

THE OBSERVER

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THE FARMERS' CO-OPERATION.

It is a singular fact that the various departments of the federal government which are designed to prove of material aid to the farmer in his many lines of work have had to convince the farmer that they were really working to his advantage and interest with the entire cost borne by the government and nothing asked of the agriculturist and stock breeder; but co-operation, it was nevertheless true for years and is still true in part, that the efforts met with but a cold reception.

Investigations of stock diseases, methods of raising the average of crops and of improving the strain of animals have all had to go through missionary stages. Every new suggestion and advance is met with this same indifference if not active opposition.

It is pleasing, therefore, to note in the latest news letter from the United States department of agriculture that the department of animal industry has succeeded in convincing the stock-growers of the nation that its work is a valuable one. During the past year this department has succeeded in learning many important facts about plagues of cattle and sheep and has brought under control several epidemics that, if allowed to run, would have done many times the damage they actually caused.

It is not peculiar of the farmer that he looks askance at the progress of the age in his own line of work, but it is perhaps more noticeable from the fact that he is working at the oldest industry of the world. Changes that centuries ago did not produce look a little too startling to him to be accepted at once. Because of his importance to the nation, his acceptance or refusal of these changes assumes a big significance to the rest of the population.

But the reports indicate that the

farmer is growing more and more willing to admit that science is able to do much for him, and the task of the government is consequently made easier.

SAVING THE YOUNGSTERS.

Miss Julia Lathrop, at the head of the United States Children's bureau at Washington—the only woman bureau chief in our government—is doing one of the greatest pieces of work in this country. She has under way many special investigations on child life, but the most conspicuous one perhaps, is her inquiries into the child death rate in America.

She approached this vital, heart interest question from the industrial, economic and hygienic aspects, and she has already progressed far enough to lead to the conclusion that the death rate is far too high; that better conditions of living reflect most favorably in the infant mortality rate, and that if children are well born and well cared for, as American children should be and have a right to be, the death rate among them will be negligible.

The children's bureau made two exhaustive field investigations, one in Johnstown, Pa., a typical coal mining and steel producing community, and the other in Montclair, N. J., a typical residential suburb, where the death rate was already near the average, but unsatisfactory to the local health authorities.

In a residential ward in Johnstown the death rate was found to be 50 per 1,000, while in the poorer and more congested localities the death rate reached 271 per 1,000. In the latter locality underpaid fathers, overworked and ignorant mothers, and the poorest living conditions went hand in hand with the high death rate. Likewise in Montclair, a far more favorable community for the average child, the death rate was 39 per 1,000 under the best living conditions and 130 in the tenement section.

Will the authorities and especially the rich exploiters of labor take the lesson to heart? We hope so, but we fear not. However, it is interesting to note that a committee has been appointed by the chamber of commerce of Johnstown to try to solve the problem of infant mortality along the lines indicated by the investigators of the children's bureau.

ALL FIGURES OUT.

We have been reading "A Statement of a Proper Military Policy for the United States," prepared by the war college division, general staff corps of the United States of America. It is interesting.

Among other things a careful survey has been made of the preparedness of other nations for overseas expeditions. This includes the quality

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and organization of troops and the available transports.

The figures show that if Japan, for instance, undertook to bring war to us, she could land 95,745 men upon our shores 22.5 days after she started her expedition. That if no accident of navigation, no unseasonable weather and no hitch of any sort intervened and if we offered no objection to the invasion so that the troops could be unloaded and the transports turned back with the celerity of ferry boats, the next consignment of troops would arrive 41 days later and would be composed of 142,622 men. Thereafter, if everything worked to schedule, 142,622 freshmen, including soldiers, artisans, doctors and nurses and all the various arms of service could be landed every 41 days, so that everyday the conquering horde, on the average, would amount to 3478 of who, about one-half would be fighting men and the other half would belong to the transport, the commissary, the medical, the signal and other non-fighting arms.

The survey shows that Germany could land 440,000 men here every 30.8 days, or nearly 14,000 a day; the first expedition arriving in 15.8 days after it started.

None of the other nations come anywhere near Japan or Germany in ability for invasion.

In the old days the fellows from the city used to sell gold bricks to the farmer. Now the smart farmers from the country get it back on the prices at which they sell eggs and apples to the city.

The United States is called the most lawless country in the world, in spite of the fact that Congress and 48 state legislatures, keep on grinding out laws as fast as the governors will let them.

In view of the scarcity of fuel for automobiles, it would seem as if we

could be made of the enormous quantities of hot air used in selling them.

Aunt Hetty Green, the richest woman in the world, scorns female suffrage. Nobody has ever doubted Aunt Hetty's sanity.

Comes now a complaint that the doughnut is not what is used to be. Well, it used to be indigestible. Can it be worse?

It has not been positively established that no man ever set the world on fire with cigaret stubs.

And it is feared that the price of gasoline will soon be so high that the women will use it for perfume.

GREATEST PRODUCTION OF ANTIMONY ORES.

The prices of antimony in 1915 were probably the highest known since the metal became a regular article of commerce. The highest prices were naturally reflected in far the largest production made in the United States, and probably the same statement is true for the world's production.

According to preliminary figures collected for the United States Geological Survey by Frank Hess, the production of antimony ores in the United States is estimated to have been about 5,000 tons, containing about 2,000 tons of antimony, valued at about \$325,000.

The price, which in July, 1914, had been down to a monthly average that ranged from 5.44 to 7.11 cents a pound and depended on the brand, rose gradually, though unsteadily, to the end of 1915, when Chinese, Japanese, and American antimony were quoted at about 40 cents a pound.

Miners and smelters, apparently thinking that the high prices would not be held long, did not begin production as quickly as they might have done, but before the close of the year properties in Alaska, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington were producing. Prices for ores ranged from \$1 to \$2.10 per unit of antimony. At first only ores carrying 50 per cent or more antimony were in demand, but before the close of the

year 20 per cent ores were being shipped from Nevada.

From Alaska, according to data collected by Alfred H. Brooks, about 685 tons of stibnite ore carrying 58 per cent antimony was produced in the Fairbanks district. It is reported that 132 tons were shipped from Nome, but probably more was mined.

The largest production was made from deposits near Wild Rose Spring, in the Panamint Range, Cal. Other deposits were mined in California—at many places in Kern county, in the eastern end of San Benito county, and on Moore's Flat near Grass Valley. In Nevada considerable quantities were mined at many places, most of them in the northwest quarter of the state. Oregon, Washington, and Idaho produced small quantities of ore, and in Arkansas a company was organized to work old properties west of Gilham.

The present high prices are of course temporary. The Chinese deposits are large and are worked by very cheap labor, and deposits are being developed in other parts of the world, so that as soon as the war is over, and possibly before prices will probably drop nearly to a level with those of 1914.

HABIT AND THRIFT DAY

Feb. 3d to Be Observed Annually in Developing Thrift Habits.

There is quite a significance in that truth so often expressed, "we are all creatures of habit." The matter of concern to the individual is not one of eliminating habit, but rather the recognition of habit values and the intensive cultivation of those which stand for greater progress and broader development.

The establishment of Thrift Day is designed to direct the attention of the individual to every habit that could in the leastwise be connected with waste, which also includes unproductive spending.

Thrift Day in no wise is designed as an observance for miserliness, stinginess or penuriousness. The fuller, bigger broader conception of the true meaning of thrift and frugality is yet to become well known and understood by the people of our country, and cannot in any way be so founded with those habits represented by their opposites. Many people who realize that the

thrift habit is a sound foundation for a fortune lose sight of the fact that it is also an important factor in character building. It is because this latter is so that the promoters of thrift in this country are devoting such earnest efforts to institute the subject of thrift into our schools with the same degree of enthusiasm and system as are used in the teaching of other vital subjects.

All students of American economics have long recognized the need for a hearty concerted effort on the part of all in our country to eliminate the many habits of extravagance into which we have carelessly or indifferently fallen, and for our future individual and national welfare practice conservation in the management of our natural resources, industries and modes of living.

The thrift habit ensues as the result of a certain desirable attitude of mind and an understanding of the value of money, and therefore of its proper use, for, to quote the words of that great American teacher and preacher of thrift, Benjamin Franklin, "The use of money is all the advantage there is in having money."

The earning power of America at the beginning of 1916 is very high, and the value and permanence of the increased and increasing prosperity will be exactly in proportion to the wise use made of it. As the Americans better realize what Thrift means to them they will not only practice it themselves to a greater extent than heretofore, but insist that it become a part of the lives of their children to be taught them just as personal and moral cleanliness is now taught.

One good use to which money can be put on Thrift Day is the opening of or adding to a savings account in the bank. It will provide for a Rainy Day.

Today's Oddest Story Milwaukee, Wis. Jan. 26.—The five From Brothers, Marathon county, Wisconsin, hunters since infancy, probably have the largest black fox farm in the world, and one of the five stays up all night with the foxes. Fifty foxes, worth \$2,000 each, are guarded both day and night by the brothers and a small army of watchdogs. The boys are all college men and also musicians.