?

Occasionally one finds a number of grass quids chewed and rolled into solid lumps lying around the pasture field. This is a sure sign that one of the horses has teeth which are badly in need of attention. No alarm need be felt at the finding of these grass balls, but have a competent man examine the teeth of the horses in the pasture and locate the sufferer.

Give the horse an easy gait during the hot weather, especially if his load is heavy. Investigation has shown that, as the rate of speed increases beyond two and one-half miles an hour, the amount of energy which the horse can devote to drawing the load grows rapidly less, until, when 11.15 miles per hour is reached, less than one-tenth of the maximum work can be performed.

These are the days when the argument that all harness should be removed from the horses during the noon hour seems to carry most weight. When it is ninety in the shade few drivers of the teams keep their coats and collars on at dinner, yet most of the horses are compelled to stand in a narrow stall itching from sticky sweat, and bearing the collar and heavy harness hot and wet from the morning's work. The horse would be more comfortable with the harness on the peg.

This is haying. There is one commendable practice which many farmers follow in putting in their hay crop, and that is to fill that part of the loft or mow which is to be kept for feeding during the spring's work with the very choicest of the season's cut. Some of these days, when the hay is going in in first-class condition, dump a few loads of the greenest, freshest, and most nicely-cured timothy, with a little clover mixed, back where it will remain untouched until next April.

Toronto's Open-Air Horse Show.

Toronto's eleventh annual open-air horse show was held in Queen's Park, July 1st, with over 550 horses of all breeds, sizes, and classes, making up one of the finest and most complete work-horse shows ever seen in Canada. The fancy-high-stepper was there with his knees almost touching his nose at every step and his hocks flexing in equally wonderful style; the fast roadster, trim and neat, clean-cut, and ready for action was eager to show his best burst of speed; the general-purpose delivery horse, well groomed, and in good condition, demonstrated his utility; the various classes of saddle horses showed riding still to be a popular pastime; the useful pony was not forgotten; and the best of them all were the massive drafters, single, pairs, and three-horse teams, sleek and fit, with muscles bulging, and champing on the bit, eager to test their strength on the heaviest loads. It was a grand show, and the grooms, one and all, deserve praise upon the way their horses were brought out. Such a show is a good thing to keep up the drivers' interest in their horses, and must mean increased attention and better care for a number of animals bearing the brunt of the delivery and dray work in the city. Clean, well-oiled harness and shining, newly-painted wagons added to the attractiveness of this the best of all these shows.