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SCIENCE IN FARMING.

Scientific farming is usually looked upon with great distrust by practical farmers, and perhaps with a good reason. But science has accomplished much for agriculture and is destined to do much more. Prof. Shaler says that in agriculture the effects of pure science are less conspicuous than in the other arts; indeed, we may say that they have been less efficient than in any other division of human industry. The reasons for this are plain. The conditions under which the farmer works have been the subject of a practical examination on a large scale for a longer time than those in any other department of industry. They depend in the main on the nature of organic life, on the original composition of soils, and on the uncontrollable element of climate. It is easily to be seen that the methods of a laboratory and of pure science in general have already done much to help the tiller in his tasks, and that there is a promise of larger profits in the time to come. From the biologist the breeder of animals has learned how to deal with a number of destructive diseases. The researches of Pasteur have alone been sufficient to enable him to deal with certain very serious maladies. The method of inoculation to prevent the ravages of an infectious disease has enabled the sheep-breeders of Australia to contend against the malady which promises to make their industry unprofitable. By similar studies into the diseases which affect silk-worms, he has afforded an admirable protection to the interests of those engaged in that vast industry and if his conclusions concerning hydrophobia are borne out by further inquiry he will remove one of the terrors that now beset life. The scientific treatment of the ordinary diseases which affect animals has vastly redounded to the advantage of our stock-breeders. It is chiefly in matters which concern the management of the soil that science has done service to the tiller. The progress of chemical knowledge has enabled us to determine with accuracy the amount of waste which is brought about by crops of different character and the methods by which the loss can most easily be replaced. So much depends upon the mechanical condition of the earth that even where the chemist finds those substances which should give fertility the tiller may have scant harvest to repay his pains. It is mainly through the development of artificial manures that chemical skill has come to the aid of the farmer.

THE subject of education is a broad one and includes all that can be stored in the memory of human beings, or acquired by mental or physical application and practice. Useful knowledge is really all that human beings can acquire and retain. All other things are fleeting and transitory but knowledge is eternal and unatachable by outside influences. Farmers as a class should acquire and retain this most desirable human acquisition. Speaking of the farmer, Charles Dickens said, "The part * * * which pays best for cultivation is the small estate within the ring fence of his skull. Let him begin with the cultivation of his brains." There are more ways than one in which the farmer, who is too old for school can do this, and one of these is in the exercise of the observing habit. No one is better situated for such culture and familiarity with the "visible forms" of nature than the practical farmer.

THE claim made by those who favor the democratic theory of tariff, that the duty on wool has restricted the development of the woolen industry in the United States, comes with bad grace in the full light of the facts in the case, which show that the development, instead of being restricted, has really been phenomenal. The census figures show that the production of woolen goods increased from $65,596,000 in 1860, to $267,-252,000 in 1880, or more than three hundred per cent, while the increase in the production of cotton goods—of which the raw material is free—was only seventy per cent, the figures being $115,681,774 in 1860 and $192,773,000 in 1880 in the latter field of industry.

Two facts seem to be undeniable, in relation to the bond buying question. One is that whenever the secretary of the treasury has gone into the market to buy that no trouble was experienced in procuring the bonds at market value—that is just the price that any individual or corporation would have to pay for them and no more. The other is that in making the purchases the financial transactions of the country have been invariably bettered instead of disturbed. Taking these two facts into consideration the wisdom of purchasing bonds to the full extent of funds available for that purpose cannot be questioned.

THE Agricultural Department is organizing five new experimental stations for the study of sorghum and its manipulation—three in Kansas, one in New Jersey, and one in Louisiana. The appropriation for this work this year is said to be $100,000 larger than it has ever been before.

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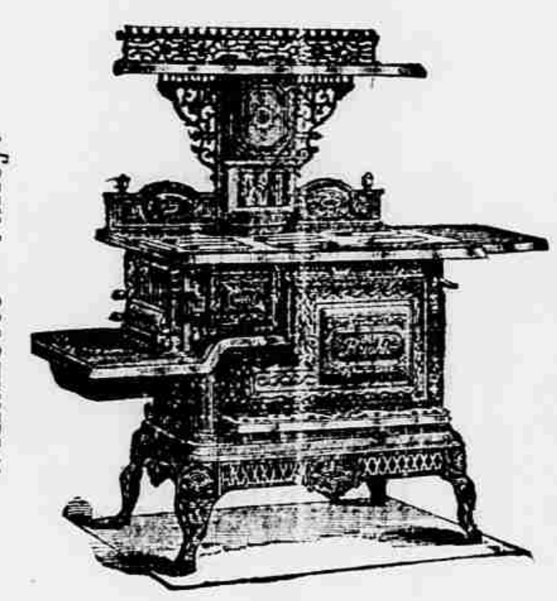

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