A Page for the MODERN FARMER

- NEWSY NOTES -

By AGRICOLA

HARRIS'S DIVING BEETLE

Referring to a recent note in this column, upon the group of insects known as "predacious diving beetles," I have now to report that the specimen sent in by Mr. Frank J. Sterns, of Souris, was actually Dytiscus harrisii, which we may translate into the popular name of "Harris's Diving Beetle." As this insect was new to me and as I did not recollect of seeing it in any Island list, I forwarded it to the Dominion Entomologist, who replied "The insect, as you suspected, Dytiscus harrisii Kirby. I am returning it under separate cover." So with thanks to the Entomologist for his courtesy, the question of the beetle's name is now settled.

There was one point that I did not touch upon: what was the beetle doing so far from his native pool? Well, possibly he may have exhausted his food supply in that particular place, and as he had wings under his hard and horny elytra, it was the most natural thing in the world for him to take off in search of watery "pastures new." Or it may have been the spirit of romance which led him to leave the familiar scenes where once he lived as a juvenile "watertiger." who knows?

A Confession

The man who never makes a mistake, they say, never makes anything; which may perhaps serve as an excuse for a rather ludicrous mistake (I don't mean a typographical one) that appeared in these notes a few years ago. In the fall of 1934, forty or fifty Blackfish got themselves stranded on Cape Breton Island, and furnished some most interesting press "copy" for the Department of Fisheries. The fishermen were told, rendered them for oil, which was used as motor lubricant and also for paint oil for which it had a very satisfactory "body". It was also used as harness oil, and was burned in lamps like kerosene. From 40 bodies 650 gallons of oil were obtained. So far the scribe had done a splendid job, but he finished up with something like this: "By the way, the scientific name of the Blackfish is **Tautoga onitis**, and it is very common southwards."

Now we called the Blackfish **Globicephalus melas** in England, which freely translated means "the round-headed black one," and is very descriptive; but I know there was a modern fancy for changing the recognized or ancient names, and supposed this to be an instance of it. Thus it came to pass that I employed the term **Tautoga onitis** in writing of the Blackfish, believing that the experts could not err.

Time went on, and at last a copy of the National Geographic Magazine came into my hands and altered my opinion in certain ways. It gave a colored picture of **Tautoga onitis**, a fish which does not exceed three feet in length and fifteen pounds in weight, and in no way resembles our "Blackfish." But the Magazine stated that it was commonly called a "Blackfish" in southern waters, so I saw where the mistake arose. The writer of the article in question had confused the two "Blackfish," giving the details of the one and the scientific name of the other. Then I enquired about our Blackfish which is not a fish at all but a stream-lined, red-blooded mammal like the whale—and found that is was called **Globicephalus melaena**, on this side of the water. There are several morals to be drawn from this little incident first: Prove all things, and verify and again verify; second; Be careful with popular names, for the same name may be applied to different objects in different localities, or the same object may have a different popular name in other places. That is why the scientific name is so important, and why an error like the above is so reprehensible.

The English Bluebell

The English Bluebell is in bloom in the garden just now, and this is the second season for it. It is a very common plant in the forests in Northumberland but only under the hardwoods, and it blooms just before the leaves of the trees become mature enough to cut off the light too much. Then, one can see the woodland floor painted as blue as the sky by myriads of bluebells, and because they are a kind of hyacinth their fragrance is delightful. In the garden here they are rather at a disadvantage, the cool weather of spring suits them well enough, but when the heat comes, and there is no shade, the leaves dry off too quickly and I can scarcely expect them to get stronger, or multiply every year. This happens to other English plants too: the Cowslips, for instance, bloom early, and then when the summer comes the leaves wilt and dry up, and the seed-pods don't fill. But after August they quickly make new growth and are as good as ever the next spring.

The English Bluebell is called in some localities the wild Hyacinth; the root is bulbous, and the leaves spring directly from it. They will grow 18 inches long in good soil, but perhaps half that length here. They are about half-an-inch wide, and are concave. The flower stem is solitary—one from each bulb—and there are from six to twelve bell-shaped flowers hanging from it. The Dutch worked over this plant til they produced white, pink, and "lilac-red" flowers; and though the wild form varies a little in England, in general it is light blue, slightly streaked darker.

Linnaeus called it **Hyacinthus non-scriptus**, and it has had several other synonyms; but most botanists now know it as **Scilla nutans**, from its nodding or drooping flowers. A first cousin of our Bluebell the **Scilla marina**, is the source of the rat-poisons which are "harmless to live stock." The Squill (Scilla) is a strong emetic, but the rat cannot disgorge it; and the internal commotion is too much for the rodent! Syrup of Squills was a favorite [illegible] for small children at one time, to bring up the mucus in cases of bronchitis etc.

"English Tuber Very Delicious"

Under that attractive heading there once appeared in the Family Herald a short article running thus:—

"The English tuber has a delicious flavor and has highly nutritious qualities. The plant grows along old hedgesides and in old pastures, and is like a small koy (that should be "kex") rather larger than the parsley plant and somewhat like it. It bears a white flower and is wonderfully prolific in tubers. Earthnuts or jar nuts as they are called in some parts, when boiled or roasted are hard to distinguish from chestnuts treated in the same way. Cultivated earth nuts grow to a huge size and are well worth the minimum of labor they require."

That carries me right back to boyhood's days; but requires some explanations. Shakespeare speaks somewhat of "Kecksies," evidently some umbelliferous plant with a flat-topped bunch of flowers, usually white. Jar must be pronounced "yar" from the Anglo-Saxon "eorthe;" we lads made it ar-nuts or arnicks. The tuber (in the wild state) never grew larger than a walnut; we dug it up, wiped the earth from it, scraped off the brown skin, and (after the manner of boys) ate the tuber raw. In that state there was a slight acridity that kept us from eating too many; doubtless this would be dissipated in cooking, as happens to many other roots. The chestnut alluded to, is not our Horse-chestnut, whose fruit is bitter and is said to be narcotic; it is the Sweat or Spanish Chestnut that is meant, a nut very generally roasted and consumed in the Mediterranean countries, and sometimes to be had in England once on a day.

Well, after reading this account I made up my mind to try the "English tuber" An old friend in Devonshire sent me seeds of **Conopodium denudatum**, which was the nearest I could get to the name of the plant, and year after year I tried to grow them. There is something in our soil or climate not favorable to the growth of umbelliferous plants, so I began to despair of ever seeing the tuber. At last the little plot became grass-grown and the experiment came to an end. Last year on cutting the grass I noticed some little divided leaves in the undergrowth, so I dug them up and there were the tubers! as large as a pea. I replanted them, some in the rock garden and others in a nursery bed. All are growing vigorously, and the latter are flowering. If I can raise the seed here, the "delicious English tuber" will have a chance to make good.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

I am always glad to answer any questions—within my power!—but readers who wish for a private reply are asked to enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

Spray The Farm Orchard

(Experimental Farms News)

Spraying is one of the practices most neglected in Prince Edward Island farm orchards. At one time it may have been possible to produce fruit moderately free from insect injury and disease, but the time of such immunity is past. Unfortunately injury to the growing crop is not the only manifestation of spray neglect but is evident in the low vitality of the trees and often results in their ultimate death, says G. C. Waren, Dominion Experimental Station, Charlottetown, P. E. I. During the past twenty years, Black Knot alone has reduced the number of plum and cherry trees in this province over seventy-five per cent.

Spraying the small farm orchard need not be a difficult or an expensive task. In most cases a small barrel-type sprayer will be found satisfactory. Such sprayers can be placed in a cart or truck and operated by the driver. In addition to the pump, one line of hose some 30 or 40 feet long is required. To this is attached a ten foot pipe or bamboo rod fitted at one end with single or double nozzles. A shut off is placed at the hose end of the rod. This type of sprayer will deliver a fine, mistlike spray and is quite efficient providing the operator covers each tree thoroughly.

Timeliness is an important factor in pest control and calendars giving complete instructions for spraying may be obtained from the Dominion Laboratory of Plant Pathology, Charlottetown, or from the Experimental Station. Such spray schedules should be closely followed if the best results are to be obtained.

WOOL WANTED

Ship your wool to

CONDONS WOOLLEN MILLS
Charlottetown

and receive highest market price for washed and unwashed wool. Money paid on receipt of wool. All wool has to be graded by government inspection. We do our own grading. You do not have to wait for a government inspection to get your money.

All wool must be clear of dirt and burrs.

Freight paid on 100 pounds on washed wool, also on 200 pounds of unwashed wool.

L565-5-28- W.S. till July 26.

Weekly Live Stock Market Report

SUMMARY

The cattle markets have been active at firm to steady prices during the past week, with weighty steers receiving considerably more attention at most markets. Calf prices in eastern Canada were stronger and held steady on western markets. Hogs made another substantial advance with increases ranging from 25 cents to 75 cents per cwt., for B-1 dressd for the week. Sheep and lamb prices made gains at Toronto and Montreal.

EASTERN CATTLE MARKETS STEADY

Cattle receipts were cleared at TORONTO at steady prices. Weighty steers sold at $8 to $9.25 with one lot at $9.35. Butchers $8 to $9 and light stockers $7.50 to $8.50. Prices were firm at MONTREAL due to a lighter run. Gold quality steers were steady at $8.65 to $9 with one load at $9.25. Prices of other classes of cattle were firm. Receipts were light on MARITIME markets and prices of all classes of cattle remained steady. Choice to good steers were quoted at $8.50 to $9.50.

WESTERN CATTLE TRADE ACTIVE

The cattle trade at WINNIPEG was active with butcher steers and heifers 25 cents higher. There was a good demand for practically all classes of cattle. Fed yearlings were steady with six shipments of boys and girls' club calves meeting a good reception. All suitable light stockers were in demand at $7 to $7.75, with local requirements increasing leaving fewer stockers for eastern shipment. At CALGARY the market was steady, good butcher steers being quoted at $7.75 to 8.60. EDMONTON had improved action on weighty steers. Three cars of heavy steers brought $8.15 on United States markets. Elsewhere in the west cattle trade was generally brisk under light receipts. Top prices for steers at PRINCE ALBERT were $8.25. MOOSE JAW $8.50, SASKATOON and REGINA $8.25 and VANCOUVER $8.75.

UNITED STATES MARKET

Shipments of Canadian cattle to the United States were heavier this past week. Canadian steers at Buffalo brought $10.40 to $10.65 or about the same as Toronto values of $9 to $9.25. Medium to good steers at St. Paul were quoted at $9.50 to $10, and good and choice vealers $9.50 to $11.

Exports to the United States during the week consisted of 1,927 beef cattle 464 dairy, 1,858 calves and 1,177 hogs. Shipments to date this year, with corresponding figures for 1940 in brackets, were: beef cattle 44,124 (55,068), dairy 7,073 (4,871), calves 29,287 (34,227). hogs 16,708 (nil). Beef cattle exports under the second quarterly quota from April 1st to June 12th, were 21,241 (35,713.)

CALF MARKET REGAINS LOSS

The calf market at Toronto opened 50 cents higher at $10.50 to $11 for choice and closed strong with a general top of $11. At Montreal, good veals made $10 to $11, with an extreme top of $11.50. The bulk of the calves at Winnipeg were $9 to $9.50, while good choice vealers at Calgary were $9 to $10. Top prices at Edmonton were $9.50, Prince Albert and Moose Jaw $8.50, Saskatoon $9, Regina $10 and Vancouver $9.

SUBSTANTIAL ADVANCE IN HOG PRICES

Hog prices at Toronto made a sharp advance from last week's close of $12.85 to a closing price of $13.50 this week for B-1 dressed. Montreal sold dogs at $13.50 to $13.75 dressed. Hogs advanced sharply at Winnipeg closing at $12.50. Hogs closed at Calgary at $11.50 to $11.85, Edmonton $11.85, to $12, Prince Albert $12.10 to $12.15, Moose Jaw $12.05, Regina $12.30, Saskatoon $12.10 to $12.25 and Vancouver $12.70 to $12.75.

LAMBS UP 25 CENTS AT TORONTO

Choice lambs at Toronto opened 25 cents higher at $13.50 and held the gain to the close. Montreal paid $12.50 to $13, others $10 to $12. Winnipeg sold a few good spring lambs at $12.75. Tops at Calgary were $11, Edmonton and Prince Albert $10.50, Moose Jaw and Saskatoon $11 and Regina $12.

THE WOOL MARKET

Graded wool is now being offered more freely by certified wool warehouses in Ontario. One warehouse reports the sale of two carloads, one of Medium Staple and one of Low Medium grades. Prices for graded wool in Ontario from certified wool warehouses to manufacturers are as follows:

Medium Staple, 32 cents to 33 cents per lb.; Low Medium Staple, 31 cents to 32 cents per lb.; Low Staple, 29 1-2 cents 34 cents per lb.; Coarse, 29 cents to 33 cents per lb.; Black & Grey, 20 cents to 25 cents per lb.; Seedy & Chaffy, 18 cents to 19 cents per lb.; Cotts 20 cents to 23 cents per lb.

In the Maritime Provinces mills are now purchasing freely from farmers for direct deliveries at mills: Medium Staple, 29 cents per lb.; Low Medium Staple, 26 cents to 29 cents per lb.; Low Staple, 26 cents to 28 cents per lb.; Seedy & Chaffy, 15 cents to 20 cents per lb.; Cotts, 15 to 18 cents per lb.; Black & Grey, 25 cents to 28 cents per lb.

The first carload of officially graded Manitoba wool was shipped east from Winnipeg this week. Wool being delivered by wool buyers to registered wool warehouses in western Canada is, for the most part, in such shape that the fleeces have to be conditioned. This indicates lack of care on the farm during the growing period and at shearing. Only a small percentage of western sheep are shorn. Registered wool warehouses in Manitoba are offering the following prices to farmers and wool buyers:

Fine Staple, 20 cents per lb.; Fine Medium Staple, 20 1-2 cents per lb.; Medium Staple, 20 cents per lb.; Low Medium Staple, 22 1-2 cents per lb.; Low Staple, 22 cents per lb. Coarse, 22 cents per lb.; Seedy & Burry, 12 cents per lb.; Grey & Black, 18 cents per lb.; Cotts, 15 cents to 8 cents per lb.

CATTLE MARKETS

TORONTO cattle receipts of 5,262 were cleared at steady prices. Weighty steers brought $8 to $9.25, butcher steers and heifers $8 to $9, butcher cows $5 to $7.50 and bulls $6 to $7.50. Fed calves ranged from $8.75 to $10 and light stockers $7.50 to $8.50, while milkers and springers were from $50 to $90 each.

Montreal had a lighter run of 1,622 cattle. Good quality steers made $8.65 to $9, top $9.25, medium kinds $8 to 8.50, good heifers brought $8 to $8.50, common $4.75 to $6.50, baby beeves sold for $9 to $10.50, bulk of the good quality cows $7 to $7.25, canners and cutters $3.50 to $4.50 and bulls $5 to $6.50. Milch cows ranged from $50 to $110 each.

WINNIPEG had 2,738 cattle for sale and an active trade. Butcher steers and heifers improved movement at $8 to $8.50, odd tops $8.75. Dry fed yearlings in demand at $7 to $7.75, quality cows steady at $5 to $7, with canners $3 to $4.50. Bulls were in good demand at $5.50 to $6.75. Light stockers in demand from $7.75, common $5.50 up.

CALGARY marketed 1,793 cattle on a generally steady market for butchers with cows tending lower. Good choice butchers brought $7.75 to $8.60, good cows $6 to $6.50, good fed calves $8 to $8.50 and good stocker steers $7 to $7.50.

EDMONTON had 1,231 cattle with improved trading on weighty steers, others steady to strong. Practical top on handyweight steers $8.25, heifers $8, fed calves $8.50, cows $6.50 and bulls $6.50. Stockers to $7.

PRINCE ALBERT had 84 cattle with a brisk trade. Good steers were mostly $8, choice heifers $7.50 to $8, good fed calves $8 to $8.25, stocker steers $5 to $5.75.

MOOSE JAW had a steady market with sales at 101 head. Choice handyweight steers and best fed calves $8, odd top heifers $7.75, best cows $6.50, some stockers $6.50.

REGINA receipts 130, best steers $8.25, choice lights cows $5.40, best bulls $6.

SASKATOON had 275 cattle. A few choice grain-fed steers at $7.75 to $8.25, mediums $7 to $7.25, best cows $6 to $6.50, canners $3 to $3.50, choice fed calves $8.40.

MARITIME receipts light with all classes steady. More cutter cows are needed. Choice to good steers $8.50 to $9.50, butcher cows $5.50 to $7, cutter $4.75 down.

SHEEP AND LAMB MARKETS

TORONTO lambs opened 25 cents higher at $13.50 for choice and held the gain to the close. Yearlings were quoted at $9 to $9.50 and sheep steady at $2.50 to $6.

MONTREAL had good lambs at $12.50 to $13 per cwt., with medium to good around $12, common $10 to $11. Sheep ranged from $3.50 to $7, mostly $5.50 to $6.

WINNIPEG had light receipts and spring lambs sold up to $12.75.

CALGARY lambs were scarce, making $10.50 to $11, lower prices in prospect.

EDMONTON quoted lambs from $10.50 down, with feedlots $8.75.

PRINCE ALBERT sold good lambs at $10.50 good shearlings at $8 and heavy ewes at $4.

MOOSE JAW had spring lambs at $10 to $11, with a few heavy lambs at $8.50.

REGINA sold a few choice lambs at $12.

SASKATOON a few light spring lambs quoted at $10 to $11 yearlings $6.50 to $8.50. Sheep $4.25 to $7

IN THE STUD

Simco Harvester 2.04½ will stand for the season at the Alberton Race Track.

HARRY O'BRIEN,
In Charge.

L-245-6-7-14-21.

- CONSERVATION -

A WEEKLY COLUMN OF PRACTICAL OPINIONS OF THE VITAL ISSUES AFFECTING THE USES AND ABUSES OF NATURAL RESOURCES BY MR. LUDLOW JENKINS, MARSHFIELD.

January Inventory

The sixth consecutive January inventory of migratory waterfowl was conducted under exceptionally trying conditions but with results that completely justified the methods employed. Under the leadership of the 10 regional directors practically the entire field force of the Bureau was thrown into this operation, aided by the Army Air Corps the Naval Air Service, the Coast Guard, a commercial tire and rubber company, the Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, National Park Service, State forestry, police and game and fish departments, and others. No attempt has been made to compile a complete list of participating personnel but the estimate is between 2,000 and 3,000 —a fine crops of trained observers

While the advent of winter over much of the country was delayed nearly to the holiday season, it closed in about at inventory time with an intensity that has not been equalled in many years. Freezing weather extended to the Gulf Coast and deep snows were prevalent. Despite these unusual and frequently hazardous conditions, the inventory was carried out on schedule.

The 1940 estimates indicated that there were somewhere in the neighborhood of 65,000 000 ducks and geese on the continent. These figures represent an increase of about 15 percent in the waterfowl population since January 1939, and nearly two and one-half times the count of 1935. The 1940 population is probably very close to half that of 1900.

When arranged by flyways, the results of the inventory showed a decided lack of uniformity as had been indicated by study of the fall migration. As in the past few years the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways this year harbored most of the ducks and geese. The Central Flyway showed a large decrease in all species, while in the Pacific Flyway the status of the birds remained almost at the 1939 level.

According to species, the mallard and the pintail are making the best recovery, due of course to their extensive ranges. Black ducks show a slight decrease, which may be more apparent than real. Although but little improvement can be detected in the status of the redhead the canvasback shows a satisfactory increase. The population of Canada geese is somewhat greater than last year the increase does not come up to expectations, probably because of excessive slaughter of these birds in one or two areas during the past hunting season. Both blue and snow geese show a satisfactory increase.

Starvation of Ducks

Shortly after the inventory and while the country still remained in the grip of severe winter, widespread reports of alleged wholesale starvation of waterfowl began to appear in the press. As a rule, the facts were greatly exaggerated, but some losses did occur. Local reports were over-publicized in connection with promotional campaigns and with efforts to oppose continuation of the baiting of waterfowl for shooting.

Several instances of alleged starvation in different parts of the country were thoroughly investigated, examinations of birds collected being made by the Biological Survey, State universities, and other agencies. In each instance the birds affected were cripples from the hunting season, were heavily parasitized or more suffering from lead poisoning. The last-named diagnosis was the most frequent finding of the technicians conducting the examinations.

In the Illinois River valley, 41 ducks supposed to have died of starvation, were given a critical laboratory examination, and 20 were found to have died from lead poisoning. The remaining 21 birds had died from other causes, but many showed the characteristic lesions of lead poisoning. Of these, 8 were heavily infested with internal parasites, 3 were suffering from gunshot wounds, and 7 of the remaining 10 had a considerable quantity of corn small grains, and other food in their gizzards—a circumstance definitely eliminating starvation as the cause of death.

An investigation made on Round Lake, near Ruthven, Iowa, by the Biological Survey in cooperation with the State Conservation Commission showed that about three-quarters of the 123 dead mallards found on the area had food in their crops. About a fifth of the gizzards bulged with food, but this could not be digested because of paralysis of the muscles from lead poisoning All but one of the 13 ducks contained shot. Although one gizzard contained 22 pellets, 55 others showed but one shot each.

These studies in Illinois and Iowa support findings of wildlife pathologists in other parts of the country, where in many winters reports of starving ducks have been common. In nearly every case wildlife technicians found that causes other than lack of food have been responsible for the condition of the birds.

Nevertheless, starvation may be the immediate cause of death for ducks that are incapacitated by wounds, lead poisoning or parasites. For birds that might make complete recoveries under moderate weather conditions the freezing of water areas, with accompanying deep snow, may well mean death by starvation. Many wildlife experts have reached the conclusion that normal wild ducks or geese are not likely to die of starvation. It is becoming increasingly evident that the ducks that starve are those badly injured or too weak from other causes to leave an area that suddenly becomes inhospitable, or that are unable to withstand the severe weather conditions prevailing for short periods nearly every winter in the northernmost parts of the waterfowl wintering grounds.

During severe cold spells, when tens of thousands of ducks are concentrated in small open bodies of water, it would be almost miraculous if a few dead birds were not found. Some of these may be individuals that have lived through a normal span of life or that are otherwise unfit, and it is natural for them to succumb during critical periods.

Cripples

The annual loss of crippled or unretrieved birds is a very serious drain on our waterfowl. Although this is to some extent unavoidable and is sometimes caused even by expert shooters, a large percentage is the result of attempts to bag birds beyond the effective range of the gun. The following quotation from an article by H. P. Sheldon in Country Life (Feb. 1940) is illustrative:

"Fed duck shooters can go through a season without having cause for self-reproach over the number of crippled birds that are not recovered. Even if a gunner is utterly indifferent to the humane aspect of the matter he cannot ignore the fact that it is dreadfully poor business to allow one-fourth of the total annual kill of wildfowl to be wasted in such fashion. One way to avoid crippling is to use these modern heavy shot loads properly —not in attempts to make long-range hits, but to produce cleaner kills at normal ranges. I wish with all my heart that these could be less talk about the long-range qualities of these cartridges. Every word of it adds to the numbers of the poor broken-winged, gun-shot creatures dying in their thousands back in the willows and sedge, out of sight and too often, I fear, out of the minds of the men who put them there. God knows there is little need to encourage duck hunter to try a long shot. On any day on any ducking ground one will see incorrigible optimists firing long-range cartridges at birds at distances of from 30 yards to infinity. It's a lamentable and scandalous fact that most of these lads are not too hot at the 30-yard birds, but they will nevertheless dauntlessly undertake to bet a 3-inch 5-cent shotgun shell against the life of a wild duck 80 yards distant. Just often enough to support their egos and back up the old saying about they'll kill a 70-yard duck dead in the air, having missed a few, and hopelessly crippled a few more that could not be gathered afterward.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox Farming

In connection with everything in this province the writer experienced a severe shock when news of the sinking of the S. S. Charlottetown was published. It seemed to grip one more than many of the other and probably greater tragedies we have experienced. On behalf of thousands of silver fox farmers we would expess to Captain John L. Read our sincerest sympathy and hope that this splendid steamer, which he commanded so ably, will be back in service again.

The Seattle, Washington Fur Exchange held their regular sale of furs June 12th. RANCH MINK was 76 per cent sold with fine skins bringing from $16. to $18. and ordinary $9. to $14. WILD MINK was 30 per cent sold, fine Alaskans bringing $14. to $16. WHITE FOX was 98 per cent sold, ones and twos brought $8. to $21. BLUE FOX to the number of 1,500 were offered and 1,450 sold. ALASKA ARTICS brought $45. to $55. ALEUTIAN ISLANDS ones and twos $40. to $60. MUSKRATS were 98 per cent sold. Selected lots of Washington, Oregon skins bought $1.70 to $1.85, best Alaska trapped skins brought $1.70 to $2.00. SILVER FOX. The offering was small, only 675 skins comprising it. These were 62 per cent sold with selected skins bringing $60. to $70., ordinary full silvers $35. to $45., three-quarter silvers $30. to $37., half silvers $25. to $28., and quarter silvers $18. to $22.

William Filene & Sons, Boston, launched a sale last week, entitled —"An advance season fur coat sale." They featured dyed black Persian lamb at $398, $498 and $598 per coat."

Captain Edward Molyneux, famous Parisian designer but now employed by Fromm Brothers in New York is designing fur garments from silver fox pelts. He has brought out a completely new method of silver fox skin treatment known as the Horizontal. This treatment of skins is used as a design motif as the border of coats, jackets or capes. Hemline borders are either shallow or only two split skins, or they are wide, measuring 10 or 12 inches deep. Collars continue large. The shawl collar extends to waistlength on a narrow shouldered coat. Capes range from waist to below knee lengths. A waistlength cape has skins hanging in perfectly straight lines from a wide waistlength collar. Fromm Brothers have all their styles patented and the furs made up are sold through certain specified dealers.

Bert Avery, Pine Knot, California, who has stepped right to the top among silver fox, platinum and white face silver breeders of the United States, has a very interesting article entitled, "Modern Fox Mutations." in the American Fox Breeder for June. These are extracts...."I have been raising silver foxes for twenty years and have always strived to produce a better animal. The type I have in my mind dates back to 1923 when I saw a fox called Canuck Champion at the Royal Winter Fair, Toronto. This male had all that a fox should have and I have never seen anything since that compared with him. He did not win the Grand Championship that year, was beaten by Cappy P., but old Canuck Champion won the world's championship five times—a record that speaks well for his quality.

One of his pups, Cedar Park 17A was my first polygamous male, and while this male is responsible for many of my prize winners I am still trying to produce a Canuck Champion. (Canuck Champion was owned by Peter G. Clark, Summerside, P.E.I., and Mr. Clark will feel proud, we are sure, when he reads the above.)

"In the Spring of 1936 I tried to buy a white-face silver from the Black Forest ranch and was informed they had decided never to sell breeding stock. About the same time I saw a lady wearing a white-face scarf and I was impressed with the beauty of the silver. Although this scarf was only a three-quarter silver the silver was blue white and the black was blue black. After introducing myself I said, "I see you are wearing a Black Forest fox scarf." "No," she said, "this fox came from the Colpitts ranch in Calgary." I corresponded with the manager and finally persuaded him to part with one pair of white-face silvers and they arrived in November, 1936.

I understand the Colpitts mutation appeared in 1928 and about 1931 ten pairs of the best white-face breeders were shipped to the Colpitts ranch in New Brunswick and they claim that more mutation can be seen on this ranch in two hours than in all the rest of Canada. Their show record in white-face and platinum foxes speaks well for the quality of their strain.

The McNeill strain of white-face foxes is better known. I visited their ranch in 1938 and bought two pair. At that time they had some very fine white-face silvers and two very fine platinum males that had been produced from their white-face silvers. Last November the Canadian ranchers put on a mutation show at Saskatoon, Sask., I decided I had better take a look. At this show there were the following herds— the LaForest, the McNeill, the MacDonald and the Holman strains. I will try to give a brief description of each.

Mr. Burroughs had some very fine platinums and won many high awards with his animals. His foxes, I understand, are of the McNeill strain and were very uniform in colour, colour being bluish white with a slight dark veiling and the underfur was creamish white and the tail had the appearance of the same combination as the body. The Holman mutation is another original mutation produced on the C. C. Holman ranch and is a distinct type and quite different from the McNeill platinums. This male has abundant white markings and is hard to describe. In the crate he seemed to be a mixture of black, white and blue guard hairs. I understand that the Holman strain crossed with the McNeill white-face silvers produced the herd owned by Dr. R.H. MacDonald.

They are different from all the strains and it is hard to describe exactly what they look like. One thing outstanding about this strain was the strength of guard fur and the fine conformation which is characteristic of the MacDonald herd of standard silvers. Some of these platinums had a peculiar appearance as though the colours did not blend. They were dark and light in waves from the back and the underfur blended with the guard fur, that is, where the guard fur was dark the underfur was dark and where the guard fur was blue the underfur was blue. This strain is beautifully marked and has a good future.

The LaForest strain came from an original mutation occurring on a ranch in Quebec. The original mutation was a platinum and this strain and other strains I have seen where the original was a platinum are different from the platinums produced from selections from white-face silvers. In the LaForest strain instead of a creamy white underfur they have a blue underfur that blends and corresponds to the lightness of the guard fur. The guard fur on these foxes is a mixture of three shades of blue mixed with some almost white hairs. The veiling does not break sharp but each hair darkens a little at the tip, making a colour that cannot be accurately described. This strain is large and they have an abundance of fur. They are very similar to the better types of Norwegian skins I have examined. There was a nice showing of white-face silvers. They are different from our American white-faces in that they carry a much heavier veiling.

From Saskatoon I went to Grand Rapids where the Michigan and Ohio associations were staging a grand fox show, and here again were more platinums and more white-face silvers. It seems that the U. S. ranchers prefer blonde, because the platinums here are much paler in colour than the Canadian platinums. There were 4 different platinum herds here, all a little different. Each one of these herds had for the original a platinum mutation. First there was the herd shown by Wilfred Todd, one of them a beautiful adult male, very pale with white underfur, beautiful brush and well marked.

The Buffalo Bill ranch of Cody, Wyoming, had a very fine entry of platinum foxes. These animals were very pale blue in colour in the guard, fading to almost white on the flanks, with underfur that blended, being pure white on the belly and getting darker over the back. These foxes are well furred, well marked and created a lot of interest." Quite a number of other herds were described by Mr. Avery and then he goes on to say...."I have been asked many times what I think of the future of the platinums. Frankly, I don't know. Right now they command fancy prices, due partly to the scarcity. I think we have a lot of hard work ahead of us and we will have to keep in close contact with the auction sales to watch the trend, and we will no doubt make as many changes in our platinums as we have in our standards. I think most of the American platinums are too pale—not enough character to make them stand out. For the scarf trade they are desirable, but soon they will be cut up into garments and we must have more colour, more pattern and more character to make them stand out as a distinctive fur.

Beauty of character and volume of fur are the important points to consider. No doubt these new colour phases have been a life saver for the ranchers, and a boom to the furrier. The public were getting fed upon silver foxes and the furriers were desperate for something new and were trying to get good blue foxes to tempt the buyers, and now we can give them almost anything they can name in the way of a fox. The future of the white-face silver is very bright. Silver fox has been the most popular fur on the market for many years and in the white-face silver we have a similar character but much more brilliant in colour that makes an outstanding scarf and works into garments beautifully.

The pearl platinum as developed by the Ritchies, Garwoods and the Cherrys of Colorado are very beautiful foxes. These are a solid colour fox with a pearly blue coloring. A pearl platinum mated to a standard female will produce all silvers in the first cross, but when these are mated back to a pearl platinum a high percentage of the second generation are pure pearl platinums."

The results of the Canadian Fur Auction held the past week show that of the 9,562 skins offered almost 6,000 were sold at an average price of $22.73. This would net the rancher if he sold through one of the shipping companies, something over $20.00. The company claims that this is a 5 per cent advance over the previous sale. Careful consideration of the results obtained does not fill one with enthusiasm. It seems to the writer that there has been a distinct slowing down in the popularity and demand for silver fox the past few months. One does not see them featured in the advertisements of the large firms in the large cities as they were a year ago. Our contention is and always will be that the fox farmers through their organizations have got to bestir themselves and take more interest in the Canadian market. After all there is a tremendous amount of money circulating in Canada that will be spent for luxuries and we are dumbbells of the first order if we don't get our proportion of it. Others with more aggressiveness and less laissez faire attitude will change the public consciousness towards Persian lamb, mink or any of a half-dozen other furs.

Several ranchers have called up with reference to trouble in their ranches, foxes going off feed being the principal thing complained of. Our advice was to cut down feed at once and gradually increase as appetite returned. We think there may have been a little laxness in the preparation of the feed. It may be the meat was a bit tainted because evidently some "bug" got into the system and caused fermentation or distress. Most of the trouble occurred in ranches that have been feeding heavily and perhaps mixing their feeds some time before feeding time, thus possibly causing fermentation.

We are indebted to Ollie McNeil, Fort Qu'Appelle, Sask., for copies of the Denver, Colorado, Rocky Mountain notes, giving a full account of the theatre opening by 9,000 Rotarians. Ollie is very popular in Denver and his foxes are well known. One of the Rotarians was 6 feet 7 1-2 inches tall and the smallest chap 5 feet 4 1-2 inches. They were photographed together and made quite a contrast.

CROP REPORT

WINNIPEG, Man., June 20 — Sufficient moisture for present requirements is generally reported over the West. Exceptions to this continue to be found in the Edmonton division of Alberta and in north eastern Saskatchewan. Plentiful surface moisture in all other teritory has tended to develop a shallow root system under an extremely heavy growth and there will therefore continue to be an urgent demand for more rain to maintain present prospects. The welcome arrival of warmer weather has been ideal for all crops and no serious damage is reported from any source according to the Weekly Crop Report of the Department of Agriculture of the Canadian National Railways.

Southern Manitoba continues to be favored with an abundance of rainfall and much of the wheat is now in the shot blade. Growth is heavy and prospects are excellent fall rye is well headed out.

In Northern Manitoba rain has fallen in some districts but in others the need is becoming urgent. Wheat has made good recovery following frost damage but it is feared the coarse grain which was badly frozen may not fully recover. Crops are generally reported to be 10 days later than average.

Conditions in southern Saskatchewan are generally reported satisfactory but some of the lighter land is drying out and rain will soon be needed. Higher temperatures during the past week have promoted more rapid growth. No serious damage to crops from any source is reported.

Prospects in the Saskatoon division are very promising. Scattered showers have occurred at many points but a good rain would be welcome. There is a general need of rain in most of Nothern Saskatchewan although no deterioration of crops is reported Crops have made excellent progress during the last several warm days and wheat is coming into shot blade.

Southern Alberta reports hot dry weather with some high winds and a few showers. All grains doing nicely and of good color. More rain would be welcome in some of the lighter soil districts. The general outlook still remains good.

Most of northwestern Alberta is still in need of more rain. Weather has been somewhat warmer with scattered showers but a general heavy rain is an urgent requirement. Poor pasture conditions will undoubtedly affect dairy production and much of the hay crop is already reported a failure.

Heavy showers over the entire Peaceriver District have improved the moisture situation greatly. Some of the wheat is in the shot blade and no damage is reported from any source.

ORDNANCE EXPERT KILLED

LONDON — (CP) — Prominent figure in the retail motor trade before the war, Lt.-Col W. H. Prestage of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps has been killed in action.

HOLSTEIN MEETING

The annual meeting of the P. E. I. Branch of the Holstein Friesian Association will be held Tuesday, June 24th, at 11 o'clock A. M. Standard Time in the Agriculture Hall, Charlottetown. All Breeders of Holsteins attend if possible.

CECIL STEWART,
Secretary.

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