

POINTS FOR SUCCESS

Sunshine and Nitrogen Are Two Great Essentials.

Plowing Under of Turf, Mixed In With Little Irrigation, Farmer Never Need Fear Failure—Increase Fertility.

The farmer man or boy must be constantly reminded of the value of crop rotation, live stock, grazing, barn-yard muck, good seed and deep tillage or he will not get along very well. Only the other day Burbank told me that the two great essentials in our economic existence are sunshine and nitrogen—the one and the same but interchangeably different in producing all that the world contains, writes Eugene H. Grubb in the Denver Field and Farm. With these essentials and the plowing under the turf mixed in with a little irrigation we will never have a crop failure. We will continually increase fertility and get larger yields, just as do the farmers of Great Britain.

It is a deplorable fact that the American farmer is producing, under the most favorable conditions, only one-third of the crops which the European farmer is raising under extremely bad conditions. Another significant fact is that the fertility and productivity of the European farm is gradually increasing while that of the average United States farm is decreasing, in about the same inverse ratio. This is true, despite the fact that the farms of Europe have been worked for 2,000 years. The corn area of the United States is practically developed. There are no new fields except in Argentina where we can look for increased production of corn for human food or the making of meats.

The only solution of the problem of securing cheaper prices for the food of the people of this nation is to double or treble the acre yield. The capabilities of the soil are treble, if not quadruple, what the land is now being made to show. We cannot too soon adopt the methods and principles of European agriculture. The stinginess of the United States government in appropriating a measly \$15,000,000 a year for the furtherance of the great cause of agriculture is almost inconceivable. Practically the entire wealth of the country is created by the farmer and the miner. Out of the earth comes wealth in nearly all its forms. The value of the nation's crops approaches \$9,000,000,000 annually and this amount can be trebled if the farmer is given the proper knowledge of scientific methods. The prosperity which will ensue will reach every line of industry, without exception.

The appropriation by the government for agricultural purposes should not be one cent less than \$100,000,000 every year. It would be incomparably the best investment that congress could make. One of the most valuable factors for the education of the farmer along right lines is the agricultural college yet this institution is giving the farmer of the nation only half-measure. We are today misapplying the revenues from the Morrill act. The bill, enacted in the early sixties, was most wise in its conception. It provided ample funds for the education of the masses along agricultural and mechanical lines, but we are not getting it. If the wise provisions of that act were carried out, particularly the one requiring that each and every student shall work not less than two nor more than four hours a day at manual labor in the field or shop, our free agricultural schools would not be overcrowded by men and women seeking university professions to the exclusion of many who are earnest in their desire to conquer soil problems.

If the student is pursuing a literary course exclusively in the agricultural college, where he does not belong, he would soon seek other sources of culture. Only by a combination of the technical study of the class room and the practical work of the field the farmer student can be educated up to the fullness of his capacity to get the most from the feed lot and the soil. Another regrettable fact of our institutions and conditions is the loss of the apprenticeship system in our trades. We are now compelled to rely upon the mechanics that come from Europe to do our work. If the agricultural colleges would live up to the requirements of the Morrill act we would give the American boy an opportunity to acquire a mechanical education.

MANY ASK ABOUT IRRIGATION

Number of Eastern People Seeking Information about United States Increases 40 Per Cent. in Year.

The number of eastern people seeking information about agricultural conditions in the irrigated territory of the west has increased more than 40 per cent. during the last year, says Dr. A. C. True, director of experiment stations, in his annual report to Secretary of Agriculture Wilson.

"The thousands of settlers who have made their homes on irrigated lands during three years," he adds, "are for the most part ignorant of irrigation practices and methods. To assist them as well as the old settlers, who also are confronted with new problems from time to time, agents have been maintained throughout the year in ten western states and in three others part of the year."

HOW TO TREAT ALKALI SOILS

Evaporation of Moisture at Surface Brings Injurious Salts to Level, Injuring Plant.

The Kansas Industrialist, published by the agricultural college at Manhattan, contains in a recent issue a brief article on how to handle alkali soils. It is pointed out in the first place that such crops as cane and kafir corn may be grown on lands not too badly affected by alkali. It seems that alkali in any soil comes from the subsoil—away down deep. Evaporation of the soil moisture at the surface is what brings the alkali to the level where the main injury to plants happens.

If evaporation is prevented, these strong, injurious salts will not come to the surface and eat the tender plants. That, then, is one way to reclaim. And it is done—in this prevention of evaporation—in three ways: shading, mulching and keeping the soil at the surface well cultivated.

Mulching is practiced in the case of young orchards. The young trees are protected in this way until they become large enough to protect themselves with their own shade, when the mulch is needed no longer.

Straw, leaves or manure may be used to make the mulch. These involve more trouble and expense than the simple maintenance of a loose surface soil mulch throughout the dry season. As such a mulch is necessary, anyway, to the cultivation of some garden crops and hoed field crops, it is an inexpensive method of reclamation.

Some field crops, when once established, will do well on a slightly alkaline soil, provided a good stand has been obtained. This is true of alfalfa. The alfalfa seed is sensitive to "black" alkali and is very likely to be ruined by it. To prevent this, it is well to use gypsum when sowing alfalfa. This neutralizes the "black" alkali and leaves it harmless. Then, when the alfalfa has grown to a good stand it may live for many years without a sign of injury.

Then there is the "leaching-down" method of reclamation, in which the soil is kept flooded with water from three days to a week, when the alkali salts will be carried deep enough into the soil to prevent further injury—for a few years at least. This method is not possible except where an abundance of water is accessible. It is used in irrigation districts.

The final and universal treatment for alkali soils is underdrainage by tile. This treatment of a land will remedy all the evils of alkali. Its only drawback is the first expense. Private persons use the underdrainage method sometimes, but generally it requires co-operation or assistance from the government to make this method feasible. When once this drainage system is built it remains good indefinitely.

Potatoes From Irrigation. Excellent potatoes are shipped to Chicago and other eastern cities from the irrigated country. Shipments are often received from Colorado, of a potato of such high grade that it commands a price of ten cents more a bushel than the ordinary product.

National Drainage Congress. The national drainage congress is a new creation by members of the national irrigation congress. This congress will seek to reclaim all lands now in a swampy condition.

POULTRY NOTES

The wire nest has much to commend it. A neglected hen will lay in summer but never in winter.

Scraps saved at butchering time make a fine egg stimulating feed in cold weather.

A dozen eggs will buy almost a bushel of oats. And oats make a good winter feed for eggs.

Hens that are let out into the cold and snow are soon chilled out of the egg-laying notion.

For quick fattening, nothing beats a mash of corn meal and milk, fed warm about three times a day.

If the house is damp scatter some dry ashes and air slaked lime about. They are good absorbents.

Running an incubator is a job for a grown person. Better not let the children have anything to do with it.

It is a good plan to make the nest bottoms of poultry wire. That makes them easy to clean and a poor harbor for mites and lice.

Ducks kept up in winter will be found to thrive better if their corn is soaked in warm water instead of feeding it hard and dry.

A light case of roup may often be cured by ducking the sick bird's head in a mixture of one ounce permanganate of potash to three pints of water.

The weather is changeable these days and the incubator will bear close watching unless kept in a building where the temperature is very uniform despite outside changes.

Every farmer keeps chickens and if they would give their poultry the same care their other stock gets they might all have winter eggs.

Pigeons take care of the feeding of squabs and that saves a lot of bother. The mighty mite is more quiet these cold winter days, but he isn't dead.

Gapes can be cured by fumigating the chicken with sulphur. The first thing after setting up an incubator is to select a place for it.

WASHINGTON GOSSIP

18,000 Miles of Postage Stamps a Year



WASHINGTON.—If all the postage stamps issued by the United States government during the last fiscal year were collected and laid end to end they would form a chain over 18,000 miles long, stretching three-fourths around the world, or from New York to the Philippines and back. The number was 10,061,439,768, with a representing face value of \$180,957,385.

Of the whole number 5,130,249,018 were two-cent stamps and 3,738,961,039 were one-cent. Only one thirty-cent stamp was issued.

The American postage stamp is now serving its sixty-sixth year, the first issue having been placed on sale July 1, 1847; the total issued during that year was 860,350. Prepayment of postage did not become compulsory until 1856.

The postage stamps of the current issue have given considerable trouble to the public and to the postal service on account of the similarity of the designs of the different denominations. All of the eleven denominations in use are of identical design, except that the one-cent bears the head of Franklin and the others the head of Washington. There are not a sufficient number of distinctive colors for all the stamps, making it necessary in the case of those above the six-cent to use different shades of the colors used in the lower denominations. Thus the one-cent and the eight-cent are different shades of green; the three-cent and fifty-cent different shades of purple; the five-cent and the fifteen-cent different shades of blue. In the rapid handling of mail matter one denomination is very apt to be mistaken for another, especially under artificial light. The first six stamps are of sufficiently contrasting colors.

The department is now arranging to print the remaining five with different border designs. Further, the first six will bear the head of Washington, while the remaining five will bear the head of Franklin. The one-cent and two-cent stamps will also be altered to express the denomination in numerals instead of in words, thus making them conform to the other stamps of the series.

How Adee Turned the Joke on Himself

ASSISTANT Secretary of State Avey A. Adee is one of the men in the government service who are said to be indispensable. He is a walking encyclopedia on matters diplomatic and can handle the most intricate affair of state with the confidence born of long and faithful service. His predecessor in his line of work held office for more than a generation and was such a public official as Mr. Adee.

One of Mr. Adee's chief characteristics is his tremendous fund of good nature and stories concerning his official actions never grow old. One of the best stories told of him was a joke on the secretary himself which he never relished, although his intimate friends say he has privately admitted the humor of the situation.

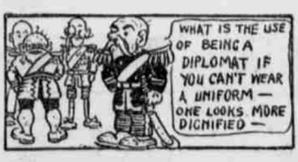
When Mr. Adee gets down to serious work he does not like to be interrupted and at one stage in his official service he found interruptions so numerous he hit upon the scheme of putting a special lock upon the door of his office, the working of which he himself could control. One day he dismissed his secretary and messenger, carefully locked the door and got down to business.

In the course of the morning he wanted his messenger and rang the usual bell to call him. The messenger

knocked at the door and received no response. When the bell rang a second time he called upon Mr. Adee's secretary to witness the fact that he had knocked again for entrance, but had not been received.

After one or two rings on the messenger call, which sounded like a small-sized fire alarm, Mr. Adee placed his finger on the button and kept it there. The result was consternation all over the state department. Poundings and kicks on the secretary's door brought no response and fears began to grow that he was seriously ill. In the end the combined office force had to break the door off its hinges and Mr. Adee was found sitting at his desk, angry and indignant that his calls had not been answered. The secret of the situation was that Mr. Adee had forgotten about the new lock and an impairment of his hearing had prevented him from answering the repeated knocking at his door.

Was Not the First to Wear a Uniform



THE accounts of Ambassador Leishman's resplendent court costume of navy blue with gold braid created very little stir in Washington. Public men have ceased to have the old-fashioned interest in the government's representatives abroad. Few even keep in mind the names of the constantly shifting procession of diplomats, and it is only when an international affair of some proportions arises that the average senator or congressman takes the trouble to recall what particular individual represents the United States at any particular court.

There was here and there a man who had something to say of the incident. The many, however, neither knew Mr. Leishman nor cared how he might choose to dress at a court function. But at the state department,

where Mr. Leishman is known, and it is the daily business of everybody to know diplomats and be interested in everything they may chance to be doing, there was no surprise at the navy blue shade of the Leishman uniform, and the gold braid caused no shudders for fear that the ambassador would be recalled by his government or censured by a resolution by congress.

On all sides officials were fortified with precedents for wearing various sorts of clothes at state functions abroad. Mr. Breckinridge, who, in Arkansas, wore homespun trousers, put on white silk stockings and knee breeches at the coronation of the czar and got along very well at that except for the snickering of the ladies at the attenuated condition of the ministerial calves. Theodore Roosevelt, who at one time held some sort of a commission in the New Jersey militia that gave warrant for a uniform, served his country as minister to Germany during the last Cleveland administration, and put that old militia uniform on and wore it to a court reception with great success.

Young Congressman's Dates Were Mixed

A STRANGER entered the office of Representative William S. Reburn of Philadelphia, who broke a lot of youngest congressman records by landing in the lower house last spring at the age of twenty-eight.

He introduced himself and then began to ply the congressman with questions.

"You knew your multiplication table by the time you were a year and a half old, I presume?" he suggested.

"Oh, certainly!" said Reburn, deeming it wise to humor the fellow and avoid a scene.

"And at what age had you mastered Latin grammar?" pursued the investigator. "Five years perhaps?"

"Somewhere around there," nodded Reburn.

"And as you grew older," went on the visitor, "that is, when you got to be nine or ten years of age, which of your college studies appealed to you most?"



"Say, what are you getting at?" asked Reburn, sidgiting in his chair.

"Why, naturally your case interested me, and many other earnest students of psychology," replied the visitor, quietly. "Any young man who could finish college at the age of twelve seemed to us—"

"Hold on there!" exclaimed Reburn. "Way-tay-minute! Who was it that told you such bughouse stuff that I finished college at the age of twelve?"

"Why, I saw it in your biography in the 'Congressional Directory.'"

Reburn seized the directory on his desk and turned to the page where it says he was born in 1852 and was graduated from Yale in 1894. It was the first time his attention had been called to the misprint. The latter date should have read 1904.

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