

rate produced only 5 to 15 heads per plant. This is an important consideration which the author of the 'miracle' article did not mention.

Second.—If the seven pounds of seed sown at the ordinary rate in the arid West—three pecks per acre—it would be impossible for the plants to obtain enough water to produce the yield reported. Considering that it was sown at the usual rate, we have to consider the following facts: It requires about fifty tons of water to produce one bushel of wheat in this section. (It may require somewhat less in Northern Idaho, where the 'Miracle' is said to have occurred; but the difference would not be very great.) Two hundred twenty-two bushels would therefore require 11,100 tons of water. Now one inch of rainfall adds to the soil about one hundred thirteen (113) tons of water per acre. To produce on one acre 222 bushels of grain, then, we should have to have about ninety inches of water in the soil during the growing season and all of it would have to be available to the plants. Under the best system of water conservation, the soil loses from 3 per cent to 5 per cent of its water by evaporation—an amount that doesn't in any way assist in plant production. This additional fact would increase the water requirement of the 'miraculous' yield to about 100 inches. When we consider that the average annual rainfall in the arid West is but from 10 inches to 20 inches, and when we know that there is a positive limit to the quantity of water that a soil will retain, we see at once that the 'miraculous' yield is impossible. And yet the author of the joke states that the wheat 'yields up to 222 bushels to the acre' This story of agricultural wonder is about as creditable as 'Jack in the Bean Stalk.' Jack, you will remember, had a variety of very tall-growing beans.

"The article in the 'Post' is replete with a variety of amusing stretches of the imagination; but as they are nearly all very much like the 'yield dream' they need not take up space in discussion.

The 'miraculous' Alaska wheat is simply the old and fairly well known 'miracle wheat'—so-called, possibly, because of its peculiar composite head, as each stalk bears one main central spike and several branched spikelets or secondary heads. Botan-

ically, it is known as *Triticum compositum*, and as such has been known for years. Some botanists regard it simply as a 'sport' and do not accord it the dignity of a separate species.

A small quantity of this species or 'sport' was grown this year on the Nephi sub-station. It is inferior in almost every particular. It yielded low, the stalks were weak and it lodged easily; the germination, too, was low—only about 20 per cent.

Now the Utah farmers should know these facts, and not rush into the nets that have been cast in some states east of here by 'agricultural wonder' sharks. It is reported that farmers in Colorado have paid as high as twenty dollars per bushel for this 'Alaska wheat.' The farmers of this state should have in mind the fact that the Utah Experiment Station and the U. S. Department of Agriculture are conducting some extensive experiments with wheat and other grains in the state, and that when a superior type is discovered or produced, here or elsewhere, the station will not be slow in advertising the farmers regarding it. That is one of the reasons why the farmers have an experiment station.

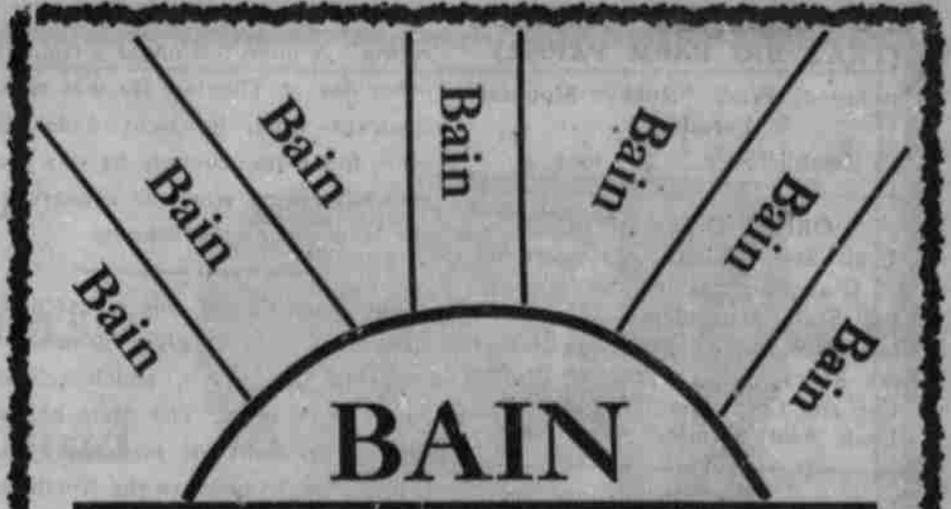
"At any rate, if any farmers must try some of the 'miracle,' they would be wise to limit their purchase to about ten cents' worth, and not be beaten out of forty or fifty dollars each. The wheat will be tried carefully at the sub-station, and if it should prove to be valuable—contrary to this year's result—the farmers will be duly informed."

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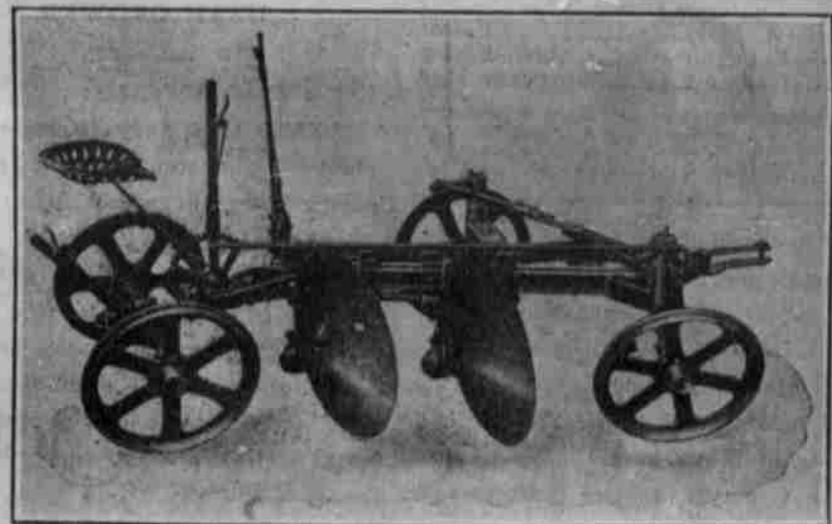
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