

The Farmer's Advocate

HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN
THE DOMINION.

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Agents for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal,"
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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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to be in fattening his own cattle if he can possibly handle them. It must be remembered that the United States market is going to open 'to finished cattle as well as to feeders, and prices for the former class must advance. While we must advise the man who has bred and raised a good lot of cattle to hold them and feed them himself, the man who is buying on this fall's market to feed this winter must exercise judgment and not pay unreasonable prices in the hope of a phenomenal jump in prices. We should buy good stock, and keep away from the scrub variety. There is likely to be a fair profit in feeding steers this winter, if the breeder feeds his own and if the man who buys to feed buys right.

While on this subject of profit it might not be out of place to point out again the one big reason why beef cattle are fewer in numbers to-day than was the case a few years ago. Compare the returns from feeding beef with those from other branches of farming, and the cause is not far to seek. The demand for dairy products has enlarged, and prices have made dairying pay. With dairying goes pork production. Compare the price of bacon with that of beef. The cry now is, "Produce More Beef." Just so soon as the feeder is assured that it will pay him just as well or better to produce beef than anything else, so soon will he produce it abundantly. But even though other branches may, in some instances, pay higher returns, there are thousands so situated that beef raising and feeding fits in best with their conditions. To these we must say continue in the business, and to all those who feed cattle at all, unless under special conditions as where the farms are grass farms only, there can be no better policy advocated than to finish all the animals.

Opportunity Capitalized.

"How are things with you?" asked a visitor in an off-hand way of a fruit farmer in the Niagara Peninsula.

"Oh just medium; prices of fruit are not as high as they should be," was the reply.

"Are the prices of fruit too low or the prices of land too high?"

"Well, I don't know," was the reflective response. "I think the growers need more thorough organization to distribute their fruit to better advantage."

"Undoubtedly, but the distribution system being what it is, are not land values too high to enable the owner to make interest on his investment, plus wages, plus expenses, plus taxes? Supposing you got your more perfect organization, and prices of fruit rose in consequence, would not the increased earning capacity of these farms be at once capitalized in the form of still higher land values?"

"I don't know but that you are right. There are many fruit farmers around me who are burdened beneath the load of the property they carry. As land sells here to-day, their farms would command a large sum of money, but still some of them are handicapped for lack of working capital to buy baskets, hire labor and so on. And some of the new men who come in to buy land for six hundred to a thousand dollars an acre are bound to have a hard time to make ends meet. Take my own case: I bought ten acres of land a few years ago for fifteen hundred dollars. I am now offering it at fifty-five hundred, which is cheaper than any of the prices asked for farms around me. This year, if everything on my land had given me the best yields I could reasonably expect, the gross sales would not have amounted to over eight hundred dollars. As it is, I will come considerably short of that. On account of dry weather my peas did not do as well as I expected, grapes were light and prices of plums low. After paying expenses and interest, I shall have about twenty-five cents a day for my summer's work on the place. There is no margin in the business worth while."

It is ever thus. Opportunity is capitalized in the form of increased land values, good will or otherwise, raising higher the bar across the door to success. The worker struggles over as best he may or falls back worsted, while the landlord or the money lender takes the toll. How futile, therefore, it must in the long run prove to attempt to make a business extra profitable by artificial means, save only where Combine or Monopoly prevails.

Nature's Diary.

By A. B. Klugh, M. A.

The leaves are falling fast
Before the autumn blast
And the woods are taking on a garb of gray
The summer flowers are dead
The butterflies have fled
And the birds to southern lands have flown away.

But a blossom still in view
Bids the summer days adieu
Gleaming yellow from the leafless branches drear
'Tis the Hamamelis flower,
That at autumn's latest hour,
Closes the floral procession of the year.

Hush! Hush! Chant ye the requiem
Peace to the souls of the midsummer hours
Soon will the winds of winter be sweeping
The crystal-white snow through the haunts of the flowers.

Hamamel's virginiana, the witch-hazel, is the last of all our plants to bloom. It has the peculiarity of flowering, and ripening the fruits from last year's flowers at the same time. Late in the autumn in open woods or forming little thickets of its own on hillsides, we find the leafless branches bearing the yellow flowers with four strap-shaped petals, and the brown two-celled fruits. The flowers have a peculiar odor, unlike anything else I know of.

The witch-hazel has a most efficient means of spreading. The walls of the capsule are hard and smooth, and the seed also is hard and shiny. The capsule opens gradually from the top and the pressure upon the seeds becomes greater and greater, until, at last, the seed is shot out with considerable force, and flies to a distance. If one gathers branches of the witch-hazel before the capsules have opened and takes them home, he

will have a miniature bombardment in his room. I remember well taking some such branches into my bedroom and waking up wondering whatever was flying about the room, until I thought of the witch-hazel.

The leaves of this shrub are oval and wavy-toothed, and are downy when young.

The other day I was sitting on a rail fence, perfectly motionless, when a red squirrel came along the fence. It advanced rapidly until within a few feet of me, then stopped and approached in little jumps. It hesitated a moment, then jumped to my left arm, then to my shoulder, ran around my neck, tickling it with its tail, down my right arm and away along the fence.

The episode of the squirrel reminded me of an experience I once had with a mink. I was sitting on a log in a swale calling sparrows, when a mink appeared close at hand. Its eyes were blazing red and its nose working at a great rate. It jumped up on the log and on to my knees, and then shot into the air and off in a big hurry. The mink evidently thought it heard a bird in distress, and came along expecting an easy meal. It apparently did not catch my scent until it was actually on my knees.

This was not the only time when calling birds has called up game of a larger size. I was calling up hermit thrushes in a big swamp one June day, when over a log a few feet distant a gray shadow rose. The gray shadow was a lynx, and it stared at me for a moment and then faded away as quietly as it had come.

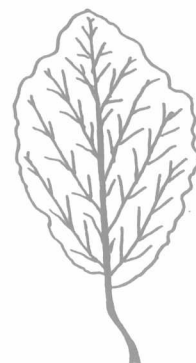
My friend, Dr. Cox, of the University of New Brunswick, was one day "playing stump" in the woods when a chickadee alighted on his shoulder. It hopped about on his shoulder and arm, and finally hung on to his lower lip and pecked at his teeth.

There are little insects which are very abundant in the air in the late fall. So small are they that we are apt to overlook them until one of them gets into one of our eyes. They are the winged aphides or plant lice. The life-history of these aphides is peculiar. Throughout the summer the females produce living female young, without fertilization. Many generations are produced in this way, and nearly all of these generations are wingless. But once in a while during the summer a winged generation is born. In the fall a generation of both females and males is produced, and the females lay fertilized eggs which do not hatch until the following spring. It is the members of this last generation of winged males and females which are so common in the late fall.

Europe Through Canadian Eyes-VII.

Even before we left Holland we came upon evidences of what every traveller through Europe must have noticed, the high estimate placed on the trees by the people of that continent. Most of the country roads in the low lands (the Netherlands) are lined with a row of elm trees on either side. Some of these have been planted of late years, but in other parts, perhaps where longer reclaimed from the sea, these roadside trees are of large size and form magnificent avenues. Along each side of the road in front of Aug. Zyp's farm, a notice of which appeared in an earlier issue, the elm trees were planted 150 years ago and average two feet in diameter, the tops meeting overhead. But Holland is not quite all low-lying, as can be noticed when going by rail from Amsterdam to Cologne. Some time before entering Germany the country becomes quite hilly and this region is largely planted with forest trees. On coming to a fresh cut on the railway the reason for this was quite evident. The surface soil was of the scantiest and underneath to the depth of the cutting it was nothing but pale yellow—almost white—sand that looked too poor to grow anything. Yet had we not seen what poor stuff the soil was we would never have suspected it, for the timber covering these hills was as thrifty and vigorous as one could desire.

The same conditions extended well into Germany, the forests not covering the whole surface of the country at all, but apparently only the more barren portions of it. Well-cultivated farm areas, with comfortable buildings attached, intervened between the blocks of evergreen trees, giving a most pleasing character to the passing landscape. Towards the south of Germany again there is the great Black Forest, which covers a mountainous tract many miles in extent. The Danube has its rise in this region, and it is skirted on the west by the River Rhine. Seen from



Leaf of Witch-hazel.



Flower of Witch-hazel.