

INCREASES YIELD OF WHEAT

Experiment of Treating Seed Electrically Meets With Success in England.

An interesting experiment as to the effect of electrically treating seed wheat before sowing has been carried out at Bodsham Green, Elmstead, Kent, during this season, by W. F. Pledge of the Victoria flour mills, Ashford, the London Times states. The variety of wheat chosen for the experiment was "red standard" and two adjoining plots were sown on November 13 and 14 last at the rate of three bushels to the acre, the seed on one plot being electrically treated and that on the other not. The land was treated exactly alike all through the year.

Recently the growing crops were inspected by a party, including R. L. Robb, lecturer of agriculture at the Southeastern Agricultural college, Wye, Kent.

A marked difference between the two plots was noticeable, the wheat on the treated portion being much the more vigorous in growth and habit, and promising, so far as the experts present were able to judge, a yield at least 20 per cent higher than that of the untreated plot. There were evident signs of rust, too, in the untreated crop, and it was significant fact that the other plot was, at any rate at the present stage, entirely free from this disease. It was the general opinion of those present that electricity is likely to become a very important factor in the cultivation of agricultural crops and that great developments along that line may be confidently anticipated in the near future.

HEART OF THE DOUGHBOY

Experiences of War Taught Him to Tackle Every Problem From Rock-Bottom Up.

Most of our soldiers went to the other side young boys. They came back men hardened by fire and experience. They will tell you that they have "figured out a new bunch of dope," or that they have "learned a rule or two about the little game of life." What they mean is that they have gone down to fundamentals and tackled every problem from rock-bottom up.

It was with the understanding that the doughboy is a new man and a problem in himself that Col. Arthur Woods, assistant to the secretary of war, laid out his plan of campaign for the war department's gigantic effort to get jobs for returned service men. "This," he told his assistants, "is not merely an employment idea. It is a new experiment in psychology. We must understand the soldier, the sailor, the marine, right down to the ground, learn their problem minutely and take infinite pains to restore them to civilian life with as little friction and as much celerity as possible."

"These boys are coming home eagerly, but also a little fearfully. We must bridge the gap that they have crossed during 1917 and 1918. America's future lies in her youth. The soldier who fought in France, the sailor who plied the dark waters, and the man who drilled faithfully and patiently at home, must not be left in the lurch after what they have done for us."

New Photo Dark "Room."

The dark room, necessary evil, has always been the one right obstacle to the perfect flexibility of the photographic art. Now, however, the operator can carry a complete dark chamber along with him, and develop his exposures when and where he pleases. The "room" described and illustrated in Popular Mechanics magazine packs in a case less than two feet long, about a foot wide, and four inches thick. It opens to a height, in the larger size, of 18 inches in front and 13 inches in back, with walls of light-proof fabric. Elastic cuffs at the side admit the operator's hands, while he looks through a hood in front, equipped with two shutters that are opened by pressure on the hood, and instantly closes on release. Trays and plates are inserted through a ruby-glassed door in the top.

Laborer Builds Organ.

That workmen who are earning big wages possess a grand piano or even two pianos is evidence that a love of music is one of the first pleasures indulged in when a man begins to have more money than he wants for necessities.

I could tell you of a workman in a Midland town, who, being of a musical and mechanical bent, has built himself a small organ in his living room. The instrument possesses a reed stop and several pedal notes, and is a marvelous piece of ingenuity.

As the family is a large one and the room about 12 feet square, it can be imagined what inconvenience the family is willing to undergo in order to indulge its love of music. The organ fills about one-third of their only living room.—London Chronicle.

Why Not?

Clymer Jeffries, Jr., of Williams, Ariz., four and one-half years of age, recently acquired a small dog and a few days later the following conversation occurred between him and his next-door neighbor:

"Mrs. M., I want you to keep your chickens out of our yard."

"Why, Clymer, what do you mean by that?"

"Well, I have a dog over here, and if your chickens come over here I am afraid that he will get the chicken pox."

An epidemic of chicken pox was on at the time.

BACK TO NATURE

Agricultural Department Renews Faith in Old Maxims.

Experts Have Come to the Conclusion That There is Much More Than Superstition in "Signs" Our Forefathers Noted.

The problem of making agricultural superstitions into agricultural data is being studied by experts of the department of agriculture, who declare that many old maxims handed down from father to son for generations are not really superstitions at all, but helpful information discovered by keenly observing persons.

Everybody has heard some of the old maxims. They deal with every variety of agricultural operation. Bean planting, for instance, never was done by the forefathers of the present generation at the time of the blossoming of the blackberry bushes. When the catkins had formed on maple trees it was a sign from nature that early gardening might commence. And toward the close of the season warning of frost was given by the maturing of cockleburrs.

Now the department of agriculture declares that there is a best time for every farm and garden operation, and that some tree or shrub or plant indicates that time more accurately than all the scientific instruments can register it. It is those signs which were noted by the pioneers who laid the foundation of this country and recorded in the simple sayings handed down to posterity. Soon they will be dignified with the scientific name of "phenology," which is the science of phenomena.

Collection of natural signs into the science of phenology probably was begun with a campaign against the Hessian fly. Experts were endeavoring to determine the best time for planting wheat so that the sowing would be late enough to prevent ruin by the pest and yet early enough for the grain to get a start before cold weather.

It was easy enough to work out the general rule that the season varies four days for each one degree of latitude, five degrees of longitude and 400 feet of altitude, but as no two seasons are just the same the rule could tell only approximately when the farmer should do his sowing.

In seeking for a more exact guide, Dr. A. D. Hopkins of the department forsook the cold realm of scientific formulae for "back-to-nature" information. As plants respond to climatic conditions and not to dates, it was decided that some natural indication would give the information desired.

It is now claimed that observation has proved that the best time for sowing wheat is that period between the full blooming of tall late goldenrod and the time when the white, common Japanese clematis flowers are nearly all gone or the leaves are distinctly colored on the dogwood and hickories.

What has been done for wheat will be done for other crops, but the working out of the signs will be a slow process. Meanwhile every farmer and even the city gardener have their own guides at hand, if they have eyes to see. Thus has the superstition and folklore of days called primitive been justified by the advanced science of the twentieth century.

Dangers of City Streets.

Apparently the time is not ripe for the solution of the problem created by excessive speed in driving motor cars, although the mortality is truly termed terrifying. The annual toll in the city of New York alone of dead and wounded far surpasses some of the casualty totals of the Civil war. In Cincinnati since January 1 there have been forty-eight fatalities. Satirical humorists have laughingly said that a city resident who succeeds in safely crossing a car crowded thoroughfare should not thereby become unduly exalted, because he has gained only a reprieve, and in the end surely will be run down. It is appalling to think that the mere journey from one side of a street to another in municipalities is really dangerous and that a risk of life and limb is taken by the pedestrian.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Puzzle Over Musk's Loss of Scent.

For many years now, the remark has gone the rounds among flower lovers that it is next to impossible to get a sweet-scented musk. More than one grumble at the nurserymen for raising the larger flowered and scentless variety, but now it turns out that the nurserymen are blameless in the matter. The musk has deliberately lost its scent; that is the plain fact, and nobody knows the wherefore of this strange occurrence. The Field calls attention to the fact, and says that no other case of the kind has been recorded. It adds that old colonies of the musk plant which were powerfully fragrant have now become quite odorless. Kew, it appears, is as puzzled as anyone over it.

He Knew Who Hired Him.

The jury was evidently getting on the judge's nerves, and at last he announced:

"I discharge the jury!"

A tall, lean member of the 12 then rose.

"Say, judge, you can't discharge me!"

"Can't discharge you? Why not?"

"Thundered the judge.

"Waal," replied the jurymen, pointing to counsel for the defense, "I was hired by that guy over there!"

OLD ORDER PASSES

Today Is the Twilight of the Belted Earl.

British Aristocracy, for So Many Centuries Secure in Its High Place, Is Feeling the Ground Slip Under Its Feet.

In one of the old Plantagenet houses of England the belted earl and his ladyship live in one corner of the castle. The rest of the fine old mansion is closed. William Allen White writes in Collier's. The servants needed to run the house are no longer available. Money will not hire them. Their men have been commissioned in the army because the earl's son—who had a right to sit at the foot of the throne and who had also the blessed privilege of hearing the king by ancient right address him as cousin—the earl's son lighted one cigarette too many on the parapet, and when he and his kind from Eton and Harrow went out, commissions in the army fell to the cook's son and the housekeeper's son and the parlormaid's brother and chambermaid's sweetheart, who, being commissioned, promptly took their women-kind out of service. They are feeling what they never felt before, these domestic servants of the nobility—the spur of ambition.

So they have left the castle, and such of the servants as stay have begun to assert their rights, to manifest their self-respect. "Whatever you do," said her ladyship to her guest, "don't ring a bell!" To the question in the visitor's face the hostess replied: "If you ring a bell the servants will leave. I have only three. They have announced that they will do their work, but they forbid interruptions by bells!" The hot water appeared on schedule; the service flowed into the guestroom in its regular channel, except that fires were so low that the visitors' feet were frostbitten; the meals were served on time and were well cooked. But the servants were efficient shop assistants, no longer feudal serfs. And the earl chopped the trees in his own forest with his own hands for his own fires. The meager household allowance of coal that the fuel controller gave to the earl from the mines under the earl's own lands was barely enough to heat the servants' rooms.

And as for the bread estate over which the earl ruled as an agricultural overlord six years ago—an agricultural overlord and industrial entrepreneur through his coal mines—the estate is all crumbling. The land is passing into the hands of small farmers; the old yeoman farmer, fairly well-to-do, of good old yeoman stock, going back to the Conqueror—he and his kind are taking the ownership of the land of the belted earl in 100-acre lots, and the nation, having taken charge of the earl's coal mines, may now relieve him of the burden of mine ownership as well. For the parliamentary committee by a large majority has reported in favor of the government ownership of all mines of every description.

And because the earl's son sleeps under the poppies of Flanders and his daughters are married and gone, the earl is a weary, confused old man, chopping wood in the forest to keep his old wife warm. He cannot fight the new order. No leadership is calling him. He knows that the end is coming for him and his kind. He realizes quite definitely that in a few years the castle of the Plantagenets, who were royal in the last Henry's days, probably will fall into the hands of a brewer or a draper or a stock broker, who will put in a central heating plant to defile it, debase the privacy of every bedroom with hot and cold water, and degrade the place with a wilderness of bathrooms, so that four servants can run the place on two eight-hour shifts where 100 retainers once served the baron under Elizabeth.

The millions the old earl received from the yeoman farmers for his land have been divided with the state in yearly income taxes; and now on the horizon he sees a parliamentary bill gradually approach which provides that capital as well as income shall be heavily taxed. So the old man in the forest sees even his capital unsafe, and he wonders curiously how the little gray man at Windsor feels about the prospects of succession for the genial young-prince-of-Wales.

Dish Runs Away With Spoon.

A chain of restaurants in this city has to purchase more than a million spoons, forks and knives every year. Others tell the same story. Some of the help, according to the management of a Wall street restaurant, must be reckoned on as furnishing their homes with "borrowed" tableware and many patrons take it for souvenirs as unblushingly as they would appropriate an umbrella on a rainy day.

A Wall street man was invited to a dinner at the house of a rich client not long ago and during the evening his hostess promptly showed him hundreds of spoons, forks and knives bearing the names of hotels and restaurants both of this country and Europe. "It took me ten years to get this collection together," said the lady, "and I didn't pay for one of them."

New Electric Lamp.

An electrical lamp has been developed in Europe which virtually consists of a metallic arc inside of a sealed bulb containing attenuated helium and neon gases. The wire anode terminates so closely to the edge of the hemispherical iron cathode that the current discharges across the gap spontaneously. The rays have an orange hue and are only slightly actinic, making the lamp useful in photographic dark rooms. It is also recommended for use in mines, and other places where inflammable gases may be present, because breaking of the bulb instantly extinguishes the light.

FLAT ROOFS FOR HOT LANDS

American Indian Desert Dwellers Knew Secret of Home Building We Seem to Have Forgotten.

We dwell with Colonel Roosevelt upon the historic and cultural value of the ancient Indian towns of Arizona which, had they been in Europe, would doubtless have been preserved unchanged as living records of successful communistic forms of government, whose social and ceremonial life offered a study of the greatest possible importance to our knowledge of mankind as a whole. And we asked: What right have we in "free America" to stretch forth an autocratic hand arbitrarily to change the village life of this ancient and peaceful folk?

We spoke of the characteristic architecture of the pueblos, by many centuries the oldest inhabited towns in America, whose flat-roofed, terraced houses are not only in utter harmony with natural surroundings, but constitute, from a practical standpoint, the most successful type of building for desert cities. High above the sands, the flat roof forms a porch for the open-air Indian, whereon at certain seasons he works, rests, receives his guests, eats, and sleeps.

In North Africa, in Spain, in Asia Minor, where climatic conditions are similar to those in Hopi Land, the same flat roof may be found. But we think we know better! In a land of burning sun, the slanting, hot, tin roofs of the government dwellings clinging in an inherited architecture of rain-soaked central Europe, cut their incongruous outline against a rainless sky, impotent in their longing to shed water! And the sun streamed into their big European windows, inviting myriads of flies, and forming a contrast indeed to the shadowed cool of the thick-walled Indian houses, whose open fireplaces insured at all seasons wholesome ventilation, in spite of high, narrow windows.

And yet the white man's unpractical transplanted house, brought from far other climes, is urged upon the Indians as "civilized." With no eye to either beauty or fitness, our arbitrary standards (rarely, in the Indians' case, put to the test of experimentation first) are forced upon a people who through centuries of experience have learned how to conquer conditions foreign to us. Improvements there might certainly be in the Indian's manner of life, but why not along those lines which nature has taught as most appropriate?—Natalie Curtis, in the Outlook.

The Attractive City.

In a word, then, so far as I am personally concerned, you will not make your city more attractive to me by buildings, parks or monuments—what other city has not these things? But if you can show the heart that I know is in your breast, if you can forget to look straight ahead in order to cast a look of friendly interest on a passing stranger, if you can cease to fear being "done" and become inspired by the desire one in a while to show that you are a human being amidst your bricks and stones, just to that extent will you do your part in making your city attractive. Oil may draw money to Tulsa; social exclusiveness will always make Newport and Palm Beach desirable to a limited number; the palaces of Pasadena will attract other millionaires there. But you'll prefer smoky old Pittsburgh or noisy Kansas City, or St. Joseph, or any other city that shows its heart beneath the crime and takes the lid off its smile.—J. Breckenridge Ellis in the Twilight Hour Magazine.

Removing Warts From the Face.

One of the difficult disgusting things to get rid of is the eruption of many small warts on the face. The British Medical Journal tells how Dr. Charles Ind has succeeded in eradicating them. He paints the warts three times in one day with a saturated solution of salicylic acid in alcohol and the following morning he cuts them off with a flat sharp steel instrument, beveled on one side only. This is painless, but it leaves a tiny bleeding point at the site of the wart. This he immediately paints again with the salicylic acid solution, which is applied twice again the same day. On the second morning the sites of the warts have small brown scabs, which are bathed once a day with pure alcohol till they drop off, leaving a healthy skin.

Its Advantage.

"The automobile has one big advantage over a horse."

"What is that?"

"It can be tired without wanting to stop."

Home Brew.

"Come on up to the house for dinner and we'll give you some good homemade bread."

"You have some good homemade beer, too, I suppose?"

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