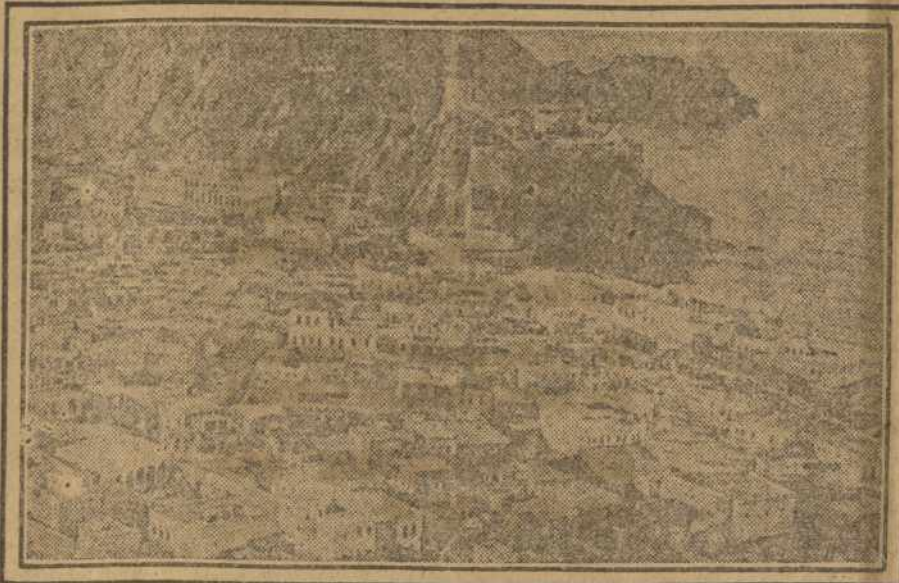


ADVENTURES IN ARABIA



CITY OF MUSCAT, ARABIA

Photo by Underwood & Underwood.

EXTENDING across the whole of the Old World from Morocco to Manchuria there runs a great belt of waste-land, a zone of country composed for the most part of sandy deserts, only broken here and there by a rich fertile valley or an isolated oasis.

The Sahara, Arabia, Eastern Persia, Turkestan and Mongolia are the connecting links in this great desert zone. The occurrence of such names at Nafud, which means "exhausted," Robi el Khali—"the abode of emptiness," and Gobi or Shamo—"the void," conveys to the mind only too clearly the character and climate of these regions.

Of these desert countries Arabia is the least known, and, therefore, the most interesting. Few people realize that Arabia, the great desert peninsula, though situated so close to the western world, is still practically "terra incognita." It is to all intents and purposes a closed country, for few travelers have attempted to penetrate its deserts, and still fewer have succeeded. The center of Arabia has been called "a lion's den," and it is certainly easier to get into than to get out of.

For a quarter of a century Arabia has been passed by and entirely neglected by explorers. This is not because Arabia is without interest, or that it is all a hopeless waste of sand, possessing neither inhabitants, trade, nor history, but simply because it is such a difficult country to travel in. On all sides Arabia presents a hostile, forbidding fact to the traveler. Fanaticism, pirate-haunted coasts, and waterless, robber-infested deserts are the drawbacks to travel in Arabia, and complete the isolation of the peninsula. Only the hem of Arabia is known. Aden, Mecca and Muscat are probably the only place-names that the majority of people connect with Arabia.

Arabia, one of the few countries left of the explorer, holds out that greatest of all attractions to the adventurer—the hostility of the inhabitants. Ice barriers guard the pole, fevers and swamps long held Central Africa impregnable, but added to the natural difficulties of Arabian travel is the determination of its inhabitants to keep out strangers. It is as "forbidden" a land as ever Tibet was. Indeed, it offers to the traveler the maximum of danger and discomfort and the minimum of reward.

Over the immense area of desert only one form of existence is possible—nomadism. In Arabia, the barrenest of all countries on earth, nomadism is found in its purest form. In such a land of nakedness man can only exist by constantly changing his abode and seeking pasture for his flock in different localities. Two-thirds of the population of Arabia is nomadic. A scarcity of water and lack of fodder, a variable rainfall and

but reveling in their freedom. The men rode far in advance or at the rear, on the look-out for enemies, and scouting the country in search of new pasture. Sometimes they indulged in a course with their greyhounds after hares or gazelles. It is a fine sight to see a large tribe on migration, imbued with the spirit of "divine unrest."

When the tribe reaches a well, the camel herds are watered quickly, and the tribe moves off, never camping beside the well. As of old, the most frequent causes of quarrel are the waterings. Robbers lie in wait at the wells in order to catch unwary strangers coming to drink. Around every well that I saw there was an ominous little graveyard. During a journey of over seven hundred miles I found but five wells, but the supply of water in these was almost unlimited.

Eventually, when the chief finds a suitable grazing ground he lights a fire as a signal to the rest of the tribe, who are scattered over a large stretch of desert. The smoke of the fire shows the wanderers the direction of their chief's tent; then they gather round and pitch their own in groups near by.

In this arid, inhospitable land there is scarcely substance enough to support human life, and even what there is has to be wrested from Nature. Flocks need grazing, and as the herds increase they need more extensive pastures. The men therefore fight for the best and widest pasturages, and also to secure larger herds of camels.

Although the Arab's life is one of supreme idleness, given up to the breeding of his herds, yet the desert air is not conducive to rest. The Bedouins lie in their tents for a week at a time; then the fit comes on them and they collect in bands of 50 or 100 individuals and go off on a marauding expedition. They are daring robbers, and their one alleviation from the dull monotony of life is systematic thieving. These raiding parties render the whole of Arabia unsafe, and are the terror of all travelers. The bands are composed of from 20 to 150 men. Mounted on swift dromedaries, armed with breeching-loading rifles, carrying food and water for many days, they are the most mobile warriors in the world.

In Arabia travel is only possible by means of camels. The prancing Arabian steed is a myth to the traveler



Arabs of the Desert.

in the peninsula. I never saw a horse worth looking at in those desert regions; indeed, I cannot see how horses could be bred to perfection in such a herbless land. Without the camel life would be impossible. The "humpy herds" are the sole products of the desert, and on them one must wander from well to well if one determines to brave this most inhospitable and dangerous of journeys. Camels form the chief concern of the Arab's existence; they supply him with all his wants, tents, food, clothing, and transport, hence the breeds are well selected and pedigrees carefully kept.

A Hero Again.

The great, inevitable conflict in the air was on.

Our feet of airships was confronted by that of the enemy.

Suddenly a scout-plane darted in with the news that the enemy was bringing up its reinforcements.

Unless something tremendously heroic was done all was lost.

Quickly Richmond Pearson Hobson, sailing on a single motorplane, dashed into the imminent breach.

In resonant tones he began delivering his series of Chautauqua lectures.

This quickly used up all the air over an area of one hundred miles in diameter.

Beats of the Human Pulse.

The average of the pulse in infancy is 120 per minute; in manhood, 80; at 60 years, 60. The pulse of females is more rapid than that of males.

A Running Business.

"What is to be done about the price of these skates?"

"Put them on a sliding scale."

Winter Months on the Farm

How to Improve Them

Selecting and Testing Seeds

How to Choose the Best Grains—Winter Jobs That Result in Bigger Yields

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The death knell of scrub stock, whether animals or plants, is sounding far and wide. Where formerly scrubby parent stock was once commonly used, they are gradually but surely declining in popularity. The farmer is awakening to the value of good blood. In the live stock industry breeders have educated the general farmer to an appreciation of the benefits and greater profits possible through careful selection and mating of pure-bred foundation stock. State legislation has aided in the eradication of scrub and grade stallions. Public sentiment has cheapened the erstwhile popularity of scrub and grade bulls, boars and rams, but only recently has the farmer's attention been directed to the careful selection and testing of all his seed grains and the use of only pure-bred strains of grains in his crop rotation.

By increasing the production of corn in the United States one bushel per acre an annual increase of 115,000,000 bushels would result. To augment the oat and barley yields one bushel per acre would mean annual increases of 34,000,000 and 7,000,000 bushels respectively. When one considers that the use of carefully selected seed will not only increase production one bushel per acre but will easily render possible the enormous importance of universal knowledge concerning the value of pure grain seed is evident.

Importance of Proper Curing.
When taken from the stalk, corn usually contains from 20 to 30 per cent. of moisture, which, unless reduced to 10 or 12 per cent., is likely to injure the quality of the seed. In the northern states, where the seasons are short, we find the most convenient way of ridding the corn of this excessive moisture is by the use of artificial heat.

Corn should never be placed against the south side of a building, where there is likely to be strong sunlight, as the rays of the sun will injure the vitality of the seed or the side of the ear turned toward the sun. If corn is cured by hanging under a porch or under the roof of the corn crib, it should

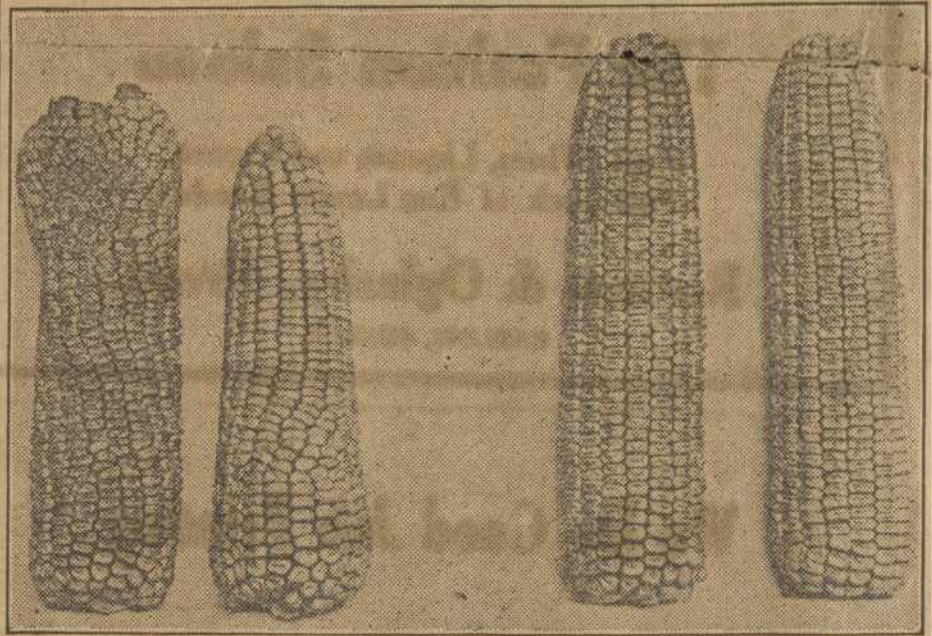
sections of tens to correspond with the sections in the seed tester, which are usually in tens. A nail should be driven between each section and the various sections as well as each individual ear of each section, numbered. At least four sections (some use six) are taken from different parts of each ear and placed directly in front of the ear from which taken, until kernels have been removed from all ears.

The preferable device for testing is a box 20x40 inches square and usually six inches in depth. Sawdust is an excellent material to use as a germination bed, but it should first be boiled in water in order to kill bacteria or molds. The sawdust should be placed in the box about three inches deep and should be moist but not soggy.

A piece of good muslin upon which two-inch squares have been drawn with an indelible pencil and numbered to correspond with the sections and individual ears to be tested, is pulled tightly over the sawdust and tacked securely to the sides of the box. The kernels of corn taken from ear No. 1 are put into square No. 1 and from ear No. 2 in square No. 2, until all are used. A plain moistened cloth is placed over the kernels and a muslin sack made for the purpose and partially filled with sawdust about two inches thick is placed on top of the cloth and pressed down firmly over the corn.

The tester should then be placed where it will be held at ordinary room temperature or a little warmer. During the day the sawdust reaches a temperature which it holds during the night, even though the outside temperature drops several degrees the germination bed will be fairly constant.

After five or seven days have elapsed the sawdust pack should be removed and the cloth rolled back upon the corn, being careful not to disturb the kernels underneath. The kernels should be inspected to note if any have absolutely failed, if each kernel has put forth both root and growing point, and the vigor or vitality shown in the germination. All seed which does not germinate should be rejected.



The Good Seed, on the Right, Will Reproduce Itself, While Those of Bad Form, on the Left, Will Tend to Continue Their Freakish Characters.

be stored away in some dry room where it will not absorb moisture from the outside atmosphere before hard freezing weather begins.

Where kitchen or furnace room can be used for curing corn small hanging devices may be used for the holding of the corn. A simple and practical method is to use cord, tying the ears so they are a safe distance apart for drying. Another device is to use double cord, placing ears between them so that it can be held securely and hung on a nail or hook by a loop.

An attic which can be ventilated and has a chimney passing through it, or is directly over a heated room, so that it can be kept at a fairly uniform temperature through the winter, is an exceedingly good place to cure corn.

Testing Seed Corn.

Each ear of corn should be tested before planting and all ears rejected that do not germinate and show lack of vigor or vitality. Fifteen average ears of corn will plant one acre, using four kernels to the hill, placing the corn three and one-half feet apart between the rows.

The most perfect seed ears having kernels of a uniform width should be selected from the store room and laid out on the floor or on tables to be convenient for making the test. Care should be taken to place the ears in a building where they will not be disturbed during the period of the test, otherwise, if disarranged before comparison can be made, the results will be for naught.

The ears should be arranged in sec-

Before shelling the seed, remove the butts and tips, as these grains are of different shape and will neither plant uniformly nor give a uniform germination. If the butt and tip kernels are planted at all they should not be used with the middle kernels, but should be planted by themselves.

The prospective seed buyer should first send to the seed dealer for a sample of small seeds, such as alfalfa, clover, etc., upon which he can make a germination test. A simple seed test can readily be arranged. Take two tin plates, one a little larger than the other, cut a piece of cotton flannel to fit in the larger plate, soak the flannel in water, then squeeze out the surplus water, and put the flannel in the larger of these plates. Then place 100 or more seeds in this plate, cover the seeds with a similar pad, well moistened with water, and then cover with the smaller tin to retain the moisture. The tester should then be placed in some convenient place where the temperature ranges from 70 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

The tester should be examined every 24 hours to see that the pads do not become too dry. It is advisable to loosen up the lower pad occasionally to let in oxygen, which will aid in the germination of the seed. In about three days the seed will begin to germinate and at the end of five days they should all be germinated.

Good seed should give a germinating test of at least 90 to 95 per cent., better still, if it reaches 100. No clover seed should be sown that does not test at least 80 per cent.

BARE KNEE STYLE IS SCORED

English Medical Writer Says It Undoubtedly Militates Against Good Health of Children.

Medical men in England now have turned their criticism upon parents who clothe their children after the fashion of the Highlander, leaving the knees exposed by having them wear stockings which reach only half way up the leg.

"It is true," says the Hospital, "that this type of costume is popular in Scotland; but it is permissible to point out that even there it is a relic, if not a barbarism, at any rate of the time when a Highlander boy, to sleep warmly on a winter's night, dipped his plaid in water, wrapped it round his body and awoke the next morning without the slightest need for a dose of aspirin."

"We no longer have that race, either in the Highlands or elsewhere, and certainly not in crowded cities where the practice of the open knee is peculiarly popular. It need only be added that while such a practice may

harden three per cent of growing boys and girls, it undoubtedly militates against the good health of 97 per cent."

When the English Laugh.

A correspondent recalls a pointed but discourteous and yet not wholly undeserved interjection made at a local political meeting.

A woman, whose husband had temporarily lost his voice, loyally appeared to make a speech on his behalf. She said a good deal at the outset about the state of his larynx, and then plunged into politics. Having exhausted that theme, she returned to her husband's health, and described, not only his disappointment at being unable to address them, but her own efforts to patch him up for the fray. She had tried hot fomentations, she had tried poultices, she had made him gargle his throat, she had steamed his throat for him, she had sprayed his throat and made him try every kind of lozenge. Was there anything else she could do for his throat? And a voice said: "Aye, mem, cut it."