

FOR FARMERS, STOCK BREEDERS AND GARDENERS

NEWSY NOTES

BY AGRICOLA

A FARMERS' UNION

Ipswich, England, boasts of a "Farmers' Union," to which the farmers in the surrounding country are invited to send their milk. Now, this "union" appears to be simply an individualistic enterprise parading under the co-operative banner, and less intent on the farmer's profit than on its own. To use a homely but appropriate simile, the "union" got the cream, while the farmer got the skim-milk. John Bull is naturally slow to move, being a peaceful fellow in the main; but when he makes up his mind he never hesitates to use drastic measures. So when the difference between the price paid to the farmer, and the price paid by the consumer became too steep, the farmers drove to town with their milk cans and gave away their milk to the townsfolk. "In preference to giving it to the union." It would be interesting to know the end of the episode, but the account falls us at this point. The method however stands out in sharp contrast to that adopted by those southern farmers who picketed the roads and prevented supplies from reaching the towns in their districts. The "savvier in modo" policy is universally acknowledged to be more effective than the "fetter in re" variety.

BOTANICAL NOTES

THAT WALNUT. Since I penned last week's Notes, I have received the determination of the Montague walnut. It is the black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) and I believe it was grown at the Wightman Hotel, Lower Montague. The English walnut, Prof. Groh tells me, has the partitions thin and papery, and the butternut is longer and pointed at the ends, and the partitions are very hard and bony. The black walnut is shaped more like the English walnut than like the butternut, and the partitions are moderately thick and bony. There are several valuable qualities possessed by the English walnut, apart from the edibility of its fruit. For instance, the dried leaves are a remedy for hots in horses. Has the black walnut this quality?

THE HELIXINE. There has lately sprung into prominence a house-plant popularly called "Baby's Tears," and having the scientific title of *Helixine Soleirolia*—a title which astonished me, accustomed as I am to such language! Call it

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which you will, the plant is attractive being a perfect mat of tiny green leaves, round, and about one-eighth of an inch across. It has a great resemblance to a moss (though it belongs to the Urticaceae or nettle family) and like a moss it prefers a shady place, and plenty of moisture. Helixine is a plant you can grow in a north window—but you must not let it freeze. It is doing well as "undercover" in the greenhouse devoted to plant pathology at our Experimental Station.

THE LEONIDS

The Leonids of 1932 seem to have been a fizzle, like those of 1899. The writer kept a sort of desultory lookout for the meteors, but only on one occasion were any observed. This was at or near 1 a.m. on the morning of November 16th, when a dozen were counted in the space of about twenty minutes. The moon was three days past the full, and the sky was so bright that the meteors were seen only at the lowest part of their course. There was also an auroral display. By two o'clock (a friend tells me) the sky had clouded in again; indeed the sky was mostly clouded at the time the "shooting stars" were expected. It would add to our interest to know if others had seen anything of the shower.

It is fortunate for us that our atmosphere forms a protective shield against the constant bombardment of meteors to which the earth is subjected. These particles of matter strike the atmosphere at very high rates of speed, and the consequent friction generates a terrific heat. The meteor is generally dissipated in the form of fine ashes or dust, but if of large size, may reach the earth only partially consumed. Many of such meteors find places in museums, and two, at least, are attracting the attention of scientific men by reason of their enormous size and the strange effects produced by their fall: one of these fell in Arizona and the other in Siberia. The Leonids are not the only periodic meteors. There are the Orionides about the 19th October, the Andromedes on the 24th November, and the Geminids about the 7th of December; but history does not credit these with a spectacular display.

A press despatch dated August 8, 1913, found its way into my scrapbook, for it told of the destruction of the village of Alcoer, near Valencia, Spain, by an immense aerolite (meteor) which fell from a cloudless sky shortly after noon. As the lurid ball of fire fell, a deafening detonation was heard, and the meteor burst, scattering tongues of fire in every direction and setting on fire farmhouses, haylofts, and gathered crops of hay, wheat and olives. The whole population had gone to attend a requiem mass in the church, two miles distant, and but for that the loss of life would have been great. As it was five persons were seriously burned and one of these died the same evening.

WILD DUCK FOODS

Whether owing to the depression, or to certain changes in the administration of the laws, there has been a great revival of interest in shooting game birds; in fact, an ac-

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Wm. LANDRIGAN,
65 Queen Street,
Charlottetown.

quaintance says: "you cannot go into a house here, without seeing a gun!" I have not, however, heard of any great "bags," in fact the evidence seems to point the other way. With every man's hand against them the birds have got very "cute," and those that are shot are reported as thin, from the failure of the egg-grass. The latter statement leads to a consideration of the duck and geese feeds native to the Province.

Setting aside the egg-grass, which has been the subject of much attention by biologists and others, perhaps the pondweeds (*Potamogetons*) may be ranked first in order of importance. We have three species here, *Potamogeton natans*, *P. praelongus*, and *P. pectinatus*. As I have observed elsewhere, one species grows at Cavendish, in the "Lake of Shining Waters." The last named species produces numerous tubers upon the rootstocks and these as well as the thickened winter buds, seeds, and leaves, are eagerly eaten by many kinds of ducks. The species so far found to feed on this aquatic plant comprise the American, red-breasted, and hooded mergansers (locally "Shedducks"); the mallard and the black-winged teal; the shoveler, pintail, and wood ducks; the greater and lesser scaups; the golden-eye and buffle-head ducks; the white-winged, and the surf scoters, and the ruddy duck: all of which visit or frequent here. Some of these are indebted to the pondweeds for fully five-eighths of their food. There is no record of the utilization of the pondweeds by geese.

Next in importance is the water arrow-head (*Sagittaria latifolia*), the tubers of which are eaten by ducks, geese, and swans. The arrow-heads are found all over N. America, and wherever the plant is abundant large numbers of water-birds congregate to feed on it. The tubers (from 6 to 9 on a plant) are formed on runners in the mud; the largest being two inches long and one inch thick. This peculiarity has led to the plant receiving the names of "duck potato," "swamp potato," and "muskrat potato." It is easily transplanted into ponds where the water is not more than a foot deep; just press the tuber slightly into the muddy bottom. This plant is found at several points in the Island, notably at Cavendish and at Southport.

There is a pestilent grass known as cockspar grass or barnyard grass (*Echino-chloa crus-galli*). It prefers a damp situation and is a nuisance once it gets a foothold in the rich soil of the garden. Last summer a sod of this grass was brought in for identification, and the bearer said it was "as thick as hair on a dog's back." This grass is known in the Southern States as wild millet, and also as wild rice, though it is not related to the true wild rice. It is however a splendid duck food, and is sometimes planted as such in suitable localities. The seed is the part sought by ducks, while geese will eat the stem and leaves.

One would scarcely class the water-lilies as duck food, but the seeds (only) of the yellow *Nuphar advena* and those of the white *Castalia* have been recognized in the stomachs of 19 distinct species of ducks. No fewer than 160 seeds of the yellow waterlily were taken from the stomach of a wood duck.

The remainder of the wild duck foods will form the subject of another "Note."

ROMAN BRITAIN, A. D. 84
Agricola, then had reduced the island of Britannia to a tranquilly, if servile, state; but unhappily that distinguished proprietor had incurred the displeasure of the reigning emperor, Domitian, for no other reason than that of his success in military undertakings. The worthless emperor ordered him to Rome, where an empty "triumph" was the prelude to neglect and ingratitude. But so well had his work been done that we hear nothing more of Britain in history for some years. It seems probable, however, that

Horse Memoirs

(C. E. MacKenzie)

THE STANDARD BRED

(C. E. MacKenzie)

In former articles the writer gave perhaps a meagre description of our leading harness horses of earlier days and we now come to the advent of the Standard Bred. To the best of this writer's knowledge the initial importation of Standard bred horses to Prince Edward Island was "All Right," the combined product of "Tangatts Abdallah" and "Rysdyks Hambletonian." This horse was imported by the late Newton Lee of Summerside in 1877 after the death of Kingbird at a cost of \$3,000.00.

All Right may be rightly called the king pin of our racing stock. After three years in service in Prince Edward Island he was taken to Truro, N. S., by Mr. Lee but it was not long until his colts developed and in 1888 Mr. Lee brought "All Right," 2:42, back to this province. "All Right," his sons and daughters have possibly produced more speed than the progeny of any other horse ever brought to P. E. Island. He has if I mistake not about one dozen in the rhymed circle while his sons "Black Pilot," "Neptune Lee," "Dauntless," "Billy MacKie," "Robbie Lee" and others have produced wonderful performers in their time, for instance we have "Pilot Jr.," 2:19, "Lady Pilot," 2:20, "Brilliant," 2:26, "Jewel," 2:28, by Black Pilot, 2:30; "Hamlet," 2:16, "Twilight," 2:22, "Bob," 2:26, "George," 2:28, by "Neptune Lee" (trial 2:32), and "Snatcher," 2:29, by "Dauntless." This gives proof of this statement when one considers the class of mares bred to these horses while the daughters and granddaughters of "All Right" produced such horses as "Ada MacKie," 2:17, "Parkwood," "Parkland" and many others.

Of All Right's sons Black Pilot and Neptune Lee would possibly rank first. The former, bred by the Duckindorff Brothers, York Point, made a winning race record of 2:30 1/4 at Halifax, beating out the best available horses in the Maritimes. His mother, Jenny, by MacInnis Pony out of Phyllis by Saladan, was a wonderful brood

mare, producing stock that were winners wherever shown. "Neptune Lee" was bred by the writer's father, the late Angus MacKenzie, Cavendish. "Nep," as he was familiarly called, was a son of Lady Milton, a daughter of imported Sambo, and whose dam had two crosses of Roncesvalles and one of Neptune, both thoroughbreds. I well remember Lady Milton. She was a dark iron grey mare that could pull a wagon all day at a twelve miles per hour gait. Of her ten colts only four were from light horses but every one could show a three minute gait, in fact one colt by a son of Old Clyde got a mark of 2:42 in New Brunswick.

That these horses were speed producers is evident from the fact that "Dauntless," full brother of Neptune Lee, not being used in the stud only left five colts and from these five "Snatcher" made a mark of 2:29 without training. I feel safe in saying that the progeny of "All Right" have produced greater speed, if we consider the time than the progeny of any other horse imported into the Maritimes. About the same time Mr. Lee brought "All Right" to this province another standard bred horse "Abdallah Messenger," came from the United States. He was owned by a Mr. John O. Ranaghan of Kinkora. He was a large horse and produced good stock. His sons, Barney E., Confidence, Golden King and Parnell were good horses in their day and there were many speed prospects from sons of "Old Abdallah."

In the year 1888 Mr. W. MacLeod and Judge MacLeod of Summerside purchased Hernando, a son of Almont. Hernando was a beautiful bay horse of good size that when crossed, especially with the progeny of All Right, produced a wonderful class of brood mares. Among his sons that were producers of speed were Almont Wilkes, sire of Montrose, and Rosemont Herbert E., bred and owned by Mr. John Watts, now of Newstead, but formerly of Margate.

Still another real good horse sired by Hernando was "MacKenzie's Hernando." Then we have Harry C., who was bred from a Saladan mother owned and raced by the late Harry Connolly, Charlottetown.

In the year 1887, the late Alfred Gourle of Summerside purchased the standard bred stallion Administrator, 2:29 1/2, a son of Rysdyks Hambleton 10. This horse when he came to this province was twenty years old and had been used in the stud in United States for eighteen years yet he produced his fastest trotter, Dot, 2:18, from a Dean Swift mother after coming to Prince Edward Island. In all Administrator sired fourteen 2:30 performers and no less than twenty of his sons and forty-three of his daughters produced colts that have trotted in 2:30 or better. Administrator's most outstanding son was Administrator Right, sire of Bye and Bye, 2:25.

If I mistake not it was in the year 1888 that Messrs. Hearitz and Gardiner imported what was at that time considered one of the best bred standard horses ever brought to the province in Preceptor, a son of the noted Nutwood. This horse was two years old when imported and the writer has very vivid recollections of a nice looking chestnut colt with a white face. As a stock horse and sire of good race horses Preceptor proved good. Among his progeny that captured the coveted standard of 2:30 were Provider, 2:18, Kickapoo, 2:24, Shaver, 2:26, Fleetwood, 2:30, Gracie Wilkes, 2:30, and All Bird, 2:30.

1932 is the forty-fourth anniversary of perhaps the greatest match race ever run off on Prince Edward Island namely the Black Pilot-Hernando match for \$500.00 a side. This notable race was run off on Summerside driving park on August 33th, 1888, it being the initial race on this park that has witnessed so many thrills during these forty-four years. According to gate receipts about six thousand five hundred interested persons witnessed this interesting match which I believe is a record for almost any of our present day races in the Maritimes.

It took four heats to finish this race. Pilot was leading in the first heat when he took fright at a dog (it is said) and made a bad break, the heat going to Hernando in 2:41 with the late P. S. Brown up. The three following heats were won by Pilot, Horriell up in the fast

Selection of Sires

(Experimental Farms) Note

The Progeny Test is the only means by which the transmissibility of fecundity can be measured. When the daughters of a given sire prove to be good egg producers by actual trap-nest records, the sire is said to be prepotent with respect to the character for egg production.

In order to measure the productivity of a group of pullets from a given sire factors other than inheritance must be kept in mind. Such environmental factors as rearing, housing, feed development, etc., all have a direct bearing on production and one of them if not conducive to normal development will seriously affect results.

To get a fairly accurate test of the prepotency of a male bird he should be mated to a number of females. The number of females required should not be less than four or five, and if ten or twelve females are included in the mating so much the better. Mating a male to one or two females, and concluding that because the production of the daughters was good the sire was a prepotent male, would be to assume that the character for high egg production was transmitted by the male only. This, however, is not always the case. Where a given male is mated with a number of females and the production of the daughters is uniform and high, it is fairly safe to assume that the character for high egg production is transmitted by the male in question. It does not prove, however, that this same character is not present in and transmitted by the females, mothers of the pullets.

A chick inherits approximately half of its traits from the sire, and half from the dam. When one of the parents possesses greater prepotency than the other the offspring takes after that parent more than after the other. Therefore, with progeny from only a few matings it is impossible to tell whether the sire or the dam has been the larger contributing factor.

It is much easier and more practical to measure the transmitting ability of the sire than that of the dam. The male bird can be mated with a number of females at one time whereas this is impossible with the females. To get a prepotent test on a female would necessitate that she be mated with a number of different males, and unless the matings for a particular season were broken up into short periods, which is inadvisable, the time required to complete the test would not be comparable with the life of the hen.

It is important that all pullets sired by the male bird to be tested should be included in the progeny test. It is equally important that pullets showing physical defects be eliminated, but all healthy normally developed pullets should be trapped, and the larger the number of pullets from each individual mating the more accurate will be the rating of the sire for the desired character.

The Poultry Division of the Experimental Farms Branch of the Federal Department of Agriculture have inaugurated what is known as the Registration Progeny Test. This is an extension of the Canadian National Poultry Registration Programme and consists of

time of 2:35, 2:33, and 2:33. For the year 1888 a race won in three heats less than 2:36 was considered sensational and the fame of Pilot and his great sire All Right went far and wide.

I notice that one of Charlottetown's citizens ex-Superintendent T. B. Grady, was one of the timers at this race. More anon.

Experimental Farm Leads

Report of Prince Edward Island

Egg Laying Contest for the week ending November 21, 1932.	16	1 Mrs. A. E. Holland, W. L.	5.6
Stand-	17	13 Harold Laird, B. R.	4.8
ing of No of Owner's	18	5 Mrs. J. F. Easton, W. L.	2.4
pen pen name Breed points	19	20 S. R. Pendleton, B. R.	3.2
1 7 Exp. Farm, Ch'town, B.	20	3 Everett Howatt, W. L.	
2 9 Exp. Farm, Ch'town, B.		F. A. Driscoll, manager of contest. Dr. J. A. Clark, Superintendent. Production 260 birds 23.9 per cent. Small eggs not counted 23.	
3 12 T. D. Morrison, B. R.	108.1		
4 8 Exp. Farm, Ch'town, B.	105.9		
5 4 John B. Poole, W. L.	78.5		
6 11 Mrs. J. H. McPhail, B.	66.4		
7 14 W. J. Reid, B. R.	58.9		
8 16 Walter Gregor, B. R.	55.4		
9 2 Mrs. R. Easter, W. L.	37.4		
10 18 William Sanson, B. R.	31.6		
11 10 Int. Fox. & An. Foods, B. R.	29.6		
12 19 S. R. Pendleton, B. R.	25.4		
13 17 Warren Dawson, B. R.	24.6		
14 6 John A. Lea, B. R.	22.7		
15 15 Wm. R. Brown, B. R.	21.4		
	6.1		

Leading Pens for Week			
Pen	Eggs	Points	
7	57	51.2	
12	44	41.3	
9	41	40.4	
3	41	37.1	
4	43	36.9	

Leading Hens to Date			
Pen	Hens	Eggs	Points
12	6	18	15.6
7	8	16	15.1
7	3	18	14.9
7	6	17	14.8
11	3	16	14.5

the trap-nesting of the daughters of Registered birds on the owners' plants. This policy, in conjunction with the Egg Laying Contests, furnishes the basis for the progeny testing of Registered male birds.

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