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A FEW WORDS ABOUT WEEDS.

According to the wise men of the De-
partment of Agriculture at Washington
the great cities of the country are not
only the centers where vice and
crime thrive and from which they
spread, but they are also the nur-
series for all sorts of noxious and crop-
destroying weeds. Almost all the im-
ported weeds get their first start in
the cities. "There are a dozen
chances," says the Agricultural de-
partment, "for the original introduction
of a weed in cities to one upon a farm."

The foreign weed pests are brought
into the cities in many different ways.
All kinds of weeds have a better
chance to grow in cities than in the
country, because in the first place va-
cant city lots have usually been culti-
vated at one time or another, so that
the native vegetation has been de-
stroyed and the conditions are fa-
vorable for the growing of migra-
tory weeds. Again, it is the farmer's
business to look out for dangerous
weeds, and he is quick to adopt desper-
ate measures when he sees a field grow-
ing up with the Canada thistle, for in-
stance. In the city, on the other hand,
there is no crop to be affected, and va-
cant lots, even in the best residence
districts, are often given up to what-
ever will grow upon them.

"In Chicago," sternly declares the
Agricultural department, "rough pig-
weed, tall ragweed, and cocklebur are
abundant, while there are hundreds
of acres within the city limits covered
almost with Canada thistle, and in
several places Russian thistle is
rapidly increasing."

From Chicago the wind and the
water and the railroads carry the
seeds of these and other noxious weeds
to different parts of the country.
The Department of Agriculture points
out that it is not only a protection
to the farmer that city residents should

prevent weeds from growing up. Al-
most all the common weeds have a bad
effect on the health of the community,
while weeds that are deadly poisons
are found in a large number of cities
and villages throughout the country.
Henbane, or deadly nightshade, is
found in a few localities. Jimson weed
and purple thorn-apple are common in
most cities east of the Mississippi Riv-
er. Their seeds, which are somewhat
attractive in appearance, are extreme-
ly poisonous, and children are killed
every year by eating them. Nine cases
of fatal poisoning from this source were
reported to the Department of Agricul-
ture in a single year, while there were
doubtless many less serious cases
which were not reported. Weeds also
harbor injurious insects and fungous
and bacterial diseases of cultivated
plants.

"State weed laws," says the report,
"are rendered ineffective by the un-
checked production of weeds in cities.
In many of the smaller villages the
State weed laws are well enforced,
or the weeds are kept down because
of local pride in neatness, but this is
seldom true in the larger cities."

The department concludes with
some suggestions for improvement. It
urges that not only should growths of
noxious weeds be destroyed as a sani-
tary measure, but that vacant lots
should be put to the best possible use
while they remain unoccupied. They
should be made to yield their highest
value to the people. In crowded cities
it is suggested that they be used as
playgrounds for the neighboring chil-
dren. Most city children are accus-
tomed to seeing either vacant lots
overrun with weeds and not available
as playgrounds on that account, if no
other, or carefully kept parks, where
the turf and flowers are labeled "Hands
off." What they should have is a
chance to play untrammelled by
rules which forbid them to walk on
the grass.

The work of destroying the weeds
and improving vacant lots can, in the
opinion of the department, be best
done by municipal direction under the
immediate supervision of the park or
street departments. If it is done gen-
erally it will not only improve the
public health and furnish playgrounds
for thousands of city children but will
avert millions of dollars of damage to
the farmers of the surrounding coun-
try.



CANADA THISTLE.



COCKLEBUR.



SNEEZEWEED.



RAGWEED.

CLAIMS TO BE CHAMPION CHESS PLAYER OF OHIO.

Tiffin claims the champion chess
player of Ohio. He recently won the
title at the State tournament at Col-
umbus. Julius C. Eppens is not a na-
tive Buckeye, although he was edu-
cated at Canal Dover, having removed
to Ohio from Missouri, his place of na-
tivity, when he was quite a youngster.
His father—now deceased—was a Ger-
man Evangelical minister and a good
chess player himself. Young Eppens



JULIUS C. EPPENS.

learned the game while attending
Wooster University in '90. He at once
became a devoted student of the
checkered board. He plays a system
largely his own, and his successive vic-
tories are proof that it is a valuable
one. He entered the newspaper busi-
ness at Pittsburg, but decided to take
up the law, and he is now studying at
Tiffin. Ohio experts, who have seen
Eppens at play, believe that he is a
coming Pillsbury, and that he will win
international honors some of these
days.

PIPES SMOKED BY AZTECS.

Curious Specimens of Ancient Smokers'
Articles from Central America.

The increasing commerce with Hon-
duras and Nicaragua is bringing to
this country many of the odd imple-
ments and curios of those lands. The
Spanish population has a large admix-
ture of Aztec or other aboriginal blood
and preserves many of the implements
as well as customs which prevailed in
the time of the Montezumas. One of
the queerest survivals in this regard
is the long pipe, which is still employ-
ed in the rural districts of both repub-
lics. It is made from a shrub or a sap-
ling which grows somewhat like the
elder. The bush is cut down and the
pith extracted from the stem, which is
afterward peeled, polished, dried and
painted with primary colors in barbaric
style. The simplest form is a straight
stem from three to six feet in length.
A more expensive kind is made from a
step with two terminal branches. This
demands much more care in extracting
the pith and enables the owner to offer
a friend a mouthpiece on one branch
while he is enjoying another upon a
second. Three-stemmed sticks are also

made, and, very rarely, four-stemmed
ones. These are kept as curios rather
than as useful articles and are sup-
posed to have been employed upon es-
pecial occasions in the days of the
Incas.

The bowl is of red clay, gray clay or
sandstone and the mouthpiece may be
of bone or horn or decorated silver and
amber. The length of the stem causes
the tobacco smoke to cool appreciably
in its passage from the bowl to the lips
and gives a taste almost as mild as that
produced by the oriental nargile. The
tobacco used with it is of a rich red-
brown color, about intermediate in fla-
vor and appearance between Virginia
and Havana leaf. These pipes make
very pretty ornaments for a mantel or
for a wall, being much more pleasing to
the eye than the "church warden"
familiar to all smokers. They are
strong and durable, but, unless oiled
or varnished now and then, they are
apt to split in a dry climate. Collec-
tors make it a rule to oil them on the
inside once a year.

Salt and Skylights.

The absorption of salt as a means of
prolonging human life is among the
"discoveries" recently made by the
scientists who make newspaper stories.
All a man has to do is to lick salt until
he learns to love it with the affection of
a brindle cow, or lie him to the shore
where the restless waves wash the un-
changing rocks, and sup in a few gal-
lons of nature's solution.

There are still to be found in some
places remains of the old blue glass
skylights with which people prolonged
their lives a quarter of a century ago.
It cannot be denied that many of those
who had the rays of the sun fall on
them through the colored glass, and re-
ligiously made themselves look like a
moonlight effect in a modern theater
every day, twenty-five years ago, are
still living. Some who did not use the
blue glass have also survived. Thus
science works its way.

Specific Directions.

A Memphis gentleman who has just
returned from an overland trip through
Mississippi says that one day he
stopped at a negro cabin to ask the way
to the village for which he was bound.
In reply to this he saw an old white-
headed man come to the door and the
following conversation took place:
"Can you tell me how to get to B—?"
asked the traveler.
"Saittly I kin, sah," replied the dar-
ky. "You follow dis here road till jist
before you gits in sight ob de next
house, and den you truns to de right,
and dar ain't no odder road to put you
off from dar on till you gits to whar you
is a-going."—Memphis Scimitar.

Notice, and you will find that your
conscience distresses you most about
those sins most likely to be found out.

A man who understands women is
willing to admit that he doesn't under-
stand them.

WELL, I DON'T KNOW

Mr. Johnson, you don't know
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