

NEWSY NOTES

BY AGRICOLA

INDIAN FOOD PLANTS

John MacSwain, in his "Plants of P. E. Island," give the common or Black Nighthshade (Solanum nigrum) as one of our native plants. It must be relatively uncommon since I have not yet come across it. It is known that the Indians of California ate the ripe berries of this plant, but considered the green berries poisonous.

At 4 p.m.; after a week of warm weather. Severe electric storm about 1 p.m. Falconwood Hospital struck and main central tower gutted. No lives lost, but \$25,000 property damage. Ju. 23, 1926.

Local Time of Sunrise and Sunset for June, in Latitude 46 degrees: 1st, 4.11 a.m., 7.46 p.m. — 5th, 4.09 a.m., 7.49 p.m. — 15th, 4.08 a.m., 7.52 p.m. — 20th, 4.09 a.m., 7.54 p.m. — 25th, 4.10 a.m., 7.55 p.m. — 30th, 4.12 a.m., 7.55 p.m.

THE BABES IN THE WOOD, AGAIN

I am indebted to a correspondent who sends me a newspaper cutting throwing further light on the old and famous Nursery Story. The wicked uncle of the tale was one Robert de Grey who lived at Griston Old Hall, at the little town of Norfolk. Poor Robert was "framed up" in the ballad, in the same way as Capt. Bligh of the Bounty was treated in the talkies.

When the boy died whippers of foul play were put into circulation and bit by bit the story grew. Before Robert died in 1601, the ballad as outlined in these Notes, was published as a broadsheet. After the lawsuit was ended Robert got into trouble with the ecclesiastical authorities and was heavily fined and often imprisoned.

A wood close to Watton is called the Walling Wood, because, said the legends, it used to be haunted by the wailing spirits of the babes; and the huge oak beneath which Thomas and his sister are said to have died, was struck by lightning and destroyed in 1879.

OIL FROM COAL

To make gasoline from coal does not seem a feasible task, but this is being done today at one of the collieries on the coast of Durham, England; and it is reported that another factory will soon be established in South Wales, which will refine the bituminous shale industry there, besides recovering Britain independent of foreign oils to some extent. The method of producing the oil, is a modification of that worked out by Dr. Friedrich Bergius, a German, some years ago. It is one thing to work out a method, however, and quite another thing to make it commercially practicable, but Dr. Bergius did both—with thirteen years between!

An admirable instance of Teutonic perseverance. Coal, as is well known, is principally made up of Carbon, Hydrogen, and Oxygen in various proportions. Soft Coal is a compound of C and H, in the proportion of 16 to 1; while oil is a hydrocarbon with the proportions at 8 to 1. Bergius' task therefore was to find out how to make coal accept a double load of hydrogen and become oil.

In a nature used to seeking "substitutes" he did not lack backers, and the members of a chemical combine furnished him with a laboratory and money to carry out his experiments. This was in 1911, at Hanover and incidentally it may be mentioned that it cost the combine \$6,000,000 before success crowned the work.

Like a wise man Dr. Bergius first made himself master of the material he was to work in; he sent for samples of coal from all over the world and studied their composition. Afterwards in his laboratory he produced synthetic coal of various kinds, for two years; and then he was ready for his real task.

His first attempt was to heat lumps of coal in a steel tank and to force hydrogen into the tank under great pressure. The coal turned to coke under the heat evolved, and didn't drink up the hydrogen. Would grinding the coal first, improve the process? The result was ready for his real task.

His next step was to mix the ground coal with oil to a kind of sludge. This was heated in the airtight steel tank for some hours and then hydrogen was forced in

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as before. When the tap was opened a syrup-like fluid ran out. Part of the coal had turned to oil in the presence of a catalyst—in this case the added oil. At last the scientist began to see his way.

Finally, Dr. Bergius mixed the ground coal with tar. "Mechanical stirres agitated the sooty paste in hot tanks," says the account of this experiment; and as before, the hydrogen was pumped in. When the valves were opened gas and oil flowed out. Success at last! But three more years were to pass before the patient scientist got rid of all his difficulties mostly, minor, but still troublesome and erected his first factory. Not long afterwards he erected another, and the two factories now produce one million barrels of gasoline and lubricant oil annually. The combine got back their money in a few months.

The factory in County Durham uses crude oil to mix with the coal as a catalyst and has two pipe-lines running to the coast; the one to receive the crude oil from the tanker, and the other to deliver the gasoline for transport. One of the serious enemies of the value of such factories to Britain, and it is hoped to extend both their number and capacity.

JUST A FEW WORDS.

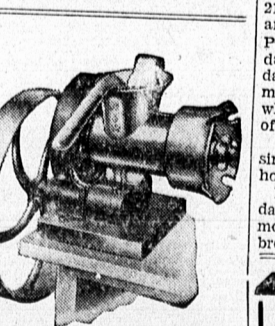
I have sometimes voiced an objection to the phrase "off of," partly because of its displeasing sound, and partly from its redundancy. It is now a sort of dialectic usage in the country to the South, but seems to have persisted in literary circles in England to the middle of the eighteenth century. I have alluded to its occurrence in the works of Defoe, and just lately I have come across it in the Second Part of Shakespeare's Henry VI, Act 2, Scene 1, where Simcox says he was crippled by "a fall off of a tree." An English writer of the present day would certainly omit "of," and most likely would change the phrase to "a fall from a tree."

On the other hand the practice of leaving out "from" certain phrases seems to be growing; the read of "a couple years' time," "a couple more eggs," and so on. Couple, pair, and words of that kind, are substantives and necessarily take "of" to connect them to the noun they refer to. To omit it is a slipshod way of writing.

Many times this past winter, over the air came those short vocal efforts generally termed "Sailors' Shanties." Many music catalogues adopt that spelling, which is obviously wrong; the repetitive sound of the music and words quite naturally carries a reminiscence of the chanting of a church choir, so the term is properly "Sailors' Chantey." Such Chanteyes were sung by the crews of the old sailing ships, to keep the men in step at the capstan, or in hauling on ropes.

We call a she fox a vixen but that is just a dialect form of the old word vixen or vixen, which by the way conveys no idea of sex, but does C. plurality.

I am told that the old North-umbrian dialect, familiar to my boyhood days, is fast dying out. Only a few of the older folk use it now, and the school children are said to speak "kitch pretty!"



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HORSE MEMOIRS

By Mr. C. E. MacKenzie

GREAT BROOD MARES

Dex the dam of "Royal Harry," deserved a place in our great brood-mare list. This mare, although not Island bred, produced that noted prize winner and sire of carriage and roadster horses Royal Harry. Dex was a daughter of Hamiltonian 10, having been imported to this province by the late Dr. John T. Jenkins and the result of her mating to "Prince Matry" was "Royal Harry." Dex also produced "Young Ham," a son of Young Hamiltonian 10, "Young Ham" being in bred was a beautiful horse.

Dex, as her name indicates was a sister of the noted Dexter 2.17, fastest horse of his time in America. No doubt the dam of Jeff, would be entered to a place too but the writer is unable to give her breeding. "Lady Milton," the dam of Neptune Lee again, the dam of worthy of a place in the roll of honor, "Lady Milton was a daughter of "Sambo" thoroughbred said to have been the most choicely bred horse that ever came to this Province, and at the time "Lady Milton" was bred he was owned by the late Moses Byrne, North River. Lady's dam was by a son of "Neptune," (imported thoroughbred) known as the "Hayes" horse, the mother of Lady's dam as well as the mother of the Hayes horse were both daughters of imported Rancavalles, thus we see that we had four crosses of thoroughbred, Lady Milton had nine colts, all but three of which were sired by Clyde or cross-bred horses and every colt she raised was a real horse. Jennie Lee, by Red Clyde trotted miles in 2:42-1/2 when this was considered record time.

Neptune Lee, sired Hamlet 2.16, Twilight 2.2, Longfellow 2.26 1-2 and Dauntless only sired seven colts among which was Snatcher 2.29. Gama, dam of Parkland, Parkdale Parkide Pr. and Ada Mack, is another mare that has a right to a position in this list. She was a daughter of Hernando, her dam being "Lili," by All Right, granddam. A daughter of Prince Edward from a daughter of "Coachmans Glory" and having a further backing of Mountain Stag and Revenge to the glory of Parkside, no horse fan can deny, as the wonderful performance of both Parkland and Parkdale as colts trotters brought fame to this province, while many of us still remember "Ada Mack's" splendid performances at Charlottetown and elsewhere.

"Lili," a daughter of Dean Swift, produced Dot 2.18. Administrator's dam of "Natusin," the mother of "Kickapoo" 2.18. Both these horses were sons of Preceptor. Among other worthy mares might be mentioned the dams of Stranger 2.25, said to have been sired by French Lion, and Sir John Dean 2.25 1-2. No doubt some of my readers will be able to furnish their extended breeding.

The dam of Ned Hanlan 2.25 was, I am told, a daughter of MacLinn Pony Ned, being a son of "Kimbly Morgan," a handsome black horse imported to Prince Edward Island from Vermont and a typical Morgan. The dams of Minnie Warren, P. 2.25, and Will-o-the-Wisp, 2.29 1-2 both sired by Dean Swift, should also be worthy of honorable mention in this list, but as the writer has no knowledge of their breeding I am unable to give this information. Should any reader know the particulars I would be pleased to publish same in a future article.

Among other dams distinction I would like to make mention of the dams of Beau Prince 2.27, Banker 2.29, Montrose and Boss, money Maker 2.18, Hamlet, 2.16, a daughter of French Sporter and whose dam was MacLinn Pony and Saladan breeding. The dam of Twilight 2.22 was a daughter of Harry Morgan out of a mare sired by a son of "The Gull" which was one of the real trotters of earlier days.

The dam of Orwell Belle, was sired by Administrator Right. This horse sired "Bye and Bye" 2.25. Bob Mack's 2.11 dam was a daughter of Parkside and on his mother's side was of Saladan breeding.

Large wooded runs in this country would not be nearly as efficacious as they are in Wisconsin, for the reason that cold weather strikes Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan quite early—usually the latter part of September or first week in October and they do not have the rainy falls which we are subject among very large timber lands which the lower branches have been removed and the ground between the trees certainly is a visitor who saw one of them told the writer that they are as dark as pitch and that some of them are

As my readers will notice a large number of dams mentioned only produced one foal. This fact I feel does not give these mares the credit they should have had if there had been a larger number of better sires available in those earlier times. Another reason why our earlier breeders did not breed more trotting stock was the fact that their mares being largely of thoroughbred breeding, produced well turned horses when crossed with draft sires and as the market in the earlier history of horse breeding demanded just such horses as this cross produced they catered to the horse car and general delivery trade.

No doubt the indulgent readers of Horse Memoirs will find errors and commissions in these articles, nevertheless I trust this imperfect history of our earlier breeding activities may be of interest and while it is difficult to procure authentic data, the writer would be pleased to receive all available help in this work. I have just recently procured the summaries of a number of races run off on one of our rural race courses, which I trust to be able to put in shape in the near future and I would be pleased to receive any additional history of any or all of our race tracks, that were in operation in those balmy days of horses racing from the earlier nineties on.

Your readers will notice that in the brood-mare list I have confined myself to Island bred dams, with the exception of Dex, and in a future article I plan on making mention to dams that have produced trotters, born in this province which will no doubt be interesting especially to those breeders who were progressive enough to import well bred mares to this province.

CARTER'S SEEDS

April is here and Spring is just around the corner. It will soon be time to start the Hot Bed. We are all ready with a good supply of SEEDS at our SEED STORE, QUEEN STREET.

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TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH

Silver Fox Farming



The Honorary Judges at the British Silver Fox Show held in London the latter part of December, have released a report (which we are abbreviating) on the quality standard of the animals shown to them for judging.

1. The standard of the champion-silver prize winners was very high, particularly in the full silvers and three-quarter silver classes. The champions and reserves in these sections could hardly be improved upon for color and quality, and the adult dogs in the half silver section were a considerable improvement on anything that has been shown during the past few years.

2. The standard in the quarter silver, black and slightly silver sections and in the half silver section, except as mentioned above, was not quite such a high level. In these sections density of silver and over-hair could have been improved upon.

3. In most of the large classes there was very little to judge between the foxes occupying the prize winning places, and it was usually quality which was the deciding factor. In general, foxes which did not take prizes lacked density of underfur or density of guard hairs, and shoulders with strong guard hairs were scarce, and we think breeders should pay particular attention to this point. Color in the classes from half silver to black was not as good as in the more silver sections.

4. There was much room for improvement in the tails of a large percentage of the foxes exhibited. Many tails were either too greyish in color or with twisted or hairs. Although from a trade point of view tails are not of such high importance as formerly, attention should be given to this point. Belles, too, were often sparsely or too short furred. As a whole, however, the foxes exhibited were good, clear, sharp color and the prize winners were of the much desired bluish tone.

5. Fine color and good quality have always been of great importance and now that the annual production of pelts is becoming so enormous it is only those of the best color and quality that are likely to bring real remunerative prices to breeders.

Quite a number of Winnipeg fox ranchers visited Fromm Bros. sale in February and came back all excited from its success. Some of them were planning to imitate Fromm's by building large runs in wooded parts, believing that will improve the color of their foxes (which are kept in open pens) and increase their size.

Discussing the influence of light on color with W. Chester S. McClure, he stated that it is only reasonable to assume that dark surroundings tend to produce clearer and better colored pelts. He instanced the fact that the best sable comes from the dark, heavily wooded parts of Kamchatka, Russia and the best mink come from the similarly wooded portions of Labrador. "I am convinced," said Mr. McClure, "that foxes that are kept for pelting purposes should be permitted as little light as possible and kept free from the effects of rain."

The Charlottetown Fox Club with President Arthur Roper in command, is seeking to boost membership and will welcome any of the fraternity to the fold. An evening spent listening to discussions there, which follow papers or talks by the mentioned authorities, is an evening well spent. Meetings are held every second Thursday.

Reports from Summerside are that George Calbeck will have a great turn out from his hundred females. Litters looked at are said to average six. The writer hopes that this figure will carry on to the final George Calbeck, as he is expected to have a big turn out and with the great record he has made in the show ring he has reason to look forward to happy days this fall. The McArthurs are ardent horsemen and divide their love of animals between these two dissimilar types.

It looks definitely as though the threat of war for this year at least, is over. You will remember that I mentioned in these columns a few weeks ago that the Russians have a better pursuit plane than the Germans. This was demonstrated in Spain, where a commission of Germans have been thoroughly studying the war there with a view to gauging the effect of the new weapons. A conclusion was reached by them that the Russian pursuit planes were definitely superior to the Germans. Others ascribed it to the superiority of the Russian aviators. The committee is further of the opinion that the Italian as a soldier in a modern war is not the best of martial material!

After all when you come to think of it, little credit is expected of the Italians in that capacity because if we trace the course of history you will find that as a people they have not been called upon to take part in any bitterly fought wars. Napoleon made his name ring through Europe by his exploits in Italy when he took a French force

so large they cover sixty to one hundred acres. Major T. B. Rogers, the well known fox rancher, will be one of the contingent representing this province at the Coronation of His Majesty King George VI on May 12th. The Major has made great progress with his foxes the past three years and has developed some very beautiful animals.

Dr. Leo Frank reports excellent success with his breeding operations at Rosbank Fur Farms. He hopes to have over 200 cross fox pups from his matings of Alaska and standard breeds. This switch in breeding has proved quite profitable to the Doctor on account of his attractive cross pelts which sold in New York at good averages, and the demand for his Alaskan fur is increasing. By the way, some top prices were realized for fresh crosses at the Montreal sale this Spring, over \$200 being paid for some fancy specimens.

It seems to be the vogue to pay a high price for "freak" pelts. No doubt there are movie actresses and others who want something strikingly different. This explains the high price paid for a white nose, white-ringed silver fox pelt and the E37 which a steel blue silver realized in London at the January sale. It might be, however, that the proportion of these freaks on a large scale would not be attended with such desirable results and that in the long run it would be better to stick to accepted standards. However, if any of our readers have something that is different yet beautiful, our advice would be to breed from it and endeavor to establish the strain.

Talking to many representative breeders within the past week I have arrived at the conclusion that generally speaking, litters are a little larger this season than last. In our own ranch where we had 184 litters on the first of April last year this year we are down to 149, but we believe that the production will be equally as great as last year when the final litter arrives on or about the 26th of May.

Once more the season approaches when every normal person begins to yearn for spring and summer. Winter sports, even for the young, pall as snow gives place to flush, and slush to mud. But beneath that slush and mud or it may yet be frozen snow, nature once more is beginning to stir.

Birds are returning from the south; sap is rising in the maples and on the southern slopes of the hill the earth is commencing to steam at high noon. Soon it will be time to sharpen spade and fork and get out in the garden, either in the bare ground one that is going to be developed this season, or to make constant improvements in one that may have been in the family for generations. Active operations may not be possible yet for weeks in some part of Canada, but in the meantime plans can be laid, seeds and other stocks ordered, and early plants started in sunny window or hot bed.

Garden Plans

For the permanent sort of gardening, that is the kind using perennial flowers, shrubs, trees, grass and other things that grow for years, some preliminary planning is absolutely essential. True, most Canadian garden authorities advocate informal planting for the average home surroundings, but even in simple informality some previous notion of the final results is desirable. Otherwise there are going to be tiny shrubs hidden by large ones, grass is going to be too shaded in one quarter and delicate flowers burnt-up in another. Even in the vegetable patch, it is a splendid idea, so the horticulturist state, to plot the whole patch roughly to scale, and then lay out

stably feedings his soil for generations. The older provinces in Canada have been gradually realizing the value of stimulating their land by supplying it with plan food, and so making more profitable crops possible. The western prairies, rich in decayed vegetable matter, have in many parts of these provinces produced remarkable crops over a considerable period of years, but farmers on these prairies are now discovering that where land has been cropped for fifteen or twenty years the soil needs some restoration, and experiments with commercial fertilizers are proving that their application will increase the yields of grain and increase the profits of the farmer. When such is the case in Western Canada we may draw our own conclusions as to East.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

THE MAINTAINING OF SOIL FERTILITY

In most sections of our farming districts the first deficiency in plant food, to be found in the land, will be a lack of phosphate. We frequently grow legumes, in which nitrogen is restored, and potash is not so quickly exhausted, so the rule is that our first depletion will be that of phosphate.

An efficient farmer will prepare a good seed bed before he plants his seed. He will also sow nothing but the best seed that can be had, knowing, as he does, that good crops do not grow from inferior seed. His ultimate yield will then depend upon the fertility of his soil, excepting, of course, exceptional weather conditions. If the soil is rich in available plant food, the crops will be an abundant one; if the land is deficient in the elements that promote growth, poor results may follow.

The question then becomes the very pertinent one of why a farmer will expend all the labor necessary to produce a good crop if his soil is not rich enough to give him a good yield. If the soil is rich, the same labor will produce a crop worth a good deal more money. The answer, then, is that we must see to it that the land is enriched to yield a heavy crop.

We must first find out what the soil lacks, that we can supply that need. Increased yields mean increased profits. We cannot afford to be tilling impoverished soil where the returns will not sufficiently compensate for the labor expended.

People frequently speak of a farm as being "run down." The same expression is often used with reference to a person in poor health. The expression is a significant one, meaning, as it does exhausted vitality. When persons are in this physical condition, they must make an effort to build up their health again, to restore their vitality, so they will be able to perform their regular duties. No one can do a full vigorous day's work when in a run-down condition.

Soil in a run-down condition cannot meet the demands of a full crop. It lacks the vitality to sustain the growth necessary to a heavy yield of grain. Crop returns depend upon moisture, sunshine and plant food in the land. Without the plant food, however, the moisture and sunshine are helpless. Growing crops are greatly aided by careful preparation of the seed bed, and later cultivation when necessary, but no full yield can be secured unless the soil contains sufficient quantities of available plant food to promote rapid growth, early maturity and full heads of grain.

It is, therefore, essential that we keep our soil up to a high state of production. In every agricultural country in the world where uniformly heavy yields of grain are harvested, we find commercial fertilizers are freely used. The British farmer has been con-

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It would appear from tests made in fields that have been growing alfalfa that this plant exhausts the lime content of the soil. It is quite apparent that alfalfa will not flourish on land that lacks lime. It is easily detected, then, that lime is a nourishing factor in the life of alfalfa. Alfalfa has been found to have been growing alfalfa for some time shows a lack of lime content and a resultant acidity.

This is a feature of fertilizing land that should be observed closely. Alfalfa may be considered the most valuable plant in farming operations. It is excellent feed for all kinds of live stock, and it enriches the soil by restoring nitrogen. Many farms have been greatly improved by growing alfalfa. If it exhausts the lime content, however, that must be given some attention, and as it can be restored cheaply, it should neither be neglected nor delayed. Soil can be kept in good condition for growing this legume by keeping it sweet. Farmers should, therefore, not allow of lime to their soil by exhaustion of lime to persist. It should be immediately remedied.

Low yields in either your land or your animals is fatal to farming. The low producing cow in the dairy is living off the good ones, and often she is a real liability. Every acre of your land that is unable to produce its maximum yield of grain is eating into your farm profits. No form of animal or vegetable life can exist without phosphorus. It is one of the essentials of life. The land produces the vegetable crops to feed your animals; how essential, then, it becomes to see that your soil does not lack phosphates.

As nothing is more important than rapid vigorous growth in the early stages of plant life it is well to have the fertilizer relatively near the seed, so as to stimulate their growth as soon as they sprout and begin to send out their first roots.

Canadian Garden Service 1937

BY GORDON LINDSAY SMITH

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It is, therefore, essential that we keep our soil up to a high state of production. In every agricultural country in the world where uniformly heavy yields of grain are harvested, we find commercial fertilizers are freely used. The British farmer has been con-

stantly feeding his soil for generations. The older provinces in Canada have been gradually realizing the value of stimulating their land by supplying it with plan food, and so making more profitable crops possible. The western prairies, rich in decayed vegetable matter, have in many parts of these provinces produced remarkable crops over a considerable period of years, but farmers on these prairies are now discovering that where land has been cropped for fifteen or twenty years the soil needs some restoration, and experiments with commercial fertilizers are proving that their application will increase the yields of grain and increase the profits of the farmer. When such is the case in Western Canada we may draw our own conclusions as to East.

It would appear from tests made in fields that have been growing alfalfa that this plant exhausts the lime content of the soil. It is quite apparent that alfalfa will not flourish on land that lacks lime. It is easily detected, then, that lime is a nourishing factor in the life of alfalfa. Alfalfa has been found to have been growing alfalfa for some time shows a lack of lime content and a resultant acidity.

This is a feature of fertilizing land that should be observed closely. Alfalfa may be considered the most valuable plant in farming operations. It is excellent feed for all kinds of live stock, and it enriches the soil by restoring nitrogen. Many farms have been greatly improved by growing alfalfa. If it exhausts the lime content, however, that must be given some attention, and as it can be restored cheaply, it should neither be neglected nor delayed. Soil can be kept in good condition for growing this legume by keeping it sweet. Farmers should, therefore, not allow of lime to their soil by exhaustion of lime to persist. It should be immediately remedied.

Low yields in either your land or your animals is fatal to farming. The low producing cow in the dairy is living off the good ones, and often she is a real liability. Every acre of your land that is unable to produce its maximum yield of grain is eating into your farm profits. No form of animal or vegetable life can exist without phosphorus. It is one of the essentials of life. The land produces the vegetable crops to feed your animals; how essential, then, it becomes to see that your soil does not lack phosphates.

As nothing is more important than rapid vigorous growth in the early stages of plant life it is well to have the fertilizer relatively near the seed, so as to stimulate their growth as soon as they sprout and begin to send out their first roots.

With shrubbery, which incidentally is usually set out just as soon as it is possible to work the soil, one should know what the mature height is going to be so that there may be ample space given at planting time. It is of course, possible to rectify a few mistakes. Roses, shrubs and even fair sized trees may be moved two or three years hence, if they become overcrowded, but the moving will be quite a job and it set back growth for at least one season if not two.