

HORSE MEMOIRS

EARLY HORSE HISTORY
C. E. MACKENZIE

While we have been giving a brief sketch of earlier horse breeding on Prince Edward Island, it has occurred to the writer that it would be interesting to look up the earlier equine history and recently while looking for material for Memoirs I found a clipping from an English writer that I am sure would be interesting to Guardian readers. The domestication of the horse, says this writer, occurred at so remote a period that in the most ancient writing of the world, the book of Genesis, we find mention of him as an animal already trained to carry a rider: "An adder in the path that biteth the horses heel, so that his rider falleth backward."

In the book of Job, too, a work next in priority to the Genesis, and written at a period antecedent to Abraham, there is a wonderful graphic description of him as a warhorse, and allusion is also made to the employment of him in the chase of the ostrich. After a description of that bird, these words occur: "what time she lifteth up herself on high she scorneth the horse and his rider."

As the horse is represented in this ancient work as possessing all the high and noble qualities, strength and courage that the animal of the present day displays, he doubtless had been domesticated long previously to the discovery of letters. His first subjection to the control of man probably took place in Central Asia during the pastoral epoch, before mankind began to congregate in cities.

Thence the knowledge of his usefulness radiated, and the numerous carved Egyptian representations of the animal in ancient Egypt prove, by their symmetry and beauty, that they were designed from high bred types developed from a long course of uninterrupted improvements of stock through many generations.

Under the influence of man's training and his adaptation of the horse to different uses and kinds of service, not only was the animal greatly improved with regard to size, form and intelligence, but divergences from the original stock were produced representing all the different breeds, from the swift and graceful, the fiery, fine-limbed courser, to the ponderous, clumsy, dull, slow, heavy footed cart horse of England, Holland and France.

In the British Isles there was an indigenous equine race still represented by the Shetland and Welsh ponies, the diminutive size of which is not much above that of their primitive ancestors.

It was from this foundation stock crossed with those heavy sties from Holland and France, that the present breed of Clydesdales originated.

Speaking of the intelligence of this wonderful friend of man, we have often heard of their almost human intelligence in such stories as "The Arab and his Steed" and others.

The writer noticed this further evidence of the horse to even understand not only what is said to him but to understand conversations.

A horse named Flip owned by a Mr. Frank MacGill had been ridden by his owner to a village over the mountain in one of the Eastern States and while conversing with a friend named Crockett, MacGill was told that he could save a number of miles on his return journey if he would turn off the Ferry Road at a blazed tree half a mile up the mountain.

The conversation took place in the stable where Flip was feeding and while on his way home Mr. MacGill was giving his horse his head, letting him take the grade with a loose rein, and on coming to the blazed tree Flip without guidance turned around by the tree and took the shorter mountain road for home.

It would therefore appear that this horse understood what Mr. Crockett said to his owner. No doubt there are many other instances of horse sense that would indicate the power of our horse friends to understand much of what is being said.

Still another instance of horse sense that the writer can vouch for.

A number of years ago a gentleman was returning from his place of business after a storm and not knowing that a certain portion of the road had not been opened up he guided his horse round a turn into the unopened road. After proceeding a short distance he found that the drifts were so deep that he could not get through. He then decided to take down the fence and cross a field to the opened road. On getting his horse and sleigh over the fence he

NEWSY NOTES

BY AGRICOLA

INDIAN FOOD PLANTS (6)

The Bunchberry or as it is sometimes called locally, the "Pigeon Berry" was a favorite all over Canada and the Northern States of the Union, though the berries according to our taste, are rather unwholesome. The fruit of another Cornus, the Red-osier Dogwood, was eaten by some of the tribes, but though the berries are said to be bitter.

The family Pyrolaceae is well represented in this Province, and several of its members were used by the settlers in rustic medicine. Only the Prince's Pine (Chempaphila) and the One-flowered Wintergreen (Monesee) were used by the Indians. The stems and roots of the Chempaphila were boiled to prepare a tea-like beverage, and the fruit of the Monesee was eaten. This pretty little plant (Monesee) is also known by the name of Wood-nymph; it is not plentiful now.

Now we come to the very important family, the Ericaceae, Erica is a generic name for a kind of heather, so we may call this the "Heath Family." The Labrador Tea (Ledum) was used, in infusion, as a beverage, and our pioneer families adopted the custom from the Indians. The Leather Leaf (Chamaedaphne) was used in the same way, as was the Creeping Snowberry (Cheopogon). The spiny berries of the creeping Wintergreen (Gaultheria), the known also as tea-berry, were eaten fresh, and on a pinch the leaves were used as tea. The fruit of the Bearberry (Arctostaphylos) was used in a variety of ways: it was eaten fresh, or cooked, or dried, ground and made into bread or mush; also used for seasoning meat. The juice of this plant made a cooling drink.

The remaining six members of this family were still more important. The Black and the Blue Huckleberries (Gaylussacia) provided an abundance of sweet, edible fruit. Even more abundant was the fruit of the Blueberries: the Early Sweet B., the Low Black B., and the Canadian B., were either eaten fresh or dried and smoked for winter use, the latter process being quite out of fashion now. When we add the two species of Cranberry growing in the Island, we can imagine the value of the Heath Family to the aborigines. Strange to say they appear to have eaten the Cranberries without sweetening.

We find a few of the Labiates made use of. The leaves of the Catnip were used for tea after it was introduced by the settlers; and those of the Self-heal (Prunella), the latter being bruised into cold water, were eaten. Woundwort (Stachys) was eaten, while the rootstocks of the Common Bugleweed (Lycopus) were cooked and eaten. The leaves of the American Wild Mint were eaten as salad, or boiled to make a beverage.

A NATURALIST'S CALENDAR

June — and the world's a symphony in green! Myriads of flowers beckon us from the road sides, the open wood groves, and the marshy flats. We have been so long accustomed to the cold whiteness of the winter landscape that the spring verdure appears miraculous—as indeed it is. But just as the British gardener and orchardist fears the frosts of the "9th of May," so here we dread the first weeks of June and delay planting our tenderest vegetables till they are past. As for about the end of the second week occurs the "Sheep Storm," which formerly used to destroy numbers of Sheep, when the thin, sheared animals were drenched by the pitiless East rain. To avoid this the pioneers changed the date of shearing to June 1st, so allowing the sheep to become hardened. The

stumbled and the reins slipped out of his hands. The steed kept going and after getting through an open gate apparently missed the driver and on coming to the first house on the way turned into the yard.

On hearing a sleigh come into the yard the farmer went to see who had come to visit him, only to find a horse and not a sleigh. He recognized the horse he jumped into the sleigh. Then the horse started and on reaching the highway turned back and lead the farmer across the field until they met the owner coming. It therefore looks as though this horse thought his owner injured and went for help.

Many other instances of horse knowledge might be given to prove this superiority over almost any other animal.

CONSERVATION

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

(Continued)
HAWKS AND OWLS MOSTLY BENEFICIAL.

Nearly two-thirds of the birds of prey inhabiting the United States belong in the present class, which comprises such hawks and owls as are mainly beneficial. A few of the more useful and well-known species will be considered in detail.

The marsh hawk is one of the most valuable on account of its abundance, wide distribution, and habits. It is more or less common throughout the United States and may be easily recognized by its white rump, slender form, and long, narrow wings, as it beats untrillingly over the meadows, marshes, and prairie lands in search of food. It is not that occasionally it pounces upon small birds, game, and poultry, its place in the first class would be insured, for it is an indefatigable mouser.

Rodents, such as meadow mice, rabbits, arboreal squirrels, are its favorite quarry. In part of the West the last-named animals form its chief subsistence. Lizards, snakes; frogs; and birds also are taken.

From its abundance, wide distribution, and striking appearance, the red-tailed hawk is probably the best known of all the large hawks. Since it is handicapped by the misleading name "hen hawk," its habits should be carefully examined. There is no denying that both it and the red-shouldered hawk, also known as "hen hawk," do occasionally eat poultry, but the quantity is so small in comparison with the vast numbers of destructive rodents consumed that it is hardly worth mentioning. While fully 66 per cent of the red-tail's food consists of injurious mammals not more than 7 per cent consists of poultry, and it is probable that a large proportion of the poultry and game captured by it and the other buzzard hawks is made up of diseased, or otherwise disabled fowls. It is well known to poultrymen and owners of game preserves

consigned the babes to their uncle's care. He promises to look after them, and does so for a year; but the estate which he holds in trust for them, undermines his principles, and he hires two ruffians to destroy his wards while pretending to take them to school.

He told his wife an artful tale. He would the children send. To be brought up in faire London.

With one that was his friend. The babes and their conductors set off, and on the way their innocent prattle touches the heart of the milder ruffian. On entering a wood the other proposes to kill the babes, whereupon he is attacked and slain by his companion. The children become hungry and their conductor tells them to remain there till he returns with bread—which he has no intention of doing.

"Thus wandered these poor innocents. Till death did end their grief—No burial these pretty babes. Of any man receives. Till Robin-red-breast piously Did cover them with leaves."

Modern versions of this nursery story end here; but such a finale did not appeal to our forefathers, who always liked a moral to the tale. "And now the heavy wrath of God upon their uncle fell," says the ballad-writer. His barns caught fire, his land became barren, and his cattle died in the field. Two of his sons were lost while on a voyage to Portugal; and before seven years (the perfect number) were out he died in prison where he lay for debt. The ruffian who deserted the babes was captured while staging a robbery, a capital offence in those days; and before his execution confessed his part in the tragedy of the "Children in the Wood."

"You that executors be made. And overseers eke of children that be fatherless. And infants mild and meek; Take you example by this thing. And yield to each his right. Lest God with such like misery Your wicked minds requite."

The complete text of this ballad may be seen in Bishop Percy's "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry."

that killing off the diseased and enfeebled birds, and so preventing their interbreeding with the sound stock, keeps the yard and ers the spread of fatal epidemics. It seems, therefore, that the birds of prey which catch aged, frost-bitten, and diseased poultry, together with wounded and crippled game, are serving both farmer and sportsman.

Abundant proof is at hand to show that the red-tail greatly prefers the smaller mammals, reptiles, and batrachians, taking little else when these can be obtained in sufficient numbers. If hard pressed by hunger, however, it will eat any form of life and will not reject even offal and carrion; dead crows from about the roosts, poultry which has been thrown on the compost heap, and fresh from the carcasses of goats, sheep, and the larger domesticated animals are eaten at such times.

Immature hawks are more apt to commit depredations than adults, the reason probably being that they lack skill to procure a sufficient quantity of their staple food. A large proportion of the birds eaten consists of ground-dwelling species, which probably are snatched up while half concealed in the grass or other vegetation. Among the mammals most often eaten and most injurious to mankind are the arboreal and ground squirrels, rabbits, voles and other mice.

The stomachs of the red-tailed hawks examined contained Albert squirrel, red squirrel, three species of gray squirrels, two species of chipmunks, Say ground squirrel, plateau ground squirrel, Franklin ground squirrel, striped ground squirrel, harvest mouse, common rat, house mouse, white-footed mouse, Sonoran white-footed mouse, wood rat, meadow mouse, pine mouse, copper lemming mouse, cotton rat, jumping mouse, porcupine, jack rabbit, three races of cottontails, pouched gopher, kangaroo rat, skunk mole, and four kinds of shrews. The larger insects also, such as grasshoppers, crickets, and beetles, are sometimes extensively used as food.

The red-shouldered hawk, or as it is sometimes incorrectly called the "hen-hawk," is common, and very valuable to the farmer. It is more nearly omnivorous than most of our birds of prey, and is known to feed on mice, birds, snakes, frogs, fish, grasshoppers, centipedes, spiders, crawfish, earthworms, and snails. As about 90 per cent of its food consists of injurious mammals and insects, and hardly 1-2 per cent of poultry

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The twin, or matched two-skin Silver Fox scarf, is enjoying considerable popularity this Spring and is an appropriate addition to the Spring suit ensemble. It can be worn in the cool of the early summer evenings and late fall evenings. Macy's and Russick's two of New York's leading stores, recently offered it as part of a Spring suit outfit, quoting a flat price for suit and scarf of \$194.

The following particulars regarding the white faced Silver Fox which brought \$460, at the February auction in New York, is taken from the Fur Trade Review. "The price was unusual and was the top price paid for the New York Auction Company's skins this season. The pelt was of unusual full silver beauty and was distinctive because the four paws were white and around the head of the skin was a deep, pure white band that gave a white race effect. It was, of course, an oddity or freak, but it was beautiful and it was a p r e c i a b l e d by B. Wolman, and Brother, New York, which firm, by the way, specializes on odd and unusual fox skins.

The fox was bred by the Black Forest Silver Fox Ranch at Montrose, Colorado, and it is stated that this ranch has ninety pairs of foxes similar to the one that was pelted this season and sold at the auction sale. The breeders believe they are about to fix or establish through these animals, a new type of fox that will be a novelty and when produced in quantity, present new manufacturing and merchandising possibilities for the trade.

Don't you remember when the Canadian National Fox Breeder's Association placed a clause in their registration rules to the effect that white up to the hock on a fox disqualified said fox for registration? It was just that kind of fox that finally produced the white banded animals which the Colpitts, Ollie McNeill and others are using in their experiments to produce freak foxes. The writer always thought it was a fool's rule because, I invariably found that the foxes hav-

ing white paws or white hind legs were of good pelt quality.

The March Black Fox Magazine has a leading article entitled "Causes and Cures for Tail Biting Habits of Minks." We quote in part: "From mink breeders in Sweden, Germany, England, Canada, Alaska and almost all parts of the United States, come letters constantly reporting the outbreak of this really terrifying habit. We say terrifying because in some cases the minks have literally bitten themselves to death. In our own minkery we can often cure the sore tail by the external application of a lotion made of one part of iodoform, one part ether and one part olive oil. This stops the mink from biting its tail temporarily, but when only a few minks out of many are affected it cannot be that the formula for the feeding ration is to blame, but rather because some particular animals cannot adjust themselves to the rations and conditions. Individual animals are often cured by adding large doses of tomato or lemon juice to the food or more roughage. Freshly killed small animals such as squabs chickens or sparrows, fed bones, feathers, fur and all, often prove effective."

Percy V. Noble of Lakeside Ranch, Shallow Lake, Ontario, has the following to say regarding the trouble. "The largest percentage of cases of tail biting can be attributed to an improper diet or one not properly balanced and most likely deficient in minerals. The mink may then begin chewing up the bedding and possibly chew wood from the nest box, and of course as neither of these supplies what the mink craves the result is fur. As the tail is the most convenient to work on so the fur begins to disappear from this member."

Another major cause which takes quite a toll is parasitic infestation and in this case mink often keeps chewing until the tail is completely chewed off, with death usually following. I have found that mink penned together take up tail chewing as one of their favorite pastimes. They sometimes chase their tail as if it was for the mere entertainment they get from it, but as a rule not much damage is done. In conclusion, I would suggest that mink be penned separately after four months of age, fed a balanced ration, treated for parasites both internal and external and kept clean. Tail chewing would then never seldom occur."

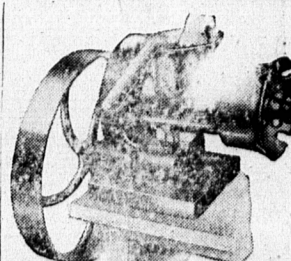
The Ontario Department of Agriculture has on the recommendation of the Ontario Fur Farmers Association, appointed Dr. E. R. Bowness, V. S., B. V. Sc.; a native of Summerside, P. E. I., and a graduate of the Ontario Veterinary College, to serve the fur ranchers of that province as Field Man. His headquarters will be at the Ontario Veterinary College, Guelph, where the fur farmer, through him have at their disposal the services of all departments of the college.

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TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS

CONNECTED WITH

Silver Fox Farming



The next fur auctions in London will be held early in May and a much better demand is anticipated than during the March sale. Another factor that is said to be favorable is the Paris Exposition, which opens some time in May and runs through the whole year. It is a tremendous affair and will draw enormous crowds of wealthy people to it. Paris seems to be the world mart for Silver Foxes and if nothing intervenes its Exposition should be a great help to us.

The Fur Trade Review of New York in an editorial in its March issue says: "United States will absorb the bulk of its own production of Silver Fox pelts and will draw on Canada and Europe to fulfill its requirements for the silver types of skins. Indeed it might be said that since last December Silver Fox pelts have been the bread and butter of the fur trade, both here and abroad. There may be an easing of prices due to a slackening of demand during the summer months but we foresee a steady consumption of Silver Fox fur that will carry through until next December. It is all the result of improved consumer purchasing power in the principal states of the world, and a general depletion of fur stocks. Furthermore, other furs have advanced sharply in price. Silver Fox has not."

The Colorado State Agricultural College, Fort Collins, Colorado, has established a course of lectures on fur farming and fur animal breeding. The best authorities in the United States will deliver the lectures. It is expected that other agricultural colleges and schools will follow suit. The Colorado course of lectures was brought about mainly through the efforts of Milligan and Morrison Associated Fox Ranchers.

The London Fur Trade will hold a grand ball at the Trocadero on May 15 in celebration of the Coronation of King George and Queen Elizabeth, the proceeds to be donated to charitable purposes. Just at the present time the writer would not be at bit surprised if George A. Calbeck is having dinner frequently at the "Troc" while visiting London. It is very popular with overseas visitors.

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Another major cause which takes quite a toll is parasitic infestation and in this case mink often keeps chewing until the tail is completely chewed off, with death usually following. I have found that mink penned together take up tail chewing as one of their favorite pastimes. They sometimes chase their tail as if it was for the mere entertainment they get from it, but as a rule not much damage is done. In conclusion, I would suggest that mink be penned separately after four months of age, fed a balanced ration, treated for parasites both internal and external and kept clean. Tail chewing would then never seldom occur."

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