

FOR FARMERS, STOCKBREEDERS AND GARDENERS

TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox Farming



Over fifty were present last Thursday evening at the semi-monthly meeting of the Charlottetown Fox Club. The demonstrations on pelting and stretching with talks on pelting, were given by Reagh Tinney and Victor Traversé of the P. E. I. Fur Pool, assisted in the practical work by Mr. Perry of the same organization.

Two foxes were pelted so as to make the demonstration practical. The principal points brought out were the importance of proper stretching and shrinking of the pelt. The head was stretched considerably, two lath nails being inserted back of the ears and head. It was then left loose to the shoulders, where it was tacked, thereby thickening the neck. From there to the tail was left snug, not stretched. Other methods that seemed radical to the foxmen, but certainly an improvement over past methods of pelting, added to what proved a most valuable demonstration.

The interest was further increased by the display of about a dozen pelts which exhibited different methods of pelting. The speakers, Messrs. Tinney and Traversé, explained the difference between these takings-off, their good and bad points, and gave considerable emphasis to the importance of proper scraping of pelts. Too much heat has a tendency to cook the pelts and brown them and over-scraping is undesirable as it loosens the guard hairs.

Their talk and demonstration was probably one of the most valuable of any meeting so far and the thanks of the foxmen were heartily given to the gentlemen for their valuable contribution to the activities of the club.

The publication of the prices received by Captain J. C. Ellis, of \$3,500, for five pelts, has brought in a flood of reminiscences of those halcyon days when the Silver Fox sat on a pedestal in the fur world and looked down with utter scorn on all other furs.

Yesterday we were privileged to see the photograph of a check which Mr. McLure gave to Captain J. C. Ellis. It was dated December 22nd, 1919, and was for \$3,500, for five pelts. Another photograph dated November 24th, 1919, was of a check made out to R. L. Montsomy, Quebec, whose foxes were ranches at The Willow Hill Farm in Summerside, then managed by George A. Callbeck. Six skins fetched \$3,075, the highest price, No. 5011, being \$800. No doubt George Callbeck will remember those skins, which the writer had the privilege of viewing.

Another nice check made out on Ontario fur farmers are having

January 3rd, 1920, by Mr. McLure, was to The Charlottetown Silver Black Fox Company for 28 silvers, valued at \$12,600. But probably the king pin average of those glorious foxes was obtained by Walter S. Grant, Manager of Fur Producers, Ltd., who disposed of 35 pelts for an average of \$300, apiece, while the entire shipment of 60 brought an average of over \$600, net. They were sold early in 1920, some to Mr. McLure and the balance marketed in London.

The Borden Fox Show was concluded on Thursday and pronounced by exhibitors and spectators as a great success. Many wonderful foxes were shown, but everyone seemed unanimous in the Judges' award of the Grand Champion fox of the show to J. R. Sevcik, who exhibited a magnificent adult female weighing 26 1-2 pounds, perfect in fur, perfect in color, wonderfully furred and finished from nose to end of tip. Mr. Sevcik is a native of Czechoslovakia who has been in this country for several years, first engaging in the meat business and keeping a few foxes as a side-line. He has added to his number of pairs and today is devoting all his attention to them. The female mentioned was purchased from Victor Traversé as a pup.

Among the successful exhibitors other than those whose names we frequently see at the Charlottetown Fox Show, we noticed in the prize list Arthur Roper, Charlottetown, who picked up twelve ribbons, one for every fox and these included two firsts and a Reserve Championship. J. Wilfred Lecky of Summerside, whose foxes are so well and favorably known but have not been taking part in shows for several years, was very successful with his pups, winning Champion Male Pup and Reserve Champion Female Pup and Reserve and Grand Champion Pup and Reserve Champion of the show.

The arrangements for the Exhibition were good and everything pertaining to it was carried out in a very satisfactory manner, which reflects great credit on the President and Secretary.

Mink ranchers are feeling mighty good these days, particularly those located in Quebec and Vermont. There is a real demand for ranch bred mink from large ranches, the reason being that the manufacturer can get a more uniform fur from such ranches than he would from those taken in the wilds, which are far from uniform. Frederick Huth and Company are holding a special mink sale in New York on the 23rd of December at which they expect to receive good averages.

Fox Rangers

It's time now to start your winter feeding schedule of Purina Chow which you procure from your dealers.

Purina Chows have proven incomparable for production and the results of feeding Purina by breeders at the Charlottetown Fox Show have established a new all high record for the achievement of any feed. At this Show, out of 20 championships and reserves, 16 were Purina feeders.

We cannot emphasize too much the importance of feeding half Purina and half meat for winter time. The increase in pup production, if you do this, will amaze you.

All other Purina feeds for Horses, Cattle, Pigs and especially Poultry are equally as good as their fox feeds.

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built up an excellent herd of foxes that have demonstrated their capacity as prize winners in no uncertain manner at Winnipeg.

There is an interesting article in the Canadian Silver Fox and Fur Magazine by H. M. Hartley entitled, "To any Young Man Considering Fur Farming as a Life Work." We quote a passage: "Fur farming is not over-crowded and cannot be overdone under any normal conditions during the lifetime of this generation. It is smiling and riding high after five years of depression. To date it has only succeeded in supplying the fur needs of one woman per thousand possible users in the world and there is room for plenty of development. As high powered destruction of wild fur bearers continues, fur farming steps into the gap."

Colonel Dawson's suggestion of a pelt show at Charlottetown in last week's issue has not yet borne fruit, but that it will eventually be undertaken is altogether probable. The advantages of a pelt show here are so obvious that it is not necessary to enumerate them.

The Canadian Fur Auction Sales Company, Montreal, will hold a special fox sale December 18th. The last receiving date will be December 4th. This sale will be for silver, cross, white and blue fox only.

Quite a number of silver foxes changed hands during the Charlottetown fox show, some Ontario breeders buying as many as seven and several buying one. Captain H. M. Ireland of the Highland Silver Fox Ranch, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, purchased from W. B. McArthur the Champion Male Pup of the show and later purchased from J. J. McCague, Alliston, Ontario, two male pups for his Scottish herd.

The Canadian Silver Fox and Fur, November issue says: "The Championship winners at the Winnipeg fox show were Champion Male Pup, Reserve Champion Male Pup, Champion Female Pup, Reserve Champion Female Pup, Reserve Champion Pup of the Show and Reserve Champion Pup of the Show, all won by L. B. Pollock, who won five firsts, five seconds, two thirds and one fourth with fifteen foxes shown."

Champion Adult Male, Reserve Champion Adult Male and Grand Champion of the Show were won by Dr. E. H. McDonald. Champion Adult Female and Reserve Grand Champion of the show were won by Frank Kruselnick. Dr. McDonald is a native of Bedouque and his foxes are mostly of the Callaghan strain. L. B. Pollock's foxes were of Prince Edward Island ancestry.

The writer well remembers when Mr. Pollock first started exhibiting foxes at the Royal Winter Fair about 1924. He had started on a small scale but by careful attention and good judgment he has since

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Notice to Live Stock Men

The Purina Company are putting on a Movietone Show at the following places: At Summerside November 27th in Town Hall at 7.30 o'clock. Kensington, King George Hall at 2.30, Nov. 28th and at Charlottetown, Nov. 28th at 7.30 in the Odd Fellows Hall.

Poultry and Foxmen should not miss this show as it is instructive and will exceed your highest expectations.

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NEWSY NOTES

BY AGRICOLA

LEGENDS OF THE SKY (2)

The constellation of Ursa Major and consequently the "Dipper" or "Plough" is never below our horizon, and thereby hangs a tale, as the poet says. The ancient Greeks, who were the successors of the Arab astronomers, and who were much more vivid in their imaginations, had a legend that Juno, their chief goddess, was zealous of Callisto, the beautiful daughter of Lycaon, the King of Arcadia. Knowing that Juno meditated some injury to the princess, Jupiter transformed Callisto into a bear. Juno found this out and asked Diana (the goddess of hunting) to kill the bear in the chase; but Jupiter was too many for them, for he placed his favorite safely out of harm's way among the stars. Arcus, the son of Callisto, was turned into the Little Bear (Ursa Minor) at the same time. Juno, as may be supposed, was very much annoyed at this turn of affairs, and persuaded the rest of the gods to forbid the bears from descending, as did the other stars, into the sea! And that is why the Bears are always above the horizon.

Last week the star-gazer was shown how to find Polaris (the Pole star) by means of the two front stars of the Dipper. It is, then, the star at the tail of the Little Bear, or to put it another way, the knob of the Little Dipper's handle. Although not as bright as we might expect from the prominence given to it by astronomers, it merits our attention for several reasons.

First of all, all the starry heavens appear to revolve around it, while it seems immovable. "But I am constant as the northern star," Of whose true-fix'd and resting quay There is no fallow in the firmament." (Shakespeare: "Julius Caesar")

This "resting quality" has for centuries made Polaris the faithful guide of all who travel by land or sea. It has been called the sailor's lodestone and will continue as such for centuries more, though not forever.

Secondly, Polaris forms a convenient starting point for "quartering" the starry vault. We might have taken the more general terms of the compass points to find our way about among the constellations, but it is safer to have the surer guide, and to draw lines at right angles through the Pole Star. Star Atlases always begin their maps in this manner. At the present time a line running through the poles of the earth and continued indefinitely Northward would very nearly touch the star in question; whence its titles Pole Star and North Star. But owing to a slow tilting movement of the earth, the tip of such a line describes a gigantic circle in space which would take 26,000 years to complete. Any star on that huge circumference would be the Pole Star for the time being, and at length Polaris would come into its own again, when the 26,000 years were gone by! Nearly 5,000 years ago, a star called Thuban was the Pole Star, as we learn from the ancient Egyptians; and this will be the Pole Star again in 21,000 years. Polaris has two companions, whom we know of: one is invisible and goes round him once every four days; and the other is a tiny blue star, visible in a three-inch telescope. Next week we shall pass to the opposite quarter of the heavens and study the constellation Cassiopeia, a group almost as familiar as the Dipper.

OUR DISAPPEARING FLORA

When this Island was first peopled we can imagine that it was in great part covered with "bush" wherein grew a multitude of shade-loving plants; though none of them were sufficiently showy to vie with the sheets of wood-hyacinths, wind flowers, or narcissus, which are found in similar situations in Britain. In the swamps of our Island would be found another flora: orchids, aroids and fern-grasses. As the woods were cut down, the shade-loving plants became fewer, till at last they maintain a precarious foothold in isolated places. Even there they are not safe, since the cattle destroy what man has spared. Years ago—perhaps twenty—I used to botanize in a little wooded valley with an alder-fringed brook running through it. In the alluvial land at the bottom grew the Indian "Turnip" (*Arisaema*), several varieties of orchids, and some carexes which were new to me. Five years ago I revisited it: the wood had been cut, the valley fenced, and cattle turned in. The change was complete, for everything was gone except the grass. This, or something similar, is taking place in other districts, so that one welcomes any attempt to preserve this disappearing flora.

It is therefore very gratifying to be told that a gentleman of means, residing in this Province, intends to lay out part of his land as a garden devoted to the culture of our native plants. He is choosing a delightful "hobby," since the plants themselves, as well as the search for them, alike are interesting. I would specially recommend to his kindly care the orchids, the ferns, and the aroids.

AUSTRALIAN NOTES

It was my privilege and pleasure to "listen in" to a graphic lecture on Australia recently. The lecturer mentioned that horses, bul-

locks and camels, met the needs of transport in different areas of the big Island continent. In this connection he told us that an expert bullock-driver could, with his long whip, flick a fly off any of his team. Seeing is believing is an old country proverb; and the writer once saw something very like this at the Empire variety theatre at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. A native Australian "stockman" was billed for the week, and his daughter, a famous marksman, was to accompany him.

When the "Captain"—for such was his title—came on the stage, I saw a tall, rather heavily built man, who answered well to my conception of the Australian type. He carried a whip, with a short shank (perhaps two feet long) and a long "lash" or thong, which I thought to be fourteen feet in length. He gave it a flourish, and then he sprang out. Then he explained that the different districts had different ways of "cracking" the whip, and that you could always tell where the stockman came from by his manner of doing this. He gave examples of the Sydney "crack," the Melbourne "crack" and so on, till the whole theatre was ringing with the sound. Being a Northumbrian, one of a disbelieving race, I had "ma doots" about this explanation, but there was no question of his expertise. He put a beer bottle on a table, and showed his audience what to do when they had no corkscrew. The whip gave a flick and cut the neck cleanly off the bottle. Then his daughter came to the front, and with apparently the same exertion on the part of the "Captain," the lash of the whip encircled her neck without leaving a mark. Then he called for a member of the audience, and a young fellow climbed upon the stage. He was blindfolded, given a lighted cigarette, and told to "enjoy himself." The Captain stepped forward, gauged the distance, the long snaky lash leaped out, and the end of the cigarette flew off in a shower of golden sparks. The chap complained that he'd not finished his smoke, so he was given another, which was put out in the same way.

Then the scene was changed to the Australian "bush." The Captain was disclosed sitting by a camp-fire, waiting for his "billy" to boil, while he sang "The Miner's Dream of Home," a sure-fire way of awakening sentiment in an Old Country audience. A bush-ranger appeared and menaced the Captain with a revolver, with the object of collaring his "swag," but the faithful lash swung out and tore the weapon from his grasp; after which the Captain bore down on him and trussed him up in a most efficient manner.

The Empire is not a large theatre, being only a little larger than the Prince Edward. The Captain's daughter now appeared on a staging erected behind the occupants of the gallery, while an attendant carried on to the stage an escutcheon or shield studded with little electric lamps. Using a little rifle and some kind of soft pellet, she justified her title of "famous marksman" by shattering them, one after another, while the glass tinkled onto the stage.

On another occasion I witnessed a boxing bout between a "sailor" and a kangaroo, which was fought on the lines told of by the recent lecturer. The kangaroo supported itself on its hind legs and tail, and warded the blows with its fore paws. Every once in a while it leaped and launched a blow with its hind foot in the fashion of the Parisian "savate." Very likely its claws were cut, since it is able to rip open an incautious opponent with this dangerous attack. However it showed itself to be a good sport by shaking hands with the "sailor" before and after the bout!

Australia must be a very interesting country to the nature student. One would think that Nature had created it in a topsy-turvy mood. A great many biological features are "in reverse," just as in China. Many of the social features are directly opposite to those of our country. The Australian swan is the least of a rare avis in terms; trees have their leaves set on edgeways, and if you want to know what the birds say—for they don't sing—get Charles Reade's romance "It is Never too Late to Mend." Here is the home of the pouched animals, from Old Man Kangaroo downwards, and here is found the Platypus, or, if you prefer a longer title, the Ornithorhynchus, a little beast with a duck's bill, that breaks all the rules by laying eggs! A sly little beast that makes a false nest in her burrow to deceive her foes, and plugs up the entrance to the real nest with mud when she goes shopping!

Some of the rivers start out well enough but add to the worries of the stockman by losing themselves in the sand instead of in the sea. In the old "gold fever" days, water was a dollar a bucket at Kalkooliel.

The presence of the camels which the lecturer told us of, is explained by the fact that part of central Australia is desert, where transport was facilitated by the introduction of these animals. A curious feature in physical geography from which Australia, despite its isolated and insular position is not exempt, is that between the latitudes of 20 and 40 degrees South of the Equator there is a series of desert lands girdling our sphere. The Kalahari desert in Africa and the nitrate desert in North Chile, South America, complete the Southern series. North of the Equator, al-

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most in the same latitude, there are Chinese, Indian, Arabian, and African deserts and on this continent the Arizona deserts presenting a similar series of belt.

The aborigines of Australia, said the speaker, are the second lowest race of human beings. I have read somewhere that these "black fellows" have no calves to their legs, denoting an absence of muscular and fatty development which must greatly handicap them in the "survival of the fittest." The lowest human race is that of the African Hottentots, whose disability takes other forms. Linnaeus in his classification of the human family (see Huxley's "Man's Place in Nature" in our Public Library) describes the Hottentots as "Monorchidid," a term the interpretation

whereof I must leave to the learned. Topinard, in his classic work on "Anthropology," gives us the curious information that steatopygia is common amongst certain individuals of this primitive race as doubtless it was once amongst all mankind: for gous statuettes have been dug up from several Neolithic temples, and notably at Hagar Kim in the island of Malta. Another physical conformation, which however he does not describe, he calls the "tablier" of the Hottentots.

"Do you know what it is to go before an audience?" "No. I spoke before an audience once, but most of it went before I did!"—The Epworth Herald.

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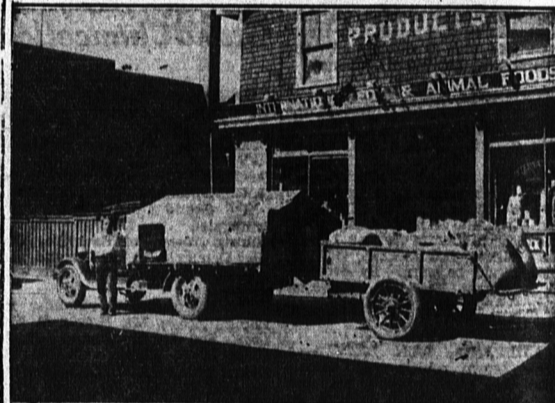
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