AGRICULTURE SHARES IN NITROGEN'S PROGRESS

Harnessing of Elusive Element Proves Boon

PRODUCT TAKEN FROM AIR

It is Found That Purer Ammonia Can Be Produced More Cheaply by New Process

(Correspondence of the Associated Press)

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.—Skillful harnessing to man's utility during the war of one of nature's most illusive elements, nitrogen, has proved in its post-war phases to be at once a distinct boomerang to one branch of American industry and a substantial benefit to agriculture.

Steel mills, coking plants and hundreds of municipal gas companies today are faced with discarding millions of dollars' worth of equipment hitherto used to distill ammonia liquor as a by-product of gas manufacture because a purer ammonia can now be produced more cheaply from atmospheric nitrogen. This was made available by a process developed primarily to supplement, during the war, the supply of South American nitrates so vital to the manufacture of high explosives.

In the meantime, farmers also may reap, in the form of substantially reduced fertilizer prices, the harvest of one of the outstanding pieces of wartime ingenuity.

Distilling Apparatus Scrapped

Announcement made by the local Citizens' Gas company of the scrapping of $100,000 worth of ammonia-distilling apparatus and of its replacement with a $250,000 ammonia sulphate plant, brought from Clarence Kirk, president of the company, the story of tremendous strides taken in seven years by one of the America's newest industries.

"Fifteen years ago German scientists perfected the Haber process of fixating nitrogen," Mr. Kirk said. "It was a great discovery. Man's supply of nitrogen before that time was confined to natural beds of sodium and potassium nitrates found almost exclusively in Chile. Through nitrogen, a gas harmless in itself, constituted four-fifths of the air we breathe, we could not, until the Haber process was discovered, make substantial and cheap use of the valuable properties it possesses when in combination with other elements.

"While the Haber process opened up new fields of scientific thought, it was unable to fixate nitrogen in sufficient quantity nor at low enough cost to be commercially valuable.

Speed Forced by War

"The war forced Germany and other nations to speed up their work of fixating nitrogen and the result was development of means to obtain an almost unlimited supply. Then came the problem of a peace-time use for the product of valuable equipment and it was discovered that it could not only be made into a purer ammonia than the steel plants and gas companies were manufacturing as a byproduct of their industries, but also could be made much more cheaply.

"That was the beginning of the end of the gas company's career as a manufacturer of straight ammonia liquor. So completely has this 'synthetic' ammonia supplanted our product, that we are forced to turn to other fields for use of our ammonia, and we have now started making ammonia sulphate."

Nitrogen compounds, he added, are a basic element in the composition of virtually all soil-richening fertilizers and farmers may reasonably expect even lower prices for such products.

AMUSEMENTS TODAY

AT THE THEATRES TODAY

Heilig — Associated Vaudeville: The Dancing Kennedys "In Their Own Creations;" the Hong Kong troupe, Chinese wonder workers; Leo Kendall and company, in "At the Studio," a moving picture episode; Anthony, wonder whistler and accordionist; Bingham and Meyers in their comedy of laughs, "Right Off the Reel;" Oregonian Review, Topics; "East Side, West Side," a comedy of the Jews and the Irish; Heilig Concert Orchestra playing French "National Defile March," by A. Turlet.

Coming — James Oliver Curwood's "When the Door Opened;" Buck Jones in "The Countess and the Cowboy;" "The Havoc;" Norma Shearer and Lew Cody in "His Secretary;" Lon Chaney in "The Tower of Lies;" Strongheart in "North Star;" "An Exchange of Wives," with Eleanor Boardman; "My China Doll" (musical comedy road show).

* * *

McDonald—Second day: The world's sweetheart, in her latest and greatest picture, Mary Pickford in "Little Annie Rooney," a comedy filled to the brim with humor, pathos and adventures extra added attraction, "Life's Greatest Thrills;" Frank Alexander in a special concert, "In Annie Rooney's Own Back Yard," a medley of old favorites on the organ.

Coming — Blanche Sweet, Robert Frazier and Charlie Murray in "Why Women Love;" Sidney Chaplin in "The Man on the Box;" Norma Talmadge and Eugene O'Brien in "Graustark;" the Liberty magazine special, "Mannequin," by Fannie Hurst; James M. Barrie's "A Kiss For Cinderella," with Betty Bronson; D. W. Griffith's "Sally of the Sawdust;" Raymond Griffith, in "Hands Up."

* * *

Rex—Last day: "New Brooms," a delightful comedy drama of a father who handled the family's business affairs, and a son who attended to the love affairs, until they decided to switch, and then the fun begins. The cast is headed by Bessie Love, Neil Hamilton and Phyllis Haver; Century comedy, "All Out," is filled with fun; Kinogram news events; J. Clifton Emmel in melodious musical accompaniment to the picture on the organ.

Coming — "The Midnight Flyer," with Cullen Landis, Dorothy Devore and Frankie Darrow; Evelyn Brent in "The Broadway Lady;" Emery Johnston's "The Last Edition," With Ralph Lewis; "Madame, Behave," with Julian Eltinge and Ann Pennington; "The Home Maker," with Alice Joyce and Clive Brook; "The Street of Forgotten Men;" "The Scarlet West," with Robert Frazer, Clara Bow, Johnny Walker, Ruth Stonehouse, Robert Edeson and Gaston Glass; "Seige," with Virginia Valli and Eugene O'Brien; "Abraham Lincoln," with George Billings; "Sundown," with Bessie Love, Hobart Bosworth, Robert Stewart and Charley Murray.

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Auto Man Hurt in Wreck

When two trains crashed in Florida, four persons were killed and W. C. Durant, automobile manufacturer and financier, was reported to have suffered concussion of the brain.

ROTARIANS FATHER GIRL WHO MAY SHINE IN OPERA

Kathleen Kersting Hailed as Real "Discovery"

SANG IN CHURCH CHOIR

Calve Who Heard Song Bird and Took Her to France to Study Under Masters

(Correspondence of the Associated Press)

WITCHITA, Kan.—Three years ago a fourteen-year-old girl singing in the choir of a Wichita church, Kathleen Kersting today is hailed one of the "discoveries" of modern opera. She is completing her musical education in Europe, with Mme. Emma Calve, under the guardianship of the Witchita Rotary club.

Calve heard Kathleen sing while the French opera star was on concert tour of North and South America in 1922. She consented to a newspaperman's request to introduce the girl and was so charmed by the impromptu recital that she insisted Kathleen should accompany her on her return to France.

Kathleen's father is a farmer, but the family invested all their humble holdings in the training which Calve said the girl should have abroad. Two years of study in France and Italy, where a new world opened out before the little Kansas girl under the motherly care of Madame, and the little fortune was gone. The Kerstings had opened a rooming house to help obtain funds. Kathleen came home last winter to sing in concert, but only a few hundred dollars were gotten together.

Rotary Club Advances Funds

Then the Wichita Rotary club learned of the situation and came to Kathleen's aid. In a twinkling, $5000 was raised, and Kathleen went back to France and to the jealous care of her internationally known tutor. With the other of Calve's youthful proteges, the girl has studied the music and art of the continent.

Recently she appeared in informal recitals where her voice was acclaimed by several of the great French critics as that of Calve, at the heighth of her career. The critical audience, said one of those present, little anticipated what was in store for them. But as Kathleen sang, the attitude changed from one of eager interest to one of frank and charmed amazement. Calve stood bejow her watching every movement. Kathleen responded to encores until Calve refused to let her sing more.

Calve, herself, says that within five years, Kathleen will be known as one of "the great voices."

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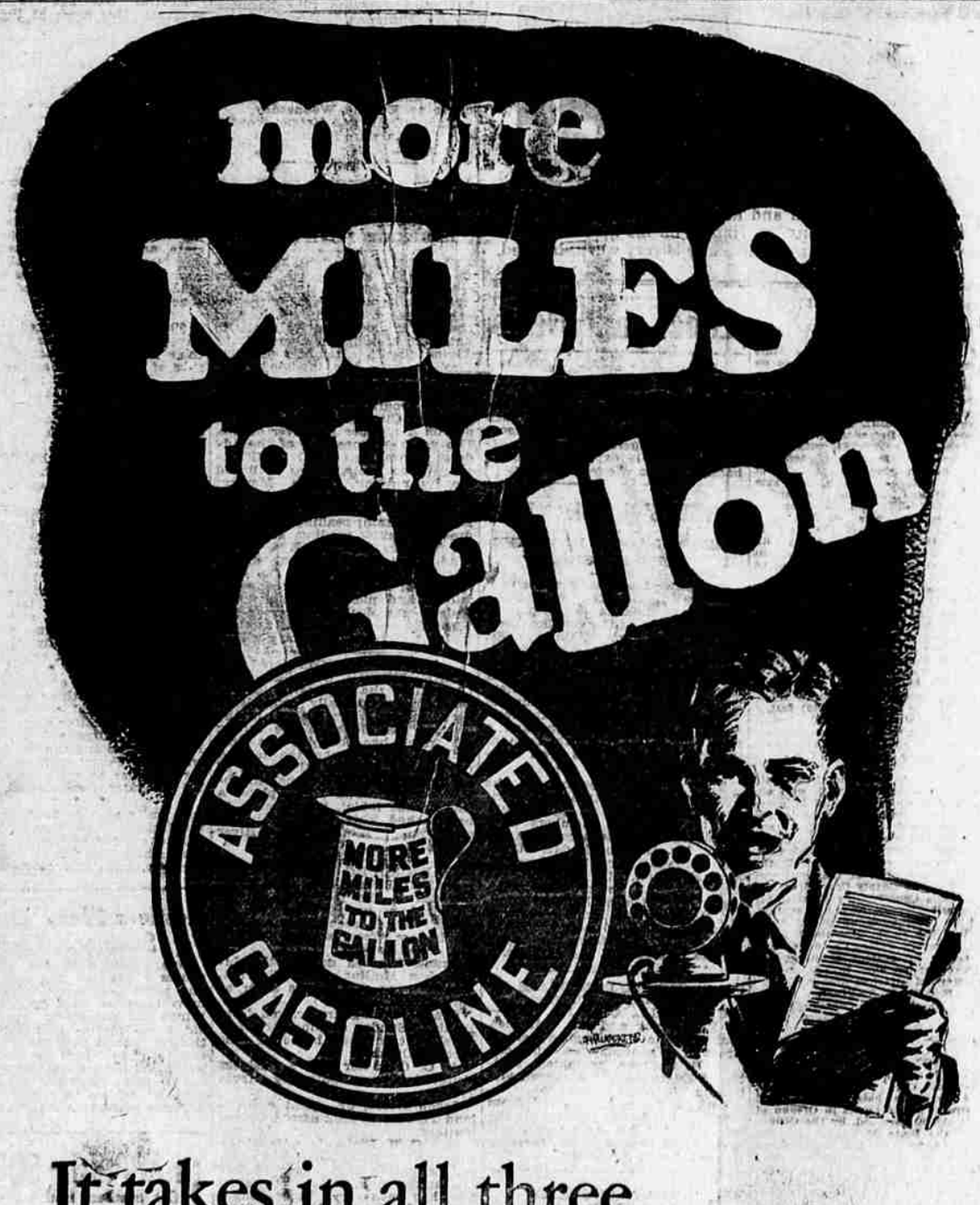

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