

THE OBSERVER

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ENVIRONMENT.

The ignorance of Congressman Connelley of Kansas relative to torpedo-boat destroyers is in a way pardonable, after all. Raised on the broad prairies where the nearest thing to a boat ever seen is a "prairie schooner"; where the largest fish is a channel cat from a slow running stream; where creeks are forded instead of

bridged; where water has on horrors for the populace because they see little of it, what should be expected of this rural congressman?
 It was Jerry Simpson, peace to his ashes, who made a speech in congress on a navy appropriation bill and said, "Battleships, what do we want with battleships; we can't plow corn with battleships."
 And a former congressman from

Kansas, who was relegated to the "home guards" because he stuck by Joe Cannon, was once working on a New York paper, after he had graduated from Kansas journalism. He was assigned to write up a yacht race. Knowing nothing of water, yachts or the vocabulary of the sea he made such a hideous blunder that the news room of that paper for years preserved the article written by "the sea dog from Kansas."

Environment has a great deal to do with a man's knowledge. It will be remembered Nebraska and Kansas are one and the same save for the imaginary state line, and the failure of William Jennings Bryan to grasp the duties of the big job of secretary of state, might be ascribed to environment, as well as the blunder of Congressman Connelley.

TAXES EAST AND WEST.

That communities in the west are going wild over the subject of taxes—levying a tax for this and a tax for that—until the burden is becoming unbearable is so apparent that argument is not needed.

Along this line it is interesting to know something of taxes in eastern and middle states, and the best short synopsis we have seen of late was given at Pasco a few days ago by J. E. Frost, formerly a member of the state tax commission of the state of Washington.

Mr. Frost said: "The system and habit of taxation has come down from barbarous times when one man was paid by others for protection from savage tribes."

"Pennsylvania is a pioneer in successful taxation of bonds and securities. There these are taxed 40 cents on the hundred annually, and \$15,000,000 is raised each year. Farm machinery, artisans' tools and manufacturers' plants specifically are exempted. The city of Pittsburg, as a result, originates more freight than the cities of Philadelphia, New York and Chicago combined. Maryland saw the success of the Pennsylvania system and placed a uniform tax of 25 cents on the hundred dollars of bonds, with the result that in Baltimore alone \$200,000,000 were turned for assessment the first year, against a measly \$6,000,000 that had been turned in previously under the former system."

"Washington assesses and taxes the railroads more per mile than any other state in the Union. Canada taxes on the gross or net earnings. Taxes raised from all the people should be spent for the benefit of all the people. This would eliminate the log-rolling

of our legislature, which is the real cause of the high taxes.

"Multiplicity of laws is another cause of high taxes. In 20 Washington has passed more laws than England has in 100 years since from King John. And every law passed which is more noticed in its breach than in its observance begets a contempt for all law. And this means more expense. The only laws needed are those to protect business transactions, protect the home; prevent and punish crime."

LIGHT EMPLOYMENT.

Ed. Howe of the Atchison Globe says there would not be so many idle men if so many were not seeking light employment.

In this sentence he rings the bell a keen resounding ring. Light employment is right. Nearly every job hunter is looking for light work—work that will permit the wearing of good clothes, that will call for short hours and easy life.

There are plenty of opportunities for men who really want to work. We know of a man who has so much business that he would welcome able help at any price. He has several ranches that take a great deal of his time and if some man would take off his coat and say, "I am going to make good, never mind anything but a meal ticket until I show you," that man would fix himself for life.

Such opportunities are hanging around in various localities. The man with the punch and get-there has the best chance ever seen in America. But the country is filled with men who are looking for light employment, which is hard to find and hard to make good at.

Although the dry law is said to be helping the dairies, it is also claimed in Portland that since a well organized system of bootlegging has been adopted old man Booze is showing up quite often.

SOME GARDEN HINTS.

Washington, D. C. March 3.—Even the smallest back yard may be made to yield a supply of fresh vegetables for the family at but slight expense if two or three crops are successively grown to keep the area occupied all the time, according to the garden specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. People who would discharge a clerk if he did not work the year round will often cultivate a garden at no little trouble and expense and then allow the soil to lie idle from the time the first crop matures until the end of the season. Where a two or three crop system is used in connection with vegetables adapted to small areas, space no larger than 25 by 70 feet will produce enough fresh vegetables for a small family. Corn, melons, cucumbers and potatoes and other crops which require a large area should not be grown in a garden of this size. Half an acre properly cultivated with a careful crop rotation may easily produce \$100 worth of various garden crops in a year.

When to Work Soil

If the garden was not broken in the fall it should be plowed in the spring as soon as the frost is out of the ground. Small areas may be worked with a spade, pushing the blade into its full depth and turning the soil to break up the clods. Heavy soils should never be worked when wet. Over zealous gardeners, ready to seize the first warm spell as a favorable opportunity to go out and work the heavy clay soil before it is dry, are not only wasting their energy, but are doing a damage to the soil from which it will take years for it to recover. To determine when heavy soils are ready for plowing a handful of earth should be collected from the surface and the fingers tightly closed on it. If the ball compacted earth is dry enough for cultivation, it will fall apart when the hand is opened.

A garden spot near the house is often more desirable than a plot which is in better tillth but located at an inconvenient distance. A garden which is near the house will receive many a spare hour of care from adults and children which would otherwise be wasted. Where there is ample room for the selection of a garden site, the slope of the land should be carefully considered. A gentle slope towards the South is most desirable for growing early crops, while it is a decided advantage to have the plot protected on the north and northwest by either a hill a group buildings, or a board fence. Drainage of the garden is of great importance. The land should have sufficient fall to drain off surplus water during heavy rains and yet not be so steep that the soil will be washed or gullied. The surface should be nearly level so the water will not stand in hollows. Where the natural slope of the land does not provide sufficient natural drainage ditches may be dug or a tile drain put in. This will prevent waste water from the adjoining land from washing over it. Such water may carry weed and grass seed into the garden, which are later culled out with difficulty.

How to Fertilize

The soil in the average back yard is not only lacking in plant food but also has been packed until it is hard and unyielding. To loosen up such soil and make it suitable for garden produce requires that careful attention be given to its preparation. After spading the inclosure thoroughly, the upper three inches should be



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March 4th to March 11th, 1916

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During this week, attention will be focused on the baby, its care, its need, its clothes.

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made fine with the use of hoe and rake. Stones and rubbish should be removed and clods of dirt broken. The surface should be made even and as level as possible. It may then be marked off for planting in conformity with the general plan of the garden.

Barnyard or stable manure is the best fertilizer because it furnishes both plant food and humus. An application at the rate of from 20 to 30 tons to the acre of well-rotted manure is very satisfactory. This should be applied after plowing or working with a spade and distributed evenly over the surface and later worked in with a hoe and rake. On many soils it is advisable to apply commercial fertilizer, especially phosphate, in addition to the manure. An application of 300 to 600 pounds of acid phosphate to the acre is usually sufficient. If additional potash is needed, which is often the case with sandy soils, this may be economically supplied in the form of wood ashes. If the wood ashes are un-leached they should be distributed over the garden, using 1,000 pounds to the acre. If they have been wet, or leached, 2,000 pounds should be used. An application of 100 pounds to the acre of nitrate of soda may be used in the spring to start the plants before the nitrogen in the manure has become available. It should be borne in mind that commercial fertilizers will not yield good results unless the soil is well supplied with humus. Sod or other vegetation which has overgrown a garden spot may be used to advantage. It should be turned under with a plow or a spade and will aid in lightening the soil and providing humus.

Parch Blight on Douglas Fir

For several years there has been evidence in the spring of what has been named "parch blight" of the Douglas fir trees in the vicinity of Portland, the injury manifesting itself in a browning of the foliage. In the February issue of the "The Plant World" there appears an article upon the subject by Thornton T. Munger of the Forest Service, Portland, Oregon.

According to Mr. Munger, the cause of the blight is rather easy of explanation. It is due to the drying cold east winds of winter—the Chinook winds—that occasionally sweep across the Cascade Mountains from the interior plateau country and parch the Douglas firs. The Douglas fir of the region west of the Cascades is called the coast form, and it is particularly dependent upon a humid climate. The Douglas fir east of the Cascades in Oregon resembles the Rocky Mountain form, and endures a much drier and severer climate. It

is interesting, therefore, to note that in passing up the Columbia River, evidences of the injury disappear about 35 miles eastward from Portland at a point about opposite the crest of the Cascades where the Douglas fir takes on the harder Rocky Mountain form.

Mr. Munger points out that although Douglas firs in many parts of the Northwest appear to be affected by the blight, the injury is not permanent as a rule and the trees resume their usual green appearance with the beginning of the growing season.

The jackal follows in the wake of lions and tigers and feels from the remains of the marauding expeditions of the larger animals.

MATRIMONIAL BUREAU.

Mayor of York, Pa., Kept Busy Answering Calls for Mates.

York, Pa., March 3.—Although begun in jest by Mayor Ephraim S. Hungenugler, the City of York now boasts of the only municipal matrimonial bureau in the United States, with the city's Chief Executive as its sponsor.

A Baltimorean wrote him a few weeks ago and asked his aid in obtaining a York wife. The appeal touched the Mayor's heart, and he set about trying to accommodate the lonesome swain. An advertisement was inserted in a local newspaper. Responses were immediate.

Twenty-seven letters from York girls are filed at the City Hall. Any one of the girls would make a desirable wife, the Mayor says. The appeal

of the Baltimorean and its ready response has inspired other wife-seeking men to file applications. There are letters on file from men from several states, who request that they be granted an opportunity to select wives from the list at the City Hall.

DEMAND FOR MRS. WILSON.

Fashion Leader Says She Has Power to Dictate Styles.

Pittsburg, March 2.—"Every milliner in the country hopes Mrs. Wilson will be re-elected whether her husband is or not," declared Ora Cne of New York, man milliner and reputed authority on milady's raiment, in a lecture here. Cne asserts the new White House bride has it in her power to become the fashionplate of the world, dictator of the world's styles. "Mrs. Wilson," said Cne, "is the first wife of a President in many years young enough and with wealth enough to entertain or to afford a taste for fashion leading. She can help us wonderfully."

"Of course it would take money to set the world's fashions, but you see the First Lady of the Land is understood to have nearly half a million in her own right and a good jewelry business besides. In addition, Mr. Wilson makes \$75,000 a year as President."

"Here's the situation: There will be no permanent leader of the world's fashions unless the King of England should die and the Prince of Wales were to marry some enormously wealthy girl with a taste for dress. All that's extremely improbable—so it's Mrs. Wilson or no one."

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