

DRY FARMING CONGRESS.

Methods of Increasing Crop Output Will Be Discussed.

The Dry Farming congress is now organized, with some persistency and determination to be heard from in the matter of urging its claims upon the attention of the public. The faith that the promoters and operators of this association have in their claims of dry farming methods, well carried out, cannot be questioned, says the editor of the Twentieth Century Farmer. The experiences and results of careful and persistent work in crop growing efforts are the evidence that is offered in testimony of the feasibility of dry farming methods and dry farming as an industry.

It is not surprising that there are the doubtful, the skeptical, the unbeliever in converting the dry land of the arid West to agricultural purposes, the growing of crops, the cultivation of orchards and forests, the establishing of homes and the building up of commercial interests and industries on these lands; we say that it is not surprising that some hesitate, that they doubt the availability of sufficient moisture to grow crops; that they forecast seasons of drouth, etc. All these things had their period and have exerted their influence to discourage and prejudice the mind of the public as the settlement of the country has progressed westward for the last fifty years, and yet cultivation has been the civilizing influence that has conquered drouth, hot winds and the barrenness of the plains and prairie countries that are now the dependence in production.

The Fourth Dry Farming congress will hold its meeting at Billings, Montana, October 26, 27 and 28, 1909. This will not only be an institute for dry farming farmers and dry farming instructors and teachers, but it will be an exposition of dry farming products such as this or no other country has ever witnessed. There are pledged already exhibits from thirteen Western states that are engaged in dry farming work. The organization by states, to show what each is doing and capable of doing in the raising of grain and vegetable crops, without irrigation, is a feature never before undertaken in this district and promises some great surprises for visitors.

The area of tillable lands in the United States not yet turned to cultivation is comparatively small, and under present conditions of demand by the homesteader will last but a few more years at most. It is only the part of good business judgment that the dry farming districts be investigated by those who contemplate getting a home under the free homestead law. Good lands and the best locations will be the first taken. Each year will reduce the quality of lands to be disposed of as government homesteads.

The Dry Farming congress will be a good place to visit next October, in view of getting dry farming information and dry farms on which to put it into practice. The Dry Farming congress announces that there are 200,000,000 acres of arable land awaiting development by the dry farming methods.

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"The aeronaut who is going to try that long flight will take his pet dog along."

"What kind of a dog is it?"
"A skye terrier, of course."—Baltimore American.

Information Bureau.
Caller—I wish you would tell me if there has been any change in the size of the 5 cent piece within the last ten or fifteen years.

Man at the Desk—Decidedly there has. The 5 cent piece of ice isn't more than half as large as it used to be.

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"Golden wedding? Why, he's only just married."

"I know, but the bride is worth a million."—Boston Transcript.

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Never caused the pit-a-pat
Of anybody's heart at all
She wore a modern hat.
—Houston Post.



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UNCLE SAM'S OLDEST LIVING SOLDIER

Laying close siege to the century mark, Uncle Sam's oldest soldier recently celebrated his ninety-seventh birthday in Washington. He is Major General Daniel H. Rucker, U. S. A., retired, born ninety-seven years ago—April 28, 1812. In the whole history of the military service of the United States there is no record to parallel his, declares O. F. Schuette in the Chicago Inter Ocean. Probably in all the world there is no soldier who can look back seventy-two years to the date of his first commission. For it was in 1837 that the future general received his first commission as a second lieutenant from President Andrew Jackson. He was then a man of 25—little dreaming that he had before him three-quarters of a century of life. If he lives three years longer, and with his present vigorous vitality there is no reason he should not, he will cross the century mark of life and celebrate the end of three-quarters of a century of membership on the military lists of the United States government.

Away back in the dawn of our national greatness, our school book histories tell of the war of 1812. Yet Daniel Rucker was two months old before the first shot of that war was fired. A year later came the first Creek Indian war. Five years later came the hostilities with the Seminoles in Florida. And then came outbreak after outbreak of Indian conflicts. It was in this Indian warfare away back in the '30s that he saw his first service. He won his first promotion for bravery in the Mexican war. Then again he participated in Indian warfare. He was 49 years old when Fort Sumter was fired on. When the Spanish war broke out he was 86 years of age. But he had retired from active service sixteen years before, with forty-five years of service to his credit.

It is a far cry from the clumsy, muzzle-loading flint lock to the noiseless, smokeless, rapid-fire rifle of today. And it is a further cry from the wooden frigates that formed the fleet of the United States and won those splendid naval victories on the great lakes, when he was a babe in 1812, to the marvelous squadron of fighting ships that sailed home from a triumphant trip around the world.

When General Rucker first joined the ranks of Uncle Sam's defenders there was no such thing as breech-loading muskets, no sixteen inch guns, no torpedoes, no mines, no lyddite shells. No warship was propelled by steam and all the fleets of the world were at the mercy of the wind and of the waves. Then came the Civil War and the first ironclads. General Rucker had passed the half century mark of his life when the first battle of armored ships was fought and the triumph of the Monitor in beating off the Merrimack and turning the tide of the Confederacy on the sea. Yet that was but a toy experiment of what was to follow. Progress was slow, and it was thirty years before the armored vessel of to-day really came into being. General Rucker was 87 years old when the navy of the United States—worthy successor of the plucky little fighters of 1812—sent to the bottom in two hemispheres the successors of the proud Spanish armadas.

It is a long jump from the clumsy frigate, with its muzzle loading guns, its shaking sails and its limited range of action, to the Dreadnoughts of today, with their heavy armor, their speed, their powerful engines and their wonderful range; and there have been other marvels just as great in the progress of his profession. When he took his first commission, and rode 200 miles on horseback alone to his post, no one had thought of automobiles or airplanes or wireless tele-

graph, much less of their revolutionary use in actual warfare. When General Rucker was born Abraham Lincoln was a 3-year-old babe in the backwoods of Kentucky. General Rucker was 10 years old, minus just one day. When General Grant saw the light of day, April 27, 1822. Only one President of the United States died before General Rucker was born—George Washington. He was 14 years old when John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died on that same Fourth of July in 1826. When James Monroe, the fourth ex-President to die, succumbed, on July 4, 1831, General Rucker was 19 years old. And out of the nation's twenty-six ex-Presidents General Rucker has survived all save one, Theodore Roosevelt.

General Rucker was but a boy when his parents moved from New Jersey to Michigan. It was there he got his first taste of army life, at a frontier Michigan army post. His father was averse to his joining the army, and his mother even more so; but the future general won out, and he applied for a commission as second lieutenant. There was plenty of work for Uncle Sam's soldiers in those days, with the boundless West just opening its wealth to the onward march of civilization. He was assigned to the First dragoons, then on duty at Fort Leavenworth. Lieutenant Rucker made his way overland by stage coach until he got to the nearest point which could bring him to the Kansas outpost. He was then still 200 miles from his destination.

He had hardly settled down to the comparative ease of his frontier post before he was ordered into the heart of the Cherokee country, and for half a dozen years he was kept busy with his soldiers driving off marauding Indians, protecting settlers and emigrants' caravans and holding the hostile reds in check. He was still busy in this hazardous campaigning when the First dragoons were ordered off to Mexico as part of General Zachary Taylor's expedition. He took part in the battle of Buena Vista, and distinguished himself by an act of personal gallantry in the field. It was an act of bravery under the eye of a commanding officer, who recommended him for a brevet commission as major. When peace was declared Major Rucker's command was sent across the continent to Los Angeles.

The discovery of gold brought the rush of '49, and then there was more than plenty to do. It was a feverish



time, and the soldiers of Uncle Sam had to hold in check the madness of the men that swarmed into the new El Dorado. Few of those who started across the mountains and the deserts that fenced off California knew of the hardships they must face. Each new arrival brought tales of horror from the trail. Lost and starving, the immigrants straggled off their paths, until sacrifice of life made terrible the days.

Finally Rucker was ordered east. He left San Francisco in a steamer for Panama, with Lieutenant Sherman—afterward General Sherman—as one of his companions. They made the trip across the isthmus of Panama by ponies and small boats and then sailed for Jamaica, where Sherman and Rucker paid a friendly call on General Santa Ana, whom they had worsted at Buena Vista. Major Rucker saw several years of comparatively peaceful service in the East, and then he was again sent out to the frontier. This time his battlefields covered New Mexico, in constant warfare with the Apaches. While he was in this work the civil war broke out and he was ordered back to Washington.

In September, 1861, he was promoted to Colonel of volunteers and in May, 1863, President Lincoln made him Brigadier General of volunteers. In 1865 he was made Brevet Major General of volunteers and in 1866 he was mustered out of the volunteer ranks.

But he was made a Colonel and assistant quartermaster general of the regular service and served as such until February 13, 1882, when he was made Brigadier General and quartermaster general. At that time he had seen forty-five years of service and seventy-one years of life. He was then placed on the retired list as a Major General.

He is still hale and hearty and delights in walks in the beautiful portion of residential Washington, near his home; but he is leading a quiet life, and even the excitement of recalling the hard days of fighting is too much for his strength. With him lives his daughter, Miss Sarah Rucker. Another daughter, Mrs. Philip H. Sheridan, widow of the hero of Winchester, lives but a few blocks away, where she can see the statue of her husband that a grateful nation erected.

In all his years of service General Rucker was never wounded. What is more remarkable, in all the years of service and hardship he was never ill for a single day.

THE NEW CURATE.
Mother (nervously)—You know what I told you, Johnnie. Johnnie (who has been told not to make personal remarks)—I wasn't saying anything. I was only looking at it.—London Weekly Telegraph.

ATLANTIC GARDEN IN DANGER.
Old Belle of New York's Bowery Is Marked for Destruction.
The Atlantic garden, one of the few remaining buildings binding the Bowery of to-day to the old Bowery—the Bowery which saw the wealth and fashion of the town go nightly to the Thalia theater and slip into the garden next door for a bite and a sip between the acts—celebrated its fifty-first birthday Friday evening under a shadow. The shadow was cast by the Manhattan bridge, already looming large to the east and projecting itself nearer and nearer to the spot that still has the savor of the old days.

A rumor to the effect that the city, desirous of making a fitting approach to the great bridge, had already marked the garden for destruction, brought the oldtimers there in droves Friday night, the New York Sun says. They told stories of the old days, the days when if you wanted to hear German opera you had to journey to the Thalia, where Conrad worked as a supe and where Mme. Geisinger drew her crowds. The old passageway between the theater and the garden is still there.

The garden was opened on May 8, 1858, by the father of the present Kramers, and part of it is the original Bull's Head tavern of the Revolution, one of Washington's many headquarters. It was the center of the German life of the town, and there Kramer first showed the great orchestra, the wonder of its time, which he bought from the grand duke of Baden. There, too, the German regiments of the Civil War made their headquarters and recruiting station, and there played all

liked nothing so much as to move. All day long it used to lie asleep in the sunshine, and sometimes even the attraction of food could not budge it. I took a number of pieces of silk of the same quality, but of different shades, and, after waking the pig, waved each strip of silk in front of it. For the blue and green it never moved, but when I waved the red and orange stripes it jumped to its feet, stamped about and appeared to be thoroughly angry. Time and again I repeated this experiment and always with the same result.—Frank Alvah Parsons in Good Housekeeping.

A well digger says there's always room at the bottom.

Effect of Colors on Animals.
The effect of color upon mind is most easily noticeable in dumb animals, because they make no effort to curb or control their emotions. Wave a red flag at a bull and he becomes violently angry. Shake a red shawl in front of a turkey gobbler and he will storm around fearfully. I made an experiment in the country one summer to see if this same fact held true of other animals. On my farm I had an enormously fat, laxy pig that dis-

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"That may be because he is nothing but a hack."—Baltimore American.

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