

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL
IN THE DOMINION.

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JOHN WELD, MANAGER.

Agents for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal,"
Winnipeg, Man.

1. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE 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.
2. TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.—In Canada, England, Ireland, Scotland, Newfoundland and New Zealand, \$1.50 per year, in advance; \$2.00 per year when not paid in advance. United States, \$2.50 per year; all other countries 12s.; in advance.
3. ADVERTISING RATES.—Single insertion, 25 cents per line, agents. Contract rates furnished on application.
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9. WHEN A REPLY BY MAIL IS REQUIRED to Urgent Veterinary or Legal Enquiries, \$1.00 must be enclosed.
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12. WE INVITE FARMERS to write us on any agricultural topic. We are always pleased to receive practical articles. For such as we consider valuable we will pay ten cents per inch printed matter. Criticisms of Articles, Suggestions How to Improve "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine," Descriptions of New Grains, Roots or Vegetables not generally known, Particulars of Experiments Tried, or Improved Methods of Cultivation, are each and all welcome. Contributions sent us must not be furnished other papers until after they have appeared in our columns. Rejected matter will be returned on receipt of postage.
13. ALL COMMUNICATIONS in reference to any matter connected with this paper should be addressed as below, and not to any individual connected with the paper.

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LONDON, CANADA.

ably more than ever before corn stood for a long time in the shock before it could be put in the silo. How this silage is coming out for feeding is a point on which we invite correspondence from readers who have had actual experience.

That potato canker has gained a foothold in Canada was the disturbing fact brought out in a recent lecture on this serious European potato disease delivered by Prof. Howitt, of the Ontario Agricultural College. Broadcast warnings, it seems, availed not to exclude the infection from Canada. Now, let the individual grower beware and endeavor to keep it off his own particular premises. If you buy any seed potatoes, enquire as to their history and watch for the protruding rusty-brown eyes, characteristic of the slightly infested tubers. Remember that a few diseased ones may infect a bag or a pile.

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION.

Have you sent us your renewal subscription to "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine"?

Our subscribers are our best circulation getters. They can conscientiously recommend it to others, feeling that \$1.50 cannot be invested in any other manner that will give as much pleasure and profit. The larger our circulation becomes, the better paper we can give our readers.

Old subscribers sending us two NEW names and \$3.00 may have their own subscription advanced twelve months; or, for your own renewal and one NEW name, we will accept \$2.50. In either case we expect the new subscriber to pay the regular subscription price of \$1.50.

New subscribers will receive a copy of the 1912 Christmas Number complimentary.

Nature's Diary.

By A. B. Klugh, M. A.

The Ruffed Grouse may fairly be reckoned as the premier game bird of Eastern Canada. At the same time, it is one of the most mis-named, being termed "partridge" or "partridge" in some localities and "pheasant" in others. It has not the characteristics of either a partridge or of a pheasant, and we have no native birds in Canada to which these names can be correctly applied. In British Columbia the Mountain Partridge and the California Partridge have been introduced from California, and the Ring-necked Pheasant has been introduced from China. The ruffed grouse has inherited these names from its faint resemblance to the partridge and pheasant of Europe in the same way that our American Robin was termed "Robin" because it had a red breast, though it was twice as large, of a different build and with an entirely different bill to the bird of that name in England.

The ruffed grouse is a fine hardy bird, well adjusted to survive and increase if given a reasonable amount of protection. The recent complete close seasons of the last few years had a beneficial effect upon this species, as it has become commoner again in many localities where it was becoming dangerously scarce. That it has increased is a hopeful sign, as it shows that the Game Laws have been, to a certain extent, respected. And we hope that in the future we may be able to speak more of the "respect for" and less of the "enforcement of" Game Laws, as these laws can only be effective when backed up by an enlightened public conscience. If the great majority of people once realize what an important asset to a country the wild life is, then those few who would ruthlessly destroy it can soon be dealt with as they deserve.

Those who live in thickly populated districts, and those who live in the wilder parts of the country, have very different ideas of the ruffed grouse. In the thickly settled regions one usually hears a whirr of wings and sees but a brown flash as the bird departs for some far distant point, for the ruffed grouse of these districts has been educated and knows that man is to be feared. But away from civilization we get an opportunity to study its habits.

In summer the ruffed grouse feeds largely on insects, wild fruits and leaves. Of the former it eats grasshoppers, crickets, caterpillars of various moths, beetles, flies, bugs and ants. It eats a great many wild fruits, among them being the fruits of raspberry, wild black cherry, wild red cherry, elder berry, Nanny berry, maple-leaved dogwood, climbing bitter-sweet, high-bush cranberry, bunch-berry, snowberry, huckleberry, withe rod, greenbrier, Solomon's seal, black alder, silky cornel, Virginia creeper, wild grape, staghorn sumac, bayberry, blueberry, partridge berry, poison ivy, thorn-apple, mountain ash, blackberry, rose wintergreen and sarsaparilla. Of leaves it eats a great variety, being particularly partial to those of the partridge berry, the sheep sorrel, and of several species of ferns.

In the autumn it eats quantities of beech nuts, hornbeam seeds, and acorns, and in the late fall, in winter, and in early spring the ruffed grouse resorts to "budding," that is, feeding on the buds of various trees, largely the birch, poplar, and ironwood. It has been suggested that the trees may be injured by too heavy "budding" by the grouse, but investigation has shown that the birds cannot reach the terminal buds and that no trees are injuriously affected.

It will be noticed that among the fruits eaten by the ruffed grouse is the poison ivy, and it is interesting to notice that in regions where the poison sorrel or "lambgrill" is common that the grouse often feeds in winter upon the buds of the poisonous plant. This fare has no injurious effect upon the bird, but if their flesh is eaten, it often causes glossitis (inflammation of the tongue) and other symptoms of poisoning. Dr. V. K. Chestnut, the specialist on poisonous plants, gave an extract of poison laurel leaves to a chicken, which he subsequently killed and fed to a cat. The cat was rendered seriously ill, but ultimately recovered. One good feature of this item on the bill-of-fare of the grouse is that the laurel buds are eaten only in late winter during the close season, and people who eat grouse then deserve all they get in the way of poisoning.

The ruffed grouse has a peculiar habit of passing the night in the winter beneath the snow. They drive down into the deep snow, and in the morning force their way out at the other end of their tunnel. I have occasionally come across tunnels in the early morning which had no "exit hole," and, as I approached them, have seen the birds burst out and fly off amidst a spray of snow. Sometimes the habit proves fatal to the grouse, the story of the tragedy being plainly

told by fox tracks leading to and from the tunnel and blood and feathers left at its entrance.

The "drumming" of the male grouse is a sound we love to hear. It is a love-call to the female and a challenge to rival males. Each male has his favorite drumming post, usually a log. He mounts the log, struts up and down with his tail spread and his black ruffs erect. Then he spreads and raises his wings, and begins to beat them slowly at first, then faster and faster, till the "thumps" become a rolling tattoo. Then follows a period of observation, with the head held high on outstretched neck, and then another "drumming." It is frequently stated that in "drumming," the bird strikes its breast on the log, but by careful stalking I have approached very close to drumming grouse and have seen that it does neither, and that the sound is made by beating the air which is enclosed on the downstroke between the log, the sides of the body and the concave wings.

The nest of the ruffed grouse is made on the ground, a slight depression being scratched out and lined with leaves. From 8 to 13 eggs are laid.

When the young are hatched, they follow the mother about, and when the family is approached she makes a whining sound like a young puppy and drags herself along the ground as if wounded, keeping just out of reach of the intruder. After about a minute of this acting, off she goes like a bullet. But by this time the chicks have hidden, and so successfully that it takes a very sharp eye to detect even one of the brood, and one has to be extremely careful in moving away not to tread on them.

Rural debate.—Resolved—That forking warm silage out of a silo is preferable to digging frozen corn shocks out of the snow. The "Ayes" appear to have it ten to one.

Exactly one month was the length of time it took the Grand Trunk Railway to deliver a barrel of apples from London, Ont., to Winnipeg, Man. The apples were frozen solid on arrival. Had the weather been warm, they would have required to be embalmed.

HORSES.

Watch the feet of the unshod horses to keep them in shape.

It takes little time to dampen the horse hay before feeding, and may help to ward off a case of heaves.

It costs no small penny per annum to keep a team of horses shod, especially when used much on metalled roads.

Watch the harness and halters for weak parts. What is the price of a tug, a hold-back strap, a neck-yoke iron, or a halter shank against the value of a horse or two?

Moderate feeding with light, regular exercise will build up and fit a run-down horse as economically as it can be done. Occasional severe work with intervening periods of idleness is hard on condition.

We are deriving a great deal of help from "The Farmer's Advocate", and could not very well do without it. Your veterinary columns are much sought after by the boys.
Lambton Co., Ont. P. W. FORSHEE.

Do you know what it costs you a year to keep a horse on the farm? Somewhere between ninety and a hundred and fifty dollars. Is there an idle one eating his head off in your stable? Can't you get rid of him and save money?

In horses, as in cows, type is not the whole consideration by any means. Much depends upon the inherent vigor and stamina wrapped up inside the hide. This quality is not always apparent, even to shrewd judges. The owner of a stable of five work horses, all about the same age and weight, recently remarked that every horseman, who had visited his stables, had picked the poorest horse for the best. Yet this animal, showing evidence of much quality, could not stand half the hard, steady work which the others could easily perform.